

गैर-सरकारी हैं। इसमें कुल 24 सदस्य हैं जिनमें से 5 सरकारी सदस्य हैं। अपनी त्रिफारिशी करने से पहले समिति सभी संबंधित विषयों पर विचार करती है जिनमें भारत सुरक्षा प्रेस की क्षमता का प्रश्न भी शामिल है।

12.47 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Circular Railway in Calcutta

SHRI DHIRESWAR KALITA (Gauhati) : I call the attention of the Minister of Railways to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon :

The reported announcement made by the Minister of Railways on the 11th April, 1970 in Calcutta contradicting his earlier statements regarding construction of circular railway in Calcutta.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NANDA) : On the 11th of April, at Calcutta I pointed out that there has never been a decision to build a "Circular Railway" in Calcutta and therefore there is no question of going back on any such earlier decision. On the previous day I had given the assurance that I would study the problem of Metropolitan Transport in the Calcutta area, and would do my best to remove the bottle-necks which are holding up the progress towards a solution of the problem. With regard to the Dum-Dum-Princep Ghat, Suburban Dispersal Line I found that it was beset with certain difficulties and problems which might take a long time to resolve. Some of these issues had been raised earlier in the Survey Report on the basis of which the work of Final Location survey was taken up and some others were discovered in the course of further work on investigations regarding this line. I have given directions that these questions should be settled quickly, and the work on the Final Location Survey should be speeded up and concluded expeditiously.

In Calcutta, I looked closely into various aspects of the problem. It was clear from all the Reports since 1956, that there was practical unanimity in favour of a Mass Rapid Transit System, based on two corridors—North-South from Dum-Dum to Kalighat and East-West from Sealdah to Howrah. This appeared to me to be the most effective approach to meet the transport requirements of the City. The discussions with the engineers and others engaged in the tasks connected with the surveys, led to the conclusion that there were no insuperable difficulties in the way of carrying out this plan. I have told them to accelerate their studies and complete them most expeditiously.

I lay on the Table of the House a detailed statement on the subject. [Placed in Library. See No. LT—3280/70.]

SHRI DHIRESWAR KALITA : On 28.3.1970, in the course of the Railway Budget discussion, when some hon. Members expressed doubts about the circular railway, the hon. Minister denied them and said that the circular railway was to go on. He can check up his own statement. What is popularly known as the circular railway is technically known as the semi-circular railway or the dispersal line. The Planning Commission and the Railway Board have already sanctioned Rs. 30 crores, during the last three years, for the construction of this circular railway, but this is what the Railway Minister said according to the Hindustan Standard of the 12th instant :

"Asked why the proposal for 'O' Railways now rejected, the Railway Minister said it had been abandon ten years back. He believed it was unwise to spend about Rs. 29 crores on the dispersal line project, otherwise known as semi-circular railway, as car-marked by the Railway Board, when it would not solve the fringe of the problem."

When the money has been sanctioned he says that it is unwise, but on the floor of the 28th March he positively said that this work would go on. I do not understand this contradiction.

Secondly, what he is visualising is the underground railway. The Railway Board has

sanctioned Rs. 140 lakhs for its survey. It is a separate item. He should not make us confused. The circular railway is a separate thing for which the Planning Commission and the House have sanctioned Rs. 30 crores after proper survey. This was not abandoned long back, this has been accepted. So, I want to know from the Minister how it has been abandoned.

Secondly, the tube railway or the underground railway is also an utmost necessity to meet Calcutta's transport problem. As sanctioned by the Planning Commission that should also be executed. But I want to know why he prefers the underground railway to the circular railway which has already been sanctioned.

SHRI NANDA : If the hon. Member had read the statement which was circulated, or even if he had cared to follow the brief statement which I read here, this question need not have arisen at all, because I have not said anything about discarding the suburban dispersal line, from Dum Dum to Princep Ghat—*(Interruption)* I do not want to cast reflections on certain individual papers. I am not doing that. That will depend on other channels. Now, what I am saying is this. Having heard this, the whole question becomes superfluous. Then about the confusion, if it persists, I think I have done enough to dispel it. The circular railway is not there. To go on calling it a circular railway, when one committee after another, after 1956, thought and said that it was not at all a proper solution or a proper scheme, and when in place of it, this suburban dispersal line has come up, is not correct. I believe that the hon. Member must appreciate the approach. I have said this. Having been in Calcutta, I found that even earlier we have had a report about certain difficulties. For example, the effect of the vibrations of the overhead railway on the Hooghly bank, and the pile that will be driven into the ground : these things have not been resolved.

