

12.02 hrs.

**CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER
OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE****LIGHTNING STRIKE BY BOMBAY PORT
TRUST WORKERS**

Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kanpur): Under rule 197, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Transport and Communications to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:—

"Lightning strike on the 15th February, 1960 by the Bombay Port Trust Workers."

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): On the 3rd February, 1960, the General Secretary of the B.P.T. Employees' Union sent a communication to the Secretary, Bombay Port Trust, listing ten demands on behalf of Divers, Deckhands, etc., employed in the Salvage Section. It was mentioned in the letter that if the demands were not acceded to by the 15th February, 1960, the divers etc., would have no alternative but to go on strike. The General Secretary expressed his readiness to discuss the demands with the Bombay Port Trust authorities. However, he intentionally avoided doing so although he was in almost daily touch with the General Manager of the Bombay Port Trust until 9th February, 1960, when the latter left for Calcutta on tour.

On the 12th February, 1960, demands were made in writing on behalf of fitters and linesmen as well. Perhaps the idea was to win them over to the side of divers who alone had figured in the demands made on 3rd February, 1960.

On the 15th February, 1960, the caissons at the Victoria Dock entrance were to be lifted for the placement of new roller pathways. This was to be done primarily by the workers of the Salvage Section. All of them, numbering 93, however struck work on that date and are still on strike.

The Bombay Port Trust wrote to the General Secretary, Bombay Port Trust Employees' Union on the 16th February, 1960, that the demands put forward by him on behalf of the workers of the Salvage Section were highly exaggerated and unrealistic and that the action of the workers in going on strike was opportunistic and irresponsible. The Chairman of the Bombay Port Trust expressed his readiness to the demands being taken up in conciliation through the Regional Labour Commissioner and then referred to adjudication, if considered necessary, provided the strike was first called off. The Regional Labour Commissioner has actually tried to settle the matter in conciliation but because of the stiff attitude adopted by the workers on strike, no progress in that direction has been possible so far.

The Government have obtained a detailed Report from the Chairman, Bombay Port Trust on the demands made on behalf of workers on strike. They are in full agreement with him that the demands are ill-conceived and highly exaggerated. Chairman's offer to adopt the machinery of conciliation and then of adjudication, if necessary, stands, provided the strike is first called off. It is earnestly hoped that wiser counsels will prevail with the strikes and their leaders and that they will accept the offer.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: I just want to know whether the Regional Labour Commissioner has submitted any report to the Government and whether in his report he has referred to the objections raised by the workers in regard to the Conciliation Board.

Shri Raj Bahadur: He is trying to contact the General Secretary who I am told is in Delhi. His deputy is there, and if the General Secretary can be contacted by the Regional Labour Commissioner, I think the matters will ease.

Shri Anthony Pillai (Madras North): The Minister said that the General Secretary was in contact

with the General Manager, almost daily, but he avoided discussion of these disputes. If he was really in touch with the General Manager, why did not the General Manager initiate discussion after the strike notice had been served?

Shri Raj Bahadur: That was sought to be done. So far as my information goes, even now the Regional Labour Commissioner wants to contact the General Secretary and my friend knows better that perhaps the General Secretary is in Delhi.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member will put the General Secretary in touch with the Commissioner.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: The General Secretary wanted to meet the hon. Minister.

Mr. Speaker: Over the head of the Commissioner! Let me pass on to the next subject.

12-06 hrs.

BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

FORTY-EIGHTH REPORT

The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs (Shri Satya Narayan Sinha): I beg to move:

"That this House agrees with the Forty-eighth Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 22nd February, 1960."

Mr. Speaker: Let me put the motion.

Shri Braj Raj Singh (Firozabad): May I make a submission? The time allotted for the general discussion of the railway budget and the discussion and voting on the demands for grants in respect of the railways seems to be inadequate. It is 14 hours and 10 hours respectively.

Mr. Speaker: 24 hours in all. They have given five days. 24 hours come to five days minus one hour. If it is necessary, I shall extend it by one hour. We will have full five days then.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao (Khammam): Even one hour's extension will not be enough.

Mr. Speaker: Let us see. The question is:

"That this House agrees with the Forty-eighth Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 22nd February, 1960."

The motion was adopted.

12.07 hrs.

DEMANDS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS (GENERAL), 1959-60— *contd.*

Mr. Speaker: The House will now take up further discussion and voting on the supplementary demands for grants in respect of the budget for 1959-60. Shri Chintamani Panigrahi may kindly continue his speech.

Shri Chintamani Panigrahi (Puri): Yesterday, I was referring to demand No. 120 relating to the purchase of food-grains as a result of the decision to extend the system of advance payment to the procurements made in Orissa and also to meet the larger advance payments in other States. For these, an additional provision of Rs. 10.70 crores has been asked for. In August, 1959, the total procurement made by the Government of India so far as rice and wheat are concerned was Rs. 15.44 lakh tons.

Mr. Speaker: Page number?

Shri Chintamani Panigrahi: I am giving the figures which were supplied in answer to a question. For rice, it comes to 13.6 lakh tons and for wheat,