

purpose than grafting. If the part removed is not used for the purpose for which it is removed then this will not be governed by any provisions of the Indian Penal Code. Therefore, in order to have check some provision has to be made in this particular Bill. I do not agree with Mr Daga that provision should be made that ear drum or ear bone of a person is removed while he is living as I feel that this is provided for by the provisions of the Indian Penal Code. After removal, if it is misused, for that, provision is not there. So, I do feel, that provision is necessary to be made. Since you have rung the Bell, I reserve my comments and I would speak on my amendments.

श्री राम सिंह यादव (अलवर): सभापति महोदय माननीय मंत्री जी ने जो विधेयक प्रस्तुत किया है, मैं इसका हार्दिक स्वागत करता हूँ, किन्तु साथ ही समझता हूँ कि ला मिनिस्ट्री या स्वास्थ्य मंत्रालय से परामर्श करने के पचात ही इसको पेश करना चाहिये था, क्योंकि कुछ अभाव व त्रुटियाँ इसमें गहूसस की जा रही हैं, जो कि वास्तव में अपने आप में एकमहत्व लिये ह्ये हैं।

सर्वप्रथम इस विधेयक में जो आपने नीजर रिलेटिव की परिभाषा दी है वह अपने आप में अपूर्ण और अव्यावहारिक है। अपूर्ण इस मागले में कि नीजर रिलेटिव करते हैं, जो कि पर्सनल-ला गवर्न होता है . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member may continue tomorrow.

17.02 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER
OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

CLOSURE OF JUTE MILLS IN WEST BENGAL

SHRI NARAYAN CHAUBEY (Midnapore): I call the attention of the Minister of Commerce to the following matter of

urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:—

“The servious situation arising out of the closure of seventeen jute mills in West Bengal resulting in unemployment of a large number of workers and further depression of raw jute prices for the farmers.”

17.03 hrs.

[SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE in the
CHAIR]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL): The Jute industry is one of the oldest industries in the country. From a position of being dominantly export-oriented industry it has over the years become dominantly domestic market oriented industry. Its a machinery and equipment are antiquated. The industry has not been found to be responsive to the needs of modernisation of machinery/equipment as a result of which the industry has suffered and is facing problems of cost-competitiveness both in the domestic market as also in the international market. For quite some time, the jute industry has been facing a crisis emanating from the slump in export demand, particularly for carpet backing cloth resulting in a forced diversion of production capacity to heavier constructions and the sharp increase in their output unmatched with the demands. As a consequence, market prices of jute goods have slumped to unremunerative levels for a considerable period of time and jute mills including those belonging to the nationalized-sector are facing adverse trading conditions. In recent months, the overseas demand for our jute goods had indeed shrunk in a distressing manner on account of competition from synthetic substitutes and other major jute goods producing countries. The recessionary trends in industrialized world and the concomitant fall in the house building activities have significantly restricted import demand for carpet backing cloth. Slackening of demand was also evident in the domestic market. The cumulative effect was to force the industry into a very difficult economic situation. Inadequate returns from sales created a liquidity prob-

[Shri Shivraj V. Patil]

lem for many a mill and quite a number of them have stopped functioning, rendering thousands of labourers jobless.

As on 13th July, 1982, seventeen mills are lying under lock-out/closure involving 54,940 workers.

From out of the above 17 mills, one namely, Naskarpara, has been wound up with effect from 28th June, 1982, under orders of Calcutta High Court. Another two namely, Shri Ram and Prem Chand, appear to have been permanently closed. In three other mills, namely, Ludlow, Ganges and Bajrang, there are reports of specific industrial disputes arising out of acts of violence and indiscipline on the part of workmen. Conciliation proceedings have been initiated by the State Government's Labour Directorate in the case of these three mills but no settlement has been possible to be arrived at as yet primarily due to inter-Union rivalries. The West Bengal Government has by an Order issued under Section 10(3) of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, prohibited the continuance of lock-out in four mills, namely, Ganges, Dalhousie, Empire and Kelvin, mainly on the ground that workmen in these mills were reduced between the period 1972 to 1979 as per assessment of the Workload Committee appointed by the State Government. The above four mills have gone to the High Court in Calcutta on writ and obtained Stay Order against the orders of the State Government.

The Central Government have been trying to their best to help both the jute growers as well as the jute industry. Various measures have been taken from time to time for stimulation of demand for jute goods by invoking the Essential Commodities Act for meeting DGS&D's demand for jute goods at cost price on the basis of Palekar formula. Government also introduced Cash Compensatory Support for export of jute goods in September, 1981. There has also been better coordination with other user-Departments for packaging of foodgrains, fertilizers, sugar, cement, preferably in jute bags rather than in HDPE or polypropelene

woven bags. The Ministry of Industry have decided to use 100 per cent new jute bags for packing cement from October, 1982. Stabilization measures at regional and international levels are also being pursued by Government through ESCAP and UNCTAD auspices, so as to prevent fall in export earnings from jute goods and create a climate for better working in the jute mills. Bilateral talks with Bangladesh for evolution of a joint marketing strategy are also continuing.

The jute industry has represented its working capital problems as also financial accommodation of long term nature. Government will examine this as and when a detailed memorandum indicating the nature and scope of requirement, both short-term and long-term is received through the Jute Commissioner who will look into this. Jute Commissioner is also in contact with the State Government's Labour Directorate in order to look into the specific conciliation proceedings which have still not matured into settlements for re-opening of the jute mills.

Regarding the impact on raw jute price, the depression of raw jute price in the last session has been caused as a result of industry's not extending the matching buying support for raw jute to the Jute Corporation of India which had stepped up its procurement from 10.62 lakh bales in 1980-81 to 17.59 lakh bales in the 1981-82 season. It is the near absence of the trade industry from the raw jute market in the 1981-82 which resulted in imbalance of supply and demand for raw jute forcing the prices from specially of a lower grades to slump below the statutory minimum during the peak arrival periods. However, the Jute Corporation of India, as a Public Sector Agency, did its best to support raw jute price expanding its market coverage substantially and but for JCI's massive market intervention, the economic position of the raw jute growers would have been worse. Government will continue to make the Jute Corporation of India responsible for price support operation for the 1982-83 season. The State Governments will also have to extend support to the J. C. I. by trying to develop regulated markets, develop growers cooperatives, setting up suitable sto-

rage godown for the cooperatives and do other infrastructural works so that J.C. I's hands are strengthened and the benefits of massive price-Support Operation are entirely passed on to the growers.

Government are alive to the responsibility of restoring the economic viability of the jute industry and creating a climate conducive to its normal functioning so that all the locked out and closed mills are able to re-open or commission as early as possible. Government have already taken several ameliorative measures and will pursue them with a renewed vigour both at national and at international level till the conditions suitable for normal functioning of the jute industry are achieved and the workers of the jute industry and jute growers are able to earn a fair living.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: Sir, with due respect to our Minister and his statement, I beg to submit that at least the first part of his statement, it seems to me, has been influenced by the statement of the IJMA. Only yesterday an article written by Shri Ashis Burman has appeared in the press under the heading "Nationalisation Overdue". The Minister has also stated in his statement

"The industry has not been found to responsive to the needs of the modernisation of machinery/equipment as a result of which the industry has suffered and is facing problems of cost-competitiveness, both in the domestic market as also in the international market."

Shri Ashis Barman in his article has stated:

"Exports had shown a decline since 1966. But this has been largely due to the comprador-trader character of our jute barons. After they dominated the jute industry, they bade a goodbye to renovation of the industry, research and development efforts were stopped; quality control was neglected. On the contrary, supply of indifferent products

and widespread over and underinvoicing was indulged which damaged the image of the Indian products abroad. This led to the wide use of synthetic packing materials abroad. All based on petrochemicals, till the international petroleum crisis took care of this aspect of the competition of jute goods. Yet the Indian industry, being what it is, failed to recover its last ground."

