

[Shri Baldev Singh Jasrotia]

E.g. by head-load. We talk of emasculation of the unorganised labourers, but it will be sad if these workers are cowed down by repressive actions when they will raise their heads over their demands for bare subsistence. It is exactly the same that FCI is now doing to suppress the workers' movements for abolition of contract labour system, a system which has already eaten the vitals of FCI's economy and has caused extreme exploitation to workers. The contract labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act 1970 has been enacted but the benefit of it has been denied to these poor workers.

Thus a vicious situation prevails due to the wrong, malafide and vindictive action of the FCI. So I would urge the Government to immediately intervene in the matter and see that workers' demands for abolition of contract labour system is met forthwith, otherwise situation will be drifted from bad to worse and the workers will be forced to launch a bigger movement and I may have to stage Dharna before the Parliament along with others after waiting for ten days from today.

(iv) REPORTED CLOSURE OF KAILASH MILL, KANPUR FOR THE LAST 26 MONTHS.

श्री मनोहर लाल (कानपुर) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं आपकी भाषा से नियम 377 के अन्तर्गत एक महत्वपूर्ण विषय की ओर आपका, इस सदन का और सरकार का ध्यान आकषिप्त करता हूँ तथा आशा करता हूँ कि आप अपने ध्येयवस्तु का प्रभाव डालकर इस उचित माँग को पूरा कराने की कोशिश करेंगे।

कानपुर की कलशा मिल विगत 26 माह से बन्द है जिसकी वजह से लगभग 2500 श्रमिक बेकार हैं। बेरोजगार होने की वजह से भूखों मरने की नीयत का गई है। श्रमिकों की शिक्षा की शक्तियों को पैदा न होने की वजह से बन्द कर देनी पड़ी है। फंड का

खारा बचा निकाल कर काँच भरे हैं। मिलों में उद्योग मंत्री की के बंधन के अन्तर्गत 12 दिनों से अधिक आन्दोलन चल रहा है। बिर्सा कानपुर ही नहीं, बल्कि उत्तर प्रदेश में श्रमिक अशांति होने का डर है। उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार ने केन्द्रीय सरकार से इस मिल को अधिग्रहीत करने की प्रस्तावना की है। केन्द्रीय सरकार इस मिल को जीवित बचा कर जिससे लगभग 10,000 श्रमिक परिवार को रोटी मिल सके।

(v) REPORTED AGITATION BY THE WORKERS OF GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS, MINTO ROAD, NEW DELHI.

SHRI CHITTA BASU (Barasat): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, under Rule 377, I would like to mention the following matter of urgent public importance.

The workers of the Government of India Press at Minto Road, New Delhi have been agitating for the speedy redressal of their grievances since some time past. The Union workers met the Minister of Works and Housing and apprised him of their grievances in April, 1978. There were discussions over the charter of demands and the Minister assured that some of the legitimate demands of the workmen would be acceded to. But the management of the Minto Road press have rejected all the demands straightway. This has caused resentment among the 3000 workmen of the press at Minto Road. A peaceful dharna has been going on since 17th July, 1978. Shri Banwari Lal, Vice-President of the union has undertaken fast untodeath as a mark of protest against the Government of India's attitude with effect from 26th July. The Lok Sabha is particularly concerned about it, because all the parliamentary papers are printed in this press. It is desired that the Minister of Works and Housing makes a statement on this.

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SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Jadavpur): This is very important. The same thing has happened at Kharay and this Ministry has taken a hostile attitude.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI (Chirayinkil): The Minister is there, he may make a statement.

PASSPORTS (AMENDMENT) BILL
—Contd.

Clause 2.—(Amendment of Section 5)
—Contd.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: We would now take up further clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill to amend the Passport Act, 1967.

Shri Vayalar Ravi.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI (Chirayinkil): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I have already moved my amendments to clause 2. As I stated yesterday in my speech, the number of passports issued by the department has gone up from 3.5 lakhs to one million and the income of the department has gone up considerably. There is, therefore, no need to raise the fee to Rs. 50 for passport applications. The calculations made by the Minister in justification for increase in the passport fee include the increase in accommodation charges and increase in the cost of equipment and services which the passport offices need. These are all unwarranted and I hope, the Minister will accept my amendment and make this fee Rs. 25 instead of Rs. 50.

Secondly, the hon. Minister has assured the House yesterday that passport offices will be opened in every State. I hope that the hon. Minister will take expeditious action in this respect and see that the passports are issued to the persons concerned without delay. The delay could now be four to six months, may

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be for different reasons. We want that the applications for the issue of passports should be disposed of within a particular period. I have, therefore, moved my amendment that such applications should be disposed of within a maximum period of six weeks. The Minister has already given an assurance that these applications will be dealt with expeditiously, but if a statutory provision is there, your offices—of course, they are responsible—would be more careful to see that these applications are dealt with expeditiously.

SHRI V. M. SUDHEERAN: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I have already moved my amendments to clause 2. I join Shri Vayalar Ravi in saying that the fee for a passport application must be reduced. I want that this should be reduced to Rs. 15. This is because the number of passport applications has increased and the fee could be conveniently reduced to Rs. 15.

I welcome the steps taken by the hon. Minister to liberalise the procedure for issuing of passports. I would like to appeal to him to make it more liberal. In that connection, as I have suggested, all MLAs, the Chairman of the Municipal Councils and the Panchayat Board Presidents must be re-empowered to provide the verification certificate. That will liberalise the whole system and the poor people can easily approach the local bodies people because nowadays it is very difficult and we feel it very difficult as in Kerala we face a problem. I myself have signed about a lakh of passport application forms out of which about 40,000 might have been issued. So I appeal to the Minister that the procedure should be more liberalised and urgent steps taken in that regard.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You may get into trouble signing so many.