

कलकत्ता को दिल्ली से मिलती है मध्य प्रदेश से होकर नहीं जाती। यदि सदस्य राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग सं० 3 का उल्लेख कर रहे हैं तो उत्तर निम्न प्रकार है :—

(क) जी नहीं।

(ख) प्रश्न ही नहीं उठता।

(ग) लगभग 1261 लाख रुपये की लागत पर मध्य प्रदेश में राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग सं० के विकास कार्यों को चौथी पंच वर्षीय योजना के दौरान शुरू करने का प्रस्ताव है जहां तक पांचवी पंच-वर्षीय योजना का सम्बन्ध है योजनाओं को अभी अंतिम रूप में बनाया जाना है।

12. hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

REPORTED DISRUPTION OF BANKING SYSTEM IN ANDHRA PRADESH

श्री रामाबतार शास्त्री (पटना) : मैं अबिलम्बनीय लोक महत्व के निम्न विषय की ओर वित्त मंत्री का ध्यान दिलाना चाहता हूँ और प्रार्थना करना चाहता हूँ कि वह इस बारे में एक वक्तव्य दें :

“आंध्र बैंक लिमिटेड, स्टेट बैंक आफ इंडिया और रिजर्व बैंक आफ इंडिया में आन्दोलन होने के कारण आंध्र प्रदेश में तीन मार्च, 1972 से बैंक व्यवस्था अस्त व्यस्त हो जाने के समाचार”

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI K. R. GANESH) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, The banking industry in parts of Andhra Pradesh has been affected by the strikes in some branches of Andhra Bank Limited and State Bank of India and in the Hyderabad Office of the Reserve Bank of India.

In the Andhra Bank Limited a dispute has arisen out of a claim of the workmen staff

union to be the sole bargaining agent for the officers also. 77 branches out of a total of 219 have been completely affected, while in others work is being carried on with such staff as is available. It is reported that efforts are being made by the parties to settle the dispute.

The agitation in the State Bank of India has arisen out of intra-union disputes. As reported by the State Bank of India, the Award staff union at the circle level at Hyderabad split into two groups some months ago, one group owing allegiance to the All India State Bank of India Staff Federation, which is the recognised federation of the bank at the all-India level and the other, to the All India Bank Employees Association. As a result of the agitation, it is reported that the instruments of the State Bank of India are not being accepted by the other banks even at the clearing houses.

In the Hyderabad Office of Reserve Bank of India a dispute has arisen in the matter of posting of staff Officer Grade II from Madras and Trivandrum in the Agricultural Credit Department at Hyderabad. On 12th March, the Association served a strike notice on this issue and before conciliation proceedings had commenced, the employees of the Hyderabad Office went on a lightning strike on the ground that one of the promoted staff Officers Grade II was allowed to join duty in Hyderabad Office. Though Reserve Bank of India had discussions with the union representatives, no settlement could be reached.

While the actual dislocation in work is confined only to a few of the branches in Andhra Pradesh, work in the Clearing Houses of Hyderabad, Vijayawada, Guntur, Kakinada and Visakhapatnam has also stopped. This has affected other banks, as they are finding it difficult to meet their commitments and in obtaining funds. However, when a Clearing House does not function, banks are free to present at the counters of drawee banks and in some centres this procedure is being observed. The banks concerned are making efforts to bring about an understanding and to restore normalcy.

श्री रामाबतार शास्त्री : मंत्री महोदय ने जो वक्तव्य अभी पढ़ा है वह निराशाजनक

[श्री रामावतार शास्त्री]

ठप्प है, लोगों को मुसीबतें उठानी पड़ रही हैं।

वक्तव्य है। इसमें बातों को तोड़ मरोड़ कर रखने की कोशिश की गई है जिससे स्थिति की वास्तविकता की जानकारी नहीं होती तथा नौकर-शाहों का बचाव होता है। मैं इन तीन बैंकों के बारे में कुछ बातें कह कर आपके माध्यम से मंत्री महोदय से प्रश्न पूछूंगा।

