

recorded. Although it was not recorded, you did make an attempt to make a submission. It is a question of procedure.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: I have not made the point yet.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I will listen for half a minute only. After that, I am going to order that nothing will go on record.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Why I say it is extra-ordinary is because these employees are the vital arteries of the Government. The Government should take this thing very seriously. The Railway employees, the Defence employees, the Posts and Telegraph Department employees, are the arteries of the Government and they are for the security of the country. If these people are agitated, then it may be not in the national interest. The Government should come out with a statement that they should also get bonus. They are also the workers of Government undertakings.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I am very unhappy about the whole thing. There is nothing extra-ordinary. The only extra-ordinary thing is that this very same thing has been brought again here in a most extra-ordinary manner.

We now take up the next item of business before the House.

14.50. hrs.

SICK TEXTILE UNDERTAKINGS (TAKING OVER OF MANAGEMENT) BILL

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI L. N. MISHRA): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill to provide for the taking over, in the public interest, of the management of the sick textile undertakings, pending nationalisation of such undertakings, for the expeditious rehabilitation of such undertakings so that such rehabilitation may subserve the interests of the general public by the

augmentation of the production and distribution, at fair prices, of cheaper varieties of cloth, and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, be taken into consideration."

This Bill seeks to replace the Ordinance promulgated on 30-10-72 which the management of 46 sick textile undertakings was vested in the Central Government, pending their nationalisation.

As the hon. members of this House may be aware, from time to time, Government has had to take positive steps to overcome fall in production of textiles and resultant unemployment, arising in certain textile undertakings on account of mismanagement and other financial and technical difficulties. Under the provisions of the Industries (Development & Regulation) Act, Government has taken over the management of 57 textile undertakings, which had either closed down or were at the point of closure. Thereafter, a careful assessment has been made of the need for repairs and modernisation and working capital of these units. Large investments of public funds have been made to restore the units to a stage of profitable operation. As a result, members will be glad to know that annual production of over Rs. 200 crores of yarn and cloth has been achieved, and employment has been restored to 1 lakh workers. The mills under the management of the Central Government also exported textile goods worth over Rs. 8 crores last year. In respect of 45 units, detailed modernisation programmes have been framed involving an investment of Rs. 17 crores; and a major portion of the outlay has been spent. In short, Government is acting in a very serious and purposeful manner to rehabilitate the undertakings which have come under its control, so that production of textiles, which is an essential commodity, should be augmented and employment should be maintained at normal levels.

*Moved with the recommendation of the President.

[Shri L. N. Mishra]

In addition to the above, Government has appointed a Committee to go into the problems of weak and marginal textile units and suggest measures needed to overcome the special difficulties faced by these units. Government will do its utmost to help such units to run efficiently and implement their modernisation programmes, wherever the existing managements show a genuine interest and constructive capacity to undertake such programmes.

Besides the 57 units brought under Government management under the Industries (Development & Regulation) Act, Government had been studying the situation in respect of certain other units as well, which were either lying closed or showed symptoms of "sickness" which, sooner or later, would result in the closure of the units. There were units wherein serious fall in production had already been noticed, and the mill-companies concerned were facing insurmountable technical and financial difficulties. There were certain units wherein, the companies concerned had given the undertakings on lease to third parties, on account of their financial difficulties, and it was obvious that the lessees were only interested in short-term gains and would do nothing to rehabilitate the units concerned on a long-term basis. In some other cases, Investigation Committees appointed by the Government had clearly recommended the take-over of management by Government, in public interest, but legal hurdles had been created by the vested interests and management could not be actually taken over by the Government. In another category of cases, the mill-companies owing the undertakings were ordered to be liquidated on account of financial difficulties, and the prospect was that the fixed assets of the units would be sold off by the Liquidator, in whole or part. In yet another category of cases, Investigation Committees had been appointed to go into the problems of the undertakings, which were showing serious

signs of "sickness" and though the final reports had not been received, there was adequate evidence available to show that the units were, in fact, "sick" and could not be allowed to drift into complete failure and closure.

It was to solve the problems connected with the above types of "sick textile undertakings" that Government had to contemplate special measures, which led to the promulgation of the Ordinance, which the Bill under consideration seeks to replace. Under the Industries (Development & Regulation) Act, management of a sick unit can be vested in the Central Government for a period not exceeding 15 years. The question arose, what would happen to the large investments of public funds required to rehabilitate the units, after 15 years were over? Could Government afford to ultimately return the undertakings to the former managements and shareholders?

After careful consideration, it was decided that as far as sick textile undertakings are concerned, short-term remedies would no longer suffice, and nationalisation of the undertakings would have to be resorted to in the public interest. Another consideration favouring this decision was that once these units had been properly rehabilitated, a production-base would be available with the Government to augment the production of cheaper varieties of cloth needed by the common man. Government would thus be in a better position to ensure that this very important commodity is made available to the economically weaker sections of our community at the most reasonable prices.

While thinking on the above lines was in progress, a genuine apprehension arose that there might be an effort on the part of management of the undertakings whose nationalisation was being considered, to fritter away the assets of the undertakings on a large scale. This made it necessary for Government to take-over the

management of 46 sick textile undertakings on an immediate basis by promulgation of the Sick Textile Undertakings (Taking over of Management) Ordinance.

