

LOK SABHA DEBATES

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LOK SABHA

Thursday, November 18, 1971 | Kartika 27,
1893 (Saka).

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Taking over of refugee camps by Central Government

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*91. SHRIMATI JOYTSNA CHANDA :
SHRI BHAGIRATHI BHANWAR :
SHRI MADHURYYA HALDAR :
Will the Minister of LABOUR AND
REHABILITATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Central Government are going to take over 50 refugee camps in West Bengal ; and

(b) the number of children of these camps suffering from malnutrition and what steps have been taken to give nutrition to these children ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA):
(a) It has been decided to take over the State Camps in and around North Bengal, in an around Kalyani in Nadia District and in and around Bangaon, in the District of 24 Parganas in West Bengal.

(b) It has been estimated that nearly 50% of the infants and children of pre-school going age fell into the categories of either moderate or severe degrees of protein-calorie malnutrition. A scheme called the "Operation Life-line" has been undertaken to provide nutritional feeding centres and to treat the cases of advanced mal-nutrition at Clinical Therapy Centres. The total number of beneficiaries covered by the scheme will be about 2 million.

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SHRIMATI JYOTSNA CHANDA :
How many children suffering from malnutrition have survived since they have come here ? Are you contemplating to take any other refugees camps under Central administration ?

SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA : We have got no figures about the number of children who have survived after they had begun to receive this treatment. If notice is given we shall be able to give that number.

As regards the second part, it is our policy and we are going to cover almost all the centres wherever we find children are suffering from malnutrition.

SHRIMATI JYOTSNA CHANDA :
Not otherwise ? Have you any other category of people whom you are thinking of taking over ?

SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA : Apart from children, we have been providing nutritive diet to lactating mothers and also pregnant women. We are covering three categories.

श्री भागीरथ भंडार : जिन शिविरों को केन्द्रीय सरकार ने अपने अधिकार में लिया है उनमें केवल केन्द्रीय कर्मचारी ही काम करते हैं या राज्य सरकार का भी उनमें कोई हस्तक्षेप है ?

जो बच्चे पीष्टिक आहार की कमी से पीड़ित हैं उसका मापदंड आपके पास क्या है ? साधारणतया किस आधार पर आप यह पता लगाते हैं कि उन बच्चों को पीष्टिक आहार की आवश्यकता है ? पीष्टिक आहार के वितरण की व्यवस्था शासन ने किस प्रकार की कर रखी है ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR
AND REHABILITATION (SHRI R. K.
KHADILKAR) : Specialists go to the

camps and they find out the children in particular camps who are suffering from malnutrition. In all we contemplate opening 1,000 nutrition centres and 500 therapy centres. At the therapy centres they are examined if medical treatment is called for and if so that is provided, and later on food is provided after that certification.

SHRI MADHURYA HALDAR : Has it come to the notice of the Government that materials to be delivered to the refugees in the camps are being sold in the open market in Calcutta and the refugees are given less quantities of food than they should be given? If so what steps are Government going to take to stop all these malpractices?

SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR : That is somewhat beyond the scope of this question, though I am prepared to reply.

MR. SPEAKER : I want to make this remark off the record . . . *

SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR : All these allegations are very vague, and, therefore, you have rightly cautioned them.

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Maurya.

श्री श्री० पी० श्री० : जो कैम्प केन्द्र न लिए हैं, उनको लेने के कारण क्या रहे है, किस आधार पर वे लिए गए है? क्या वही कारण और वही आधार या उन से भी ज्यादा गम्भीर परिस्थितियां और कैम्पों में विद्यमान नहीं हैं? अगर हैं तो उनको क्यों नहीं लिया गया है?

SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR : Arrangement to take over the camps under Central supervision and management was made because the local administration was overburdened and the camps were near the border. We are having camps inside Bengal away from the border. Where the State Governments have requested that because of the influx of the refugees and the resulting congestion it became very difficult for them to manage, we have stepped in. There is no question of any compulsion. We have taken them on and we are looking after them.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : You have

talked of about fifty giant camps in the months of April and May. Would you kindly tell us how many of these are actually and physically coming into existence and on what date? Secondly, how many evacuees are living outside your camps?

