

13.04 hrs.

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER

Requests of some Coal Producing State Governments for increase in rate of Royalty on Coal

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): Sir, some of the Hon'ble Members raised the subject of increase of rates of royalty on coal. I am accordingly making this statement for the information of the House.

2. Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957 empowers the Central Government to levy as also enhance the rates of royalty on minerals. Before February, 1987 the rates could be enhanced once in four years. Subsequently the Act has been amended and rates of royalty can now be enhanced every three years.

3. The rates of royalty on coal were last revised in February, 1981. The next revision could have taken place in February, 1985. However, the rates have not been revised until now because most of the coal producing States were levying very high rates of cesses on coal. These cesses differed from State to State and the yield to State Governments from these cesses was more than eleven times the yield from royalty.

4. Since the rates of cess were very high, some petitioners approached the courts. In a judgement dated 26-10-89 in the case of India Cements versus State of Tamil Nadu, the Supreme Court held that State Govts. are not competent to levy a cess on minerals or mineral rights. Following this judgement, other courts have also been striking down the cesses levied by other States.

5. Since the income from cesses to the State Governments was quite sub-

stantial the finances of coal producing State Governments were affected adversely by these decisions of the courts. They have, therefore, approached the Central Government to enhance the rates of royalty.

6. A decision on these requests involves complicated legal and financial issues. While some cesses have been struck down others are being still levied. Levy of royalty on coal is related to prices of a number of commodities and full implications of problems have to be studied in consultation with the Ministries, Departments concerned and the State Governments concerned. All these matters are under examination of the Government. We are aware of the difficulties being faced by the State Governments and a decision in the matter will be taken very shortly.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT-174/91]

[English]

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE (Dum Dum): Sir, there is a demand that the royalty be paid *ad valorem*. Over ten years, the prices of minerals have been raised at least three times...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE (Lucknow): The States do not want assurances, but royalty. (Interruptions)

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN (Roser): Mr. Speaker, Sir, just one clarification. I had given a notice in this regard.

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat.

[English]

Hon. Members know that in this House we do not allow the questions to be put on the statements made by

the Ministers. If it is necessary to discuss this matter, I will consult all concerned and we will fix up a discussion

(Interruptions)

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: Sir, may I draw your attention to a Rules Committee's decision that such clarifications with the discretion of the Chair will be allowed? I was a member of the Rules Committee...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Just one clarification, you had permitted earlier also. You had allowed me to seek a clarification in this very session itself. *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: If I permit you, it will create problems for you only. I am thinking in terms of your interest only.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to move a Privilege Motion against the hon. Minister. I would like to seek a clarification because in the Oral answer to a starred question given on 26-02-1991 what the then hon. Minister of Energy had said, I would like to read it before you...

MR. SPEAKER: Now, see, it is turning into a regular speech.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: I am not making a regular speech, I am just saying that the then hon. Minister had promised that a decision on increasing the royalty would be taken by 31st March, now the present Minister is saying that the matter is under consideration of the Government. I would just like to read out the answer given on 26-02-1991 by the then hon. Minister...

MR. SPEAKER: Now, you are again talking of reading out something.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: The hon. Minister had said in his reply, "So far as the question of increasing the rates of royalty on coal is concerned, the matter is under consideration, and a decision in this regard would be taken very soon so as to compensate the State Government for the loss it is suffering on account of cess and this shall be done by 31st March." The then Government had given an assurance in this very House that this would be done by 31st March. The then hon. Minister had talked about 31st March, now it is end of July and even then the hon. Minister is saying that it is under consideration of the Government. No doubt, the Government and the Ministers have changed, but the commitment made by one Government should be adhered by its successor. The previous Government had said that a final decision in this regard would be taken by the end of the financial year and now this Government says that the matter is under consideration of the Government. On account of delay in taking decision, Bihar Government has so far suffered a loss of Rupees 500 crores. It has suffered a loss of rupees 500 crores, despite the Supreme Court verdict..

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Paswan, now you conclude. I am not allowing like this.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Through you, I would like to know from the Government, whether it is not true that the previous Government had assured this very House on 26-02-1991 that a decision on increasing the royalty would be taken by the end of the financial year, that is, March 31.

DR. LAXMI NARAYAN PANDEYA (Mandsaur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, similar is the case with Madhya Pradesh. The State Government has requested the Central Government to increase the royalty.

[English]

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: Sir, one clarification...
(Interruptions).

MR. SPEAKER: No, please.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: I will just seek clarification, I will not deliver any speech.

MR. SPEAKER: No, no please. I have said that if it is necessary, we can discuss it, not now. Now if I allow Paswanji. I have to allow you, I have to allow others also.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: I was a member of the Rules Committee. You remember, Sir, that you have been allowed this discretion.

MR. SPEAKER: I know.....

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Not now. It is not correct. If I allow you, then how can I disallow others also?

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: Sir, in other States, the cess is there; it has not been struck down. Will the Government try to protect it? That is the first clarification. The second clarification that I want to seek is whether they are considering an *ad valorem* royalty. These are the two clarifications I am seeking; I am not delivering any speech.

MR. SPEAKER: Please understand that the rules are not only to help the Presiding Officers, they are meant to help you also. Supposing you raise this thing, then other matters cannot be taken up. And that is why, as far as possible, we have to follow the rules strictly. If you want, you can change the rule. You can do that. But then it becomes an unending affair.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Sangma, it seems that the Chief Minister of Bihar has declared certain things. That is why I have allowed Shri Paswan. If you are interested, you can respond to that question only.

(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: What about my clarification? (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SURAJ MANDAL (Godda): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to give some information.

MR. SPEAKER: Please be seated, no need of any information etc. You can give it later on.

(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: Mr. Speaker. Sir, the assurance that has been referred to by the hon. Member was given on the floor of this House—as per his version, which he has stated now—by the previous Government. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Sangma, please address the Chair.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: I have stated the actual position of the case. We have some difficulties because the rates of cess differ in some States. Some High Courts have followed the Supreme Court ruling and struck down the Cess Act. (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it has been the issue of discussion throughout India. It was discussed for the whole day.

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): You can change the law. By one simple amendment that can be changed. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: The Minister does not know anything about it. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: We are looking into this. A decision will be taken as soon as possible. *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am on a point of order. Through you, I would...

MR. SPEAKER: What is your point of order, which procedure has been violated?

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: You had allowed me to seek clarification... *(Interruptions)*..

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I rule it out. It is not a point of order. Do not stretch it beyond a certain limit. Because your Chief Minister was involved, I allowed you to speak.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: The clarification I wanted to seek was whether the Government had given an assurance or not that the decision to increase the royalty would be taken by the end of the financial year... *(Interruptions)*...

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Please take it as point of information... *(Interruptions)* What was the reply? I would like to produce the proceedings of the House before you.

MR. SPEAKER: Not in this manner.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir.....

MR. SPEAKER: What is your point of order? Which article of the constitution has been violated?

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, my point of order is limited only to this point that at that time Shri Kalyan Singh Kalviji had said in reply to a question that by taking a decision in this House itself it would be implemented within the current financial year. Is it a fact or not?

MR. SPEAKER: It is not a point of order.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Then what else is it?

MR. SPEAKER: It is a point of disorder.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: The Minister had said that..... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now you have made your point sufficiently. I have again said that if necessary it can be discussed. You cannot go beyond that.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the whole work of Bihar Government is at a standstill

because of lack of funds. The outstanding amount is Rs. 500 crores... (Interruptions)... and you are talking of decision. It won't go on like that... (Interruptions)..

MR. SPEAKER: Be seated, please. You have taken up this issue at a time when it is to be decided whether a statement etc. is to be given or not on this issue.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please be seated. You should not do like that repeatedly. When I have already said, if it is necessary, we will allow a discussion on this. Even then you are saying that you will ask questions after the statement and want reply also. It is not possible...

(Interruptions)...

[English]

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA (Cut-tack): Sir, we are interested to discuss it today itself. (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Sir, I am thankful to you that you have considered it. We wanted that government should consider it seriously, instead the Government showed its negligence. It is a matter of regret. (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: When I am cooperating with you, you should also cooperate with me.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Mr. Speaker, on the one hand the government is giving assurance to provide funds positively but on the other hand even the amount of arrears is not being paid; What to speak

of increasing the royalty? The decision of the previous government is not even being implemented... (Interruptions)...

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You have made your point sufficiently.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I do not appreciate Shri Paswan's behaviour.

(Interruptions)

SHRI CHANDRA JEET YADAV (Azamgarh): Sir, if the Government fails to fulfil any assurance given on the floor of this House, then what is the alternative for the Members?

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not carry on this kind of a discussion with the Presiding Officer. The Presiding Officer is facilitating you. You do not get anything from the Presiding Officer. I have said that if it is necessary, you can discuss it. When I have said this, there is no point in just carrying on a discussion like this. If he has not answered, what can I do?

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRA JEET YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the point was raised that the Chief Minister of Bihar had said that from 29th he was going on a fast unto death and in view of its seriousness it was allowed. Now the government is breaking even its own assurances. For this they are not even prepared to say that they would call the Chief Minister of Bihar and would discuss the matter with him. All the resources have been exhausted there. There is nobody to take care even after the decisions of the High Court and the Supreme Court... (Interruptions)

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: Sir, the assurance was given by the previous Government stating that it would be done before the 31st of March, 1991. This was the assurance given by the previous Government and not by our Government. Our Government has come to office only towards the end of June. So, how can we fulfil that assurance when that date is already over? (*Interruptions*)

SHRI CHANDRA JEET YADAV: Sir, is it a Government of the people of this country or not? We are not here to talk about this Government or that Government. (*Interruptions*) If an earlier Government reaches an agreement with a foreign country, then the next Government cannot say that this was done by the previous Government and so we are not liable for this. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): Sir, I am on a point of order. Our Constitution does not contemplate party Governments so far as the discharge of the duties and the functions that the Constitution imposes on the Government of India is concerned. Therefore, no Minister can try to avoid responsibility by saying that a particular party Government has taken a particular decision and so another party Government cannot abide by that decision. This is a question of constitutional impropriety. Can the obligation be disowned because another party forms the Government? The Congress Party Government should have the minimum sense of political morality to abide by the decision of its *benami* Government headed by Shri Chandra Shekhar. Who had put up that Government? They gave an undertaking to the President to support that Government unconditionally. So, they are bound by that decision. Can they deny that? This is a question of constitutional impropriety. (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI RABI RAY (Kendrapada): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was listening to

the whole debate. The Honourable Minister has said 2-3 times in the House that it was the assurance given by the previous government. It is very correct but which government was it. It was the government supported by the Congress party. It is a secondary question and I am not raising this matter. I do not know whether it comes under the purview of point of order or not but I am raising a question of propriety.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, when the House is aware of the fact and it has given its recognition to the above fact that government is a continuous process, it goes on continuously. If some government makes any commitment to a State Government about its economic condition, is it not obligatory on the part of the next Government to fulfil that commitment. I do not want to put you into any trouble in this connection. I only want to submit whether it is correct for a Minister to stand up in the House and say that this commitment was made by the erstwhile government. I just want to know if this commitment was made by the previous government, should it not be fulfilled by the present government.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is an important question. Suppose a particular government makes a promise or gives an assurance and that too about the financial condition of a State Government, won't the subsequent government fulfil that promise? Today, Bihar Government is not able to meet its daily expenditure and the Chief Minister of that State says that he will go on fast unto death from such and such day. You did well by giving frequent chances of discussion on this topic. I would like to know under a question of propriety whether it is not the duty of the present government to fulfil the promises given by the previous government? ...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE
SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I am

not entering into the merits of the issue. I am sure my colleagues will answer that. I just want to make one point.

I think, the statement made by the Minister has been misunderstood. With great respect to Shri Rabi Ray, I may say, the emphasis is not on the fact that the assurance was given by the previous Government. Nobody is saying that there is no continuity in the Government of India. There is a continuity. If a decision has been taken, it has to be honoured. If an assurance has been given, it has to be implemented. The point, I think, my colleague is trying to say—this is where I am surprised that a distinguished Member and lawyer like Shri Somnath Chatterjee is trying to turn the tables against us. The point he was making was, if an assurance was made in February or so that something will be done by 31st of March, 1991 how can a Government which came into office on 21st of June, 1991 fulfil it?

Let the hon. Members understand the point. What my colleague said was: We have come into office. We are looking into the matter and we will take a decision very shortly. That is not a repudiation of any decision or of any assurance.

The point is, the Government came into office on 21st of June. It requires time to take a decision and certainly it cannot be taken before the 31st of March, 1991. That is all, I think, he was trying to say. I do not see any controversy about it.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Do not spoil a good Minister.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Do not spoil a good case by your bad arguments.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: I never said that the assurance of the previous Government could not be fulfilled. The only point is how the assurance which has been made by the previous

Government, namely something would be done within the 31st of March can be fulfilled? How could I fulfil that assurance when I was not there? I have come only after that.

As soon as we came to power, we have given our attention to it. The Chief Minister of Bihar has been talking to us. We have been in constant touch with the State Government. I have assured the House that the decision will be taken shortly. (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to point out the difficulty once again. I rose after Shri Sangma made his statement. I wanted to say something but you said that it would be discussed later.

MR. SPEAKER: Now we are discussing a point of order.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan is an old Member of the House. He strained his vocal chords and had his say.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, this question does not relate to Bihar alone. Along with Bihar it relates to other states also. I am associated with Madhya Pradesh, though I have surrendered the Vidisha Parliamentary seat. This problem relates to Madhya Pradesh also. I do not want to rake up the old controversy here. Shri Chidambaram is right in saying that as the present Government took charge after 31st March, it cannot fulfil the assurance given on 31st March by the previous Government. But Government can at least tell by when a decision would be taken in this matter 'shortly' does not mean anything. (*Interruptions*) Mr. Speaker, Sir, all the states are facing financial crisis. I received a phone call from the Chief Minister of Madhya

[Sh. Atal Bihari Vajpayee]

Pradesh yesterday and he asked me to raise the matter of royalty here and urged that we insist on the Government for an early decision. If a Chief Minister threatens to go on hunger strike it would create a new crisis. In case another Chief Minister also threatens to go on hunger strike what will happen and how long will it go on? I would, therefore, submit that the Government should take an early decision in this matter and fix a date by which it would be done.

[English]

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: He said "Very Shortly."

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: How short is shortly?

MR. SPEAKER: I think Shri Sangmaji understands the meaning of 'Shortly' very well.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): It is not shorter than Shri Sangmaji.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: It is very difficult to understand what is short and what is tall. Some people say I am short. Some people say I am tall. I assure that this will be done shortly. I am trying my best.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Minister must give a firm date.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Achariaji please sit down. Please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I am not giving a ruling. One thing is very clear from the sentiments expressed by all the hon. Members in the House and that is there is a consensus on the matter. There is no need to speak on it. The Government is a continuing factor and

even they agree to it. Now the question is about date. The point is that the hon. Members from Bihar are concerned about the difficult situation in their state and want an early solution. Similarly, Members from other states are also seized of the matter which is creating problem in their State and want a solution at any cost.

The hon. Minister has said that it would be done 'shortly'. This means as early as possible and in the least possible time. I don't think he can give a particular date. If he gives a date and is not able to give a solution by that time, it would not be good. I hope he would bear in mind your sentiments. I think 'shortly' should mean 'shortly' and nothing else.

(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA (Cuttack): This is a very serious matter. You must try to understand this problem. This matter has been raised many times in the House. The Government of India is deliberately neglecting this.

MR. SPEAKER: I have received a letter from Shri Advani Ji.

(Interruptions)

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: It will be an ugly sight if a Chief Minister of a State goes on hunger strike to pressurise the Centre. We should try to avoid such a situation. All that we want from the House is that the hon. Minister should give a date. It may not be 29th. It could be 31st July. We can dissuade the Chief Minister from going on hunger strike against the Centre. It is this that we want Shri Sangma to understand and he should respond.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: The Government of India is deliberately neglecting Bihar. The Government of India is trying to take a political line. (Interruptions)

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: The State should not collide with the Centre.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: In West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa, there are non-Congress(I) Governments. (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI CHANDRA JEET YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Shri Vajpayee has rightly said that he can at least say that the Chief Ministers are being invited for consultations. When the Chief Ministers are being invited he can say that the meeting is being held on so and so date. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: The Government will have to fix the date. We can't forsake the Chief Minister of Bihar and let him die. (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA: Sir, there are two issues involved in this matter. What about the Cess Amendment Bill? Are they going to bring forward that Bill in this Session or not? (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned for lunch to reassemble at 2.30 P.M. today.

13.30 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till thirty minutes past Fourteen of the clock.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at thirtyfour minutes past Fourteen of the clock.

[**SHRI SHARAD DIGHE** in the Chair]

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN (Rosera): Mr. Speaker, Sir, we had

raised the matter of royalty on coal. We had urged the hon. Minister, Shri Sangma, who is sitting here, to fix a date by which a decision in this matter would be taken because the Chief Minister of Bihar has threatened to go on a hunger strike. This is a serious matter and therefore, we appeal to the hon. Minister to increase the royalty on coal and fix a date in consultation with the Chief Minister of the concerned States by which the royalty on coal could be increased.

[*English*]

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA (Cuttack): Mr. Chairman, there are two issues that are involved; one is the announcement of royalty and the other issue is about the Cess Amendment Bill. So the Minister should categorically say this. 'Shortly' 'as no meaning at all. We have been listening to him. Royalty enhancement is pending with the Government of India for the last 10 years. It is already overdue; the Bihar Chief Minister has given a notice that he will go on fast; the Orissa Chief Minister has already had a discussion but still the matter is pending with the Government of India. There should be a categorical answer from the Minister as to when the Government of India is going to take a decision in respect of enhancement of royalty and about the Cess Amendment Bill. We would like to know whether this Bill is coming in this House, in this session or not. The Minister should state this categorically.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: When are you going to give Rs. 500 crore which is due on this account?

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Thanjharpur): Mr. Chairman Sir, the royalty on coal was increased way back in 1981 and since then there has been no increase. Bihar is passing through financial crisis

[Sh. Devendra Prasad Yadav]

and coal is the only source of income for the State. In States where petroleum products are produced, like Maharashtra and Assam, royalty is increased from time to time but royalty on coal is not increased. This proposal is pending consideration of the Central Government. No time limit has been fixed by the Government Sir, this is a matter of public importance and so I would ask the Government to stipulate a time limit within 2-3 days.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): Sir, I had decided to convene a meeting of the Chief Ministers of all the coal producing states including the Chief Minister of Bihar, within a week's time.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Alright, the Government has decided to call the Chief Minister of Bihar. The present Government has said that the matter regarding increasing royalty is under consideration. The previous Government said that a decision would be taken by 31 March. 31st March has already passed. The hon. Minister says that he was not Minister on that date. This morning Shri V. P. Singh spoke to the hon. Prime Minister for the information of the House and the hon. Minister, I would like to say that the hon. Prime Minister said that this was a serious matter. A Minister who belongs to Bihar is present here and he is aware of the situation there. A similar situation exists in Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal. Floods are playing havoc in Bihar.

The royalty money is pending towards the Central Government but the Bihar Government has no funds

to make payments to its employees. The Central Government should release the sum of Rs. 500 crore which is due from it according to the last agreement. The Government should fix a date for its release. It can be 31st August or 30th July, but one date should be fixed upto which the amount of royalty will be increased. This will benefit the Bihar and other concerned State Governments.

[English]

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: Honorable Members have requested that a meeting of the Chief Ministers should be convened. I have decided as I said, to call the meeting of the Chief Ministers within a week's time. I cannot call it earlier than that because the communication has to go to various Chief Ministers and within a week's time, I have decided to call the meeting of the Chief Ministers and all matters connected with these issues will be discussed with the Chief Ministers.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Sir, regarding this matter, hon. Minister Shri Thakur who is from Bihar is present here. He should please help us in this matter.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): Sir, Bihar as well as other states should get financial assistance due from the Centre and other sources also.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: One Minister says that they should get it immediately and in due proportion. I am also saying the same thing. I am just saying that ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think that should satisfy you now.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOUDHURY (Katwa): This is a serious matter, Sir. The Chief Minister of Bihar has declared that he will undertake fast from 29th of this month. Some message must go from this House and that should be initiated by the Minister saying that things will be taken up in right earnest and it will be decided soon and that he should not undertake fast. What is wrong in his saying that?

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: I don't like anybody going on fast.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOUDHURY: Why can't you request him not to undertake fast?

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: Since I have said that I am convening the meeting of Chief Ministers including the Chief Minister of Bihar within a week, I will appeal to the Chief Minister of Bihar not to go on fast.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think that should satisfy you all. Now Shri K. Vijaya Bhaskara Reddy to move the motion regarding constitution of the Joint Committee on Offices of Profit.

14.41 Hrs.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON OFFICES OF PROFIT

Motion re. Constitution of Committee

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI K. VIJAYA BHASKARA REDDY): Sir, I beg to move:

"That a Joint Committee of the Houses to be called the Joint Committee on Offices of Profit be constituted consisting of fifteen members, ten from this House and five from the Rajya Sabha, who shall be elected from

amongst the members of each House in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of single transferable vote:

That the functions of the Joint Committee shall be—

- (i) to examine the composition and character of all existing "committees" (other than those examined by the Joint Committee to which the Parliament (Prevention of Disqualification) Bill, 1957 was referred) and all "committees" that may hereafter be constituted, membership of which may disqualify a person for being chosen as, and for being, a member of either House of Parliament under article 102 of the Constitution;
- (ii) to recommend in relation to the "committees" examined by it what offices should disqualify and what offices should not disqualify;
- (iii) to scrutinise from time to time the Schedule to the Parliament (Prevention of Disqualification) Act, 1959, and to recommend any amendments in the said Schedule, whether by way of addition, omission or otherwise;

That the Joint Committee shall, from time to time, report to both Houses of Parliament in respect of all or any of the aforesaid matters:

That the members of the Joint Committee shall hold office for the duration of the present Lok Sabha:

That in order to constitute a sitting of the Joint Committee, the quorum shall be one-third of the total number of members of the Committee:

That in other respects, the Rules of Procedure of this House relat-