पहली बात तो यह है कि आंध्र बैंक लिमिटेड में नौ माचं से हड़ताल चल रही है। इस बैंक में हड़ताल का यह पहला मौका नहीं है। कई बार पहले भी हड़ताल हुई है। पहली हड़ताल 1968 में हुई थी। उस समय भी 18 कर्मचारियों को प्रबन्धकों ने सस्पेंड कर दिया था, मुश्किलें कर दिया था। दूसरी हड़ताल 1970 में हुई थी और यह तीसरी बार उम्मीद के मवाल पर हड़ताल चल रही है। आंध्र बैंक लिमिटेड प्राइवेट बैंक का बैंक है, सबसे बड़ा बैंक है हिन्दुस्तान में जिस की पूंजी अस्सी करोड़ है। इस बैंक को टाटा तथा दूसरे इजारेदार पूंजीपतियों का संरक्षण प्राप्त है। बैंकों के राष्ट्रीयकरण के बाद इस बैंक में उन तमाम लोगों ने, पूंजीपतियों ने जिन्हें मुआवजे की रकम दी गई थी, इसी बैंक में उस राशि को जमा किया और इसीलिए इस बैंक की पूंजी अस्सी करोड़ है। यहां के जो अधिकारी हैं वे बराबर से कर्मचारी विरोधी नीति पर चल रहे हैं जिसका यह सबूत है कि तीन-तीन बार यहां हड़तालें हुई हैं। यहां के मजदूर शान्तिमय तरीके से हड़ताल पर हैं। कोई वायोलेंस या हिंसा की घटना नहीं हुई है। यहां के लगभग 44 अफसरों और कर्मचारियों को नौकरी से निकाल दिया गया है, बीम को सस्पेंड कर दिया गया है, चौदह को गिरफ्तार किया गया है, जिनमें पांच महिलाओं भी हैं और सोलह कर्मचारियों को दूसरे तरीके से ट्रान्स्फर वगैरह करके दंडित किया गया है। यह कहना मया है कि बैंक में इंटर यूनियन राइवेलरी है। आंध्र प्रदेश बैंक एम्प्लायोज यूनियन ही एक मात्र उनकी प्रतिनिधि संस्था है और उसको कमजोर करने के लिए वहां के अधिकारी स्टूज यूनियन पैदा करके झगड़ा पैदा करवा रहे हैं जिसका फल वहां के आर्थिक जीवन पर बुरा पड़ रहा है, कारोबार

उसी तरह से स्टेट बैंक आफ इंडिया के बारे में भी है। वहां जो ब्यूरोक्रेट्स हैं, जो नौकरशाह हैं, वे राष्ट्रीयकरण के बाद तिलमिलाए हुए हैं और वे राष्ट्रीयकरण की नीति को फेल करना चाहते हैं। वे कर्मचारियों के साथ उलझ करके उन्हें तरह-तरह से तंग करने की कोशिश कर रहे हैं, स्टूज यूनियन पैदा करके वहां जो प्रतिनिधि मूलक यूनियन है उसको कमजोर कर रहे हैं। स्टेट बैंक आफ इंडिया में भी इसी तरह से राइवेल यूनियन को खड़ा करके वहां काम किया जा रहा है। रिजर्व बैंक में भी इसी तरह का गाल है। तीनों में मुख्य बात यही है।

रिजर्व बैंक में एक माल पहले से समझौते की बात कुछ मागों को लेकर चल रही थी। ब्राच-वाइज बेसिस पर सीनियारिटी और प्रमोशन दिया जाए, इन दो मवालों पर एक माल से बार्ना चली आ रही थी। सतरह माचं को दोनों पक्षों में समझौते पर हस्ताक्षर होने वाले थे लेकिन इसी बीच उसका इन्तजार किए बगैर ही कुछ लोगों को एक-को त्रिवेन्द्रम से और दो-को मद्रास से हैदराबाद लाकर प्रमोशन दे दिया गया। अगली बात यह नहीं है कि यूनियन ने गोलमाल किया है और नौकरशाहों का साफ है। असल में नौकरशाह इसके लिए जिम्मेदार हैं। अगर यह स्थिति चलती रही तो काम नहीं हो पाएगा। नोटिस कैमा इशू होता है, इसको आप देखें। आंध्र बैंक लि० के प्रबन्धकों ने एक कर्मचारी को यह लिख कर...

अध्यक्ष महोदय : थोड़ा बहुत रुल भी देखिये।

श्री रा. अवतार शास्त्री : औरों को आप दस-दस मिनट बेंते हैं ..

