

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Sir, I beg to report to the House the following message received from the Lok Sabha signed by the Secretary-General of the Lok Sabha:

"In accordance with the provisions of rule 120 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, I am directed to inform you that Lok Sabha, at its sitting held on the 24th March, 1995, agreed without any amendment to the Securities Laws (Amendment) Bill, 1995, which was passed by Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 21st March, 1995."

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

The Situation Arising out of Non-Payment of wages and Statutory dues and Closing Down of a Number of Public Sector Undertakings

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA (West Bengal): Sir, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Labour to the situation arising out of the non-payment of wages, default in payment of statutory dues, virtual closing down of a number of Public Sector Undertakings all over the country and failure of the BIFR to take a view on sick PSUs and in some cases refusal of financial institutions to advance money for their revival.

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): Sir, the Government is aware of the problem of delayed payment of wages to the workers in some of the PSUs. The issue of non-payment of wages, statutory dues, etc. to the workers of PSUs including NTC, NJMC, JESSOP, Burn Standard Company, Braithwaite & Company, etc. was earlier discussed in the meeting of the Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Labour held on 14.12.1994 and in the Rajya Sabha on 12.12.1994. The Committee also discussed revival and rehabilitation of sick public sector units. (Interruptions).

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, I am on a point of order. The Minister has made a reference to the proceedings of the Consultative Committee meeting. Normally the proceedings of the Consultative Committee meetings are not referred to in the House. It is a convention. So, it should be deleted from the statement. The consultative Committee proceedings are never mentioned in this House. But, he has mentioned it in his statement. It should be deleted. Sir, it is not the convention of the House. The Minister cannot do it.

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA (Bihar): Sir, the proceedings of the Consultative Committee meetings are never discussed in this House.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, the point of order is perfectly valid. Though his reference is innocuous, let not the violation of rules be permitted.

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: Sir, the Minister should delete these words.

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Sir, there is nothing wrong in passing on the vital information, but the Minister should not mention the proceedings of the Consultative Committee.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Mr. Minister, you have delete it.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: Sir, I will delete it. I will delete the whole thing.

I think I can refer to the Tripartite Committee. Sir, I am sorry. I did not know it. I must confess my ignorance.

In the meeting of the Industrial Tripartite Committee on Engineering Industry held on 30.11.1994, it was suggested that in regard to sick PSUs referred to the BIFR, quick decisions should be facilitated. For this purpose, the Ministry of Labour has taken up the matter with all concerned administrative Ministries.

[Shri P.A. Sangama]

According to the information received from the Ministry of Textiles, salaries and wages to the workers of NTC have been released up to February 1995. According to the information received from the Department of Heavy Industry, the Burn Standard Co. Ltd. has paid wages and salaries to its workers up to February 1995 except for the Raniganj Group where payments up to 24th February, 1995 have been made.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, I don't refer to the Consultative Committee because that is not the practice in this House. But, this statement only indicates that there is an attempt on the part of the Government not to tell the truth. The truth has been tampered with. And this is a futile attempt on the part of the Government to tell the Parliament that the Government is concerned about it. Sir, I thank the hon. Minister for Labour because he has honestly painted the situation, but dishonesty lies somewhere else. The nodal Ministries have not been informing the Labour Minister of the real situation. It should have been the responsibility of the Prime Minister to come before the House and clear the issue because we are discussing inter-Ministerial responsibilities. Sir, let me tell you that there is no word in the dictionary of labour laws which describes non-payment of wages as delayed payment. According to law, non-payment of wages on the due date is a default and it is an offence under law. Therefore, the hon. Finance Minister had resorted to camouflaging the real situation. Whenever wages are not paid on the due date, it is a default and it is not a delay. Default in the payment of wages is punishable under law in this country. Therefore, at the beginning the Labour Minister agreed that his Government could be accused of violating labour laws in the country. Sir, may I submit that Government is a stark hypocrite on the question of revival of the public sector units?

There is an element of hypocrisy in the policies that the Government is pursuing. Let it also be mentioned, Sir, that the Government is accused of violating labour laws. Violation of labour laws is a criminal offence. The Government has also cynically broken its pledge or promise it had given to the Parliament. The anti-labour bias of the Government's new economic policies, I think, our Members from the Janata Dal would also be interested in discussing. Is it not so?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): You should address the Chair and not the Members.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: I am asking you, Sir. I feel that the anti-labour bias of the Government's economic policies is becoming pronounced every day. What is surprising is that money allotted for the sick public sector undertakings has not been released or is not being released in full. If the hon. Minister wants some example, there is the example of the Bharat Ophthalmic Glass in Durgapur. They were allotted rupees one crore. Only 15 days back I had been to Durgapur. I was told by the Management that not a pie had been released. Sir, the Government has created history in the country by refusing to implement the tripartite agreement that it had signed. There is a catalogue of crimes that the Government has practised. In July, 1994, there was a tripartite agreement and the hon. Minister who had signed the agreement has been elevated to the Cabinet rank. But the agreement that had been signed, has been shelved. The agreement was signed by Mr. Sangma and by Mr. Venkat Swamy. I think both them have been promoted to the Cabinet rank. But it is an irony that the Cabinet Members do not have that influence over the Cabinet so as to get their own agreement processed through the Cabinet. What has happened to the agreement? The tripartite agreement has not been implemented. It has been sent to a Cabinet sub-Committee consisting of the Minister of Labour

Mr. Sangma, the Minister of Textiles, Mr. Venkat Swamy, the all powerful Mr. Mukherjee and Mr. Bhardwaj and the Sub-Committee has just been deliberating over the clauses. They have just been deliberating. They have not come to a conclusion. As a result of their meaningless, prolonged, infructuous deliberation, wages have not been paid statutory dues are piling up and production has come to a halt in a large number of public sector undertakings of the country. It is a matter of shame that the electric supply has been withdrawn from a number of public sector undertakings because they did not pay the charges. As a result, workers are made to drink unfiltered water; they have to live in a room where there is no power. Sir, may I ask you, if the Government is so much concerned about fulfilling its international commitments, why is it so light-hearted in fulfilling the domestic commitments of its own workers? Sir, if Parliament can be given wages and salaries, if the lavish international tour programmes of Ministers can be financed by the Ministry of Finance, why is it that the workers, the Government employees, should remain without wages? If the Government has turned insolvent, let the world know of it; let there be default of payment in respect of all. If the Government has not turned insolvent, what can be the economic reason, what can be the financial reason, for withholding payment to poor workers of the country? Sir, the point is that there has been non-payment of wages in a large number of factories. I will refer to the list later on. But there is a legal question. Parliament makes laws. It is for the Government to implement the laws. If the Government violates them, what is the remedy for the country? If a labourer is to receive Rs. 1,600 per month, the violation on account of non-payment of his wage is punishable under the Minimum Wages Act, an Act which Parliament has enacted. If the wage is still higher, then the non-payment of

wages is punishable under the Industrial Disputes Act because the payment has been agreed upon on the basis of a contract entered into through a mutual discussion between the trade union and the management. If the contract is violated, then it is equally punishable under the Industrial Disputes Act. Therefore, to say that there has been a default or there has been a delay in payment is a sophisticated way of describing a criminal offence on the part of the Government which is supposed to be a legally constituted Government. Sir, if we would like to go into the details, the Minister cannot give us the details because the Department did not give him the details. Now, if we go into the details, what is the situation at the moment? Take the case of the National Textile Mills in and around the country. I was at Calcutta yesterday and I visited various mills. I spoke to the workers of a number of mills including the Central Cotton Mills, particularly the one at Rampuria I do not like to name any particular textile mill.

