

hours with the result that the intending passengers are put to a lot of inconvenience;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to change its departure time to 7 A.M. from Dhanbad;

(c) whether Dining Car is also not attached daily and the maintenance is equally very poor; and

(d) what steps are being contemplated to improve upon the situation?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MOHD SHAFI QURESHI): (a) 25 Up Patliputra Express scheduled to leave Dhanbad at 4.50 hours provides a fast service between Dhanbad and Patna ensuring adequate time for passengers at Patna for transacting their business before returning the same evening.

(b) No, as it would inconvenience the passengers by reducing the available time at Patna from 4 hours and 30 minutes to 2 hours and 20 minutes for transacting business and due to path difficulties for the train at the proposed timings

(c) and (d) A dining car is already running on this train. Only on a few occasions when the dining car got damaged the same could not be attached, but the maintenance of the dining car has been generally satisfactory

Changes in Freight Rates of Newspapers

4719 SHRI ONKAR LAL BERWA
SHRI PANNA LAI BARUPAL

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No 6715 on the 10th April, 1973 regarding undercharges on consignments of newspapers on stations of Western Railway and state

(a) the broad outlines of the orders regarding the changes in the freight rate of the Newspapers issued by the Railway Board;

(b) the date on which these orders were delivered to the Station staff;

(c) the salient features of notification, if any, issued by Government in this regard and the name and date of the Gazette publishing it; and

(d) whether Government will appoint an independent Commission to find out the facts as to whether changes in freight rates are brought to the notice of the concerned staff in time and if not whether the officers concerned should bear the losses?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI). (a) The orders to the Railway Administrations were that with effect from 1st April, 1970, newspaper parcels will be chargeable at scale 7 of the revised parcel rates.

(b) These orders as well as the revised tables of parcel rates to come in force from 1st April, 1970 were delivered to stations on different dates in the last week of March, 1970, that is in time.

(c) No Gazette notification was issued

(d) This does not arise in view of reply to part (b) above. The Western Railway Administration has also been asked to recover these under-charges from the trades only and not from the staff
12.18 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

REPORTED ELECTRONICS EQUIPMENT LYING WASTE IN THE LRDE, BANGALORE

SHRI M RAM GOPAL REDDY (Nizamabad) I call the attention of the Minister of Defence to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:—

"The reported electronics equipment worth Rs 1 crore lying waste in the LRDE, Bangalore due to fault equipment procurement."

THE MINISTER OF STATE (DEFENCE PRODUCTION) IN THE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the reported statement of Rs. 1 crore worth of electronics equipment lying waste in Electronics Radar & Development Establishment, Bangalore, is not correct. The Electronics Radar & Development Establishment currently has electronics equipment of original purchase value of about Rs 4 lakhs, which are not utilisable due to either having become obsolete or due to their having become inaccurate after several years of use. These items were purchased prior to 1966.

Alternative use of equipment has been suggested by a Committee and their recommendations are being processed.

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY: I am very glad that the hon. Minister has categorically denied the charges that have been levelled against the Ministry. I think in the paper today as well as yesterday somebody has written all sorts of things against the Defence Ministry. I want to know who is at the root of these things. I would request the hon. Minister to make an inquiry into all these articles appearing in the papers and find out who is the press people to write this. When they want to write such nonsensical things against our Ministry, they should consult some Minister or some senior officer before writing such damaging articles.

Some time back, a team of experts and scientists had gone to Bangalore and wanted to see the equipment which was in an air-conditioned room. They were not allowed to go and see it on the ground that it was a top secret thing. Of course, we can keep secrets of our military installations which we have at several places. But when the staff want to see it, they should be allowed to see it so that they may also benefit. After all, they are also highly paid officers of the Government and there should be no secret between one Government officer and another. Moreover, we have about 32 laboratories in this country and thousands of engineers are working there. The

results of working must be regularly checked so that our research officers could give the best of themselves and they should be given facilities so that we may manufacture highly sophisticated machinery. I want to know from the Minister whether all these things are being done or not.

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA: The news item that appeared is obviously based on some kind of misinformation.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE (Kanpur): It has been deliberately done.

