

**SHRI LAL K. ADVANI:** These days we are trying to sort out our economic problems also by negotiating with the IMF, etc. Very often, issues of this kind are also linked up with them. This may be right or this may be wrong, I do not know. So, these misgivings can be set at rest only by sharing with the House. the thinking of the Government in this regard. So far as I feel, this is a matter which should not in any way be linked up with our economic problems. It should be decided on its own. If there are certain lobbies which are interested in forcing us to sign this particular document, we should stay away from it. Therefore, my demand would be this. Let the Government share with the House as to what is its thinking in this regard before going to participate in that. (*Interruptions*)

**SHRI LOKANATH CHOUDHURY:** Sir, what about the issue raised by Shrimati Malini Bhattacharya and what is the reaction of the Government? The Government must say something. The Opposition is already unanimous on this point. Whatever the Government does, they must bring it to the House. The House should know what the government is thinking on this point.

(*Interruptions*)

**SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE:** Why the leader of the House is so unresponsive today? (*Interruptions*)

**SHRI LOKNATH CHOUDHURY** (Jagatsinghpur): The silence of the Government only shows that they have already agreed to this. (*Interruptions*)

**SHRI HARADHAN ROY** (Asansol): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the government to the serious situation arising out of the decision of the Government to privatise or close down some of the public sector units on the plea that they are sick. Over the years, since nationalisation, most of these public sector units were taken over

from the private sector for modernisation, diversification and expansion, but nothing has been done. In West Bengal, Sen-Raleigh - now Cycle Corporation of India - MAMC, BOGL, seven refractory units under Burn Standard, and fertiliser units are on the verge of closure. IISCO's future is uncertain. The modernisation programme is yet to come from the Government's side. Even Coal India is facing a bleak future. While private sector is demanding coal-bearing land, privatisation of power generation is promoting privatisation of coal mines. ECL has already notified closure of 32 mines in Raniganj.

I would request the Government to give up this privatisation and closure move and try to improve the functioning of the public sector units by modernisation, expansion, diversification, etc. It is high time that the Government should abandon the privatisation and closure more. Otherwise, workers of the closed public sector units will resist the Government's move and the situation will be worse. The Government must have realised the gravity of the situation after the 29th November, one-day industrial strike. (*Interruptions*)

**MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER:** I have called the name of Shri Anna Joshi, Let him speak.

(*Interruptions*)

**SHRI ANNA JOSHI** (Pune): Sir, Maharashtra State has been facing severe drought condition this year. The Government has fixed a quota of rice to be levied on the rice-mill owners. It is increasingly becoming difficult to fulfil the stipulated quota. Government authorities and revenue officials are pressing hard to extract levy from rice-mill owners. Drought has already brought down the yields and paddy cultivation which is limited only to three or four districts of Konkan and Bhandara in Vidarbha. Further, the price extended by Government for such levy is half that of market price.