MR. SPEAKER : That has been given in the statement

SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR : So far as West Bengal is concerned, only six camps are actually functioning and 1,11,342 refugees are sheltered there. Regarding the setting up of other camps the hon Member should realise that we have to select the camp site and get water supply and then we erect sheds. All these things take time. In between in West Bengal in particular because of the rains, there are difficulties

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : How many giant camps are functioning?

MR. SPEAKER : You can add the word 'giant' to the camps!

SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR : I do not know what he means by joint camps.

Either it is managed by the State Government or taken over . . .

MR. SPEAKER : He says 'giant', not 'joint'.

SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR : I am sorry. Water-supply is very important and we have got to split up the camps because other amenities must be provided. Giant camps without water-supply have no meaning.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : That is your look-out.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA : During the recent visit to the refugee camps by Mr. Balgovind Verma and some other members, they experienced a sort of mischievous propaganda being conducted in the refugee camps. The refugees are excited by politically motivated agents that all the moneys that are being spent for the refugees are being given by the international community

and that amount also is not being spent for the refugees. If that is the practical experience of the minister himself, may I know whether steps are being taken immediately to issue a statement on behalf of Government and also circulate certain pamphlets to different camps stating what amount we have got from foreign sources and what amount is provided by the Indian people as their share of the burden ?

SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR : My colleague and five members of Parliament recently visited certain camps to find out the conditions there. I am told they were very much satisfied with arrangements. But we have also heard about such propaganda openly or in a subtle manner being carried on in some centres. Mere publicity will not do. We have taken steps through our commandants to counteract this propaganda. The burden borne by the Government of India has been made clear to them.

SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL : There was a news item that 4300 children died of malnutrition in the refugee camps. Is this correct ?

SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR : All these figures given in news items are imaginary. When we detected that there was certain malnutrition and their health is not as it should be, immediately steps were taken and certain international agencies who are helping us in this regard were activated. I cannot say that not a single child has died. My colleague would like to supplement it.

श्री बालगोविन्द वर्मा : अभी पांच डिफरेंट पार्टीज के पांच पार्लियामेंट के मेम्बर मेरे साथ वहां गये हुए थे। मेघालय से शिकायत आई थी कि वहाँ तकलीफ ज्यादा है। हम सब ने मेघालय और आराम के कुछ कंपों को देखा। उन कंपों को देख कर वे लोग भी संतुष्ट हुए कि जो न्यूट्रीशनल फीडिंग का प्रोग्राम चल रहा है, उस में लाभ हुआ है। उन्होंने भी यह महसूस किया कि देहात में हमारे जो बच्चे रहते हैं, वे कंपों में रहने वाले बच्चों की अपेक्षा कमजोर हैं। इससे स्पष्ट है कि न्यूट्रीशनल फीडिंग का प्रोग्राम अच्छा है। बच्चों के मरने की खबर बहुत ज्यादा

बढ़ाकर दिखाई गई है। हम इस पासिबिल्टी को रूल आउट नहीं करते हैं कि कुछ बच्चे मरे हैं। मेरे जरूर हैं। लेकिन यह जो फिगर बताई गई है, वह हमारे पास नहीं है (अवधान) भूल से नहीं मरे हैं।

SHRI PRABODH CHANDRA : The Minister has said that not a single child has died because of malnutrition. But now his deputy says that some of them have died, although the number has been exaggerated. May I know which statement is correct ?

SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR : As soon as malnutrition was detected, we conducted an enquiry. I have not said that not a single death has occurred.

SHRI PRABODH CHANDRA : But it was the Deputy Minister who visited the camp. The Minister has not visited the camp.

MR. SPEAKER : We need not go into so much details here.

Expert Committee on bonus formula

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*92. **SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH :**
SHRI RAJA KULKARNI :
DR. RANEN SEN :

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are contemplating to amend the Bonus Act ;

(b) if so, in what manner ;

(c) the time by which the Expert Committee to revise the bonus formula, is going to be appointed and its terms of reference ; and

(d) the number of industries/employers who have accepted the proposal of graded minimum bonus to the range of 5 to 8-1/3 per cent, as suggested by the Union Labour Minister ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA) : (a) to (c). The matter was discussed by the Indian Labour Conference recently and it was felt that the bonus scheme embodied in the Act should be reviewed by a