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA: It would have been for better for the newspaper concerned or the correspondent concerned to have checked it up with us before rushing it to print. I do not think any inquiry as such is needed in such a publication.

As to the question of a team of officers alleged to have gone to Bangalore and alleged to have not been allowed to see this equipment, the whole report is completely wrong because, in the first instance, no team was sent from Delhi to Bangalore for any purpose of this kind and hence the question of their being allowed or not allowed to visit the equipment does not arise.

श्री राम भगत पासवान (रोसरा) :

समाचारों में यह भी कहा गया है कि बैंगलोर में एक करोड़ रुपये के इलेक्ट्रॉनिक उपकरणों की क्षति हुई है। प्रतिरक्षा विभाग सरकार का एक बहुत महत्वपूर्ण विभाग है। इस पर सरकार अधिक से अधिक खर्च कर रही है। हर साल बजट में इसके लिए जो व्यवस्था की जाती है उसको सहर्ष स्वीकार कर लिया जाता है। फिर भी अखबारों में यह बातें आती रहती हैं कि इनकी जो प्रयोगशालाएं हैं उन में जो परचेज और प्रोक्योरमेंट की व्यवस्था है वह बहुत ही डिफैक्टिव है दोषपूर्ण है जिस की वजह से बहुत से औजार बराबर रद्द कर दिए जाते हैं। बाहर से सरकारी विभाग का इन्स्पेक्टर या बड़ा

अक्सर जाता है जांच करने के लिए तो उसे पूरी जानकारी नहीं दी जाती है उसकी भ्रष्ट नहीं जाने दिया जाता है। यह एक बहुत बलत बात है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि एच०आर०डी०ई बक्सौर में अभी तक जितनी इक्विपमेंट रद्द की गई है उसकी कीमत कितनी है ?

नै यह भी जानना चाहता हूँ कि जो रद्द इक्विपमेंट है उसका क्या पुनः उपयोग नहीं किया जा सकता ? यदि वहाँ उपयोग नहीं किया जा सकता है तो क्या इसका भ्रं. पता लगाया गया है कि अन्यत्र उसका उपयोग हो सकता है या नहीं हो सकता है ?

क्या इसकी भी जांच की गई है कि प्रोक्वोरमेंट और परचेस की जो व्यवस्था है उस में भी सुधार लाया जा सकता है ?

जो बरबादी हो रही है इसको रोकना जा सके क्या इसके कारणों का पता लगाया गया है और यह भी पता लगाया गया है कि इसके लिए कौन दोषी है ? क्या प्रतिरक्षा विभाग की ओ. से कभी इसकी जांच की गई है और उन्हें फलस्वरूप किसी को दोषी पाया गया है और पाया गया है तो उसके विरुद्ध कोई कार्रवाई की गई है ?

श्री विद्या चरण शर्मा : मैंने मुख्य उत्तर में बताया है कि जो ख़तर छपी है वह बलत है और माननीय सदस्य ने बहुत सी उन्ही ख़बरों का हवाला दिया है जिनके बारे में मैं पहले ही कह चुका हूँ कि वे ठीक नहीं हैं। जो चार लाख का बहा पर सामान है जो उपयोग में लाया जा सकता है या नहीं लाया जा सकता है उसके लिए एक कमेटी अभी भी वह पता लगाने के लिए कि यदि उसका बक्सौर में उपयोग नहीं हो सकता है तो दूसरी प्रयोगशाला में हो सकता है या नहीं और उन्होंने जो सिफारिशें की हैं उनकी हम जांच कर रहे हैं और उसके बाद जाने की कार्रवाई करेंगे।

माननीय सदस्य ने जो एक करोड़ की बात कही है वह ठीक नहीं है।

मैंने यह भी कहा है कि कोई अक्सर दिल्ली से भेजा ही नहीं गया और ख़बरों में जिस तरह बताया है कि उसको इजाजत नहीं दी गई है भ्रष्ट ज्ञान का वह सवास ही नहीं उठता।

जहां तक ख़रीद की बात है अभी जो व्यवस्था चल रही है वह सतापजनक है। इस वास्ते फिलहाल कोई बड़ा कदम उसको सुधारन के लिए नहीं उठाया गया है। छोटे मोटे सुधारों की जहां आवश्यकता होती है विल मंत्रालय में पूछ कर उनको हम लाते रहते हैं।