अध्यक्ष महोदय : इतना बेचैन क्यों होते हैं। मेरी बात सुन तो लें। दो चार मिनट में आपने इन्ट्रोडक्शन दे दी। अब आप सवाल कर लीजिये। भाषण तो न करिये। प्रश्न करिये। दो चार मिनट मैं देता हूं। पांच मिनट आपने ले लिये हैं।

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE (Kanpur) : Then you should allow us to read the whole thing. We never wanted to do so ; that is why we put it in the form of questions. If you allow us to lay it on the Table of the House we can lay it on the Table of the House.

MR. SPEAKER : It started as a calling attention motion. The Member was allowed to ask a question for clarification

अब इहको भाषण की शृंखला में नहीं बदलना चाहिए ।

श्री एस० एम० बनर्जी : थोड़ा सा ..

अध्यक्ष महोदय : थोड़ा सा तो मैं इजाजत दे देता हूँ लेकिन वह तो बैठने का नाम ही नहीं ले रहे हैं।

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री : मैं यह कटा था कि एक दिन या दो घण्टे किसी ने हड़ताल की मयमिन ढग से, उस की महीने-महीने की तन्ख्वाह काट ली गई है। मैं इसी के मिलमिले में वह चिट्ठी पढ़ रहा था। आंध्र बैंक लि० के एक अफसर ने यह चिट्ठी लिखी, मैं उसका थोड़ा सा भाग पढ़े देता हूँ :

"You have failed to perform your required functions and conduct yourself as a responsible officer of the Bank. We have lost confidence in you and, therefore, you are discharged from the service of the Bank with immediate effect."

उस तरह का बर्ताव और व्यवहार यहां के बैंक वाले कर रहे हैं। इसलिए मैं इसको सुनना चाहता था। इतना ही नहीं है दो घण्टे या एक दिन की किसी ने हड़ताल की और छब्बीस दिन की उस की तनख्वाह काट ली गई, जो सरामर अन्याय है। अब मैं प्रश्न पूछना चाहता हूँ।

क्या यह सच है कि आन्ध्र बैंक लिमिटेड में हड़ताल प्रारंभ होने से पूर्व आंध्र बैंक एम्प्लॉईज यूनियन ने बैंक मैनेजर की उपस्थिति में केन्द्रीय श्रम मंत्री श्री खाडिलकर के समक्ष प्रस्ताव रखा था कि पंच की हैसियत से वह स्वयं या केन्द्रीय

लेबर कमिश्नर या रिजनल लेबर कमिश्नर विवाद का फैसला कर दें जिसे बैंक के संचालकों एवं प्रबन्धकों ने स्वीकार नहीं किया और क्या ऐसा करने के लिए उनके पास कोई औचित्य था ? दूसरा प्रश्न यह है... (व्यवधान) - मैं अंग्रेजी में ही पढ़े देता हूँ।

Is it a fact that the Chairman, General Manager and Assistant General Manager of the Andhra Bank, who have been inducted from outside the ranks of the Bank, have refused to recognise the fundamental right of the employees, including the officers, guaranteed under the Constitution of India, to form associations and join trade unions of their own choice, consisting of all cadres of employees, viz., that of officers, clerks and subordinate staff and these outside top brasses have let loose a reign of terror, repression, insult and abuses on the officers of the Bank who have ultimately been compelled to resort to agitation ?

Is it also not a fact that there are all-cadre employees' unions in the United Bank of India, Central Bank of India and Dena Bank and also in the New Bank of India in the private sector, and the managements of the said Banks discuss, negotiate and settle the grievances of the officers and employees through their associations and unions ?

Is it a fact that the State Bank of India management has violated the code of discipline by refusing to discuss and settle the disputes with the State Bank of India Staff Union, Andhra Pradesh, which was recognised by the Bank under the code of discipline and is pampering a rival minority union by victimising the members of the illegally de-recognised union by way of charge-sheeting, suspensions and transfers ?

Is it also a fact that because of the attitude of the management of the State Bank of India towards the recognised union, there is continued disturbance in the Bank in Andhra Pradesh for the last one year, and is it also a fact that the management of this Bank followed the same tactics in 1970 and there by blocked the normal banking in Bihar State for 87 days ?

