

## LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

-----  
*Thursday, April 28, 1988/  
 Vaisakha 28 1910 (Saka)*  
 -----

*The Lok Sabha met at Eleven  
 of the Clock*

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[*English*]

### Food Testing Laboratories

856. SHRI SOMNATH RATH : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Indian Federation of Consumers organisation urged upon Union Government to set up more food testing laboratories at centrally located places in the cities in order to curb the growing menace of food adulteration as reported in the 'Hindustan Times' dated 13 March, 1988;

(b) if so, the steps Government have taken in this regard;

(c) to what extent the food testing laboratories already in existence have been able to improve the quality of food products; and

(d) the other measures Government have taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE) : (a) Yes, Sir. Government has seen the news item.

(b) to (d). A statement is given below.

### Statement

75 Food Testing Laboratories of States/UTS and local bodies are engaged in testing of food samples limited under the provisions of Preventions of Food Adulteration Act, 1954. Besides, 4 Central Food Laboratories also act as appellate laboratories.

These laboratories analyse the samples sent to them to find out whether they are adulterated or not. Local Health Authorities take action to prosecute the offenders on the strength of these analytical reports. The work done by these laboratories for three years is as follows :

Year	No. of Samples examined	No. of samples found adulterated	Percentage of adulteration
1984	1,22,296	14,990	12.2
1985	1,28,511	14,671	11.4
1986	1,21,971	13,730	11.2

The following measures have been taken :

1. Central Government has drawn up a Plan Scheme to strengthen the Central Government Laboratories.
2. The State Governments have been requested in their turn to strengthen the Laboratories by allocating sufficient funds for this purpose.
3. State Governments have been requested to ensure appointment of trained personnel in their laboratories.
4. A list of minimum equipments required for Laboratories has been communicated to the State Governments.
5. The Central Government has provided some sophisticated equipments like G.L.C. to some State Laboratories.
6. Training of public analysts, Food Inspectors and Senior Level Officers of State Governments/UTs is regularly imparted by the Central Government.
7. The Central Government regularly conducts examination for chemists working in Food Laboratories of State Governments.

SHRI SOMNATH RATH : Sir, the hon. Minister replied that there are 75 food testing laboratories of States and Union Territories and local bodies and also there are four Central Food Laboratories to act as appellate laboratories. And the purpose of these laboratories is stated like this : 'Local Health Authorities take action to prosecute the offenders on the strength of these analytical reports' under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act.

I would like to know from the hon. Minister which are the local bodies and where these food testing laboratories are situated and since the promulgation of the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, right has been given to the public to

prosecute the offenders and they are also to send the samples to laboratories for testing, what amount is being charged from the individuals to test samples and how many such samples have been given by individuals for testing, what is the result, if any charge is being levied what is the amount and if not levied, whether the Government is going to levy it and also the facilities to be provided.

Further, Sir, as per the statement, in the year 1984 the number of samples examined was 1,22,296 and the percentage of adulteration was 12.2. And in 1986 the number of samples examined was 1,21,971 and also the percentage of adulteration was 11.2. I would like to know what time it takes for a laboratory generally to examine the samples and give the results, whether it will take months for giving results. Sufficient samples are not tested, and if so, what steps are you going to take ? (*Interruptions*)

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : This is the inaugural address of the Question Hour.

KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE : He has asked so many questions. I do not know that questions to answer.

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI MOTI LAL VORA) : Sir, it is a Questionnaire.

MR. SPEAKER : You can reply only to one question now.

SHRI MOTI LAL VORA : I may say that it is a questionnaire being asked. As the hon. Member has asked about the local food testing laboratories, I may give this information. There are 13 managed by the local bodies and these local bodies are in the States. Gujarat has got six—in Baroda, Kutch, Rajkot, Ahmedabad and Surat. and one local body. There is one local body there. In the same way, Karnataka has got one local body laboratory. Madhya Pradesh has got two local body laboratories. They are managing the tests also. In the same way, food testing laboratories are there and 62 are managed by the States. Whenever the samples are

sent to the laboratories generally it takes time for testing. I cannot give you the duration at the moment. But it takes time to examine the food samples sent to the laboratories.