SHRI H M PATEL (Dhandhuka)
When the Minister says that the information given in the newspaper on the basis of which the Calling Attention Notice was given is not correct then it is very difficult to decide on questions to be put. When he is asked why he does not propose to take any action against the correspondent of the newspaper for giving publicity to a definitely false piece of news which can do considerable harm he says it is not necessary. Why is it not necessary? Does the Minister know that it is the same correspondent who has not chosen to remain anonymous and who has again reported in today's newspaper further stories of waste in defence laboratories, and the Minister would no doubt say it is again a wrong piece of news. The correspondent reports

"Meanwhile reports of more equipment misuse have come in. In the Solid State Physics Laboratory, cryogenic equipment worth more than Rs 21 lakhs is lying idle. In the Defence Research and Development Laboratory, Hyderabad, an electronic welder, worth Rs. 45 lakhs, is being used only for isolated jobs."

Does the Minister not realise that when information of this kind is published pro-

[Shri H. M. Patel]

minently in a national daily newspaper, over a signed statement, it is necessary for the Minister to challenge that statement and to call upon the newspaper either to apologise and contradict that statement or publish the Minister's own version and say that everything is as it should be?

It is not merely a question of some equipment lying idle or unused. The equipment may be of an obsolete nature, or by the time it arrives, it becomes obsolescent, because in the field of electronics, progress is very rapid, and therefore obsolescence may be rapid, and that is understandable. Let us know all the facts; merely saying that it is not correct is not enough.

I would repeat that if your statement is correct, then action must be taken against the correspondent of the newspaper for giving publicity to an information which is not only wrong but is false. When he says that perhaps it may be due to some misunderstanding, what misunderstanding can there be? When you say that it is not correct and there is no such thing as obsolete equipment worth so many crores of rupees in the electronic industry, and when you say that there is no question of any machinery lying idle and all that you have of an obsolete nature is Rs. 4 lakhs worth of equipment of old 1958 vintage, when that is the situation, I think it is necessary that you should call upon those people to explain or otherwise take steps against them. Will the Minister be prepared to do so?

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA: While I am thankful to the hon Member for having raised this point here, once they have raised this question in Parliament and given us the opportunity of contradicting the news on the floor of the House, what further contradictions are required in this particular aspect?

As far as the action against the journalist is concerned, it is really surprising that he should plead for some action against the journalist, who makes irres-

ponsible reporting. It is obviously a piece of irresponsible reporting. He must have got some information from somewhere and he believed it to be right. If he was a seasoned and experienced journalist, he would have checked up the facts with us or from the LRDE in Bangalore, before rushing to the print or giving it to the Editor for printing. Therefore, I would say that in our country where the press is free, if somebody reports inaccurately or does some inaccurate reporting, we are definitely duty bound to contradict it and bring the real facts to the notice of Parliament and the country, and I have taken the opportunity to do so in reply to this Calling Attention Notice. Further to this, I do not think we are bound to take any action. The public and the readers of the newspapers are free to judge. I have categorically stated that whatever information is printed there, either the first instalment or the second instalment, is inaccurate. The second instalment is as inaccurate as the first one. And therefore, whatever has been printed in those newspapers, I am officially contradicting them categorically. I hope you would agree with me that as far as the Ministry of Defence is concerned, no action from our side is called for against the journalist. I have given all the facts. If further facts are required either in the consultative committee or on the demands of our Ministry, we shall give those details.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: Even if you suggest that the journalist was not a responsible journalist I do not say on what basis you say so—certainly it is a responsible newspaper, *Hindustan Times*, is a very responsible newspaper. Therefore, if it has published things which are wrong, I do not think that it should be just left like that. . . (Interruptions).

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: Should every newspaper report be contradicted?

SHRI H. M. PATEL: It is a very detailed report in a very responsible newspaper. I suggest that the hon. Minister should give serious consideration to this and point out that a respon-

this newspaper should not give publicity to this kind of wrong information.

