

71.20 hrs.

**STATEMENT RE. AGREEMENT  
ARRIVED AT BETWEEN THE PORT  
AND DOCK WORKERS AND THE  
MANAGEMENT**

**MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER:** Before I ask the Minister of Energy to reply to the debate, Shri Ravindra Varma to make a statement.

**THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMEN-  
TARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR  
(SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA):** Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I am glad to inform the House that as a result of detailed discussions that were held with the representatives of the All India Port & Dock Workers Federation, Indian National Port & Dock Workers Federation, Port, Dock and Water-front Workers Federation and Water Transport Workers Federation of India on the implementation of the recommendations of the Wage Revision Committee for Port and Dock Workers, an agreement has been reached today. Such of the Federations as had served strike notices have also agreed to withdraw the strike notices served by them and their affiliates on different Port authorities and other employers.

I would like to place on record my deep sense of gratitude to the representatives of the Federations for their cordial and cooperative attitude which enabled us to reach an agreement and thereby avert a strike in this vital sector of the national economy. I am sure, the House will join me in expressing satisfaction at the fact that an agreement has been reached with the Federations.

17.22 hrs

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS, 1977-78—  
contd.**

**MINISTRY OF ENERGY—contd.**

**THE MINISTER OF ENERGY  
(SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN):** Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I am indeed grateful to all the hon. Members of this august House for the keen interest they have taken in the debate on

the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Energy and also for the perceptive and constructive suggestions that have been made in the course of the debate. Before I respond to the observations made by the hon. Members, I would like to place before the House a few thoughts that occurred to me with regard to the functioning of this Ministry.

The interest that has been evinced in this debate underlines the importance of the energy sector and of power development in particular. Power is one commodity, as the hon. Member, Mr. T. A. Pai, remarked, which we cannot import at will. It is also a basic infra-structure which is upstream of all development and an essential pre-requisite of the schemes of integrated rural development that we intend to promote.

There has been understandable concern expressed in the House about the power availability position in the country. After all, what is important is that the consumer must get power when he needs it most to fulfil his minimum demands. Despite considerable investments which have gone into the power sector, we have today a situation where there are deficits in some States, surpluses in a few and suppressed demand in others. We have to see the situation in the current perspective as well as from the point of view of future planning. In the three months that I have been in office, I have undertaken a detailed study to see what short-term as well as long-term measures are required to meet the growing need for power. The construction of power projects is a long-gestation activity and therefore, while pre-planning to meet the future load demand is required, the immediate problem is how to maximise generation from the existing installed capacity.

Here, we have to reduce the number of forced outages that plague power plants in the country and cut down on the time taken for maintenance as well as rectification of