**SHRI SOMNATH RATH :** My question is not answered. I asked not only about the local bodies but also the laboratories at Centrally located places.

Further my specific question was, what facilities have been given to the individuals to test the food samples because in the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, individuals have been given the right to prosecute the offenders. For doing so, they send their samples to the laboratory for testing. I want to know specifically whether in the laboratory, and samples sent by individuals has been tested? If so, what is the number of samples tested.

Further, I have specifically asked the question about having a large number of these laboratories because the samples could not be tested if there are only a few and the number is also being reduced also. As such prosecuting the violators under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act is a nullity. This was my question but that was not answered.

My second supplementary is.....

**MR. SPEAKER :** Mr. Chairman, Sir you must ask simple questions. Two minutes are allowed. You have taken 5 minutes.

**SHRI SOMNATH RATH :** It is a simple question. It is an important matter.

**MR. SPEAKER :** Everything is important.

**SHRI SOMNATH RATH :** I want specific answer. Everything is left to the States. As per the statement, everything is left to the State Government. What supervisory role the Centre has got to play?

**KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE :** The Prevention of Food Adulteration Rules, 1955 cover besides standards for the various food products, regulations with

regard to addition of colouring matters, addition of labelled matters, rules with regard to package and labelling of food, prohibition and regulation of sales (*Interruptions*).

I am coming to the point now. It cover addition of preservatives and presence of poisonous matter etc, I am coming to the point.

About the role of Central Government in working of PFA Act, 1954, the Central Government plays an advisory role in the implementation of food laws. The following are the main activities of this organisation :

1. the prescription of food standards in consultation with national and international institutions;
2. the formulation of provisions of PFA Act and rules and amendments thereof;
3. coordination and liaison with the States in enforcement of the various provisions of the Act.

**SHRI SOMNATH RATH :** We know the rules and regulations. (*Interruptions*)

**KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE :** The hon. Member has asked me about the assistance which being by the Government to the States for the construction of drug laboratories. During the Fifth Plan, eight States namely, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Assam and Rajasthan were given grants by the Central Government for the construction of the combined food and drug laboratories. (*Interruptions*).

Actually, the Member was asking many questions in one questionaire. If he specifically asks me a question, I can answer it. (*Interruptions*).

**SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN :** The hon. Minister has in her reply said that "these laboratories analyse the samples sent to them to find out whether they are adulterated or not." This creates a doubt that if a sample is not sent to them, will they

not check a sample for the benefit of the health of the people when a particular item becomes controversial through press and people. The reconstituted milk with Irish butter is being distributed under the National Dairy Development Board, cooperative sectors and local milk schemes all over the country, including the army. Will the hon. Minister assure the House that when they are sending the sample to them, will they call the sample and test it for its radioactivity for the benefit of the health of the people because it should not be necessary that unless a sample is sent to them, they will not test. They must call the sample, test it for the benefit of the people. This assurance I want to have from the hon. Minister.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Radio-active butter can be used for atom bomb.

SHRI MOTI LAL VORA : As the hon. Member has given this information to us today, we will definitely ask for sample.

*(Interruptions)*

The Bhabha Atomic Research Centre is only testing radio-active samples, if they are sent there. If there is radio-activity, the Centre is there to test it. If the hon. Member has asked for the testing of these samples, we may look into it.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he or she is aware of the fact that women's organisation in Delhi called Mahila Dakshit Samiti has been conducting tests for the last several years...

PROF. J. P. KURIEN : Are you representing them ?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : I am representing the voters.

MR. SPEAKER : I will allow him to represent.

SHRI SURESH KURUP : Are you representing your wife ?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : No reference to my wife because she is not in the House.

MR. SPEAKER : I can allow you to represent her.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : I would like to know whether Mahila Dakshit Samithi or women's organisation in Delhi is conducting a food testing centre in Delhi whose work has been highly appreciated by the Delhi Administration in its report and, if it is so, why is it that the Central Government's grant that was made available to this food testing laboratory has been stopped for the last three years and will the Minister assure that the grant will be restored ?