The payment has been deferred for two consecutive fortnights. *(Interruptions)...*

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: You are taking the name.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: There is nothing wrong in it.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: I can always take the names because I have personal knowledge. The Minister must know the facts. If the Minister already knows the facts, it is for him to come out frankly in Parliament. But the Minister has not been informed of the facts. That is the way the Government is functioning. The Minister of Labour has been taken for a ride. That is why the nodal Ministry did not inform him. It is because of this the Minister of Labour cannot tell Parliament where and in what places the wages have not been paid. Let me share my information with the hon. Member. The wages have not been paid in a number of National Textile Mills of West

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Bengal, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan and several other States for consecutive periods. The list is long. Madam, while we are discussing today. *(Interruptions).*

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Are you addressing the Chair as Madam?

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: I am haunted by the memory of our Deputy Chairperson who normally is in the Chair. *(Interruptions).*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Okay, okay, let him go ahead.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: I am haunted by the sweet memory of the presence of our gracious Deputy Chairperson. Anyway, let me get rid of that memory now. While we are discussing this, the problem of default in the payment of provident fund and other statutory dues, there are thousands of jute workers waiting near the Parliament House. They have come to Delhi all the way from Calcutta to tell the Parliament the story of their anguish. Mr. Vice-Chairman, you may kindly remember the prestigious engineering concern of the whole country which is 150 years old, M/s. Jessops. Even in this, there has been non-payment of salaries for more than three months.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY (Andhra Pradesh): The IDPL is being closed down.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Yes, the IDPL is being closed down. It is not in one State only. The IDPL unit in Bihar has just been closed down without a notice of closure. The Government of India is pursuing the anti-labour practice of the private sector. No closure notice is given. The production has been suspended. The workers do not get their wages and the production has come to a halt, to a stand-still. In spite of this, the hon. Minister of Labour who has been elevated to the Cabinet rank tells us that there has been no default and that there

is only some delay in the payments. In the Burn Standard, a century-old industrial unit of West Bengal, wages are not paid for one month. In the MAMC of Durgapur, a public sector unit set up by the Government of India, wages are not being paid to its workers. The question is, the Prime Minister can be paid his salary. The Members of Parliament can be supplied with a sophisticated computer by spending Rs. 3 lakhs on every such computer. But the poor workers cannot be paid their salaries for months. What is the remedy? There is a growing feeling that there is no remedy in the system. The system fails totally. If there is no remedy in the system and if the workers become impatient, what is the future of this country? If they lose faith in the system, what is the future of this country? This is only about the salaries. What about the provident fund dues? The hon. Minister was not replying to this issue properly. The total arrears of the National Textile Mills is Rs. 12 crores. If Tapuria, proprietor of the Indian Cables can be arrested for his failure to pay the statutory dues, why should I not, in the case of NTC's default in payment of statutory dues, demand the arrest of the Minister of Textiles, Shri Venkat Swamy? Why should there be double standards? In the eyes of law, all the citizens are equal. The people in the private sector who defaulted in the payment of statutory dues are sent to jail and it is quite right. But why should the Government servants including the Minister be taken to be innocent if they commit violation of the law in the same way as the private sector does? In the case of M/s. Jessops, the default is of the order of Rs. 12 crores. In the case of MAMC, the default is of the order of Rs. 9 crores. It is not only these two companies. I now refer to a particular jute mill in West Bengal, the National Jute Mills. In this, eight hundred workers retired three months ago. This is a long story. This is unparalleled and unprecedented. This exemplifies the

Government of India's violation of labour laws with impunity and there is no remedy in the system. There is no remedy. And the uninterrupted violation of the law by the Government of India only inspires the private sector to commit the same crime. The result is, the innocent workers of the country become victims of an unparalleled criminality in this country.

The tragedy is that the hon. Prime Minister, while speaking in this House, has repeatedly said that the economic reforms will bring new benefits. He has said this repeatedly in this House. The Minister of Finance has also said that those sick public sector units which can be made viable shall be made viable. What happened to the assurance of the Prime Minister? What happened to the assurance of the Finance Minister?

Not only the human face has been lost but also the worst prosecution of the working class right or left, is taking place in the country. Sir, I can tell you that this is an issue on which there is a total unanimity in the country. The trade unions whether they belong to the right or the left, having the tricolour or the red flag, are uniting today to fight this illegality, but there is no remedy. What is unfortunate is that while a factory is being referred to the BIFR, the budgetary support is being withdrawn. While the BIFR has not taken a final view and the matter is still being discussed, the budgetary support is being withdrawn by the Government? The budgetary support is being withdrawn by Dr. Singh and as a result of this refusal of funds while the matter is still pending with the BIFR, production comes to a complete halt. A death certificate is being given even before a patient is clinically dead. As a result of the withdrawal of the budgetary support, production comes to a halt and there is a virtual closure and there is total suspension of production. Even in those cases where the BIFR agrees to a revival plan, the financial institutions refuse to give money. The

BIFR was set up under an Act of Parliament to take an expeditious view on the question of revival and we all were given to understand that the BIFR is the all powerful semi-judicial body that will finally decide the fate of the sick units. But, now it has come to light that even on issues where the BIFR comes to a decision, the banks refuse, at one, to finance the revival package. Sir, once the public sector was the most favoured child of the Government, but now it has appeared that the public sector constitutes the condemned segment of the economy.

Sir, may I take this opportunity, most humbly, to request the Government to kindly spell out its policy? Let the double-talk end; let the gap between the promise and performance disappear; let the Government come to Parliament and spell out its own policy; let the duplicity come to an end; let hypocrisy be substituted by an objective and honest economic strategy; let the violation of law be not condoned; and let illegality not be white-washed. Sir, if the working class is harassed, if the working class is humiliated, if the working class is left in the lurch, it is not the machine that can bring about the revival of the economy. Dr Singh must remember that it is not the machine that can bring about higher productivity. It is not the machine or the best technology he may import from foreign countries that can bring about a turn-around. Without the man the machines can't be activated. Therefore, if the working class is left in the lurch, the country's reform programme is bound to fail. This gentle working class can't bring about any increase in productivity. Therefore, Sir, I appeal to the

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Now, you put the question to the Minister.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: I appeal to his heart, to the Government and also to the political leadership, if it has still time to ponder, let the

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Government feel that while giving a fair deal to the foreign investors there should not be a raw deal for the workers. Your policy of "hire and fire" is not going to work. That is a point which the Government should understand. If the policy of confrontation is going to be pursued, then social tension is sure to be generated and in a condition of fragile economic reforms, the rising social tensions will definitely create a situation where the advance of the country will be uncertain.

Sir, the working class does not want this. We want the country to advance and the working class wants a fair deal. We do not want to be treated as a favoured child nor do we want to be treated as a step-child. Let there be a fair deal. Sir, the benefit of economic reforms is going to be more than counter-balanced by the social costs of the rising tempo of tension in the society. Therefore, we had been discussing this issue over the years in the Houses of Parliament. Let the hon. Minister honestly come before us and spell out the policy and let him say, if the Government is bent upon closing down the public sector industry, and bent upon continuing the criminality, it is for the working class to take to the path of confrontation. We are not going to take this line of continuing the criminality lying down. India's working class, despite its differences shall be one to fight this anti-national economic policy. It is for the Government to make the choice. We want conciliation and not confrontation. We want the path of objective development. We want a fair deal. We do not want confrontation. But, if the confrontation is thrust on us, then the Government is held responsible for the repercussions. Thank you, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Thank you. Now, Shri Dipankar Mukherjee.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE (WEST BENGAL): Sir firstly.....