Is it a fact that the Reserve Bank management has been discussing with the Employees'

[Shri Ramavatar Shastri]

Association for more than one year the rules pertaining to their promotion policy and had almost agreed to fill the vacancies in the officers' cadre in its offices from amongst the local employees and such a settlement was to be signed between the management and the Employees' Association on 17th March, 1972, but in utter disregard to the understandings on the promotion policy, the Reserve Bank Management, on 15th March, 1972 posted at Hyderabad one person from Trivandrum and to from Madras with a view to forestalling the promotion of Hyderabad employees thus causing bitterness amongst the employees at Hyderabad, resulting in the present agitation ?

MR. SPEAKER : I am not going to allow such exploitation of the procedure. It is just a headache. The rules have been made by this House and they are not to be distorted by this House. This gentleman would not sit down and would not listen.

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री : अध्यक्ष महोदय, तीन बैंकों का इतना बड़ा सवाल है और मंत्री महोदय ने गोलमाल जवाब दिया। इसीलिए पूछना पड़ रहा है।

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur) : Those who respect the rules always suffer.

MR. SPEAKER : I also suffer. You cannot imagine the torture I have to suffer sometimes when I have to stand all this. Only one question is going to be allowed.

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री : नहीं, अध्यक्ष महोदय, ऐसा मत कहिए। मैंने तो आपकी बात मानी और यही निवेदन किया कि तीन बैंकों का सवाल है और तीन क्वेश्चन्स हैं।

SHRI K. R. GANESH : The Government is concerned about the dispute in the three banks in Andhra Pradesh, which has caused suffering to the public. All these matters pertaining to Andhra Bank, State Bank and Reserve Bank are matters of dispute which the hon. member has mentioned. That is the stand the trade unions have taken in the matter of disputes. The position is, negotiations are in progress in all the three banks. The intention of the hon. members was to

focus the attention of the House on the serious dislocation of economic life of Andhra Pradesh as a result of this dispute. You would agree that if I go into the merits of each dispute mentioned by him and take a stand, it will not be correct because negotiations are already going on. The Labour Minister is already seized of the matter. The conciliation machinery is already in the process. The hon. member referred to the offer of arbitration being made by the trade union representatives. That also will be taken into consideration. I can only appeal to the hon. members that it will be necessary to create a proper climate in which these negotiations could succeed.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : On a point of order, Sir, Mr. Shastri referred to the Union Labour Minister, Mr. Khadilkar. The Finance Minister also referred to Mr. Khadilkar in his reply. This calling attention which should have been diverted to the Labour Minister has been given to the Finance Minister. Fortunately, the Labour Minister is also present. You can direct him to say something, so that the strike may come to an end. The point of order is, since the name of the Labour Minister has been mentioned and he is here, he may be directed to say something. He says, the Labour Minister is seized of the problem. The problem has not been seized by the Finance Minister.

MR. SPEAKER : The calling attention is directed to the Finance Minister and he is replying to it. As for other ministers, they have no notice of it. How can I ask them to reply? Simply because some other minister happens to be present and the minister who is replying says that the other Minister has been asked to settle it, that does not entitle a member to insist that the other Minister should reply. After all, you must be reasonable in what you say. I know the minister himself may be very impatient to reply, but I do not want to set up such a precedent.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN (Medak) : I do not want to take much time of the House, but as has been mentioned in the statement itself, the state of affairs in Andhra Pradesh, particularly in Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam, Kakinada and Guntur is such that the work has been paralysed and normal transactions have been interrupted to such an extent that it necessitates the intervention of the Government of India, particularly the Finance Ministry and

Labour Ministry, immediately for an amicable settlement between the Board of Directors of this private sector bank and the employees, who have been the victims. The arrest of five women on charges of criminal intimidation and violence is very deplorable. So far as the Reserve Bank office at Hyderabad is concerned the posting of staff Officer Grade II from Madras and Trivandrum is also highly deplorable, because the staff in Hyderabad are still available at the disposal of the bank. I appeal to the minister to intervene immediately and bring about an amicable settlement.

MR. SPEAKER : It is just an appeal ; no question.

SHRI K. R. GANESH : Yes, Sir. The conciliation machinery is in progress.

