

3493 Calling Attention ASVINA 2, 1886 (SAKA) Death of School 34
to matter of Urgent Children
Public Importance in Kurnool

Shri D. Sanjivayya: I am reading out about the Jemahari Colliery which is under the Babisol Colliery management.

Shri Indrajit Gupta: I am talking about the Jemahari Khas.

Shri D. Sanjivayya: Please let me read it again. It says:

"in the case of New Jemahari Khas Colliery, alleging that the Babisol colliery Management had vindictively and illegally locked out without notice all workers. On enquiry it has been reported that work in the Lower Kajora Seam of Babisol Colliery...."

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: That is Babisol.

Shri Indrajit Gupta: I am asking about New Jemahari Khas.

Shri D. Sanjivayya: There seems to be some confusion because according to the report that we have received it looks as though Jemahari Khas and Babisol are one and the same.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: No, no.

Mr. Speaker: He will kindly ascertain the facts.

Shri D. Sanjivayya: A telegram was received in the Ministry from the Colliery Mazdoor Sabha, Asansol, on 20th September, 1964. Therefore, we are still awaiting a report, according to that. A report is still awaited from the Regional Labour Commissioner.

Shri Indrajit Gupta: That may be a detailed report. I want to know whether the colliery is working or not. Even that report he cannot give us. That is all I want to know. The detailed report can come later on.

Shri D. Sanjivayya: I have no information.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: He should really look into the matter.

Mr. Speaker: He might ascertain more facts about it.

Shri D. Sanjivayya: We will certainly ascertain facts.

STATEMENT RE: DEATH OF SCHOOL CHILDREN IN KURNOOL

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister of Education.

The Minister of Education (Shri M. C. Chagla): The unfortunate tragedy in question came to the notice of the Ministry through radio and press reports. We are all deeply grieved that such a shocking tragedy affecting a large number of children of an elementary school should have occurred. The Ministry has been constantly in touch with the Director of the CARE in Delhi and also with the Education Department of the Andhra Pradesh Government for further details. Information received from both these sources indicates the following position:

Maddekar is a Panchayat village with a population of about 15,000 in Kurnool District. The CARE Mid-day Meals Programme had been discontinued in the Block for some time prior to 15th September because of the incidence of Cholera. There were no cases of Cholera in Maddikare village. The school-going children of this village were supplied Mid-day Meals on 15th, 17th and 18th September. On the night of the 19th the President of the Panchayat Board reported to the Chief District Medical Officer Kurnool about the cases of suspected food-poisoning and resultant deaths. The Medical Officer visited the village on the 20th and organised medical help. The Secretary Zila Parishad suspended the supply of mid-day meals in all the schools of the Kurnool District on receipt of the report.

The Mid-day Meal which consists of Corn Meal, Butter, Oil and Milk

[Shri M. C. Chagla]

Powder supplied by CARE (With salt and onions) was prepared at one central place in Maddikare and served to various schools.

The Chairman Zila Parishad Kurnool met the Director of Public Instruction at Hyderabad on the 22nd and expressed the opinion that the unhappy incident might have been the result of food-poisoning during the process of cooking the mid-day meals. In his opinion the food material supplied by CARE are in fresh condition and are being supplied from the same stock to other villages in the Block without any complaint.

According to the Health Officer the exact cause for the contamination or the infection will be known after the analysis of (i) food stuffs (ii) vomittings (iii) excreta (iv) viscera obtained as a result of post mortem. The Chemical Examiner's opinion had not been received by the Education Department of Andhra Pradesh till the 23rd.

The total number of students who were supplied mid-day meals was 320 of whom 174 were reported to be infected. This shows that part of the meal might have been infected as it was cooked in instalments.

The number of attacks and deaths date-wise is as under:

Date	Attacks	Deaths
19-9-64	63	17
20-9-64	66	12
21-9-64	30	3
22-9-64	15	6
	174	38

Special medical assistance was rendered by the Superintendent of the General Hospital, Kurnool. No complaint has been received in regard to the inadequacy of the medical help.

The CARE authorities had also started anxious investigations. They have reported that this programme

covers millions of children and all the food-stuff received in Andhra Pradesh are subject to the same rigid controls and made with the same high standards as those consumed in the school lunch programme in America and other countries. It may be stated that the CARE Mid-day Meals Programme is in operation in several States of the country covering about 7 million children and the CARE appoints its own Administrator in each of the States where the Programme has been accepted by the State Government.

Shri Hem aBrua (Gauhati): May I seek a clarification?

Mr. Speaker: Would they like to ask questions?

Shri Hem Barua: Yes, Sir.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath (Hoshangabad): It was held over last week.

श्री यशपाल सिंह : (कैराना) : कुकिंग में जो पायजनिंग हुआ है, वह इंटेशनली किया गया है या एक्सीडेंटली हो गया है..... (इंटरपोज़)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : आर्डर आर्डर ।

श्री यशपाल सिंह : आगे क्या सरकार कोई एसा रूल बनाने जा रही है कि कुक करने वाले जो हैं, उनको बच्चों को खिलाने से पहले खिलाया जाए जिससे आइंदा यह गलती न हो ?