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) : Switch on the mike please.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Sir firstly, I am afraid of certain words used by the Government. They are, 'taking up the matter', 'the matter is being taken up', 'the matter is under consideration', 'the matter is under active consideration', etc. These are the words which are being given for the last three years.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): The mike is not working. Let them put it on.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: I am going to quote one example. A meeting was held on the 30th November last year and it has been referred to by the hon. Minister. It was the tripartite Committee meeting on engineering industry. What has happened to the results of the meeting? Quick action? The Ministry of Labour has taken up the matter with all the concerned administrative Ministries that they should take quick action. Can I tell him the exciting example so far as 'quick action' is concerned after this meeting? The Ministry of Industry, example number one; Tyre Corporation of India. A scheme is notified by the BIFR. This is in December, 1994. Before that meeting, on 20th September the BIFR prepares a scheme that was agreeable to every one. Banks also. The Government then asks for some time. It is, September 1994. In December 1994, the scheme is notified. And then, there is a meeting of the BIFR on March 6, 1995. All of a sudden, after 4 months, banks decide that their agreement is subject to certain conditions. So, they put new conditions to the BIFR in the month of February. And, the Ministry of Industry's representatives say, in March, after 3 months, that they require another two months!

Is this the way rapid, quick action is going to be taken on sick units? I want a specific reply. I want that the Minister for

Industry should also reply. What next? If you want time, timing for what? Revival of which unit? A sick unit. Who is going to give it non-Plan support? It is the Minister of Finance. Is he prepared to do it? Look at the Budget and see whether any non-Plan support has been given to it. The same thing will be for the same kind of cases referred by Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta. No action is there.

If I go to the Minister of Labour, Shri Sangama(Interruptions)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): You please take some other mike. I think there is something wrong with your mike.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Sir, so far as salaries and wages are concerned, the Payment of Wages Act, section 3, section 4, section 20, etc., I need not tell Mr. Sangama all this. He knows it. What has he been doing for the last one year in the tripartite meeting or otherwise? When he goes there and it is told by the trade unions and organisations that salaries are not being paid, he gives a very good and sweet smile and says, "I will see to it that the salaries and wages are paid." If we go to the Minister of Finance, Dr. Manmohan Singh, and I have already met him four times, his contention is very clear. He says, "As far as the demand for salaries, wages and statutory wages is concerned, I will see that they are paid and there is no blockade from my side." Then we go to the concerned Ministry. More or less mostly I have to handle the Ministry of Industry. She does not speak too much. But whenever she speaks she says, "What will I do? I ask for money, but no one gives me the money." This musical chair is going on for years and not for one year. Mr. Das Gupta has cited some cases. You see how they are taking the decisions. The name of Jessop Company has been referred to by Mr. Das Gupta. This company has gone to the BIFR only recently. It was not a sick company in those terms of sickness. In October 1992, in anticipation of sickness in the healthy

unit, the management and the union jointly decided to sell the head office for acquiring some working capital. When this point was decided, the Ministry of Industry was very much involved in that decision. The second decision they took was relating to a loan of 13 crores of rupees which they took before nationalisation. The interest on this 13 crores of rupees is being taken care of by the Jessops Company. They want to regularise it. The amount of 13 crores has become 40 crores. That is the loan taken before nationalisation because Jessops was nationalised in the eighties. It was agreed. I have posed two questions on this issue regarding sale of the head office from which they could have taken some working capital and they could have more production and they were in a position to add to it. They had a order of 140 crores, but still they do not have the working capital. They cannot pay salaries. About this decision of October 1992, I have put two questions in the Rajya Sabha. I have also given three letters. What has been the reply. "So far as sale of the head office is concerned, some procedural formalities are required and that the matter is being sorted out and action is being taken." So one letter, two letters, three letters, and upto March 1995, still some procedural formalities are being completed. This is the sense of urgency. It is the Jessops that is paying the salary of January in the month of March and it is when they are not asking for money from the Government. Jessop has not been financially supported by Shri Manmohan Singh. It is not getting support from the banks. They have taken a decision and implementation is yet to be completed and by this time from 1992 to 1995 it has become sick and is being referred to the BIFR. Who is responsible for this? I referred to Tyre Corporation, I now refer to Hooghly Docks which is under the Ministry of surface Transport. In these cases, action is still to be taken. You have to appreciate it. On 27th July last, I asked a question whether you had any plan for revival of Hooghly Dock and

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Port Engineers. The reply is, "Yes, a revival plan is under consideration." It was said on 27th July. In December, I asked again what the revival plan was, what the technical features were, and what the monetary implications were. This time the reply was, "This plan may be considered or may not be considered." In the month of March I again asked the same question and now they say, "A plan made by the management is under consideration for which a Committee has been formed." What did happen to the July plan? You do not know. Now, one plan has been made by the management and for considering it a Committee has been formed and that Committee will look into it and then something else will be said. In the Hooghly Port for 21 days salaries and wages have been deferred. So, overall what is it coming? It is not the Minister of Labour. He is helpless. But he cannot say himself that he is helpless but has expressed that helplessness in a nice way. So far as the sick industries are concerned, you make Sick Industrial Companies (Amendment) Act, 1975. You included the public sector. Sir, what was their objective? There cannot be any policy without any objective. If you want to implement a policy, your objective must be clear. What has happened to your objective so far as the SICA is concerned? You said that it was for the revival of the concern. That was the basic objective on which there is no lack of unanimity. That is the purpose for which you included the sick public units in the SICA. What have you been doing on that if that has been your objective? Once it is referred to the BIFR, the first and foremost thing which is required is a holding on operation till the companies are revived or till the company has decided to be closed down by the BIFR. The Finance Minister has been very specific here when last time I moved a Calling Attention Motion. He said he was going to give finance to potentially viable units, that is, once it is referred to the BIFR, unless the BIFR

decides whether it is potentially viable or not, Government will be a silent spectator. You go to any Ministry, more or less there are xerox copies ready for response. You refer to any sick company under the Fertilizer Ministry, under the Ministry of Surface Transport, under the Ministry of Textiles, under the Ministry of Industry. You will find that all of them would say that the units have been referred to the BIFR. The BIFR is a quasi-judicial authority and the BIFR will take a final decision. It appears that many of the Ministers, barring a few like Shri Sangma, feel that once it is handed over to the BIFR, so far as the Government of India is concerned, they have washed off their hands.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL (Rajasthan): How many sick units are there?

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: In West Bengal itself there are 22, in all, it will be about 40. Mr. Sangma will give the actual figures. If I am wrong you can check it. And it involves a number of people. It is not a question of small units or big units. This Government does not have money. We are talking about big companies, provident funds of Rs. 12 lakh in respect of 188 employees for Weigh Bird Ltd. has not been paid. This is a statutory Provident Funds, and, whether it is small or big, the basic question is what exactly is your approach and objective so far as the SICA is concerned.

How many minutes do I have?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): We have given you 10 minutes. You can continue for 5 minutes more.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: It is a question of what exactly you are going to do. The BIFR fixes a time-limit of 3 months for operating agencies to prepare a revival plan. The operating agencies are given three months' time to study, to do everything and then make a revival plan. You will find organisation after organisation where the Government response has been next to nothing. They

have to only say whether they agree to revival plan or whether they will finance the scheme prepared by the BIFR. Whereas the scheme is prepared within 3 months by operating agencies, the response of the Government takes more than 6 months. I know as a professional, preparing a scheme is more difficult. Studying it and saying 'Yes' or 'No' is not that difficult. Beyond that before even an operating agency starts its job, whether the Government of India is interested to work as a promoter or not is the fundamental question. The BIFR cannot be a substitute promoter. The BIFR cannot arrange finance. The BIFR can give guidelines which are not mandatory so far as the Government of India is concerned. That is happening. Wherever the BIFR has gone in for a decision for show-cause, for winding up of 4 companies I know, the Government has immediately decided, the response has been prompt. The Government has decided that it is not going to contest that recommendation. That means the recommendations of closure involving Cycle Corporation, Weigh Bird, BPMEI, National Instruments etc., the Government is responsive enough to say, "No, we are not going to contest the recommendations". Wherever they have gone in for a revival scheme, wherever the operating agency has given a workable scheme, there the Government's response has been, "Let us take two months, another two months, another two months". And the time is going on like this. In some cases the bench is asking govt. as a promoter, "do you have any scheme? Then give it". What has happened in the fertiliser case? It was referred to in 1992. Today, in 1995, Sir, please ask the Fertiliser Ministry whether any scheme has been given by the Fertiliser Ministry before BIFR Bench. No. they are telling the operating agency should make it. It has to be made by the company. Now, of course because of Mr. Ram Lakhan Singh Yadav, some plan is being made by the Ministry.