The Bill provides that the management of the 46 sick textile undertakings taken over as per Schedule 1 having vested in the Government, the individual units will be placed under the control of Custodians to be appointed by the Central Government. It is also provided that Government may appoint a Custodian General in order to exercise overall supervision over the working of the Custodians and provide necessary guidance. In pursuance of this provision, the Government appointed the National Textile Corporation as the Custodian General for all the 46 sick undertakings. It is also provided that any money advanced to the undertakings by the Central and State Government for working capital and modernisation will have priority over other debts of the company concerned.

I have no doubt that the enactment of this Bill will go a long way in strengthening the ailing part of the textile sector which, we wish to ensure, is rehabilitated. This will enable us to maintain production and employment at maximum levels and also ensure production of cheaper varieties of cloth for the common man. Steps are also afoot to make some of these units export-oriented in the long run.

Sir, I move.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That the Bill to provide for the taking over, in the public interest, of the management of the sick textile undertakings, pending nationalisation of such undertakings, for the expeditious rehabilitation of such undertakings so that such rehabilitation may subserve the interests of the general public by the augmentation of the production and distribution, at fair prices, of cheaper varieties of cloth, and for

matters connected therewith of incidental thereto, be taken into consideration."

Mr. Dinan Bhattacharyya.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA (Serampore): Only a few minutes are left out....

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Use those three minutes.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA: At the outset, I must that I do not know what exactly is the policy of the Government. Some time back a statement was given—I may be corrected, if I am wrong—that there is no contemplation on the part of the Government to nationalise the textile industry. This was a statement made by the Minister. Yet, it is contradictory to say that, to prepare the ground for nationalisation, they are taking these steps. This is also a political stunt. I would humbly appeal to the Minister not to mislead the people of our country. You will never nationalise the textile industry as a whole. That is your political base. You cannot charge these employers who have looted our country for so many years. After frittering away all the funds of the public, they are now sick. The whole industry is now sick because the purchasing power of the people has gone down and prices have gone up. So, how can you save this industry until and unless you nationalise the industry immediately? Do not allow these big sharks to further exploit and plunder our people. My first point is that the Government must immediately come forward with a categorical policy statement that they are nationalising the textile industry which is in doldrums. There are reasons for this. There is steel price equalisation policy; the price of steel is the same all over India. But the prices of raw cotton are not the same, on the same pattern as steel price. The West Bengal millowners have to pay more than what the Gujarat millowners pay for the raw cotton. The same is the case with Punjab, West Bengal millowners and Bihar

[Shri Dinen Bhattacharyya]

millowners also have to pay more....

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: He will continue on Monday.

Now we take up the Private Members' Business.

15 hrs.

RIVER CORPORATION BILL*—

SHRI R. P. ULAGANAMBI (Vellore): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the establishment of River Corporation for the regulation and development of Inter-State rivers and river valleys.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the establishment of a River Corporation for the regulation and development of Inter-State rivers and river valleys."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI R. P. ULAGANAMBI: I introduce the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Bhogendra Jha—he is not here.

15.01 hrs.

NATIONAL RIFLE TRAINING SCHEME BILL

By Shri S. C. Samanta—contd.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, we take up further consideration of the Bill of Shri Samanta to provide for compulsory training in rifle-shooting.

Shri B. R. Shukla.

SHRI B. R. SHUKLA (Bahraich): The aims and objects of this Bill are no doubt very attractive and alluring. They are also laudable. But I am afraid I have to oppose the passage of this Bill on the ground of its practical difficulties because the Bill envisages that there should be a provision for compulsory training in rifle-shooting. We are aware of many provisions, compulsory in nature. In the Constitution itself we have provided in the

Chapter on directive principle that there should be a free and compulsory primary education throughout the length and breadth of the country. But, even after a lapse of 25 years, this basic and elementary requirement of the country has not been fulfilled because of financial and other considerations. Now, therefore, my submission is that if this Bill is passed, then the State would have to require a huge financial allocation for imparting this training because persons between the ages of 18 and 30 years are required to be compulsorily imparted training in rifle-shooting. Now, wherefrom would such huge resources come? Already we have reached the point of saturation in the matter of taxation. We have not been able to provide two square meals a day to the teeming millions of this country. We have not been able to provide sufficient clothing. We have not been able to provide primary education. So, when these basic necessities have not been fulfilled on account of financial stringency, then to say that there should be a provision for compulsory training in rifle-shooting would be an idle dream.

Now, the second apprehension which occurs to my mind is the problem of law and order. Already, when there is a training which can be designated as paramilitary drills and when the country is in a state of turmoil and disorder because of the lathi training and for which an amendment to place a bar has been brought in the Indian Penal Code during the last session, then, if the people are imparted training to handle rifles, there would be chaos in the country in the present set-up. That is my apprehension.

Therefore, my submission is that there should be a provision for increasing the number of rifle clubs and they should be voluntary in nature and there should be put restrictions on the membership of those clubs. Only desirable elements should be accepted and admitted as members of

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