The jute industry is called the golden hair of Indian agriculture, but today the entire sector of our economy connected with jute is in the midst of serious crisis, and the crisis has arisen not automatically, or the crisis is not natural, but the crisis has been created by the jute magnates, the I.J.M.A. aided and abetted by the Government at the Centre.

For a long number of years, our jute growers, have not been getting remunerative prices. Distress sale has always been the order of the day. The jute barons—some six families—so manage the jute affairs—it is not like Maharashtra Cotton growers—that the jute growers are compelled to sell jute at much lower prices. The jute at much lower prices. The jute industry annually draws money from the Reserve Bank to buy jute on the plea of the recommendations of the Tandon Committee. By June last year they drew a sum of Rs. 92 crores as credit from the Reserve Bank of India to buy jute, but huge amounts from this sum were diverted to other purposes, and there has been no check from the Government of India in this regard. Tandon Committee not only recommended that the jute industry would get money to buy jute, but it also enjoined upon the jute industry to keep stock of at least 14 weeks of jute in terms of annual production. However, industry has never followed this principle. They do not buy jute when it comes to the market. The JCI also does not play a useful role. Therefore, the jute prices fall down.

The entire Kisan movement of West Bengal—all parties of all hues like Kisan Sabha, CPI, CPM Forward Block combined together — demanded Rs 300/- per

[Shri Narayan Choubey]

quintal of jute. The Left Government of our State last year recommended Rs. 250/- to be the price of jute per quintal, but the price was fixed by our Government at the Centre at Rs. 175/- per quintal. That is the condition. This portion in the Minister's statement is quite correct:

"It is the near absence of the trade and industry from the raw jute market in 1981-82 which resulted in imbalance of supply and demand...."

He has used a very nice word. It is not mere imbalance.

I would like to say that the prices had crashed. Due to the mills not buying the jute and poor farmers inability to hold on, the prices crashed even to Rs. 75-90 per quintal. The barons of jute are not looking to the interest of the industry. Industrialists have no proposals to make for the renovations and diversification. They took to the age-old process and they also are sticking to the old foreign market. You said correctly that we are facing a crisis because we cannot export to capitalist countries for our export market is very much linked to the USA where there is very serious recession and where the present Reagan Administration has curtailed all the welfare needs of the people of the USA and where the construction industry is in deep crisis.

Activities on house building have come down to a great extent. Naturally we are not having a market there. But here I submit that another market is coming up. In the year 1979 we exported only 3.72 lakh tonnes. Now in the year 1980 the export has increased to 5.58 lakh tonnes. Of this, in the year 1979 we had exported 1.08 lakh tonnes to the Soviet Union and 2.18 lakh tonnes in 1980. In 1979, we had exported to the US 87,000 tonnes and in 1980 we exported only 74,000 tonnes. So, our USA market is shrinking whereas it is increasing in the Soviet Union and probably also in some other socialist countries also it is increasing.

But the mill-owners and the barons of jute industry have got their own interest. They draw money from this industry and spend it in some other industry. Their only end is not to renovate, not to make any research for the benefit of this industry. They simply earn money from this industry and see how that money can be spent in some other industries.

Now, Sir, because of the crimes of the IJMA, 17 jute mills have declared lock-out and some of them are going to be closed for ever; and some sixty thousand workers have been rendered idle and are starving. Not only this, only recently the IJMA have declared that they will keep the mills closed for four hours a day and that they would not generate electric power from their generators. That means the workers will be forced to remain idle at least for several days in a month and the jute barons have been emboldened because no steps have been taken against them. Sir, the Jute barons want to force the Government to sanction more benefits to them force the farmers to sell jute at a lesser price and force the workers to starvation and submission. The jute barons have thrown a challenge to be accepted. This cannot be done without nationalisation of the industry. It is overdue.

In the West Bengal Assembly not only during the time of the Left Front Government, but also at the time of the Congress Government a unanimous resolution was passed by all parties—the CPM, CPI, RSP—not only the leftist parties, but even the Congress(I), Congress (S) all combined demanding nationalisation of the jute industry, to save this industry and to save the nation and to save the West Bengal economy. That was the only slogan given by all the political parties. There was no difference there on this point. Even the Government of the State of Bengal and its Chief Minister, Shri Jyoti Basu has said that the industry must be nationalised. The crisis is increasing every year and the farmers are not gett-

ing remunerative prices. The acreage is shrinking gradually. In the year 1980-81 jute was grown on 9.47 lakh hectares while in the year 1981-82, the acreage came down to 8.27 lakh hectares. You see where we are going. I do not know.

This year there has been a serious drought in West Bengal. Already, perhaps in large areas we have lost our jute crops; and so, I beg to put some pointed questions to you: Will the Government of India support the demand of all the political parties of West Bengal? Will it support the demand made in the resolution passed by the West Bengal Assembly unanimously? Will it support the demand of the West Bengal Government, made by Comrade Jyoti Basu that the jute industry be nationalised? Otherwise you cannot save this industry from crisis, and you cannot save this industry from being completely spoiled.

As yet, we do not know what price you are going to fix for the jute growers. Secondly, are you going to fix the price of jute as per the demand of the entire kisan movement of West Bengal at Rs. 300 per quintal, and save these kisans and the industry from perishing.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V PATIL: The hon. Member has highlighted the ills of the industry, and the sufferings of the jute growers. Why is the industry suffering? There are so many reasons. I am not going into the reasons; but I would say that Government of India has done a lot to see that the industry's wheels are kept revolving, and that the industry works.

Now to run the industry, one requires funds and finances. We are providing them. To sell the goods produced in the industry, markets should be available. Government of India has taken steps to see that market is available. To run the industry, there should be market available outside the country also. Government of India has taken steps to see that

market outside the country is also made available. And there are so many other things which are done by the Government of India.

It would be necessary for the local Government also to do something. Government of India having taken all these steps, having provided the finances required by the industry having provided the market, having tried to see that the international market is also available, it would be necessary for the industry, to run the industry. If they have earned profit, they should also be ready to suffer losses. There should be sharing of losses and profits. This time if they are suffering, they should suffer and yet they should run the industry. They should not lock it out, but they should run the industry. While they had earned profit, it was not passed on to anyone else. It remained with them. Now it would be necessary for them to realize that if they are suffering this year, next year they may earn profits, because the cycle is going on. It would be necessary for them to do it. I should see that that is done. The law is provided. The Industrial Disputes Act and other laws are also there; and the local Governments are empowered to implement those laws, and to see that the industry is not put under lock-out, or is not closed.

The question is whether the implementation of law is done by the local authority, or the local Government. If the local authority has not done that—I would not apportion the blame; but it becomes necessary for me to explain before this August House why it is not done. If it is not done, and if they say: 'We have gone to the court; and the court has given the stay', Sir, you are a very renowned lawyer, and you know that the court's orders are not final orders. You can go in appeal, you can go in revision. You can go from the orders of the High Court to the Supreme Court. Have you done that? If you have not done that, can you pass on the blame to someone else? If you find that all these facilities are provided, but if you are

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still keeping quiet and if you are just passing a resolution in the Assembly, in spite of the fact that certain authorities are available to you, how much of importance should be attached to the resolution which is passed? The authority is available. You don't make use of it, and you just pass a resolution, and you pass on the buck to someone else and say, 'You should do it.' Will that be all right?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you aware, Mr. Minister, that the provision of the Industrial Disputes Act regulating closure has been declared *ultra-vires* by the Supreme Court?