अध्यक्ष महोदय : अभी एक ओपिनियन यह आई है कि गालिबन वहां यह हुआ हो । दूसरी ओपिनियन अभी आनी बाकी है । हम फौरन ही इस तरह की बात न करें । अभी एक ओपिनियन दी गई है, बाकी नतीजा आने से पहले ही कनक्लूयेंस पर जम्प करके कोई चीज नहीं कहनी चाहिये ।

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Is the Minister in a position to indicate whether the chemical examiner's report will be received very shortly

and, if that is not the case, will he make every effort to get the report expedited so that we can have it in this session and, if necessary, on the report when it is received a further enquiry could be ordered in the matter?

Shri M. C. Chagla: I shall place on the Table of the House the report of the chemical examiner as soon as it comes.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Will it be expected and placed on the Table in this session?

Shri M. C. Chagla: I have already asked the authorities to give me information as soon as possible. After all, it is for the Andhra State to do it; I cannot do it from Delhi.

With regard to the other question, it is not yet decided or definite that the cause of death was faulty cooking. This is merely a guess.

Mr. Speaker: That is what I told Shri Yashpal Singh. I suggested to him that it is only one guess or opinion that it might be due to that.

Shri Warior (Trichur): I wish to know whether, apart from the supplies made by CARE, any other supplies were made for cooking from outside sources, from the bazar or somewhere and, if so, whether some investigation has been made about those stores.

Shri M. C. Chagla: As far as I know the only supply was through CARE. CARE sends all the supplies and the cooking is done on the spot. So, it is either the supplies or some defect with the cooking.

Shri Warior: Other things were also mentioned.

Mr. Speaker: There were onions and some other things.

Shri M. C. Chagla: That was also supplies by CARE.

Shri Hem Barua: It cannot be onions came from the local bazar.

Mr. Speaker: I suppose, onions must have come from the local bazar.

Shri M. C. Chagla: My statement reads as if both the salt and onions were supplied by CARE.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty (Barackpore): Why was it continued for four days? It seems that the attacks took place on four consecutive days. Why was it that the entire thing was not stopped on the very first day when this poisoning took place?

Shri M. C. Chagla: The hon. Member is mistaken. The supply was stopped as soon as the attack took place. But these are the figures of attacks on four different days.

An Hon. Member: That means that it went on.

Mr. Speaker: I also could not follow that. I also wanted to put the same question because that roused my curiosity as well. The hon. Minister has said that on such and such a date there were so many affected, and so many deaths were there, then, again, on the subsequent day, so many were affected, and so many deaths were there . . .

Shri P. K. Deo (Kalahandi): Was it in the same school or in different schools?

Mr. Speaker: That was exactly what was not clear to me also. If the children had been affected and the deaths had taken place on one day, why was it that on the second day also the same thing was allowed to be repeated?

Shri M. C. Chagla: As you know, sometimes the infection takes place later.

Shri Ranga (Chittoor): Why does the hon. Minister give his impressions now? If he has got any information he can give it.

Shri M. C. Chagla: I shall make inquiries. But as far as I know, as soon as it was known that the attack took place, the supply was stopped.

Mr. Speaker: It is just possible, as the hon. Minister has said, that the infection might have been discovered later. But then according to his statement, it might be construed or understood as if so many had been affected on one day and so many of them died, then, again on the next day, so many were affected and so many died, and again on the third day so many were affected and so many died. The statement reads like that and gives a wrong impression.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: I think that the matter should be clarified.

Shri M. C. Chagla: This is the statement attached, but it may be that the infections were discovered from day to day. I shall ascertain the facts.

Mr. Speaker: Now, Shri Bagri.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: I think this is a matter which we should take notice of. This is not a satisfactory answer, because deaths have taken place in such a virulent form.

Mr. Speaker: Then, I can ask the hon. Minister to ascertain more facts and place them before the House, and on that occasion Members can put questions.

Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kandur): May I ask one question?...

Mr. Speaker: The same thing should not be repeated every time. The question has been asked, and now more information is required . .

Shri Warrior: Much more investigation is required.

Mr. Speaker: . . . As soon as he gets more information he may place

it on the Table of the House; particularly in regard to those matters on which doubts have been expressed, he may try to ascertain what the actual facts are and then place them before the House.

Shri M. C. Chagla: I shall take your permission to make a statement as soon as I have got some more information.

श्री बागड़ी (हिसार): अध्यक्ष महोदय, इस में मेरा भी नाम था।

अध्यक्ष महोदय: मैंने तो आप को बुलाया था, मगर यह स्थगित रक्खा गया है ताकि पूरी इत्तला आ लें।

Shri Hem Barua: My name was also there, but you did not call me.

श्री बागड़ी: लेकिन इस के अन्दर तो यह हुआ कि आधे आदमियों को तो आप ने सवाल करने का मौका दिया और बाकी आधे आदमियों को

अध्यक्ष महोदय: मैंने तो सारे हाउस की मर्जी से, उन से पूछ कर ऐसा किया। मैंने हाउस के सामने इस को रक्खा और उन की मर्जी से यह फैसला हुआ। मैंने आप को बुलाया था, लेकिन जब देखा गया कि मुकम्मिल बयान नहीं है तो सारे हाउस की मर्जी से इसको मुत्तवी रक्खा गया। खाली आप का ही नाम बाकी नहीं रहता है, और भी बहुत से बाकी रहते हैं जो कि इस में थे।

श्री हुकम चन्द कछवाय (देवास): उन से नहीं पूछा गया इस लिये नाराज हैं।

अध्यक्ष महोदय: मैंने सब से पूछा था और कइयों ने सोचा कि बयान पूरा नहीं पाया है।