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA:
Let me put the record straight. I have not said that this journal is irresponsible. I have said that this reporting is irresponsible. In the opinion of Shri Patel it may be a national newspaper and a responsible newspaper. I am only saying that this particular report is inaccurate. If drawing the attention of the newspaper and contradicting that cannot be done adequately through the forum of this House, there cannot be any other forum where it could be done more forcefully. I fully agree with Mr. Banerjee that LRDE has done excellent work and it has a wonderful record of work and it is really distressing that attempts should be made to cast aspersions on that establishment.

SHRI P. K. DEO (Kalahandi): The newspapers had done a patriotic job by reporting the news item but for which there could not have been a discussion on the floor of the House and it would not have been contradicted by the Defence Minister. It is asking too much that the Press Reporter should have consulted the Defence Minister before giving the report for publication; it would be an infringement of the freedom of the Press. It is quite immaterial whether the price of the obsolete machines is one crore of rupees or four lakhs of rupees but the fact remains that there are some machines which are obsolete and they are in the custody of the LRDE. I should like to know what is the function of the Defence Research Development Organisation and what have they got to do with the LRDE and can they probe into the stock of the LRDE? Even if they do not do have they got the power to do such a thing?

Regarding LRDE even though they have done some excellent job, the fact remains that till now they have not been able to produce a sophisticated radar which could be used by our Navy or the Armed Forces. Secondly, it has been brought to our notice that we had im-

ported a large number of components for our computers from the Soviet Union and the East European countries. the cost of which is much more than a computer which is available in the international market. Sir, taking into consideration all these facts, may I know from the hon. Minister, whether it is Rs. 4 lakhs or Rs. 1 crore on whose shoulders the responsibility would lie, for the procurement of these obsolete machines.

Secondly, I would like to know whether Government is going to appoint a Committee to go into the question of the working of the various defence laboratories, as the Sarkar Committee did, in regard to the laboratories under the CSIR.

Sir, thirdly, some research papers are being published by the Defence Ministry. Should they be considered top secret? Should they not be made available for our use, so that, we would be in a position to know whether they are doing any fruitful research and this could also be utilised for the defence of this country.

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA:
Sir, it is really surprising to hear the hon. Member saying why should a journalist check up with the Ministry. If the journalists or the responsible newspapers are anxious to put forward for public information accurate news, then they normally do this kind of thing. Whenever any information is provided to them, if they want to be sure about the authenticity or the correctness of it, then, they do check up with the concerned Ministries. We freely give them information, whatever information that is in our possession. After that, it is up to them either to believe the version that we have given or to believe the version that they have got and print it. We do not think that they should believe our version and not the version that they have got, on account of what we have told them. Therefore, I think, it would have been far better and all this confusion could have been avoided, if the

Shri Vidya Charan Shukla]

gentleman concerned had taken the trouble of either consulting the Establishment or checking up with the Ministry of Defence, to know whether this news is accurate or not.

About the relationship of the Defence laboratories with the Defence Ministry, these are departmental laboratories. They function under the Ministry of Defence. The organisation is known as Defence Research and Development Organisation. The head of this organisation is the Scientific Adviser to the Raksha Mantri. Therefore, these departments function normally under the Minister of Defence Production and generally under the Minister of Defence.

The question of making enquiries did not arise and the question of sending a team, as I said earlier, did not arise because all these things were not necessary. Only some part of the equipment which was purchased, on the date that I have indicated in my main statement, was found to be inaccurate because of years of use and some of them have become obsolete. This obsolescence has come after equipments worth crores of rupees were purchased, which are under current use and which are not obsolete. We do not waste even this small part of equipment that we have got. We have asked a team of experts to go into this and find out whether other laboratories of Government or other civilian laboratories which are not connected with Defence, would be able to use them. If they are able to use them, we shall be willing to hand it over to them.

Sir, the hon. Member raised the question of production of radar or development of radar here. May I say that this Establishment has done an excellent job and I will give you three or four main things they have done. They have done many more things like that. I would not like to take the time of the House in enumerating all these things. For instance, the moving target indicator which provides facilities to the existing fire control radars on detection of low flying

aircrafts, has been developed and has been productionised in one of the pilot plants of the LRDE. This is going to be subsequently productionised in Bharat Electronics Limited. This equipment which was developed by this laboratory, was evaluated by the users in competition with the imported foreign radar of this particular nature. The radar that was developed by this laboratory was found to be much superior than the imported one, and therefore, they accepted the radar developed by this laboratory. Now, this is going to be productionised by Bharat Electronics Limited and this one work alone will result in a saving of foreign exchange to the tune of Rs. 15 crores.