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: I am not entering into the legal necessities because unless I refer to all those laws and things, I cannot say anything more (*Interruptions*) But here is an authority available. You should make use of it; and if you are not making use of it, you will be answerable to the people.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You do not wish to say that they have locked out because the Government has not gone to the court to have the order set aside.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: I am not only saying that; I have given only one example of it. If there is a will there will be a way. As far as prices that are to be given to the jute growers are concerned, now we have the Jute Corporation of India. The Jute Corporation of India is making purchases. 70 lakh bales are produced. About 17 lakh bales can be purchased last year and probably 20 lakh bales can be purchased this year. That is what the Central Government is doing. But you should realise that for the Central Government to make purchases in the villages and in the remote corners will be very difficult. If we have to make purchases, we shall have to establish the mechanism for that we shall have to employ some persons for that purpose; and the charges for administration of this will be too much. It will be very difficult to bear those

charges as well as give remunerative price. But to the extent it is possible in order to see that some protection has to be given to the poor jute growers, that is being done. Why are not the State Government doing something for them? There is the State of Maharashtra. The Maharashtra Government has done something for the cotton growers. Maharashtra is a cotton producing State. Bengal is a jute producing State. In order to protect the interest of the cotton producers in Maharashtra, they have devised a cotton monopoly procurement scheme. Under that scheme, the entire cotton produced in the State is procured at a price fixed by the State Government in consultation with the Central Government; and generally that price as a remunerative price, something more than a remunerative price. If it is possible for the State Government of Maharashtra to do it, why should it not be possible for a government which cares for the workers, which cares for the farmers, which cares for the down-trodden people to do it?

Now you say that you do not have the cooperative movement. What prevents you from having the cooperative societies? If you are not doing it, can you blame any one else? Of course, we are here; we are not shirking our responsibility. We do not say that we do not have any responsibility at all. We have a certain kind of responsibility and we will certainly discharge our duties. We will certainly help them in whatever way we can, but, at the same time, it would be necessary for the local government to do something, to take some effective steps in this respect. If you do not do that, simply passing a resolution in the Assembly does not help.

Nationalisation is discussed everywhere, on the Floor of the House. I answered it also. Time and again it is discussed. Will it be proper for any government to spend the tax-payers' money from the Government's coffer in order to take over the mills which cannot be run. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY (Calcutta South): How did you

nationalise the Maruti Company? You apply the same thing. (Interruptions) Why did you nationalise Maruti?

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: We are having free and frank discussion from the bottom of our heart. Let us not make it a party issue. I have said all these things after saying that we have a duty and we will do that. I am asking them to do their duty. I am requesting them to do their duty. It would not be possible in all cases to nationalise. We want fund for something else also, for producing electricity, for having irrigation, for having the transport system strengthened and for other things, for the establishment of new industries. Are you suggesting that we should take over an industry which is not in a condition which can be rejuvenated? But that kind of a statement cannot be made by you. Simply by passing a resolution we cannot say that this can be done and that cannot be done. Now, we have all the time said that if any industry can be rejuvenated, if any industry can be renovated, and if any industry can be run in a fashion which should be useful for the workers and profitable for the industry, that will be done. But instead of doing that you are all the time suggesting new industries. Moreover, money has to be invested in the basic industry first.

There is some other industry which has to be run. Now, we do not want all the industries to be nationalised. We have the commanding heights with the Government and there we are spending the money. But here is a section where we are getting the industry run. We have made a provision in the law, we have provided the money, we have provided the market also. Now, it is for the local people to see that these facilities are made use of and then come forth, if you want anything else or anything more. But if you do not make use of these things and all the time say that 'something has to be done', 'something has to be done', well, everybody may not understand your difficulties, or your stand or your unwillingness to do something. Why you are not doing, it is for you to explain. You have to explain to the people, if not to me, if not in the House, to the people, why you are not implementing the law, and why you are not doing some-

thing for the jute growers. Why, all the time, are you asking that someone else to do?

AN HON. MEMBER: No, that is not. (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: There are other Members to follow.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: If you do not do do, people will judge you. While saying all these things, I am not shirking from my responsibility. We have done a lot. We intend to do a lot. Whatever is possible will be done. We have done a lot. The entire scheme which we had for this industry is with us, and we will certainly come before the House and it will be known to you. But at the same, I will request all the Members that let us not apportion the blame, but let us shoulder the responsibility. You have as much responsibility towards your people and you can talk to your Government, as much as you are talking to us. You are welcome to give some suggestions to us. But at the same time, you see that you talk to your Government and you ask them, you make them do their duty to evolve a scheme which will help the jute growers and others.

As far as reports are concerned, every direction is welcome, and we go south, north, west or east. We have no inhibition in going in any direction. On the contrary, everywhere there are markets available. We go there and sell the product. You please do not have any doubt that we go only in one direction and not in another direction. We want to go in all directions wherever market is available. If the market is available, wherever it is, we will try to make the maximum use of it. If it is not available, we will explore the possibility of selling our goods in every market.

SHRI K. A. RAJAN (Trichur): Mr. Chairman, before I go into the very pertinent Calling Attention which is of rather importance and magnitude, I would like to express my objections or resentment over the way in which this Calling Attention is being dealt with in the House. This is

[Shri K. A. Rajan]

being taken in a casual way, at the fag end of the day. Never in this House, if I am correct, has such an important issue been taken for granted. It should have been put as an important item in the business of the House. That shows the attitude of the Government to this matter. I would like to say that his... (*Interruptions*) We are discussing this matter entirely in the background where the whole Bengal trade union movement, irrespective of any affiliation, has come out with a demand for nationalisation. Not only that. The Chief Minister of West Bengal in the most categorical terms has already stated that the only panacea for the evils of this industry is nationalisation. These two aspects are before us while we discuss this issue of the jute industry. The Minister, in his statement, I am sorry to state, has, with all his pious wishes and hopes, with whatever abilities he has, prescribed some remedy which one will not be able to achieve. (*Interruptions*) The fundamental question is, now we are facing a crisis in the industry not because of the closure of the seventeen mills and throwing out of 40,000 or 60,000 people in the street. Here is the basic question regarding the overall industry as it is. We have been experiencing for the last so many years and if I am correct this House had the opportunity to hear every year about the crisis in the jute industry, the attitude of the Government, the attitude of the mill owners, the price structure of the growers and the pitiable conditions in which they are put. This industry is being manned by six or seven families, if my understanding is correct. From the purchasing point to the export point, the whole trade is in their hands. If we go through their balance-sheets of the last seven years, we can see the wonderful results that they have earned profit only for two years. They need not earn profit at the manufacturing stage. The whole profit is earned at the purchasing stage. This is how they exploit the financial assistance given by the Government. They have cheated the Government. In 1981, the Reserve Bank gave them Rs. 92 crores. In what field has this amount been invested? Which mill has been modernised? Which plant has been renovated? How did they use that amount?

The Minister in his statement mentioned about modernisation. Who is worried about modernisation? Why should they modernise? They are not bothered about these things. They just reap the profit by fleecing the peasants at the purchasing point. The Ute Corporation of India, which is a public sector undertaking, does not come to the market at the proper time. They come to the market when the poor peasant has to sell his goods as distress sale. Thus they want to squeeze the poor peasants of this country. This is the state of affairs.

What are they demanding now? They are now asking for working capital. If the working capital is made available to them, this will be siphoned off for some other purpose. This is the experience the industry has felt.

The Minister in his statement has talked about the crisis in the industry. He has stated two areas—one recession in the overseas market and the other is short fall in the internal market. I do not know how far the Minister is hopeful about the internal market. We nowadays, hear about the recession in our country. There is a great controversy going on between the Government and the industrialists whether the recession is there inside the country. The facts which I have got, show that recession is there in the country because of the wrong policies pursued by the Government in its proclaimed import liberalisation and export-oriented growth. I have my anxiety about the capacity of our internal market.