SHRI J. RAMLSHWAR RAO (Mahabubnagar) : Whether it is the Andhra Bank or the State Bank or the Reserve Bank, the only point that has emerged is that Andhra Pradesh area seems to have been chosen as a staging area for developing conflict strategies. It is reported that the conflict is so serious that one of the Agents died of a heart attack ; I do not know if this is true. I am also told that cheques, drafts, etc., in the various branches are not only not attended to but are just thrown into the waste paper basket. Whatever be the merits or demerits of the dispute, this matter has been going on for a whole month and commerce, industry, business and trade are suffering. I am surprised that the Minister says that efforts are being made by the parties to settle the dispute. A month has gone by and normal business has come to a standstill. In another part of the statement, he says :

"However, when a Clearing House does not function, banks are free to present at the counters of drawee banks and in some centres this procedure is being observed."

This answer is neither here nor there. If that is so, why have a clearing house at all ? The entire functioning of the banking system comes to a standstill if the clearing house does not function. The hon. Minister must be having his own bank account and he must realise the difficulties. The entire community including businessmen, trade and industry and even private individuals who want to cash cheques are suffering. Will the Government look into

this and tell the House whether it wants to do something or allow the strike to go on for another month ?

SHRI K. R. GANESH : In the beginning of my statement, I conceded that this unfortunate dispute has led the economic life of Andhra Pradesh, pertaining to those who have bank accounts, to come to a standstill. But there is a procedure under labour statute to settle labour disputes. Direct negotiations are going on ; conciliation machinery is in process. The Labour Minister is seized of the matter. Nothing more can be done by the Government of India.

SHRI P. NARASIMHA REDDY (Chittoor) : After going through the statement made available by the hon. Minister and the replies he has given to previous Members who have raised the issue, I totally agree with him that a suitable climate for a quick and amicable settlement of the dispute should take place. I regret very much that the damage caused to Andhra's economy as a whole is much more than disclosed in the statement. In fact, Sir, you might have gone through some of the reports in the papers recently, in *Hindu*, where it is stated that every walk of economic life, every activity in Andhra, has been very much affected and things cannot be allowed to go on in such a state of drift any longer.

I would like to ask one or two questions from the hon. Minister and resume my seat. Is it enough for the Government of India to express pious hope that the negotiations that are going on will come to a satisfactory conclusion ? In my opinion, this question deserves a thorough reply from the hon. Minister. These negotiations have been going on since very long and they have not yielded any results so far. On the other hand, the situation is developing from bad to worse leading to, as some hon. Members have referred to, many untoward and undesirable things, that is, intimidation, violence, etc., being indulged in. I do not know whether that is a fact. I expect the hon. Minister to confirm it. The intimidation, violence, etc. is being indulged in by both, the management and the employees concerned. In view of this deteriorating situation, I ask the hon. Minister whether any active decisive intervention is contemplated to bring the situation under control and terminate this unfortunate state of affairs.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : It will help if the Labour Minister gives some reply.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA (Alipore) : It is very unfair to ask the Finance Minister to go on giving replies. This is a labour dispute.

SHRI K. R. GANESH : As I have already indicated, the Labour Minister himself has had discussions with the representatives of the employees' unions and he is seized of the matter. The Labour Ministry and other machinery under the statute are trying to settle this matter as quickly as possible.

SHRI K. SURYANARAYANA (Eturn) : Sir, there is not much to question the Finance Minister because he has entrusted the job to the Labour Minister. Particularly why I want to put a question to the Finance Minister directly is that the Finance Minister is responsible for the development of not only industry but agriculture also. The Members are concerned with both the sectors, the development sector as well as labour sector who are concerned with banks.

On the 30th of last month, the Labour Minister replied that the matter is being considered and the Chief Labour Commissioner is also in touch with labour unions. Again, this disease of strike and agitations was spread to the entire country wherever the Andhra Bank is having their branches. Andhra Bank is the biggest bank in Andhra Pradesh. It had been started by Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya with a few thousands of rupees as capital. Now it has come up to such a position.

I understand that up till now the Chairman and the Custodian was seen to be a capable, energetic and very strong man but in the matter of settlement with the labour union workers he is not showing his competence or intelligence or banking experience.

So far as the Andhra Bank is concerned, the main issue of this agitation is the claim of the employees' union that under the Trade Unions Act of 1926 the officer staff cannot be denied the right to join the workmen's staff union. That is the only dispute to be decided by the Labour Ministry or the Government of India. According to the Act, officers also could join the workmen's staff union. That

is the contention of the employees according to the paper circulated to us.