The other thing they have developed for the army is the Field Artillery Radar which has been productionised by BEL and introduced into service already. With this radar, it is possible to find the location of the enemy mortar and gun position for counter bombardment role.

The third thing they have developed is the Battlefield Surveillance Radars which were developed jointly by LRDE and BEL. BEL are the production agency. This is in the final stage of evaluation by the army. With this it is possible to find out during the night the movement of personnel at a distance of about 10 KM and movement of vehicles at a distance of about 18 KM. These sophisticated modern equipment have been developed by this laboratory by using our own technique and manpower and adopted by the armed forces. They are being productionised in BEL. There are several others also. So, when they have done this good work, to cast aspersions on the personnel and on this laboratory is really unfortunate. We have not found it necessary to appoint a committee to go into the working of the Defence R & D because we have a system of constant monitoring of the work being done. Whatever faults and difficulties come to our notice, we try to correct them from time to time.

SHRI N. R. LASKAR (Karimganj):
We are really glad the minister has con-

tracted this news item because I have personally seen this unit myself and they are doing excellent work. But one thing is clear. When they purchase equipment from abroad, due to lack of co-ordination, when the equipment arrives in India, we find it is obsolete and could not be utilised. So, I request the Minister to see that this lack of co-ordination is minimised in further purchases. The only way to get out of this difficulty is self-sufficiency. I do not know if LRDE is making any serious effort to attain self-sufficiency.

SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA: Yes, Sir. This laboratory is making serious efforts to achieve as much of self-reliance as possible in their own field. Whatever difficulty has arisen with regard to this equipment worth Rs. 4 lakhs, it is not really due to lack of co-ordination, but certain other reasons which have been gone into and we have taken steps to correct them.

I forgot to reply about the research paper. We have printed many papers by defence scientists in the last few years. In 1971 and 72, about 500 papers have been printed. This is within the constraint of security that we have to maintain. If the particular subject they are dealing with has been classified as secret or top secret, obviously the papers regarding that cannot be publicised. What I have said is about such matters which have not been classified as secret and therefore they were published in scientific journals or read in seminars. This indicates the good work that the Defence R & D is doing in this field.

12.45 hrs.

RE. QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur): Sir, I have given notice of a privilege motion. I may be permitted to make a statement on that. You may take your own decision on that.

MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry, it is not within the scope of the privilege motion.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: The Chief Minister of Maharashtra made a statement at a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce & Industry in Bombay that the Centre is going to make a policy decision within two or three days and that 50 per cent of the food production would be made available to the free market and the rest would be taken over. Even though the Parliament is in session, the Chief Minister had the temerity to make such a statement when he was presiding over the meeting of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Since it is a policy matter of the Central Government, it is a contempt of the House and, therefore, a breach of privilege is committed by the Chief Minister of Maharashtra. So, I may be permitted to raise this issue.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी (ग्वालियर): अध्यक्ष महोदय, अगर खाद्य नीति में कोई परिवर्तन हो तो उस की सूचना सदन को दी जानी चाहिए। वह अपना बता सकते हैं। और यह सूचना महाराष्ट्र के मुख्य मंत्री द्वारा नहीं, हमारे खाद्य मंत्री द्वारा दी जानी चाहिए।

MR. SPEAKER: When the Chief Ministers and other Ministers come here they may ask for a change in formulation of policy and make so many demands.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी: उनका यह कहना कि केन्द्र की पालिसी बदलने वाली है यह आपत्तिजनक है।

अध्यक्ष महोदय: वह अगर पालिसी बता दे तब आप कह सकते हैं।

श्री जगन्नाथ राव जोशी (शाजापुर): यह सुनने में आ रहा है कि खाद्य मंत्रालय का सारा बोटाला दूर करने के लिए नायक जो केंद्रों बुलाया जा रहा है तो क्या इस बात की समझ कर वह पहले से वे बकतब दे रहे हैं?