I would like to say that nationalisation of this industry is a panacea for all these ills. What is the criterion or guideline laid down by your Government for nationalisation of industries? I would request the Minister to kindly explain this so that the people know where they stand. The management is not bothered about all these things. They like to make their old units sick so that they may be taken over by the Government and handed them over when they become viable. That is the game behind all these things. It is in this context that we are demanding nationalisation.

tion. There is no other way. We are speaking from our experience of the actual sufferings of nearly 2-1/2 lakhs of workers in the jute industry, lakhs of jute growers and people engaged in the connected industries.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now you formulate the question.

SHRI K. A. RAJAN: There is no other alternative except nationalisation. So, firstly, I would like to know the accepted policy or guidelines with regard to nationalisation. Secondly, what has been done regarding the Workload Committee's recommendations? My information is that the workload has increased by 20 per cent and many workers have been retrenched. What is its impact on the cost structure of the industry?

The Minister has mentioned in the statement that he is seeking to enlarge the domestic market. What concrete steps have been taken, or directives issued to the respective Government or other organisations, to see that the internal market is expanded and more jute is consumed in the country?

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: It should not be necessary for me to repeat the points which I have made while replying to the first speaker. The hon. Member says that we are in connivance with the industry. The law is there. If there is a lock-out in the industry, if your government is there and it is not doing anything, it becomes clear who is in connivance with the industry.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY: Will you give directions in clear terms? You say what that Government should do. The Minister should be clear.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let the Minister reply to the question.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Probably I have hit the nail in the head... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I believe you have said that the mills should not have been closed.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Probably, I have hurt their feelings. But what can I do? I have to do my duty here. They stand up here, on the same floor of the House, and allege against the Maharashtra Government that they have not done anything to see that the strike is withdrawn. But they cannot say anything against their own government, which is not doing anything to see that the lock-out or closure is lifted. How can we accept this dichotomy? (Interruptions)

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY: What is the Maharashtra Government doing? You should tell us, because you are the Minister... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. This is a Calling Attention. Let the Minister reply to the question put.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY: Only his ignorance provoked me.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: I do not mind his remarks. He is a good friend of mine. I will talk to him outside the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You reply only to Shri Rajan's question.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: It has to be borne in mind that in one State, where there is a strike, these people are alleging against the State Government that they are not doing anything in the matter of the strike; in another State, where they have their own Government, when they have a lock-out and closure, they say nothing against the Government, in spite of the fact that there are remedies available.

Their question was: why don't you nationalise this industry? What are your guidelines for nationalising the industry? That is what they wanted to know from us. We have been saying and we have taken steps to see that the workers do not suffer, but at the same time that industry should be run. Where is the point in taking over an industry which cannot be run? You cannot say that the

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Government of India has not nationalised certain mills in the textile industry, in the jute industry. Those industries are nationalised not for the sake of pleasure or fun, they are nationalised in order to see that the jobs are provided to the workers over there and we are saying that if any industry has to be nationalised, we should know before hand that that industry can be brought out of the red. Then only there is a point in nationalising it. Otherwise, taking over and paying the tax payer's money to someone else and afterwards seeing that the industry does not run, it neither helps the workers nor does it help the industry at all. There are two statements made. One is nationalise the industry and the second is support the jute growers. I am saying that in Maharashtra there is a procurement scheme. This is something which has the character of nationalisation. I am asking your Government to do something. We will not stop JCI purchasing the jute from there. But have you any responsibility to the jute growers or not? It is the same thing. You do not require that much money as you require for nationalisation. What you require is co-operative societies, what you require is a system, what you require is a will and what you require is honesty of purpose and if you are not doing that, can you in the same breath ask for nationalisation? Can you blow hot and cold at one and the same time? On the one hand you ask for nationalisation of industry and on the other hand do nothing—nothing which can be done, nothing which has been done in other States. How can you take a stand of that kind? So, this has become an exercise to pass on the responsibility to someone else. We are not interested in that. I have said in the beginning and I would repeat it here also now: Our responsibility we bear on our shoulders, your responsibility you bear on your shoulders. Together we can solve the problem. But if you retract, if you do not anything and if you go on blaming others, well, we will reply to the charges which you have made, but the problems will remain like that. You have a local government, you have a responsibility,

you have the machinery, you can do it. It is only for this kind of purposes that the local governments are there, the State Governments are there. You should do that. If you are asking me to purchase jute from every village, it is not possible. I shall have to appoint officers simply for this purpose. But you have the officers in the villages, you can purchase and you can reduce the overhead charges for this purpose. Why don't you do it? I am not blaming you, I am requesting you, I am appealing to you. Do something like that and the problem will be solved.
(Interruptions).

The hon. Member wanted to know the guidelines. I have just given in short the principles which are generally followed. Where it is necessary, it is done, but where it has not to be done, it is not done.

— SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA (Basirhat): Mr. Chairman, this matter is quite a serious matter into which I do not want to inject any frivolity especially when it affects the lives and livelihood of some lakhs of people in West Bengal, Bihar, Orisa, Assam and Andhra Pradesh. Lakhs of farmer families are dependent on this industry for their existence apart from the workers. In the mills and apart from several lakhs of people connected with the jute trade and the workers in the mills incidentally are not all from West Bengal, on very small minority are from West Bengal, the rest are from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa and so on. Please remember these things.

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY (Nizamabad): Suppose the majority are from West Bengal, nothing is wrong.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Mr. Reddy, your mind, if I may say so, is like that tail of the dog you know. If you pull it, it gets curled up again and will not remain straight. Please do not try to make these frivolous remarks. I want you not to be frivolous. It is a serious matter. I would have thought that the Minister being a Minister of Commerce and having to carry a trade deficit of Rs. 5,600 crores, perhaps more

than that this year, he should be more worried about the industry as an earner of foreign exchange. He should be more worried about this industry as an earner of foreign exchange. This is the crisis which he is facing in his own Ministry and obviously cannot solve because it is a huge problem connected with so many international factors. The industry which held the pride of place at one time as our major foreign exchange earner, this jute industry is now apparently reduced to a stage where the Minister feels—he has not said so in many words—this is what I understand from him, that this industry has no future. Why should we put money for nationalisation into an industry which cannot be revived? That is what he said. If I misunderstood him, please clarify again. I would like to know if he really believes that this industry has no future? He should tell this House. To-morrow it will be in the newspapers. I do not know what his friends of the IJMA feel and how they will react to it in Calcutta? If he believes that this industry has no future, then why are they preparing now to pay some more money, vast sums of money to the mill owners? Already he has said here—

“The jute industry has represented its working capital problems as also financial accommodation of long term nature.”

They are going to consider them. He has said in his statement that they have already submitted their requirements. His junior Minister Shri Sangma replying to my question only five days ago on 9th of July said—

“Union Finance Minister and West Bengal Chief Minister met on 1-7-1982 with the concerned officials and representatives of the Indian Jute Mills Association. In pursuance of this meeting the Indian Jute Mills Association will have to submit a detailed memorandum regarding the nature and extent of financial accommodation required by them.”