The Andhra Chamber of Commerce has also passed a resolution requesting the Government to end the strike because they are concerned with it. Whatever it is, the industry is losing. Yesterday's news is that the bank strike in Andhra Pradesh has also affected agricultural operations because though the harvested paddy from the *rabi* crop has already started coming, particularly in my district of West Godavari, the papers say that they cannot buy and pay for the produce because their funds are locked up in the banks, particularly in the Andhra Bank. That is why we have particularly addressed this question to the Minister of Finance. He is also directly responsible for settling the matter as early as possible in the interest not only of the union but also of the development of industry.

I associate myself with Shri Shastri and other friends who have asked other questions. I think, as the Finance Minister said, it may be settled not only as early as possible but at once or tomorrow. All the representatives are here. Once the Central Labour Commissioner had negotiated but the talks ended without any results.

Not only employees of the Andhra Bank but those of the State Bank have also started having some grievance. Our friends have placed their grievance also before the Minister. When the Reserve Bank and those two banks were carrying on the agitation, the staff of other banks was not accepting cheques and other instruments on those two banks. The situation worsened when on 15th March employees of the Reserve Bank also started an agitation. The Andhra Bank is a private bank. It is having deposits worth Rs. 80 lakhs or Rs. 90 lakhs. It is high time that it is nationalised. The staff and the officers also wanted it to be nationalised.

MR. SPEAKER : I am waiting for your question.

SHRI K. SURYANARAYANA : I simply wanted to bring these things to his notice. The Reserve Bank is the direct concern of the Government of India. The State Bank also is the direct concern of the Government of India. Work at the clearing house in the Reserve Bank in Hyderabad, through which cheques and other

banking instruments to the tune of Rs. 2.5 crores pass on an average daily, remains suspended since 3rd March. It is not only a labour dispute. The entire banking system has been paralysed in Andhra Pradesh. That is why we want to know from the Finance Minister what steps he is going to take to solve this problem and not leave it only to the Minister of Labour.

SHRI K. R. GANESH : I share the concern of the hon. Member that efforts should be made to settle this matter. There is a labour machinery laid down under our statute and the Finance Ministry and the Labour Ministry are trying to see that this machinery is made effective.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Is it a matter of prestige or technicality or what? So many Members from all sides are expressing their anxiety. The Labour Minister is sitting here and by his side the Finance Minister goes on saying that the Labour Ministry is looking after it. Yet, he will not say anything! We want the matter to be solved. Why does he not say something which may help solve it?

SHRI K. R. GANESH : Actually, I did not want to go into the merits of the dispute.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : I don't want you to go into the merits.

SHRI K. R. GANESH : If I need not go into the merits, I have just come to say that prestige is involved? You know it. That will not help the matter.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Why don't you agree to the appointment of the Arbitrator and the matter can be settled?

SHRI K. R. GANESH : I conceded that the Unions have made this demand. As soon as the processing is finished, the Government will consider that. What more do you want me to say?

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : Three or four questions have been asked by the hon. Member and the hon. Minister, in his wisdom, has said that the Labour Minister is seized of the matter. And the Labour Minister fortunately is here. As the hon. Minister, we are also equally interested to see that the dispute is ended. We are not professional strikers. I want to request you that if you can possibly

direct or ask. (*Interruptions*) All the Unions have decided to make him the Arbitrator and if Mr. Khadilkar becomes the Arbitrator, I hope things will come to an end.

SHRI A. P. SHARMA (Buxar) : After the Finance Minister has given a categorical reply that the Government is seized of the matter and after the processing is exhausted, they will naturally consider it, why should we spend so much time on it?

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : Why do they want to delay the matter?

MR. SPEAKER : The question is not a question of purely, as the Mr. Indrajit Gupta said, prestige. This question, as the Finance Minister said, is under the consideration of the Government - arbitration, conciliation and all that. The main question is directed to the Finance Minister. Suppose, I call another Minister to whom no notice is given, that will be taken as a precedent for future which may not be healthy for this House. The Minister to whom no notice is given is not expected normally to come prepared. If a minister says that it will be considered by some other Minister or by such and such Ministry.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : If he is prepared.

MR. SPEAKER : But that will not be setting a good precedent.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : There were so many occasions like that.

MR. SPEAKER : I would request you to kindly appreciate my opinion.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : You will also appreciate our difficulties. When the Labour Minister has come prepared, he must be knowing something.

MR. SPEAKER : Papers laid.

12.37 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

NOTIFICATION UNDER THE NATIONAL HIGHWAYS ACT

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY