

Then, Sir, in a comprehensive memorandum to the Government the multi-lateral agency, that is the World bank, has also demanded increase in the Prices of fertilisers, irrigation, water, electricity and reforms to reduce the farm subsidy which is largely enjoyed by the rich State and rich farms. It is said that 1992 Budget should provide...

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARAMANGALAM): Sir, normally, you do not refer to the newspapers' reports.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: On this important issue there is no reaction by the Government.

Sir, it is said that 1992 Union Budget should provide for the subsidy cut.

SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARAMANGALAM: Generally, Sir, newspapers' reports are not referred to here.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Let us take it to be my observation.

Therefore, Sir, the situation is going to become more critical. Are we continuing to be an independent country or not? I do not know. Who is going to decide our policy? Our Budget policy, economic policy, everything is being dictated here which is having... (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

Please listen

[*English*]

Please listen Cannot you think of the country for a while?

[*Translation*]

Nobody knows as to when some one is in or out of power.

[*English*]

I know he is also feeling concerned. But sitting there, obviously he has to make his presence felt. Please, not in this manner. When serious situations are being raised here, matters should be given proper attention. I am sure nobody in this country and nobody in this House can deny that price situation is critical and becoming more and more critical. Therefore, instead of trying to shout me down which you cannot, you try to listen and take some steps.

Therefore, I call upon the Government at least to make a statement here immediately as to what is going to happen and what steps they are taking on this very very vital issue. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI LAL K ADVANI: Sir, I rise to draw the attention of the Government to the virtual paralysis of postal services in the North-Eastern Region because of the strike undertaken since 15th November by postal employees belonging to the C&D Group. This is the situation. Their grievances are very legitimate. Their grievances are that all Central Government employees in the North-Eastern States like, Assam, Meghalaya, Mizora, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Tripura and Manipur are paid a Special Duty Allowance because of the geographical conditions there, the transport difficulties etc., etc., and even from among the postal employees, Group A & B officials have been given this allowance, but Group C & D employees have been denied this. They went to the Central Administrative Tribunal which directed that they should be paid. Subsequently, the Government went to the Supreme Court and sought a Stay. The Supreme Court refused to give a Stay and

the legal battle has been going on. They have been pushed to this extreme of strike as a result of which the people there, are suffering. When postal services crumble in this manner of becoming paralysed, the people are also suffering.

Therefore, I would appeal to the Government and the Minister of Communications in particular, that let him realise that the telecommunication employees have been compelled to pay because of the Court Judgement. Why should these people be denied and why should they be forced to take recourse to a strike?

Therefore, immediately, this matter should be taken up. Their very legitimate demands should also be treated at par with other employees. They should also be paid the Special duty Allowance.

[*Translation*]

PROF. PREM DHUMAL (Hamirpur): I would like to add to it that the Special leave petition filed by the Government should be withdrawn. They, therefore, should hold negotiations.

(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI CHITTA BASU (Barasat). Sir, a very important issue has been raised by Shri Somnath Chatterjee. The issue relates to the increase of prices. It was said during the Budget discussion, that the price increase was of a temporary nature and it is also of a seasonal character. I think, even several months after the Budget, the increase in prices continues unabated.

The Prime Minister is on record to say that special arrangements are being made for strengthening and expanding the Public Distribution System. Instead of further ex-

panding the Public Distribution System, the requisite amount of foodstuffs, kerosene oil and other essential commodities which are supplied through the Public Distribution System are not being supplied to the State Governments. In the list of the State Governments, I include the Governments of Kerala, Tripura, West Bengal and almost all the State Governments who run the Public Distribution System in any way. So, the price increase has not been halted. This price increase is due to the faulty economic policy of the Government of India. It is because the Government of India has accepted that policy at the behest of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank to allow the monopolists and the multi-national corporations to plunder our country.

Therefore, I want that the Government should make a statement and you should also allow a discussion on the price situation in the country which has gone beyond limits.

[*Translation*]

SHRI MORESHWAR SAVE (Aurangabad): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through this House I would like to draw the attention of the Minister of Communications to the telephone system at Aurangabad (Maharashtra). The equipments which have been procured from I.T.I. Rai Bareilly last year for the expansion of telephone exchange in Aurangabad are of inferior quality in comparison to those manufactured in I.T.I., Bangalore. As a result of it, I think, Telephone services in Aurangabad would not be improved even after its expansion. The Department which takes the policy decision in regard to installation of telephone exchanges has not yet sanctioned. The Exchange of 5000 telephone lines for Aurangabad.

Similarly, an exchange having 600 lines is going to be installed in Chikaldhana city of this district in which all equipments removed from Jalna are being used. I urge upon the