So, whether they have already submitted or have been asked to submit, I do not

know. There were two slightly contradictory things here. Whatever it is, so for an industry which have no future, for an industry which cannot be revived, into which you do not want to give money from exchequer to waste it when it is required for much more important things if our only concern is to ask them—please let us know how much financial accommodation you require to get your mills going again and so on and Government will oblige them. I know it will oblige them. It has been obliging them in the years past. Last year a scandalous thing happened to which my other colleagues have referred. It is not only an amount of Rs. 92 crores which was given to them last year in the name of purchasing raw jute, they said they have no liquid capital. So, the Reserve Bank of India gave them credit of Rs 92 crores. They were not satisfied. After a little bit of more of pressurisation his predecessor gave them another Rs. 27 crores making a total of Rs. 119 crores given to them from the exchequer for raw jute purchase and now both Shri Pranab Mukherjee and Shri Jyoti Basu have publicity stated it has come out in all the press—that this money was not spent for buying raw jute. It was diverted to some other purpose. (*Interruptions*). I want to know what you want to do with these criminals. Will you allow anybody to cheat the exchequer and run away with hundred crores of rupees? They are criminals. They should be punished for this. You cannot recover that money. (*Interruptions*). You cannot give that money to me, I know that. But you cannot recover it. You cannot even penalise. (*Interruptions*).

I do not expect you either to agree with me or to reply to my questions—all of them, but at least you take a note of what I am saying. Now just permit me to say this—always it has been the history in this industry for the Government, previous Governments also, to accept at their face value whatever story of recession, crisis, etc. etc. these jute mill owners thought out. I am connected with this, something to do with this industry, at least with its workers for the last forty years. I began my career as a trade

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unionist in 1941-42 in this industry. I have lived in those jute areas. I know something about it. For forty years I have heard nothing from IJMA people except the crisis, recession, market difficulties, this and that.

Now, the hon. Minister has stated in his statement:

"In recent months, overseas demand for our jute goods had shrunk in a distressing manner on account of competition from synthetic substitutes and other major goods producing countries."

Is that a fact? I only request him humbly, when he goes back from here, to go into the official figures and convince himself whether this is a fact or whether it is just a propaganda being put out. There has been some fall in demand and there has been recession in the United States market. I agree that is true. For years we have been saying, "Don't depend so much on one market only; don't become over-dependent on one United States market over which you have no control. Suppose a crisis or depression takes place in the United States. You will be in a great difficulty. So, you try to diversify." They did not want to do it because here they were having a market where they were getting good profits and they were completely oriented towards the United States market.

What has happened today? There is a fall there. They were taking carpet backing cloth which they required mainly for the housing sector, for housing projects, for furniture, for the automobile industry and all that. Of course, President Reagan has got other ideas. He is more interested in rockets and missiles, super bombers and all that. So, the money has been cut down on the housing projects and the automobile industry. The United States is in the grip of a crisis. Everybody knows it. The thing that we had warned against many years ago is now coming home to roost.

The export of carpet backing cloth has been affected. I do not deny. In the United States, our exports of jute goods went down from 87,900 tonnes in 1979-80 to 74,000 tonnes in 1980-81. I agree. What has happened everywhere else? I cannot take the time of the House to give so many statistics. In the United Kingdom, in the rest of Western Europe, in USSR, in the rest of Eastern Europe, in Africa, there has been a dramatic rise in consumption of jute goods and exports from here from 12,000 tonnes to 17,000 tonnes; from 39,000 tonnes to 78,000 tonnes; from 1,02,000 tonnes to 2,17,000 tonnes; from 23,000 tonnes to 34,000 tonnes; from 14,000 tonnes to 34,000 tonnes in different parts of the world. Only in the United States, there has been a small fall.

The internal consumption has gone up from 5,19,700 tonnes to 9,18,400 tonnes. In the overall, if you take the total exports also, including USA, in 1979-80, the exports were to the tune of 3,71,000 tonnes and, in 1980-81, they had gone up to 5,57,000 tonnes. There may be a small fall in the American market to the tune of about 10,000 tonnes or 15,000 tonnes. I do not deny it. But is this the total picture of such terrible crisis, such recession, such disaster, facing this industry that they would be justified not only in closing down 17 mills and also demanding from the Government that they should be allowed to have a block closure of all the mills for one week, every month? Thank God the Government did not agree to it. I think, that is too much for them to swallow.

Then, they have now decided to cut down production by 4 hours every day by saying that no mill will operate from 6 P.M. to 10 P.M. ostensibly in order to save electricity and illegally depriving the workers of their wages under clause 2 (Section KKK) of the Industrial Disputes Act. Perhaps, the hon. Minister is not so familiar with the Act. They are doing something which is totally illegal. They have to pay the workers full wages for 4 hours. I know, he will say. "Why doesn't the State Government do something about it?" We will do; don't worry

That will be done. But here I may say, as you know, Sir, as well as I do that while the Industrial Disputes Act has some provision regarding the regulation of closure—I heard from you that it has been declared *ultra vires*—there is a provision that you cannot enforce the closure without giving notice to the Government and all that. There is no such regulatory provision about the lock-out. Nothing at all. They are saying constantly that the Act is there; the powers are there. He is saying, “Why doesn’t your Government do something?”. I say, please go home and read the Industrial Disputes Act carefully and tell us tomorrow under which provision—this is a Central Act passed by the Parliament here—of the Act there is any possibility of having powers for ending the lock-out. That has carefully and studiously been avoided. Nothing can be done.

18 hrs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Even that provision is being challenged before the Court regarding lay-off.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: I want to finish my speech quickly. I mentioned the export figures which are going up everywhere except in the USA.

To give an example, is he aware of the fact that an official delegation went just now recently to Australia and Japan to survey the market there for jute goods? It consisted of the Chairman of the Indian Jute Mills Association, the Jute Commissioner and the representative of the Jute Fabrics Shippers Association. Nobody belonging to the Opposition parties! They have come back from Australia and Japan and submitted their report and they have said that demand there for our jute goods is going down. There are three reasons, according to them.

One is intense competition among the Indian Shippers. You cannot regulate anything, it seems! You are the Minister of Commerce.

Secondly, irregularity of supplies. They do not supply the goods properly on time.

Thirdly, sub-standard goods are being supplied. There is no quality control. There is no pre-shipment inspection of the goods.

It is their report, not mine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it the sense of the House that we continue beyond 6 O’Clock?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes, Sir.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: We should have some compensation for being made to raise this matter at 5 O’Clock. It is a matter of urgent public importance.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Gupta.

PROF. N. G. RANGA (Gunpur): How long?

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY: At least in your life, hear a good lecture.

(Interruptions)

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: This is an example of how markets can also be lost. What the official delegation has said about Australia and Japan.

The Secretary of the Ministry, Mr. A. K. Dutt, has only recently been sent to Calcutta to address the annual meeting of the Indian Jute Mills Association.

I am glad that the same downgrading has been done of this meeting where the Finance Minister or the Commerce Minister—once the Prime Minister at that time, I remember—used to rush there to address their annual general meetings.

Anyway, this time the Secretary of the Ministry went. In his remarks, what does he say? It is all out in the Press. Mr. Dutt said:

“A redeeming feature is the sign of recovery in the demand for Indian carpet packing cloth in the U.S. which should be fully reflected in the latter part of 1982, i.e. this year.

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The worst phase of the crisis is probably on its way out and the industry is now poised for a gradual recovery in the coming months."

Then, very sensibly Mr. Dutt has also emphasised—I do not quote him now—several times the need for long-term planning. Do you think that the IJMA is capable of long-term planning? You yourself say that they have been unresponsive to the needs of modernisation or diversification. Nothing new. Going on for years. They are not interested in long-term planning. These are the people who are there: The Birlas, the Goenkas, the Bangurs, the Kanorias, the Mehtas and the Bajorias and some more. They are speculators and they do not care that these mills are reduced to junks.

And your Secretary is lecturing to them in Calcutta on the need of long-term planning.

One of the things why we are asking for nationalisation is that only under State's control can that long-term planning be done which is necessary for the long-term health of this industry.

