

12.27 hrs.

**CALLING ATTENTION TO A
MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC
IMPORTANCE**

**DEARNESS ALLOWANCE TO CENTRAL
GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES**

Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kanpur): I call the attention of the Minister of Finance to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:—

"Failure of the Government to increase the dearness allowance of the Central Government employees even after the twelve-monthly average consumer price index had gone up by more than 10 points as per figures published in the Press Note issued by Press Information Bureau on the 6th November, 1965."

The Minister of Finance (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari): Yesterday I had answered a question on this subject and I had indicated that the figures available to us as at the end of October showed only 164.92.

Shri Priya Gupta (Katihar): It is 173 points.

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: It is a question of how each person works. The people who work out the figures for me had indicated that at the end of October it was 164.92, and if further rise has taken place since then, we shall be getting the information, and Government will consider the matter.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: Before raising this issue, I had written to you also that I wanted your permission to quote certain things; after this question had been answered in the House, I had an opportunity to get the index number of wholesale prices of some groups of commodities. These are the figures supplied by the Press Information Bureau. They say that the 2177(Ai) LS—5.

index for food articles for the week ending 6th November, 1965 was 172.2, and for all commodities it was 160.1. Even the wholesale index is more than that. I want to know from the hon. Minister whether after getting the November figures which are available to us, which are available to the press but which are not available to Government, the dearness allowance will be immediately increased without waiting for any agitation to be launched in the country.

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: There is nothing automatic about it. When prices go up, Government will have to consider the situation. This is a decision which has to be taken by Government as a whole, not by the Finance Minister. Therefore, I cannot automatically take a decision.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: Will the Government take a decision without waiting for an agitation. In the case of those drawing Rs. 2500, they did not wait for anything to grant an increase in pay.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath (Hoshangabad): The answer given yesterday was that a revision is made only when the twelve-monthly average reaches 165. Does that mean that if the cost of living index goes up abnormally before the twelve months are completed, Government does not, will not, and cannot, raise the dearness allowance at all at any stage?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: The hon. Member knows this language better than I do. The answer that I have put in means exactly what it means.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: He must clarify the answer. This is not clear enough.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee (Calcutta Central): This is not being fair to us. We want to know the facts. But the Minister refuses to clarify. Where are the facts....

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Some Ministers are masters of the art of evasion, some are masters of untruth..

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: We want to know what are the facts. There is no use of indulging in equivocations like this.....

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Some Ministers are addicted to evasion, some are addicted to untruth.

Mr. Speaker: May I request the hon. Minister to just give the facts. If hon. Members have not followed the answer, he might answer it again.

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: What I have stated yesterday in answer is clear enough.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: They are trying to suppress facts.

श्री प्रिय गुप्त : जो दफ्तर का बाबू लिख कर दे देता है उसको पढ़ देते हैं ।

He must reply to the question of Shri Kamath.

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: Part (c) of the question was:

"Whether Government have decided to increase the dearness allowance of Central Government employees to neutralise the rise in prices?"

The answer was:

"According to the Pay Commission formula, the next review of the rates of dearness allowance admissible to Central Government servants is due only when the twelve monthly average reaches 165".

It says 'review'. It does not mean a decision. Government has to review the position when this figure reaches 165. As I said, the twelve-monthly average at the end of October 1965 according to the figures available to me was 164.92. May be the agency that works out the figures is not quite competent, but that is the agency I have to depend on, and it has given the figure as at the end of October as 164.92. If in November, the figure has exceeded this limit, then Government will review the position

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: The law of averages, as you know, can be misleading, if not fatal. You know the story of a man who wanted to ford a rivulet. So he asked what was the average depth. He was told 4 or 5 feet. Then he started crossing the river, and got drowned in the middle of it.

Mr. Speaker: That is all right.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: We have been fighting for monthly average. The 1960 strike was based on that.

Mr. Speaker: He is arguing it further.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Because if it goes beyond 1965 in between there is no relief possible under the present formula . . .

Shri Priya Gupta: There has been a rise in prices of essential commodities throughout. We are here concerned only with Central Government servants . . .

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. I have not allowed him to speak. He should not interrupt the proceedings in this manner.

Some hon. Members rose—

Mr. Speaker: No, no.

12.36 hrs.

MISCELLANEOUS POINTS FOR CLARIFICATION

Mr. Speaker: This being the last day some Members have written to me that because they will have no opportunity of asking for review of any decision, they want to raise a few points which may be clarified by Government. I have agreed to allow each Member two minutes, not more than that.