When all these things are going on, the special tripartite committee which had been set up has become more or less infructuous; it has no importance now. A Group of Ministers has been formed to crystallise the opinion of the Government, i.e. three or four people. Earlier, I could go to a nodal agency. I could go to a particular Minister and find out whether a particular company was going to be revived or not. But today, it is not like that. If I go and ask the Minister of Industry, she would say that I should go to the Group of Ministers. If I go to Mr. Sangma, he would also say that I should go to the Group of Ministers. To some trade unions, the Group of Ministers has become, what we call in Hinduism, *nirakar*. It is not *sakar*. It is not visible. It is invisible. No point in having this Group of Ministers, which has no accountability.

Summing up, I would say that there are four things which are to be considered. Firstly, once a case goes to the BIFR, the Government has to give an undertaking that till the company is closed, they would pay the wages, etc. Can that assurance be given by the hon. Minister? If the hon. Minister is not prepared to give that assurance, the Prime Minister or whoever is the authority should give that assurance.

Secondly, after it is referred to the BIFR, there must be a time-frame within which the Government should give its scheme, should give its mind whether it is prepared to finance, if the scheme is viable.

Thirdly, after a scheme has been given by the operating agency, there should be some time-frame within which the Group of Ministers or 12 Ministers or the whole Cabinet should give its decision; say, within one-and-a-half months or two months, the Group of Ministers should say 'Yes' or 'No' to the BIFR.

The fourth aspect is the non-implementation of the schemes which is a very serious issue. Actually, a few

[Shri Dipankar Mukherjee] schemes have been approved. These have been agreed to by the Government. But the Government has been backing out. Schemes have been sanctioned. For example, we have the case of Bharat Brakes and Valves and that of Smith Stanistreet and Pharmaceuticals Limited. In the case of Smith Stanistreet, the scheme has been sanctioned; agreed to by the Government, banks and the trade unions, but it is not functioning. The scheme has been sanctioned, but it is not functioning. Therefore, I would ask: why should not the Government itself be penalised under section 33 of the SICA?

These are the four aspects on which I would like to have the reaction of the hon. Minister; if not, from the Government of India.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Mr. Vayalar Ravi.

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: Sir, his name is not there in the list.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: One minute, Sir. We made a request to the hon. Chairman that the Minister of Finance may be requested to be present here to answer some of the points because it is not the Labour Ministry only. I was told by the Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs that our concern, our request, and also that of the hon. Chairman, had been conveyed to the Minister of Finance. Still he is not present here. It is really an affront. I take it that while vital issues are being discussed, the hon. Minister of Finance is absent because he has nothing to say in reply to the questions that we are raising here. I would like to request you, Sir, to send for the hon. Minister of Finance so that he comes here to answer the questions. I think this is the demand of many of us here.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: Sir, I would like to add...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V.

NARAYANASAMY): I will have to deal with his point first.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: This is in addition to what Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta has said. I would like to refer to the last part of the Motion. It reads: '...in some cases refusal of financial institutions to advance money for their revival'. This particular portion definitely relates to the Finance Ministry. The Labour Ministry is not competent to answer this question.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, I have repeatedly requested the hon. Chairman.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: Mr. Vice-Chairman, the last portion, in fact, deals with the whole aspect of the question. The Finance Minister should have been here.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: I have repeatedly requested the hon. Chairman. The hon. Chairman also conveyed his request. Today, just now, I was told by the Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs that he has been informed. Sir, this is most unfortunate.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Kindly take your seat.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Let us send for him. If the Minister of Finance does not make himself available in the House, it is really useless discussing many of the issues that we have raised.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Kindly take your seat. I will deal with your point. Both of you have raised the point. I will convey your sentiments to the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs to inform the Finance Minister. Mr. Vayalar Ravi.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: The Parliamentary Affairs Minister also is not present in the House, that is also deplorable. We have six Ministers and a Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs. None of them is here. This is the

way the matter is being dealt with by the Government.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Mr. Das Gupta, there is the concerned Minister to answer your point.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: It is not his concern alone. The Minister of Finance is equally concerned, because the last part of my Calling-Attention relates to the Ministry of Finance.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Therefore, I have already said that I will inform the Parliamentary Affairs Minister about your sentiments.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Where is the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): When they come, I will inform them. Kindly take your seat.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA (West Bengal): when they come, it will be too late. ...*(Interruptions)*... What I am suggesting is, let one of the Ministers take the responsibility of sending information to the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): That I will take care of. Don't worry.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: The Minister of Labour himself is not the only one responsible for this. Money is not coming. The Minister in charge of doling out the money should be here really to answer this question. I wish there was a Minister here. If one of the two Minister who are here would be kind enough to go and convey the information...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Kindly take your seat. That they will take care of.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर: श्रीमन्, आवश्यकता इस बात की है कि जो विषय फाइनेंस मिनिस्ट्री से संबंधित था, उसकी भी बात आनी चाहिए थी, लेकिन मंत्री महोदय ने उनकी बात ही नहीं की। वास्तव में यहां एक ऐसा ज्वॉयंट स्टेटमेंट आना चाहिए, जो मुद्रा फाइनेंस मिनिस्टर से संबंधित है, उस पर भी प्रकाश डाला जाना

चाहिए। जो नहीं है, अब उस पर क्या क्वेश्चन पूछेंगे..*(व्यवधान)*..because many questions were raised to which reply has to be there.

SHRI VAYALAYAR RAVI (Kerala): Sir, this is a very important issue which has been raised by my friend on the other side, especially concerning the workers. It is not merely a question of paying salaries to a few workers. There are certain major policy issues which are involved. That is the first provocation for me to intervene in this debate. But I am afraid this question is being posed to the wrong person, the Labour Minister, because the owner of the industry is the Minister of Industry, and the person to support or assist him is the Finance Minister. I do not know what assurance the Labour Minister, my friend, Mr. Sangma, can give. He can only show his ever-smiling face. I do not know whether he can give anything more.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: I can go one step further and laugh.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: So, Sir it is a very serious matter. I fully agree with the persistent demand of Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta that some kind of an assurance should come from the Finance Minister. Naturally, we hope that before the conclusion of this debate he will be present in this House and give an assurance. It is not only payment to a few workers, but a general question is involved. That is the main thing which, I thought, has got to be debated.

Sir, when a public enterprise is declared sick and referred to the BIFR, the question is whether the Government is going to take the position that they would not pay the salaries. If it is so, it would create a more serious problem.

The names of some of the industries are being mentioned here, like NTC and NJMC, among others. So far as the NTC is concerned, everyone knows that the whole NTC began as a sick industry. Its beginning itself was as a sick industry, because many textile mills became sick and the Government of India, first by an

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ordinance and later by an enactment in parliament took over the whole industry, and with an intensive to give employment and protect the vital sector of the industry with improvement in its activities. But, unfortunately, the performance of the NTC has not been up to the mark, and it is for the Government and the authorities concerned to improve its performance and make it a profitable concern and not punish the workers, whom the Government had already decided to protect. It was done during Mrs. Indira Gandhi's time, when she was the Prime Minister.

Sir, here the BIFR comes into the picture. As rightly pointed out, the intent itself was to rehabilitate an industry or to improve its condition, whenever an industry becomes sick. So, automatically it is referred to the BIFR. They intervene and they find promoters or investors and see that some kind of understanding between the workers and management is arrived at. But, I am afraid, the BIFR itself is delaying matters.

Sir, it is necessary to look into the functioning of the BIFR also. Many industries have been lying closed for two years, three years, in Kerala. They are still pending before the BIFR. They call a meeting once in six months and go away. The BIFR also should take it very seriously. It is not a matter for the BIFR to keep everything with itself, pile up the files and sit over them. Unfortunately, the functioning of the BIFR is delaying the whole process of rehabilitation of the workers and restructuring of the industry and making it viable. I am sorry for that. The Government must look into the functioning of the BIFR. This is number one.

Number two is mainly the issue of the whole policy. The hon. Member very vocally argued about it. I agree with him. What was the objective of the public sector? What are the great ideas of Jawaharlal Nehru? He initiated the whole process with mere Rs. 26 crores and

started Public Sector Industries. One of the objects is to create employment opportunities. So, what is the position today?

Employment has come down from 21.52 lakhs to 20.69 lakhs. It means that 83,000 people have become unemployed. What is the motive or objective? It is to create employment opportunities. Unfortunately, it has come to a position of creating more unemployment than employment opportunities. This is worrying people like me.

Then, the other important objective is to promote a balanced regional growth. The public sector has contributed to a balanced regional growth in the nation for the last 40 years. If there is the new economic policy and liberalisation, it does not mean, to my understanding, making the public sector sick, closing it down and giving room for the private sector. It is not so. We do not agree with that philosophy, with that sort of thinking. I believe that different states are clamouring for industrial development only because of the public sector enterprises. They contribute to regional growth, economic growth and industrial development in the country. What is the motive of the private sector? What is the motive of the people who argue about market economy? The motive is profit, nothing else. They are not concerned about social awareness. They are not concerned about social security. They are not concerned about the social purpose and the need of the people. They are concerned only about their profit. In that case, Sir, regional imbalance is none of their concern. It is the concern of the Government. Hence this public sector. Unfortunately, here also a deliberate attempt is being made by certain quarters, certain people who are at the helm of affairs, to let it go sick. Who is responsible? Where have you fixed the responsibility? Who is responsible for the sickness of the industry? Nobody is taking the responsibility. The time has come when we must pool our efforts to make the public sector profitable.

Sir, the other objective is to promote redistribution of income and wealth. These are the great ideals. These are being defeated today.

Sir, all the public sector undertakings are not bad. One hundred and sixteen public sector undertakings are functioning with about 75 per cent capacity utilisation. Only fifty industries are utilising below 50 per cent capacity. The Government has to study which industries are making losses and what the reasons are and then it should go into their viability.

Here, another major question arises, wherein the Finance Minister and the financial institution come in. We have seen the corporate war in the board room of the ITC in Calcutta. I am not referring to that. I am not arguing about that. But, I could see that the interests of the financial institutions, the ICICI, the IDBI, the UTI, the LIC etc. are more in the private sector. They are more concerned about the private sector. They are not concerned about the public sector. Why? These are the questions which should be looked into. These institutions, the LIC, the UTI, the IDBI etc. have been created not to meet the need of the private entrepreneurs alone. They have a role. They have a responsibility. Being Government institutions, I am sorry, they are not fulfilling their social responsibility. They are not aiding or helping the public sector enterprises. I want them to do this. Definitely, we should look into the role that these institutions are playing in promoting and keeping the public sector enterprises going on. So, Sir when the BIFR calls a meeting, it is necessary that responsible Government officers in the Industry and the concerned Ministry must be present in the meeting.

It is not the request to wind up the industries, but to revitalise them. Here the financial institutions must be asked to assist these institutions. The banks alone should not be asked.

1 P.M.

Sir, according to the report, the investment of 10 public sector industries is about 53 per cent of the total public sector investment amounting to Rs. 1,64,000 crores. It is a good thing. Look at the total investment. So, the basic question before the Government is their attitude towards the public sector, which was serving the social purpose. They are giving a profit of Rs.4,400 crores. More importantly, their contribution to the Exchequer is about Rs. 23,000 crores. Is it not a good thing? Is the profit of Rs. 4,400 crores not a good thing? It means that the public sector can be made profitable. Even though some industries are sick, it is necessary for the Government to think of the ways to revitalise them or even to diversify them. There are many modern methods and techniques to do that to involve them. In that respect, if you take into account the industries which have been closed and which have been placed before the BIFR, how many concessions have you given? There is no sales-tax concession given to them. the workers say they will not resort to agitation. I know of two or three industries where they have said they won't go in for strike for four or five years. Even today the closed Madura Coats which we are requesting to open it. We agreed that workers won't go on strike for five years. yet, whenever a sick factory is to be reopened, they want to extract the flesh and blood from the workers.

That is their only motive. They want to reduce the number of workers. They want all concessions. They say they won't give bonus. O.K. don't give bonus. Sir, the workers are the most compromising lot in the country today. They are agreeable to everything. They are even giving up the bonus, wages increase, everything, for five years. There is so much sacrifice on the part of the workers. So, is it not the duty of the Government to come forward and protect the interests of the workers and the industry? Definitely. I have no doubt that the

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Government would not close their eyes to this request of the workers. So, I agree with my friends and the labour in the country on their demands. Their apprehensions are that these public sector units may be closed down. You know, Sir, BHEL, which is in your part of the country and which is a profit-making concern, but what is happening today? I am not mentioning, Sir, but I am afraid...

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: BHEL is not given the necessary encouragement to compete with other foreign companies inside India. It is a fact.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Sir, BHEL can compete with any company in the world today. It has come up very fast and is very well, but I am sorry to say that the BHEL has not been given the necessary encouragement that it deserves. That is my apprehension. Being a trade unionist, I believe the Government must come forward to help the workers. The Government has made it clear in its 'Exit' policy. It has no difference over the interests of the workers. The Minister is always for the labour. I am confident that he will take steps to see that the confidence of the worker is with the Government and that he will protect their interests and pay them salaries at the earliest.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: What about the Finance Minister, Sir? (Interruptions)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Mr. Das Gupta, kindly hear me. You have made the point. You cannot raise every time a Member starts speaking.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: Has the message been conveyed? This is the question we want to ask.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): I called Mr. Sangma. I have already briefed him about the Finance Minister. Kindly be patient.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: Has he been informed?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): I have conveyed the message and feelings of the Members to the Minister concerned and he has been informed. Kindly take your seat now.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Here is the Minister. Mr. Matang Singh promised about the Finance Minister.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta, I have said that he has been informed. Kindly take your seat.

संसदीय कार्य मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री मंतग सिंह): मैंने फाइनेंस मिनिस्टर से बात की है। उनका लोक सभा में बिल चल रहा है और मैंने खुद गुरुदास दासगुप्त जी की रिक्वेस्ट पर उनसे आग्रह किया है कि उनको यहां आना चाहिए लेकिन वह लोक सभा... (व्यवधान)

श्री एस.एस. अहलवालिया: मैबर की रिक्वेस्ट नहीं है, पूरे हाऊस की है।

श्रीमती सरला महेश्वरी (पश्चिमी बंगाल): पूरे सदन का निवेदन था उनसे कि वह... (व्यवधान)

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: We all wanted it. (Interruptions).

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta, Kindly take you seat.

श्री मंतग सिंह: लोक सभा के डिस्कशन के बाद वह यहां आ रहे हैं। अभी मेरी बात हुई है।

श्रीमती सरला महेश्वरी: नहीं उनकी गारंटी है क्या? वह विषयक खत्म होने के बाद.... (व्यवधान)

श्री गुरुदास दासगुप्त: डिस्कशन खत्म हो जाएगा, तब आएंगे क्या?... (व्यवधान)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): There is another Minister taking note of it. Mr. Viduthalai Virumbi.