SHRI DHIRESWAR KALITA : Why money was sanctioned ? *(Interruption)*

SHRI NANDA : I am giving the facts. The inferences may come later on. The facts

are, it was a part of that report. There was a suggestion that certain specialists may be called to resolve that. In addition, on later enquiry, some further questions have arisen. I am answering that. I felt I should do two things : One is to speed up the resolution of these questions, that these questions should be resolved, settled, quickly, so that there may be no delay in bringing in this dispersal line.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : (Diamond Harbour) : It is only 23 years on the 15th August, 1947, you promised ! *(Interruption)*

SHRI NANDA : I am giving the facts at this moment. On the other side, I took up another line with the other thing also, that is, the two corridors plan. The mass rapid transit system has also been accepted : this enquiry should also be expedited, so that the question of feasibility may be fully settled and established, and then it would be open to us to see whether the available fund is to be spent. There should be no delay on either side. There is no question of any confusion so far as we are concerned. The confusion persists because while it is not a circular railway, it is zigzag in one direction ; still it is called circular railway.

SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH (Ghatal) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the other day we had a meeting with the Railway Minister regarding this so-called circular railway, but actually what we meant is the dispersal line. When hon. Members are asking about the circular railway, in reality they are asking about the dispersal line. So, there is no point for the hon. Minister to say that the circular railway point had been taken up three years back and it is no longer in existence. When we say about the circular railway, we know that point also. What we are asking now is only about the dispersal line.

Another point has to be clarified by the hon. Minister ; if it is a fact that he has no doubt in his mind about the dispersal line which as a project line involves Rs. 30 crores to Rs. 35 crores which might encounter some of the obstacles. But the basic point is this. Regarding this dispersal line, the engineering

[Shri Parimal Ghosh]

and techno-economic survey has been made by the railway engineers themselves, and most of the points now raised here have been taken up by the railway engineers themselves, and they have submitted a feasibility report. On the basis of that feasibility report, money has been allotted, and the railways themselves have set up a staff for the final survey and construction.

Another point which has been confused is the mass rapid transit system. That is not a new thing that has come up today. The rapid transit system is an intra-city problem, and suburban dispersal is entirely different. The suburban dispersal line has been thought of only to give relief to the commuters that will come from another side of Calcutta, to bring them to the heart of the city. It has never been thought of as a solution for the mass rapid transit.

13 hrs.

This matter has been considered by the Planning Commission. They have taken up the two projects. For the mass rapid transit system, they have allotted money. But some confusion has been created, saying that mass rapid transit system is a good system. Nobody denies it. It has been accepted that it is a good system and that is why money has been allocated for it. The only point now is to finalise the final techno-economic survey, for which money has been allocated. There is no question of priority being fixed here that till such time that the final location survey of the dispersal line and the techno-economic survey of the mass rapid transit system are completed, the work will not be done. My only point is the work for which the survey has been completed and money has been allocated should be taken up straightway. For the other work—the mass rapid transit system—whether underground or elevated—that could be ascertained after the final location survey is completed. I would request the minister to make it clear that the work on the dispersal line should continue and immediately after the techno-economic survey report is completed, the work on the mass rapid transit system, whether under-

ground or elevated, should also be taken up. For that also, a token provision in the budget has already been made. If that is his contention, let him make it clear so that the whole matter may be over and there may be no confusion in the mind of anybody.

SHRI NANDA : If the fact that the hon. Member still persists in calling the suburban dispersal line as circular line has created confusion in the mind of the people in Bengal, I am not responsible for it. It has been several times examined as such and it has been rejected. Now, I cannot wire out all that record. That circular Railway is not there now; something else is there. I have not said 'no' to going further with the Dispersal line, its investigation, etc. But I must say that I was rather frightened when I looked into the whole thing there and those problems which the hon. Member thinks have all been settled. If they confront us at the end with something and then if they delay the project, I will be the most sorry person. Therefore I took up the question. Let there be no delay and let these things be settled. On the basis of the preliminary survey report hurriedly this was accepted, because we wanted to go ahead. It was said that these matters are still unresolved. They are serious matters and they must be settled first. Otherwise, at the end of the year, we will have nothing in our hands. So I said, at the same time, the other report should also be expedited. About the mass rapid transit system and two corridors being only an intra-city matter, I say, no; it is not only intra-city. The commuters will use that from Sealdah to Bow Bazaar or down to Kalighat. Therefore, it is both suburban dispersal and intra-city.

SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH : I want a clarification. From the answer of the minister, the point has not been fully cleared. I want him to make it clear whether he means to say that the work on the dispersal line will be continued as early as possible and as soon as the survey is completed and the matter is ascertained, the work on the rapid transit system also would be taken up? For both these

works, money has been allocated. If he means that, I do not have any other question to ask.

SHRI NANDA : I have said that at the end of the two investigations, we have to make up our minds which is the best way, in the interests of the people who use that system. The first stage will deal with about 11 lakh passengers, where as this Suburban Dispersal line will deal with only 3 lakhs. Therefore, it is a matter where we cannot say simply that all our interests are exhausted where we have once accepted something. We will continue with the investigations on the dispersal line more quickly than before.

SHRI J. M. BISWAS (Bankaura) : Whatever reply the hon. Minister has given has further confused the question. The Minister has said that they are very much interested in doing something for Calcutta to reduce the congestion of the Calcutta city by the incoming and out-going passengers. The Minister has stated earlier in the documents supplied to us that some committee was appointed. Regarding the underground line also he appointed some committee. Altogether seven committees were appointed out of which three committees recommended the suburban dispersal line. A committee was set up by the Planning Commission in regard to engineering and other matters connected with the suburban disposal line. The Metropolitan Transport Team has made a detailed and elaborate study and it has come to the conclusion that for the purpose of giving immediate relief to the traffic problem of Calcutta the suburban dispersal line, which is commonly known as the circular railways, is the best solution. After making his budget speech in Parliament—and whatever recommendation was made by the senior engineers on the advice of these committees—the Minister after going to Calcutta has suddenly changed his decision. We have come to know earlier that some interested persons were there at the helm of affairs in the Railway Board who were against any constructive work, any development, in West Bengal. For your information I may point out that one Member (Engineering) of the Railway Board, who was opposing from the very begin-

ning any constructive work at Calcutta, either underground or circular railway, failed in his attempts. There is also an interested group in the ruling party which does not want any development or construction work in West Bengal. They failed in the sense that this suburban dispersal line, which is known as the circular railway, was about to be taken up. Then, suddenly, abruptly, Shri Nanda changed this programme and he is going to deprive the people of West Bengal whatever they have got after long years of struggle. That is why I put it to the Railway Minister very clearly, whatever construction programme has been taken up, for which Rs. 30 crores has been allocated in the Fourth Plan, is he going to implement it without further loss of time. He must make it clear that whatever underground proposal he has brought is not an alternative to the circular railway; it will only be supplementary. If he wants to supplement the service by an underground railways, we have no objection. We shall definitely congratulate him for that. But we do not want to be bluffed. The people of West Bengal have had enough of this bluff. We are sorry that even after four long years no decision has been taken on this proposal. Now I come to the question. When the work on the suburban dispersal line is going to be almost near-start, the Minister comes up with a new plan for the underground railway for which no feasibility survey or engineering survey has been completed. If that thing comes, I believe, the people of West Bengal will definitely continue to suffer. Therefore I would request the Minister to make it very clear that the suburban dispersal line proposal is going to be carried through and that at all other points if he wants to introduce the new railway system, it will be supplemental.

SHRI NANDA : I am not prepared to say that what is a zigzag line is a circular line. The people of West Bengal have been unduly confused by that and that confusion is still persisting.

Then, I can assure this House that I have no interest at all in delaying the construction. Even if the officers may be pushing in any other direction but I am pushing only in

[Shri Nanda]

the direction of speeding up the construction there. It has been stated that the final location survey will be completed by April 1971; I wish that it is completed earlier. Whenever this survey is completed, construction must start with the completion of the first survey. The money which is available will be spent on construction. I can give that assurance. There will not be a days' delay in construction as soon as the survey is finalised.

SHRI TRIDIB KUMAR CHAUDHURI (Berhampore): Unfortunately, it seems an evil star has dogged this scheme, whatever we call it. I hesitate to call it the circular railway any longer. Let us call it the suburban dispersal line, rapid transit system, intra-city system or whatever it is.

The hon. Minister and the Parliament must realise that Calcutta is bursting at its seams and if Calcutta blows up, the whole country will blow up.

So far as this matter is concerned, it seems that the Minister has come to certain conclusions. After his studies and investigations he says in his note:—

"It would be necessary to concentrate available resources of finances and manpower on surveys, studies, investigations and on the construction of the first phase of the Mass Rapid Transit System."

I do not doubt his *bona fides* that he wants to start construction very soon, but his tentative conclusion is that the intra-city mass traffic transit system, the southern part of the north-south tube railway or the underground railway, should be taken up first. I find further support for this from what has been published in the *Amrit Bazar Patrika* of April 22, that is yesterday, as a report of an interview of the Special Representative of the paper with him, where it says that if this is taken up at once, that is, the lines from Kalighat, Ballygunge and Sealdah, still it is possible that later on—that is, after this mass rapid transit system within the city is constructed—the Dum Dum-Princep Ghat line may become the third stage of this plan if the other two stages are not found capable of meet-

ing the full requirements. That means, so far as his ideas about the construction programme are concerned, this Dum Dum Junction-Princep Ghat line is the third phase.

He must realise that the commuters of West Bengal, particularly of the metropolitan area of Calcutta, have been waiting for the last 22 years for something being done in this regard. He must also realise that so far as the technical feasibility and other surveys with regard to the underground railway or the mass transit system are concerned, however much he may expedite them, they will take some years more. So far as the suburban dispersal line is concerned, the other survey is complete and only the location survey is taking place. That is why suspicion has arisen. I would expect of him that whatever the new ideas that he has introduced he will at least see to it that so far as the suburban dispersal line is concerned the technical feasibility survey of which has been completed and only in the location survey it has transpired there are certain difficulties, as soon as that survey is complete, construction work will not be held up.

SHRI NANDA: I am thankful to the hon. Member for asking a pointed question which, although was clear, I shall make still more clear. If any ideas that have emerged in the course of my discussions that may mean that we now prefer the intra-city mass rapid transit system and would neglect the commuters' problem, I will certainly not for a moment allow that to be done. That problem is very much before my eyes. My point was that the underground scheme would look after the commuters even more than the other scheme, that is, 7 to 8 lakhs from Kalighat to Burra Bazar and Dum Dum to Sealdah. This way it means about 12 lakhs against 3 lakhs there. I cannot get away from the facts and figures.

Further, the hon. Member says that it may take two years. If it does take, it is no use to me. Then this will start immediately. The construction of this dispersal line will start immediately if there is any delay regarding the other. If the whole thing were to come before you, certainly you would not deny that you would look at it in the best interests of the people of Calcutta.

SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH : Now the Minister has made it very clear that the suburban line, so far as he is concerned, has a low priority.

MR. SPEAKER : I am very sorry, I cannot allow it. I do not want to disappoint Shri Parimal Ghosh but the procedure is that he cannot intervene in between other Members.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY (Cooch-Bihar) : I quite share the view just now expressed by my hon. friend, Shri Kalita. Though the hon. Minister felt strongly, he has confused the whole House and the whole people of India.

At the time of presentation of the Budget which has already been discussed, the hon. Minister said :—

“The Calcutta Organisation expect to complete in the next few months the Final Location Survey and the Project Report as well as the Designs and Detailed Estimates for a Suburban Dispersal Line from Dum Dum to Princep Ghat.”

What is the implication Sir? Having regard to the huge traffic problem of Calcutta, and the problem of this great historic city, and having considered various ways and means and proposals designs taken one after the other and having regard to the approach of all the national leaders—whenever they land at Dum Dum airport they say something in favour but whenever they come back to this great city, the capital they forget about Calcutta and their assurances, I would like to remind the hon. Minister while he was saying about his approach, what was his approach at the time of presentation of the current year's Budget. Immediately on assumption of his new assignment he did not think of the matter at that time and now his whole approach is an approach to hoodwink, the whole prospect for this Calcutta's traffic problems, I beg to differ with his approach and I quote him.

We had a discussion with the hon. Minister on the 16th last regarding Calcutta's traffic problem. That arose out of certain statement made by the hon. Minister in Calcutta. We were supplied certain papers also. The hon.

Minister said during his visit to Calcutta on the 10th and 11th April, 1970, he made a study of the problem of the intra-city transport, and the programme of work in that city, inspected the alignment of the proposed Suburban Dispersal Line as also the North-South and East-West corridors for the Mass Rapid Transit System, and had discussions with the officials and certain things came out. I do not like to go into that. But only one thing I shall mention, Sir. Amongst others, amongst three others, the point is; are there any difficulties in the execution of the proposed suburban dispersal line which is yet unresolved? Is it yet an unresolved question of the suburban dispersal line in Calcutta? Is it yet unresolved? Who are those officials who gave this advice to this Minister that the question of suburban dispersal line is not yet resolved? The question, is it unresolved when the budget has already been passed with certain amount of money for its execution of work? Is it unresolved when we find that a final location survey is to be made and is going to be submitted by this Committee within the next few months. Here again, in the report just submitted today we find, it has been mooted out here that the proposed report of the final location survey will be submitted by the end of April, 1971. Here in the Budget speech it was: the final location survey and the project report as well within the next few months. I would also urge the hon. Minister to clarify, while he spoke on this on the 20th February, 1970, counting from this date, does it mean “within the next few months means up to the end of April, 1971”, or the natural inference is in the course of two or three months, or four months, or five months.

The whole thing is this. There is a systematic effort to hoodwink the people of Bengal and to discuss any of the schemes to make any easy progress for Calcutta's traffic development. Then, Sir, should we not say, should we not demand that the Minister himself is one of the guilty persons, at least he is the number one of the clique of those persons who want to delay the whole thing? (*Interruption*). I am coming to that. This is also from the Minister's statement. (*Interruption*). I am finishing within a few minutes.

MR. SPEAKER : May I repeat it again ? This is not an occasion to make speeches. If there is a question, there is a speech ; if there is a supplementary, there is a speech ; if there is a point of order, there is a speech ; if there is a call attention motion, there is a speech. Kindly avoid it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS : He is giving only the background.

MR. SPEAKER : No, no please. It is not an occasion for speech. You must just in a few words ask for a clarification. But there should be no regular speech. It almost disfigures the motion. I do not refer to you. Calling attention started. It was a motion. The Minister replied and that was all. Then it started with clarification. Then it started with questions. Such is the bad history of the call attention motion.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : I will take it for the future.

MR. SPEAKER : We are late everyday. We miss our lunch. You may go but I have the next meeting after that. I very often missed it.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : The hon. Minister submitted a big list. I would not like to go into that. The Minister seems to be very much anaemic about this particular aspect of the circular railway. It does not matter. It is a question of the Suburban Dispersal Line. But these maps are supplied by the Railway Ministry. They are also using the same expression as circular Railway. It is not only the Members who are using these new words or expressing new ideas about the circular railway. So the confusion is created by whom ? It has been said that the matter of circular railway was not there. . . . (Interruption). But this diagram showing the alignment of the circular railway proposed by various Committees was prepared by the Railways.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NANDA) : Which they rejected.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : You supplied only the other day, on the 16th April.

So, if there is anybody who was responsible for this, it is the Railway Minister and the officials. So I would like hon. Minister to clarify the whole thing and set right the whole set of confusion which has been hitherto created : whether the proposed suburban dispersal line will be there, and also to cope up with the intra-city traffic problem of Calcutta, whether the Mass Rapid Transit system, be it on the ground level, underground level or on the elevated level, whether both these things will be considered. This should be cleared. I would like to know from the hon. Minister.

SHRI NANDA : The hon. Member has said that the Minister is guilty of this or that. I would have been held guilty if I had not brought all the facts which were before me when I made a closer study. If I had hidden them from the people of West Bengal and the hon. Members, later on if these facts would have come and started us in the face and delayed the project, who would be answerable at that time ? I have no vested interest in this scheme or that scheme, I have only my interest in the speediest solution of the problem. I have said that this question of suburban line survey will take a few months. I said that in that speech which I made. Now it is not different because this date, April, 1971 has been settled earlier. It is there in the records earlier ; I have not created any new date. If it is the only intention of the hon. Member to pick up something here and there, I am not going to feel as if hon. Members are contributing towards the solution of the problem of Calcutta. I stand by whatever I have said. I have said already as soon this is completed, construction will start. But I cannot say that even if those problems are not solved still the Dispersal line will be there.

13.26 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

ANNUAL REPORTS OF PUNJAB AGRO-INDUSTRIES CORPORATION LTD., CHANDIGARH AND WEST BENGAL AGRO-INDUSTRIES CORPORATION LTD., CALCUTTA AND NOTIFICATIONS UNDER ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES ACT, 1955, ETC.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE,