

the grip of shortage of rice and consequent rise in the price of rice. Not only that the price of rice has gone up but also that rice is scarcely available in the market. The so-called superfine quality of rice released from the FCI is so poor in quality that it cannot be used for consumption. Adding fuel to the fire, the Tamil Nadu Government has imposed a ban on the free movement of rice to Kerala and the Central Government have cut down the rice allocation to the State. All these have created a very serious situation demanding the immediate attention of the Government.

It should be noted that the main cultivation in Kerala is cash crops, which earn considerable amount of foreign exchange to the country. If enough quantity of rice is not made available at moderate price, the farmers will be forced to divert from foreign exchange earning cash crops to rice and other crops which will be ultimately detrimental to the national interest itself. Keralites are only rice eaters and not accustomed to wheat and it is the responsibility of the Central Government to provide enough rice to this foreign exchange earning State.

Therefore, I urge upon the Central Government to restore the rice allocation to Kerala to the previous level, direct the FCI to provide boiled rice instead of the so-called superfine quality and to direct the Tamil Nadu Government to lift the ban on the movement of rice.

(xi) Delay in President's assent to the Bill Nationalising Kumardherbi Engineering Works Ltd., Dhanbad.

SHRI A. K. ROY (Dhanbad): Mr. Chairman, we feel seriously concerned over the delay in getting Presidential assent on the Bill nationalising Kumardherbi Engineering Works (Pvt.) Ltd. in Dhanbad, Bihar which was passed unanimously by the Bihar Assembly and the Council on the 26th and 27th July, 1982. Since then the

Bill has been pending before the Central Government for the needful. Continued closure of Kumardherbi Engineering Works, a prime engineering concern of the coal belt producing various items of priority used in the railways and the colliery has become a national issue raised in the Parliament several times. The factory employing more than 3000 workers, i.e. supporting their 20,000 family members is lying closed since July, 1979 due to the mischief and mismanagement of the employer who was a part of the Bird & Co.. In the beginning, the Central Government assured taking over of the factory under IDRA and declared the factory economically viable and a national asset and the Chief Minister of Bihar announced over the radio in November, 1980 the take over based on this assurance. Effort was made so that the Provincial Government took that over to restart the factory. Ultimately, a bill to that effect was brought and passed more than three months ago. Still, the factory could not be opened as it did not get the assent of the President.

After more than three years of closure, the plight of the workers is easily imaginable. The people are literally starving. The families have got disintegrated. More than fifty workers have committed suicide. Only last month one worker gave his life before a running train. Severe drought in the countryside has further accentuated the misery. So, the delay in getting assent from the President is acting as the last cruel blow to the patience of the workers and their withering existence.

(xii) Problems of Railway Employees retired from S.R.P.F

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Mr. Chairman, Sir, a peculiar situation has arisen out of the problems of railway employees retired under SRPF. It is a matter of grave concern because of the way their problems are being tossed around from one Ministry to another without

[Shri Basudeb Acharya]

any solution. The Home Ministry says that the problems of railway pensioners are to be dealt with by the Railway Ministry and the Railway Ministry, in turn, advises the All India Retired Railwaymen's Federation that it was the Finance Ministry which was competent to deal with their problems and the pension department of the Finance Ministry has again thrown the ball in the Railway Ministry's court. To say the least, this attitude speaks of utter callousness and indifference of the Government to their problem. This state of affairs has naturally created frustration among the pensioners. And the Government should know that most of the pensioners are facing a situation of destitution because of the nonchalant attitude of the Government.

Therefore, I urge upon the Government to examine their problems and redress them as early as possible.

(xlii) Need to release quota of Paper for Madhya Pradesh to meet the demands of students

श्री बाबूराव परांजपे (अबलपुर) : महोदय, बीस सूत्री कार्यक्रम के अन्तर्गत सूत्र क्रमांक 17 से सम्बन्धित यह प्रकरण है। इस सूत्र में कहा गया है कि उचित दर की बुकनों की व्यवस्था कर के, कारखाने में काम करने वाले मजदूरों व छात्रों के लिए, दुकानें खोलकर, छात्रों को पाठ्य पुस्तकें और कापियां प्राथमिकता के आधार पर उपलब्ध कराकर सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली का विस्तार किया जायेगा तथा उपभोक्ताओं के हितों की रक्षा का अभियान चलाया जायेगा। तदुपरान्त व्याख्या में कहा गया है कि शिक्षा मंत्रालय इस समय पाठ्य पुस्तकों की छपाई तथा कापियां तैयार करने के लिए, राज्यों की कागज सप्लाई करता है। भविष्य में छात्रों की संख्या में वृद्धि की देखते हुए राज्यों की कागज की सप्लाई बढ़ाई जायेगी और निम्नलिखित

बुकों पर कापियां बेचने की बर्तमान व्यवस्था जारी रहेगी। इसके विपरीत शिक्षा मंत्रालय कार्यरत है। दिसम्बर, 81 तक कागज का कोटा तो मध्य प्रदेश शासन को दिया गया। प्रथम तिमाही 82 के कोटे में कुछ थोड़ी सी मात्रा दी गई तथा विगत 6 माह में कुछ भी नहीं।

जुलाई 82 को जो शिक्षा सत्र प्रारम्भ हुआ, उसमें लगभग एक करोड़ छात्रों के करीब अभिभावकों की रियायती दर की कापियां उपलब्ध नहीं हो सकी तथा बुने बाजार से महंगी दरों पर कापियां खरीदनी पड़ी। आज भी वही स्थिति बना हुई है।

अतएव शिक्षा मंत्री जी से निवेदन है कि भविष्य यह कागज का कोटा मध्य प्रदेश के लिए स्वीकृत किया जाये।

Strike by Employees of Neyveli
Neyveli Lignite Corporation Limited.

DR. V. KULANDAIVELU (CHIDABARAM): Under Rule 377, I make the following statement.

I would like to draw the immediate attention of the Union Government about the serious plight of the employees over 17,000 in number of the Neyveli Lignite Corporation Ltd., and their families and total paralysis in the essential services and in the productivity with a marked set back in the power generation following non-settlement of Bonus Issue until date, consequently an indefinite strike since 10 P.M. of 27th October, 1982.

The Joint Union Action Council of NLC initially demanded 20 per cent Bonus inclusive of 4 per cent annual incentive on the grounds of 86 per cent productivity with an earmark of Rs. 38 crores profit for 1981-82.

Following series of negotiations the Management on principle agreed only upto 11.7 per cent exclusive of annual incentive of 4 per cent and 0.56 per