And you leave it to these people and go on giving them financial accommodation every year and go on giving them money to buy jute which they do not buy and they cheat you. How can you save this industry? Are you really trying to tell us—'you' means the Government—that you are not interested in this industry and that you do not mind if it collapses?

I do not want to take up more time because the other friends have said many things. I only want to....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Formulate the question.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: The main question I want him to answer is whether he believes in the future of this industry or not.

The second thing is, about raw jute he has said this. I do not deny that something more than what has been done can be done and should be done; I myself feel that a part of the responsibility is ours also, that is, of the trade unions, the peasants' or farmers' organizations and the State Government, certainly. That is to say that this Jute Corporation of India will never be able to cope with the situation. That is obvious. We have been watching it functioning for so many years. That needs to be supplemented, I know, by a proper chain of cooperatives and all that. But you know what is the condition of the cooperative movement in the whole of eastern India. There are reasons for it. Do you want me to go into those reasons? Why the cooperative movement is advanced in Maharashtra, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu and why it is backward in all the eastern States? There is some reason for it. Or, is it the temperament of the people? You should be a little sympathetic about it. Suppose we form those cooperatives; we will require financial accommodation which the IJMA gets easily from you.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: We will give.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: 'You will give' means what? Please make a statement here on the floor of the House.

You have admitted in this statement that the prices could not be sustained because of the virtual absence of these people from the market. That is what you have said in your statement. They deliberately withdrew from the market and forced the prices to go down. This is what they do every year. And the poor jute peasant is so poor that he has no holding capacity at all. Once his jute is ready, he has to sell it immediately for whatever price he can get. He cannot hold on to it. Therefore, we feel strongly and that is why I am asking him now whether he is prepared—forget for the time being Maharashtra and all that; full marks to Maharashtra; if they have done something, it is well and good, but forget Maharashtra for the time being—to consider the whole question of raw jute trading operation, if it is to be salvaged

from the hands of these profiteers these middle-men, these traders and all that, plus the running of these mills in the way it is necessary in order to diversify the production and, thirdly, export market, research and all that, which should be the concern of the Ministry of Commerce any way if they want to earn more foreign exchange. These objectives cannot be realised if all these three sectors are left in private hands. You have experimented long enough. The jute trade is in private hands, the mills are in private hands, the export trade is in private hands. And the worse thing you have done is this. After nationalising five or six of the jute mills and after Shri Pranab Mukherjee's having told us very recently in Calcutta, assured us, that those nationalised jute mills which were under NJMC would be asked to go out of the membership, they had gone and joined the Indian Jute Mills Association. Mr. Pranab Mukherjee said that he would see that they came out of the Indian Jute Mills Association and he would see that they did not follow the Indian Jute Mills Association's policies regarding production and buying of raw jute and all that. But I am sorry to say that, in this whole business now of closing down the operation of the mills for four hours from 6.00 p.m. to 10.00 p.m., in the method of buying raw jute and all that, the nationalised mills are doing nothing except absolutely dittoing what the IJMA does, following completely in the footsteps of IJMA. Why has this been done? We welcomed when you nationalised the five or six mills. But that sector should not be a carbon copy of the private sector. It should show to the people that it is possible to have some different policy, to move on some different path. I want to know whether you are going to try through the nationalised sector, small as it is comprising only five or six mills, at least to show that you are capable of following some different policy with some different perspective, taking the corporation of the workers also and seeing that the jute peasants get a proper price for the jute that you buy for the nationalised mills. It is not just a question of slogan of nationalisation. If this industry has no future, it is all right. Please say so. Let us go home and go to sleep. There is nothing to worry about it.

Would have the courage to say so? If you feel that this industry has got some future, then it can never survive if it is left from the raw jute to the finished market stake in the hand so the private people who are only out to milk it and make money. That is why we are asking for nationalisation and I would like to know what is his reaction to it.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Sir, this matter was taken up in this House at this time because the same matter was discussed in the Rajya Sabha. It could not be discussed at one and the same time in both Houses because I wanted to reply to the erudite questions put here.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: We are not blaming you for that.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: This is in answer to a point which was raised by the hon. Member and, I think, may be, the hon. Members are a little tired but the matter is important and they can well afford to sit in the House and discuss this matter in this illuminating manner.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY: We are prepared to sit for the whole night.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Sir, may I have some respite from the intermittent interruptions?

MR CHAIRMAN: Please do not interrupt him.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Any friend of mine can interrupt me outside. Sir, it is not that with a frivolousness we are discussing this matter; it is with all sincerity at our command that we are discussing but, if some thing is unpalatable to you and if it sounds frivolous, I cannot help it.

Sir, the hon. Member wanted to know: has the Government come to the conclusion that this industry cannot be redeemed? I have not said that. We will do our best and you do your bit. That is what we have been saying. When there

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were about 60 to 65 mills working previously, out of this number, 17 mills are closed down and they are not working while the others are working. We have other plans also and I shall come to that point later on. That means we do not want to give it up. But, at the same time, we shall have to understand the difficulties faced at least by a section of the industry and we are trying to be realistic on that point.

Sir, in the year 1981, five units in West Bengal and one unit in Bihar were nationalised. It is not that we are playing with their difficulties, or that, we are not taking into account the difficulties of the workers and all that. If it were the case, then we would not have nationalised in 1981. But, if you are asking us to nationalise every now and then, without considering whether the mill can be redeemed or not, whether it can run or not and whether it can provide employment or not, that would be too much. Kindly excuse me if I again refer to the State of Maharashtra. I am not talking about that here because I am coming from Maharashtra; I am talking about Maharashtra because something has been done there. I am just trying to explain that the same thing can be done in any other part of our country also. If the Maharashtra Government could nationalise eight textile mills and could run them, why cannot the West Bengal Government do that? If Maharashtra Government could have a cotton procurement scheme, why can't you do it?

Now they are not shouldering the entire responsibility. There are mills nationalised there also which are with the Central Government; there are mills run by the State Governments. Why should it not be possible for you to do that? That is my question. It is not only a question of doing it but there are other questions.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY: What is the allocation of funds to Maharashtra Government? You show me. Sir, this is an important matter.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You need not answer him. Mr. Chakraborty, please take your seat. There is another hon. Member who can put that question to him.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: As the friend from West Bengal knows, he is doing his duty properly, and if he keeps quiet for some time they would not be angry with him.

Sir, it is not only the question of nationalisation. Why I am stressing this point is that unless some assistance comes from the local Government things become very difficult, for instance, if there is no regulated market in West Bengal how do you expect Jute Corporation of India to purchase the jute in a proper manner without giving any chance to anybody to commit any wrong there. What prevents you from having a regulated market in West Bengal? Regulated market is a system under which growers can bring their produce and it is sold under the guidance and control of the officers over there and there is no opportunity to commit any fraud. I am sorry to say that you do not have regulated markets and regulated markets have to be established by the State Governments. (*Interruptions*). Slogans do not solve the problems. It is the system which can solve the problems. I am saying we are ready to do something but I am also saying what has to be done locally by the local Government. If there is no regulated market and if you are not establishing it then will you blame the Central Government for that also.

Sir, the question of nationalisation has been taken up and they are saying that we are giving money to the mill owners. Sir, when we are advancing some money to them as a credit it comes back but nationalisation means outgo from the budget. Is there no difference in giving money on credit and spending money out of the budget? This has also to be taken into account.

Sir, Mr. Indrajit Gupta referred to the visit by the Textile Secretary to some of the meetings. I am told that even the Chief Minister of West Bengal has attended that meeting. There is nothing wrong in the

Chief Minister attending it but what is wrong in the Textile Secretary...

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: I never said there is anything wrong. I only quoted what he said in the meeting and I even welcome what he said there.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Then it is all right, Sir, one of the hon. Members wanted to know what the Central Government is doing to see that the produce is purchased. I would like to say that (1) Emergency purchase of one lakh bales of B. T. will bags as one time operation through DGS&D under the Essential Commodities Act and also repeat orders on behalf of the State Governments to step the offtake of jute goods. (2) Compulsory use of new bags for packing cement upto 90 per cent at present and upto 100 per cent with effect from 1.10.1982. (3) Persuading other user departments to use more jute bags instead of synthetic substitutes for packing fertilisers, sugar and food-grains. (4) Procurement of 1.49 lakh bales of B. Twill bags through DGS&D April/june 1982 delivery on cost plus basis after linking it with purchase of raw jute from JCI. This is in addition to emergency purchase of one lakh bales of B. T. will bags during November|December, 1981.

Sir, these are the concrete steps that we have taken. We have not rested here only. We have much more elaborate plans also, for helping this industry, out of its difficulty. A committee was appointed. The report has come. We are trying to see if it would be possible to create a jute cess and fund so that the industry can be modernised. and the industry can be rejuvenated. These are long-term plans. I am not saying that this industry is a dying industry, this industry will never prosper and all those things. This industry,—the textile industry as well as the jute industry—was established in this country long back; their machines have become old; their system is not keeping pace with the modern if you want to see that it is run profit, if you want to see that it is run profitably, if you want to see that workers also get remunerative wages, it is necessary to see

that the industry also gets modernised. For that also we are taking some concrete steps. Regarding what steps we are going to take, in detail, we will come to the House and you will know it later but here we are not keeping quiet. When we are doing something, we are asking the local Government also to do something. Please let us understand it. It is just not to blame them. It is just to see that the problem is solved. Genuinely we are tackling the problem. If this appeal also sounds frivolous, I am very sorry. We are not talking lightly. We are putting before this House and through this House to all concerned that there are difficulties; these have to be solved; these can be solved only if we take certain concrete steps. We are trying to take those steps. That is our stand.

I think all the points raised by Shri Indrajit Gupta have been answered by me. If there are any other points which remain to be answered, I will certainly look into them.

The most important point which he made is this. He is trying to read in my statement that I have come to the conclusion that this is a dying industry, nothing can be done, we are just giving money in spite of that. That is not my stand. I have not stated that. Every word of mine can be examined and scrutinised by Mr. Indrajit Gupta, my learned and close friend and he can come to a different kind of conclusion. But that is not what I stated. That kind of a conclusion cannot be drawn from my statement. I stated that there is a difficulty. It can be a temporary difficulty. It can be a difficulty faced by one or two industries. It is not a difficulty faced by one or two industries. This difficulty may not be there next year. I went to the extent of saying that those industries which are not working may earn profits and when they are earning profits they should be ready to suffer the losses also. In the interest of the workers they should keep the wheels of the industry running. That kind of a statement I have made.

SHRI A. K. ROY (Dhanbad): I rise on a Point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is the Point of order?

SHRI A. K. ROY: My point of order is this.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: You can ask for explanation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no. It is Calling Attention. What is the Point of order?

SHRI A. K. ROY: I did not want to interrupt. I know it is a Calling Attention. The Minister has just now said that he has never said that it is a dying industry and there is no future in it. But here in the beginning what he said is this: we were all listening to it. My point of order is this. Suppose by mistake or being unmindful he said something those things can be expunged. Kindly go through the record.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN (Mavelikara): Under what rule he is raising the point of order? Under what rule?

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is no point of order. (*Interruption*) The Minister will keep that in mind while answering. Mr. Minister, you need not answer now. You keep it in mind. You can deal with it later.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have already ruled, this is not a point of order.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN: I am only asking under what rule.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kurien, you need not trouble yourself. I have held, this is not a point of order. Mr. Kurien, Please resume your seat. Mr. Roy, I have told you, it is not a point of order.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN: Rule should be rule. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are right. Rule should be rule.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Sir, I don't remember to have said anything of that kind. If it is there, if the sum and subs-

tance of my statement is not in consonance with one word or the other, if that word is there, it can be deleted. I have no objection to that. But I thank him for this. I do not remember to have said anything of that kind. I doubt if I had said that. It has not fallen from my mouth. Anyway I am not disputing that. The point which I was trying to make is that we are not pessimistic, but at the same time we are not over optimistic. We are trying to understand the real difficulties and we are trying to solve their real difficulties. Those difficulties may be of temporary nature. With some industries, there may be some difficulties which may occur for a year or so. But we have taken steps and we have to see that some remedial measures have to be taken. We are committed to that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: But you don't say that the industry cannot be revived.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: I have not said that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It might have been understood like that.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: If somebody understands that way, I cannot help it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Mr. Hannan Mollah to speak.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (Uluberia): Sir, I want to point out that some of these Jute Mills, as has been said in the Statement, are the oldest ones and it is one of the major industries in West Bengal and the economy of West Bengal and the country as a whole depends to a large extent, on this industry because of the large amounts of foreign exchange it earns. But what is the condition of the industry? You know about it, Sir. In 1947, in West Bengal, there were 102 Jute Mills where 3,20,000 workers were employed. Now, what is the position of this industry? One after another, the factory has been closed and now there are 62 jute mills remaining. The total number of workers in these 62 mills are about 2,10,000. But what is the production of these factories? It is now 3-1/2 times more than what it was in 1947.

This is the present position of the industry. Every year 2, 3, 4 or 5 factories are being closed. In my constituency there are 5 Jute Mills out of which two are under lockout and closure. One is the Prem Chand Jute Mill in which there was a lock out for the last more than five years and it is now closed. About 200 workers have died of starvation. I can say that already more than 200 workers have died out of starvation. The factory owner who is a speculator, not an industrialist, is also the owner of another industry—Shriram Jute Mills—that is also closed and he is making black money out of that and that he was refusing to pay the Provident Fund and other dues of the workers. The workers of this Jute Mill are not getting their dues for the last five years. They are starving and they are dying. In another Jute Mill, that is, Naskar Para, every year, twice or thrice it was closed and again opened. This has been going on for the last ten years. But now it has been closed permanently. 8 workers of that Jute Mill committed suicide. The same is the position in all the other Jute Mills which are under closure. When this is the situation, when this is the condition of the workers who are either starving or dying due to starvation, what is the attitude of the Government? In the initial statement and speech of the hon. Minister, we were shocked to find that he did not have any sympathy for the workers, and he only tried to politicalise the issue without indicating as to how to come out of this crisis, and how to solve this problem. It is also shocking and I am sorry to say that the voice of these five-six jute barons is there in the statement. I do not know, how the Minister has been holding brief for these five-six criminals, who are looting the people, killing the people, looting the nation and cheating the nation. They are not responsive to the needs of modernisation etc. Why? They are transferring capital and profit earned from jute industry to other industries outside West Bengal. All types of such things are going on. They are making huge profits, they are getting extra money out of this at the cost of workers. This is the situation of the jute industry today.

I would like to mention about another jute mill, Ludlow Jute Mill, in respect of which a wrong statement have been made.

Workers have been charged with acts of violences and indiscipline. That is the nature of this Government; they always charge the workers for no fault of theirs and try to save the barons and mill-owners. They are talking of the workers. The cotton textile workers have been on strike for six months in Bombay, but the Government has not shown any sympathy for them; on the otherhand, they have sympathy for the jute farous, the criminals. This is the situation in the jute industry. Though I can go on indicating so many things in the jute industry, but I would not like to make any more comments, and only ask a few pointed questions.

All the hon. Members who spoke asked a question, whether the hon. Minister will institute an enquiry about how the jute tycoons have been violating the stipulations of the Tandon Committee in respect of stocks of raw jutes for the next fourteen weeks. They have been taking the money for purchasing raw jute, but they have not utilised that for this purpose. However, the Minister has been cleverly avoiding the answer. I do not know of whom he is afraid of. I want a clear answer for this.

Further, I would like to know whether the Government would consider the constitution of a parliamentary body to probe into the whole affairs of the jute industry and take immediate steps to prevail upon the mill-owners to withdraw closure and reopen the already closed jute mills.

I hope, the hon. Minister will not make political capital out of it and will reply to these questions properly.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: My difficulty is that all that was necessary to be said has already been said. And if the same question is put to me as a pointed question, I shall have to reply in the same language and I would be accused of repetition. This is my difficulty, and that is the rigmorale.

It is not necessary for me to cite examples to show that this Government stands by the workers. If we had not really wanted to help the workers, we would not have nationalised 112 textile industries; we would

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not have nationalised some of the jute industries; we would not have had the schemes which helped the farmers and the workers and others also. Merely passing of the resolutions in the Assembly for the nationalisation or appointing a Parliamentary Committee to investigate into the matter cannot solve the problems of the industry. You shall have to take some positive and concrete steps and those positive and concrete steps only can solve the problems.

The industry has certain difficulties and those difficulties have arisen. I am repeating, because of the international market and the internal market. But I don't think those things will continue in that fashion.

As far as modernisation is concerned, different things....

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: Sir, my question is very pointed question. Did the industry divert funds to buy jute?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let him answer the question. You answer only Mollah's question.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Sir, we don't want to protect anybody. In helping the industry, also in giving finances, our intention is to see that industry is kept running; not any other intention. While the industry is not running, we cannot provide employment. Having got the industry running, we can provide employment and see the remunerative wages are available to them.

Sir, a reference was made to the Maharashtra strike. I have not said anything about the strike in Maharashtra or the closure of mills. But in moving this resolution, the Hon. Members have given me an opportunity to appeal to the local government to do something. At the same time they have provided me with an opportunity to compare the situation in the two States. In one State there is a strike; in the other State there is a lock-out and closure. In one State you are blaming the State Government for not having seen that the strike is over, but in the other

State you don't blame the State Government for having not seen that the lock-out is over and the closure is over. Who is helping whom? How can you blame? Who is helping whom? Is it necessary for me to elaborate on it? Who is helping whom? It is for you to see. You are all trade unionists, you know the entire situation. You can see for yourselves who is helping whom.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE (Panskura): Sir, we have asked a pointed question and you can answer in a minute.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Sir, they have said that we are conniving with them. Who is conniving with them—those who are saying that the lock-out is over or the closure is over? Again they would charge me saying you are laughing and talking. I cannot abuse and talk and I will try to keep the situation pleasant and talk. I cannot go on abusing and talking because that is not good, because it does not help anyone on Earth. But who is helping whom, let there be a comparison by the Members here, comparison by the people outside and more so the comparison by the trade unionists, those who stand by the workers and find out who is helping whom. There we are trying to see that the strike is over and here we cannot ask....

(Interruptions)

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH: You are playing on words. You reply to my question—whether you will have an inquiry about the diversion of funds? You say categorically. I demand you to say it on the floor of the House.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Sir, if they have no argument, they cannot quarrel with me. I will just keep quiet if they don't want to hear me. I have been saying that we intend to help the workers: We intend to help the industry; we intend to provide money if it is necessary; we will see that the market is made available and if any funds are not used by anybody, it would be necessary for us to see that those also are done and if necessary proper action will also be taken. We want to spare nobody, but we do not want to abuse anybody. We just do not want to criticise

without knowing the facts and accepting whatever you are saying. If it comes out, then things have to be done. But at the same time, just by abusing, or flinging abusive words at others, the problems cannot be solved.

I would like to thank the Members for bringing this matter on the floor of the House. It has given me an opportunity to explain certain of the difficulties which are really felt, and to extract that certain of the things which can be done locally, should be done.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Members will try to draw their own conclusions from his refusal to tell us what happened to the Rs. 119 crores which was given to them for buying jute.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I cannot compel the Minister to reply or not to reply. Now it is for the Members to draw their conclusions.

Now Matters under Rule 377. Shri Krishna Pratap Singh. He is not here. (Interruptions) Please sit down.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY: One clarification, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is no clarification allowed in Calling Attention. Now Shri R. P. Panika.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

(1) NEED FOR RE-STARTING IRRIGATION CONSTRUCTION WORK IN MIRZAPUR AND OTHER DISTRICT OF U.P.

श्री राम प्यारें पानिवाँ (राबर्टसगंज) सभा-पति महोदय, सम्प्रति मिर्जापुर जनपद में पिछले वर्ष "इंडियन फारेस्ट एक्ट" में संशोधन के कारण प्रदेश सरकार द्वारा जो सिंचाई के निर्माण कार्य बन भूमियों में चल रहे थे अब बन्द हो गए हैं। इसी प्रकार बहुत सी सड़कों का भी निर्माण कार्य बन्द हो गया है। प्रदेश सरकार ने केन्द्रीय सरकार से उक्त निर्माण कार्यों के लिए शीघ्र

उचित आदेश पारित करने के लिए निवेदन किया है परन्तु काफी समय बीत जाने के बाद भी अभी तक केन्द्रीय सरकार ने बन भूमि में रुकी हुई बन्धियों, नहरों तथा सड़क के निर्माण को चालू करने के लिए आदेश नहीं दिए हैं। इससे जहां पर एक ओर देरी होने के कारण परियोजनाओं के खर्च में वृद्धि हो रही है वहीं पर दूसरी ओर हजारों मजदूरों को जो कार्य मिलता वह भी नहीं मिल पा रहा है। फलस्वरूप हजारों खेतीहर भूमिहीन एवं आदिवासी हरिजन श्रमिक बेरोजगार हो रहे हैं। अभी पिछली रबी की फसल पूर्ण रूप से ओले से नष्ट होने के कारण जैसा कि सरकार को जानकारी है स्थिति और भी भयंकर हो गई है। इधर मानसून में देरी के कारण भी कठिनाई बढ़ गई है और काम के वभाव में बेरोजगारों की संख्या उत्तरोत्तर बढ़ती चली जा रही है। उपर्युक्त परिस्थिति में सरकार से अनुरोध है कि शीघ्र ही उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार को जहां पर बन भूमियों पर कार्य रोक दिया गया है तत्काल चालू करने के लिए आदेश मिर्जापुर तथा इसी प्रकार अन्य जिलों में दे।

(II) NEED FOR STERN ACTION AGAINST FAKE AGENCIES FOUND CHEATING PERSONS ON PRETEXT OF PROVIDING THEM WITH JOBS ABROAD.

श्री चन्द्रपाल शैलानी (हाथरस) : दिल्ली तथा देश के कुछ अन्य बड़े शहरों में ऐसी फर्जी संस्थाओं तथा धोखाधड़ी करने वाले लोगों के गिराहों का जाल बिछा हुआ है जो विदेशों में नौकरी का लालच देकर भोले-भाले लोगों को ठगते हैं। आए दिन अखबारों में इस प्रकार के समाचार पढ़ने को मिलते हैं। इस बात से इन्कार नहीं किया जा सकता है कि हमारे देश में बेरोजगारी की बड़ी भयंकर समस्या है और लाखों-करोड़ों लोग इस समस्या से पीड़ित हैं। यही कारण है कि हमारे देश से भारी संख्या में मजदूर दूसरे देशों विशेषकर अरब तथा खाड़ी के दूसरे देशों में जाकर रोजी-रोटी कमाते हैं। मने पावर को निर्यात करने के नाम पर जो फर्जी एजेंसियां और जालसाज