SHRI MOTI LAL VORA : As far as the work of the women institutions is concerned, as the hon. Member has said, it is really to be appreciated. I will have to enquire why the grant has been stopped. Then I can assure the hon. Member, whether the grant will be resumed or not and what was the reason for not giving the grant, I will look into it.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Will you assure that if the report is satisfactory, the Delhi Administration would resume the grants?

SHRI MOTI LAL VORA : If the report is satisfactory, definitely we will look into it and we will see that the grant is resumed.

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : From the answer to Part 'c', the extent of adulteration has not been considerable cut down and I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether there are some instances where out of greediness, some millers as well as traders are adulterating rice with white stone which is powdered and fixed with the rice supplied which is damaging the kidneys of the human beings. If so, I ask the hon. Minister whether the Government will reconsider and suitably amend the Food Adulteration Act so that more stringent action is taken against the persons who have adulterated these white stones in the rice endangering the lives of the people by enhancing the period of imprisonment as well as the enhancement of the imposition of penalty. I would like to categorically know from the hon. Minister, about this.

**KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE :** Sir, in order to curb adulteration in food in the country, the Parliament has already enacted Prevention of Food Adulteration Act in the year 1954. The Act was amended not only once but thrice. It was by the amendment of 1976 a punishment for adulteration, which could cause such harm so as to amount to grievous hurt within the meaning of Section 320 of IPC, punishment of imprisonment for a term of which shall not be less than three years but which may be extended to term of life with fine which shall not be less than at least Rs. 5000 was included. Standards for foods were prescribed in PFA rules twice.

[Translation]

**Extension of Hardwar-Dehradun HD Passenger Train upto Najibabad**

\*857. **SHRI RAM SINGH :** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to extend H.D. Passenger train running between Hardwar and Dehradun upto Najibabad via Laksar for the benefit and convenience of pilgrims going to Hardwar; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor ?

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD) :** (a) No, Sir.

(b) Extension of 1/2 HD Passenger to Najibabad is not feasible due to lack of requisite terminal facilities at Najibabad and availability of alternative services.

**SHRI RAM SINCH :** Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has given some reasons for not extending this train upto Najibabad and out of which the main reason is the non-availability of terminal facilities at Najibabad. As the whole House is aware, Najibabad is a big junction and an important station through which trains from all directions pass, what is the reason behind not having a terminal station there ? Secondly, you have stated that alternative services are available upto Hardwar. I want to bring it to the notice of the hon. Minister that Hardwar is not only a Tehsil

headquarters but is also going to be District headquarters soon and is also considered to be one of the main places of pilgrimage. In view of the above, what facilities are available for reaching there by 11.00 a.m. ?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA) :** Mr. Speaker, Sir, terminal facilities are not available at Najibabad and it is also not possible to provide terminal facilities at every junction. We have yet no plan to provide terminal facilities at Najibabad. It is, therefore not possible to extend this train because of some practical difficulties and this is what we have stated in the reply. So far as the timings are concerned, an Exdert Committee was constituted by the Eastern Railways some time back, and according to the recommendations of this committee, the Railways have laid down a policy under which the short-distance travellers are to be encouraged to travel by road and the long-distance travellers are to be provided with maximum facilities by the Railways. We are progressing in that direction and working under an Integrated transport system. At present three Express Trains and one passenger train are running between Dehradun and Najibabad. Apart from this, 5 additional train are available between Hardwar and Luxar and 6 trains between Luxar and Nazibabad. Direct connection is available with 3 Express Trains and one passenger train and with one change 5 trains are available one side and 6 trains on the other. Keeping in view the whole position, I think, the arrangements are adequate.

**SHRI RAM SINGH :** Mr. Speaker, Sir, the train coming from Dehradun reaches Hardwar in the evening and after ten and a half hours of halt, it starts for Dehradun again in the early hours next day. And as the hon. Minister has just stated that there is only one passenger trail between Najibabad and Hardwar and the rest of the trains are Express Train which do not stop at small stations to pick up passengers So this train halts for ten and a half hours at Hardwar but here also the terminal facilities are even less than those available at Luxar and Najibabad. The hon. Minister has said so perhaps on the basis of the report lying with him in this connection, I