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: There is a procedure, Mr. Vice-Chairman. After the speaker from the Congress, a speaker from my party should be called.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): This is a subject of Members.

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: You may allow more time. But you cannot over-rule the procedure. Those who are in the list, of course, will be called first. Then it will be the Congress and then the BJP.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): It is not like that.

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: It is like that. You cannot discriminate against me. *(Interruptions)*.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Kindly hear me. The list that has been circulated... *(Interruptions)*.

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: That list is wrong. There is the procedure. After the Member calls attention, the Minister will speak. Then the parties, who have given names of their Members, will be taken up. First it should be the Congress, then the BJP and then the others.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Mr. Mathur, you know pretty well that in a Calling Attention... *(Interruptions)*. I will tackle him.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर: श्रीमन् आपको पता नहीं है या याद नहीं है। इस सदन में यह प्रोसीजर रहा है। लोक सभा में यह प्रोसीजर है कि जिनका नाम होता है, वही बोलते हैं। हमारे सदन में यह प्रोसीजर है कि जिन पार्टियों के नाम हैं, अपने उसी आर्डर में वे बोलते हैं। जिनके नाम नहीं हैं, तो पार्टी की सीनियोरिटी के हिसाब से आता है। आपने कांग्रेस को बुलाया, बिल्कुल ठीक किया। उसके बाद मेरा नम्बर आना चाहिए और बाद में उसी पार्टी का आएगा। अगर इनका नाम है तो मैं मान सकता हूँ। यह प्रोसीजर नहीं है।

That is not the procedure.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Mr. Mathur, Members have raised this issue.

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: Members have raised... *(Interruptions)*.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Mr. Mathur, Kindly hear me. You have made your point. Now let me make my point clear.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: Why don't you listen to him, sir? The time will be saved. *(Interruptions)*.

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: Sir, you may consult the Secretary... *(Interruptions)*.

THE VICE CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): It is motion given by a Member. *(Interruptions)*. Mr. Mathur... *(Interruptions)*. He can be called. But he cannot quarrel on the procedure. I can call his name. That is a different matter. What I am saying is according to the procedure, as far as a Calling Attention is concerned, the names of Members in the list will be called first. The other names will be given priority in the order in which they come. *(Interruptions)*.

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: I do not know. *(Interruptions)*. My objection is that the procedure is being sabotaged. *(Interruptions)*.

THE VICE CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Mr. Mathur, I have got the position cleared by the Secretariat. Whatever I said is correct. Mr. Viduthalai Virumbi.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI (Tamil Nadu): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to say a few words on the Calling Attention issue raised regarding the situation arising out of the non-payment of wages, default in payment of statutory dues, virtual closing down of a number of public sector undertaking all over the country, the failure of the BIFR to take a view on sick PSUs and the refusal of the financial institutions to advance money for a revival package.

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After the New Liberalisation Policy has been introduced in this country, some new policies have been pursued by the Government...(Interruptions).

They are pursuing a policy of elimination of quantitative restriction, reduction of tariff, much greater protection of foreign patents and...(Interruptions)... Copy rights in these areas. The Government have more or less diluted the position that we had taken in the last decades. (Interruptions).

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: That mike can be switched off, sir.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: What is the fall out of this policy? The rate of growth in the organised sector between April, 1987 and July 1991, that is before the implementation of the liberalisation policy, was 7.7 per cent. But between July 1991 and June 1994, that is, after the liberalisation policy has been effected and implemented, the growth rate in respect of the organised sector has come down to 0.9 per cent. You see the difference. It has not even reached one per cent. It clearly shows that we have failed miserably after the new liberalisation policy was implemented.

As far as employment is concerned, the Planning Commission has framed norms to see that rate of growth in respect of employment is between 2.6 per cent and 2.8 per cent and there is a corresponding economic growth at 5.6 per cent. That means the Planning Commission expected that 8.5 million people should be employed every year. That was the expectation of the Planning Commission. But during 1992-93 and 1993-94 respectively, 6.4 million and 5.6 million jobs could be created under the pretext of the new liberalisation policy pursued by us. It has affected Tamil Nadu also.

As far as the Hindustan Photo Films is concerned, I had myself raised the issue in this August House to earmark Rs. 175 crores. A Committee consisting

of the Secretaries, came to visit the Factory at Ooty. Thereafter, the Cabinet Committee, instead of allowing Rs. 175 crores, allotted Rs. 20 crores only. What I feel is that unless Rs. 175/- crores is allotted, the sum of Rs. 20 crores so allotted, would prove to be of no use. It is not going to give any benefit to the company. There is a sinister move by some people to take over the company because it is a profit-making company. But due to the corruption at top level administration previously it shows the losses and the private people have decided to take over the company. They are lobbying here at Delhi to see that the company is taken over. The Government should not succumb to the pressure exerted by the capitalists.

As far as the Standard Motors, Madras is concerned, it has been closed down. The Seshasayee Industries, Vadalur, has been closed down. Since the time at my disposal is short, I do not want to go into the details. The number of sick mills in Tamil Nadu is going on increasing.

So far as the BIFR is concerned, after September 1994, they have received nearly 2,200 applications. Out of that, they have registered 1,607 applications. But a decision was taken only in respect of 463 applications. The ratio comes to 1:4. This is because of the fact that they do not have proper guidelines and they do not have any mandatory powers to force the financial institutions to assist them for the revival package. This is the state of affairs in the BIFR. Then, because of the inordinate delay, even the promoters are not forthcoming. I am afraid, the Seshasayee Industries, Vadalur, is going to close permanently. This is the situation. When Mr. Venkataraman was the Finance Minister, in one day in the Cabinet meeting, about Rs. 15 crores had been allotted to the consultancy agency. The case was prepared in the morning and it went to the Cabinet in the afternoon and it was passed and Rs. 15 crores was paid to the

consultancy agency. These people like who had received Rs. 15/- crores when Mr. Venkataraman was the Finance Minister, they are thinking of closing the factory. This is the situation.

Now I come to the beedi workers. They are not an organised lot. They are being penalised and harassed. A number of them have not been registered in a proper manner in India. Had it been so, lakhs and lakhs of people would have been benefited. Even the PF are covered now but here is no proper coverage of these workers. Apart from this, in the public sector units, there is a move through the media, dominated by the capitalists, to declare the public sector units are all in red. In fact, it is not so. The private sector does not have any social obligation whereas the public sector has a social obligation. When Mr. Rajiv Gandhi was the Prime Minister, the Opposition accused him that the Government is running the public sector in loss while he was replying to the Budget debate. He had stated that the Opposition also should take into consideration the social obligation put on the shoulders of the Government sector when the Opposition is taking into consideration the profit and loss made by a public sector unit.

You have actually deviated from it. They say that they are not doing that. They have, more or less, done that. They have succumbed to the pressure exerted by the World Bank. The World Bank has given it in the Report of February, 1990. What are the policies? They are stated in the Report of February, 1990. The same things, one by one, are being actually implemented by the Government. Therefore, you have succumbed to the pressure exerted by the World Bank and the IMF. Because of this, the labour, the work men of this country are suffering like anything for the last three years. As far as the public sector is concerned, I will tell you, Sir, that in 1990-91 the net profit is Rs. 2,563 crores. In 1991-92 the net profit is Rs. 2,720 crores. Now in

1993-94, it is Rs. 3,649 crores. After taking into account the profit of the profit-making industries and the loss of the loss-making industries, both taken together, the net profit stands at Rs. 3,600 crores. In spite of this, what do the media say? They say that all the public sector units are running at a loss. It is not so. But what happens is, our savings have come down. Sir, this is a rich country with poor people. Because they are poor, their saving is less. Because saving is less, the investment is less. Because investment is less, the production is less. Because production is less, the income is less. When income is less, automatically the savings will be less. It becomes a vicious circle. When it becomes a vicious circle, we want to come out of that vicious circle. What is the policy adopted by the Government of India? They say, "We want to seek foreign assistance!" That is the only thing they say. They have failed to unearth the money which is available in this Subcontinent itself. If at all the Government is interested in unearthing black money, if the Government is really interested in taking money from the NRI, what I feel is, they need not go to any foreign institution for investment. If a foreign financial institution comes over here, what will be the position? I will cite an example, Sir, at Neyveli, a project was undertaken by the Government, with the help of German Government, for technological development. They have to actually project the cost. The total project cost, if we implement this, is Rs. 397 crores for 210 M.W. First, the Government thought of implementing it. Then it has planned to produce 250 M.W. Correspondingly, the cost will come to Rs. 474 crores. That is according to the estimates put forth by the Government. Now, they have left it in the private hands. What is the estimate given by the private people to the Government of India? They say Rs. 1,125 crores. Unfortunately the estimate of Rs. 1,125 crores is accepted by the Government of India! Don't you feel ashamed of it? Don't you feel that in

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place of barely Rs. 397 crores you have now to incur a big expenditure of Rs. 1,125 crores? If we accept this estimate of Rs. 1,125 crores, what will happen then? For one unit, instead of Rs. 1.50 P. or Rs. 2/- the common man in the street has to pay more than Rs. 5/- or Rs. 6...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Kindly conclude.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Only one minute. Mr. Vice-Chairman, this is the policy. I tell you, Sir, what the Standing Committee on Industries have clearly mentioned on this problem:

"It should be an acceptable proposition that the burden which the economic reforms are responsible for should be evenly distributed region-wise and no part of the country should be called upon to bear a disproportionate part of it. In the light of this consideration, the Committee feels that the problems of public enterprises encountering financing difficulties should be examined with some care and sympathy. The reported decision on the part of a number of commercial banks, including nationalised ones, to deny working capital funds to loss-making public sector units, even while they entertain such request from similarly placed private units, therefore, calls for a reappraisal. The banks have been refusing accommodation to public undertakings on the alleged ground that budgetary appropriations ought to be available to them. But it should not be news to the banks that, in the post-liberalisation phase, that source of funds is not normally available to loss-making public units.

No part of the money obtained from privatisation of profitable units is as yet proposed to be used

to finance the revival of sick units, many of which could do with input of resources for modernisation and restructuring."

"Another aspect of the matter is that several of the profitable public sector units are with the Centre, while the State Governments have had to create capacity in less lucrative areas, such as irrigation, transport or power. The failure to use funds acquired through disinvestment operations for revival of such units seriously inconveniences the States. There is, therefore, a regional dimension to the problem."

"The Committee has also come across instances where a proposed revival plan for a sick public undertaking has received the blessing of the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction, the banks have declined to advance accommodation as per the BIFR directives. In such circumstances, the BIFR, the Committee is of the opinion, should have the statutory powers to compel the banks to comply with its orders." At the same time, the Board, the Committee is of the opinion, should use utmost caution before ordering the final closure of a sick public enterprise located in a region affected by massive unemployment."

The charges made by the Opposition have been justified by the Report of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Industry. Ninety per cent of the three thousand sick industries belong to the private sector, not to the public sector. Unless the Government is prepared to take concerted action to see that these industries are revived immediately, our industry will perish, the country will suffer and the people will suffer. With these words I conclude, Sir.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर: श्रीमन् जो यह विवाद एक प्रकार से खड़ा हो गया है प्राइवेट सेक्टर और

पब्लिक सेक्टर के बीच-बहस का विषय नहीं था लेकिन बना लिया गया है मैं उससे हटकर केवल स्टेटमेंट पर बात करना चाहता हूँ। जो कुछ मंत्री महोदय ने गैर कानूनी तरीके से कंसल्टेटिव कमेटी के बारे में कहा था उसको निकाल दिया जाए तो उनके स्टेटमेंट में कोई तथ्य रहता ही नहीं है। दो ही तथ्य रहते हैं। एक तो यह है—

“In the meeting of the Industrial Tripartite Committee on Engineering Industry held on 30.11.94, it was suggested that in regard to sick PSUs referred to BIFR quick decisions should be facilitated. For this purpose, the Ministry of Labour has taken up the matter with all concerned administrative Ministries.”

यानी मंत्री महोदय स्वयं यह स्वीकार कर रहे हैं कि इनके अलावा जो दूसरा मंत्रालय है अड़चन उनकी है। इनकी, जिम्मेदारी भले न हो लेकिन जो दूसरे मंत्रालय हैं उनकी जिम्मेदारी है।

दूसरे उनके स्टेटमेंट में तथ्य केवल इतना है जो उन्होंने एन० टी० सी० के बारे में कहा है अर्थात् फरवरी तक का पैसा दे दिया गया है। इसमें भी स्वीकृति यह है कि बाकी पैसा नहीं दिया गया, यानी एन० टी० सी० के अलावा किसी को पैसा नहीं दिया गया है और जो कुछ भी गड़बड़ है वह गवर्नमेंट की है। यह बात स्वयं मंत्री महोदय ने अपने वक्तव्य में स्वीकार की है जिसकी केवल 10-12 लाइनें हैं।

मेरा पहला प्रश्न यह है श्रीमान कि सरकार यह स्पष्ट करे कि वास्तव में उसकी नीति क्या है। यदि बी० आई० एफ० आर० की कार्यवाही, उसके साथ फाइनेंस मिनिस्ट्री की कार्यवाही, उसके बाद बी० आई० एफ० आर० की जो मीटिंग है उनकी कार्यवाही-एक के बाद एक कार्यवाही को देखा जाए तो लगता यह है कि सरकार और बी० आई० एफ० आर० के बीच में एक गुप्त समझौता है कि किसी प्रकार से अब कारखानों को चलने न देकर उन्हें ब्रान या कल बेचकर प्राइवेटाइज कर दिया जाए। इस समय प्राइवेटाइजेशन करने न करने के बारे में बहस नहीं है। जहाँ तक मेरे दल का दृष्टिकोण है बात स्पष्ट है। हम चाहते हैं कि जितने पब्लिक सेक्टर इंटरप्राइजेज हैं वे वास्तव में मुनाफे में चलें। उनके मारा जाना नहीं चाहिए। प्राइवेट सेक्टर के लिए जो क्षेत्र खोल रहे हैं उसमें मुझे कोई आपत्ति नहीं है। लेकिन यह तिरछा खेल कि आप बी० आई० एफ० आर० के माध्यम से और

फाइनेंस मिनिस्ट्री से मिलकर, इन सिक इंडस्ट्रीज को बिल्कुल खत्म करना चाहते हैं, एक न एक बहाना लेकर इनका प्राइवेटाइजेशन करना चाहते हैं, यह तिरछा खेल आपको बहुत महंगा पड़ेगा। महंगा क्यों पड़ेगा? क्योंकि एक तरफ मजदूर बेकार होगा। उनको पैसा नहीं देगे तो बेकार मजदूरों की संख्या बढ़ेगी। भूखा पेट मजदूर क्या करेगा इस पर शायद आपको ध्यान नहीं गया है।

मैं गुरुदास दास गुप्ता की इस बात से बिल्कुल सहमत हूँ कि जहाँ तक मजदूरों के अधिकार का उसकी रोटी का सवाल है उसमें दायें और बायें का कोई सवाल खड़ा नहीं होता। दायें भी उतने ही महत्व का है और बायें भी उतने ही महत्व का है। मजदूरों को केवल रोटी चाहिए। मजदूर को यह लेना देना नहीं है कि आप प्राइवेट सेक्टर को प्राथमिकता देते हैं या पब्लिक सेक्टर को प्राथमिकता देते हैं। उसका तो सीधा यह सवाल है कि उसे रोटी मिलनी चाहिए। मेरी मजदूरी का मुझको पूरा का पूरा मुआवजा मिलना चाहिए।

मैं फिर पूछना चाहता हूँ कि आपने जो एन० टी० सी० के बारे में कहा है क्या पूरा सच है? और मेरे सहयोगी मित्र ने बंगाल का जिक्र किया था। एन० टी० सी० के बारे में आपने कहा है कि पैसा फैक्ट्रीज़ ने ले लिया है, फैक्ट यह है कि आज प्रातः काल तक कानपुर की मिल्स अर्थात् म्यूर मिल्स, विक्टोरिया मिल्स, स्वदेशी मिल्स, लक्ष्मी रत्न मिल्स इनको शायद पैसा नहीं दिया गया है आज सुबह तक किसी मजदूर को पैसा नहीं मिला है। मैं पूछना चाहूंगा कि क्या आपको इसकी जानकारी है? नहीं है, तो आप जानकारी दें कि पैसा क्यों नहीं दिया गया लखनऊ का विक्रम कॉटन मिल्स अगर एन० टी० सी० ने पैसा दे दिया है तो वहां भी आज तक मजदूरों को, उनके पैसा दिया नहीं गया है। तीसरा है सहारनपुर का लार्ड कृष्णा मिल्स, वहां पर ताला लगा हुआ है, लॉक आउट है। श्रीमान, मैं श्रम मंत्री महोदय, आप ही से बात कर रहा हूँ। सहारनपुर की लार्ड कृष्णा मिल है। इसमें लॉक आउट है। आपने उसको उठाने के लिए पैसा दे कर क्या कार्यवाही की, यह भी मैं जानना चाहूंगा? इसी प्रकार से मैं एक आघ और जानकारी चाहूंगा/बी०आई०एफ०आर० का आप रवैया देखें। कितने ऐसे उनके प्रोपोज़ल गए हैं जो वास्तव में आपरेटिंग कंपनीज़ के द्वारा उन्होंने ग्रांट दे कर कारखाना चालू कर दिया है। मैं समझता हूँ कि शायद दो-तीन-चार भी ऐसी मिल नहीं होंगी जिन्होंने बी० आई० एफ० आर० के बाद स्वयं तय की और वहां काम शुरू हो गया है। मैं मंत्री महोदय से पूछना चाहूंगा कि बी० आई० एफ० आर० का रवैया देखें

[श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर]

तो पता चलेगा कि अधिकांश मामलों में उनका यह फैसला हुआ है कि यह कारखाना वायबल नहीं है। दूसरा फैसला होता है, इसको वाइंड अप कर दीजिए। तीसरा होता है कि लेबर रेड्यूस किया जाए। मंत्री महोदय, मैं आपसे एक स्पेसिफिक क्वेश्चन पूछना चाहता हूँ। स्कूटर इंडिया लि०, लखनऊ के मामले में आपने एक प्री-बजट मीटिंग 10 दिसंबर को की। उसमें कुछ आपने वायदे किए। आज तक उनका क्या हुआ, उन पर कोई कार्यवाही नहीं की गई। दूसरा एक और स्पेसिफिक सवाल पूछना चाहता हूँ कि न्यू सैन्ट्रल जूट मिल आपको मालूम है 1987 से मिल मजदूरों के द्वारा चल रही है। इसके ऊपर 12 करोड़ का कर्जा था और सूद के 20 करोड़ से ज्यादा ले चुके हैं। जरा मंत्री महोदय इनको छोड़ दे और ध्यान दे क्योंकि यह स्पेसिफिक क्वेश्चन है जिसका उनको जवाब देना है। बिल्कुल सीधा मैं सैद्धांतिक प्रश्न में नहीं जा रहा हूँ मैं केवल स्पेसिफिक क्वेश्चन पूछ रहा हूँ (व्यवधान) न्यू सैन्ट्रल जूट मिल, का बी० आई० एफ० आर० के अंदर केस पड़ा हुआ है। 1987 से मजदूर इसको चला रहे हैं। इनके ऊपर कर्जा 12 करोड़ का था। 12 करोड़ का जो पहला बकाया था उसकी जिम्मेदारी मजदूरों के ऊपर नहीं डाली जा सकती, इसकी जिम्मेदारी सरकार की है। 12 करोड़ के कर्जे में से 20 करोड़ के लगभग सूद के रूप में वह दे चुके हैं और फिर भी आप उनको छोड़ नहीं रहे हैं। मैं शुक्रगुजार हूँ आपका कि आपने कुछ दिन पहले कोशिश करके तीन करोड़ दिला दिया। लेकिन क्या इस लायबिलिटी को पूरा करने के लिए सरकार कुछ करेगी? मेरी आपसे अपील यह है कि आप इसको बी०आई०एफ०आर० के चक्कर से निकालिए और उसके बाद सीधे-सीधे जितनी पुरानी लायबिलिटी है जिसके अगेन्स्ट 20 करोड़ रुपया आप उनसे वसूल कर चुके हैं, उस सारे को समाप्त करके और मजदूरों के पक्ष में पूरा काम करने की इजाजत दी जाए। एक बात और है। आई०डी०पी०एल० है। हैदराबाद का है, ऋषिकेश का है। इसके विषय में आपने पैसा नहीं दिया है। आप कब देंगे। मैं दोहराना नहीं चाहता जो कुछ मेरे सहयोगियों ने बंगाल के कारखानों के बारे में कहा है। उनको आप पैसा कब देंगे। दूसरा, एक सीधा-सीधा सवाल है कि क्या आप किसी प्रकार से एक समयबद्ध कार्यवाही कर सकते हैं कि जो मामला बी०आई०एफ०आर० को रैफर हो तो उसको इतने दिन के अंदर अपना निर्णय देना चाहिए। दूसरे जब रैफर कर दें तो जो आपरेंटिंग मशीनरी है उसकी भी कम से कम एक लिमिट हो। इसका भी एक निश्चित समय है या नहीं,

उसको एक निश्चित समय देना चाहिए। तीसरे, मैं आपसे विनती करूंगा कि आप सैद्धांतिक विचार के बीच में न फँसें। मेरे बहुत सारे मित्र पब्लिक सेक्टर के पक्ष में होंगे और कुछ प्राइवेट सेक्टर के पक्ष में होंगे, लेकिन सभी के सामने एक ही लक्ष्य है कि चाहे प्राइवेट सेक्टर हो या पब्लिक सेक्टर हो, मजदूर को वेजेज दिलवाने की जिम्मेदारी सरकार की है लेकिन जैसाकि मैंने कहा बी०आई०एफ०आर० और सरकार की मिली-भगत है कि आप किसी-न-किसी प्रकार उनका पैसा मारकर इनको आप प्रायवेटाइज कर सकें। आप इस नीति को छोड़िए अन्यथा जो बात श्री गुरुदास जी ने कही है कि आप एक वैल्कनो पर खड़े हैं। इसलिए अगर आप यह समझ रहे हैं कि मजदूर शांत बैठे हैं, हड़ताल नहीं हो रही है और इसे आप शांति का रूप समझ लेंगे तो आप बहुत गलती करेंगे।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Mr. Mathur, one minute. I am not blocking you. I have to take the sense of the House. If the House so agrees, we can skip the lunch-hour and continue with this discussion.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, I would like to continue it, more so because we have been told that the Minister of Finance cannot come as there is something urgent. That House will also be adjourning. We would like to continue with the discussion and skip the lunch-hour. But I also demand, unequivocally, that the Minister of Labour cannot answer and the Finance Minister must come forward. The Calling Attention Motion does not come to a close.... (Interruptions)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta, your sentiments have been conveyed to the Parliamentary Affairs Minister. The Minister is in the other House and he will come.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर: महोदय, अंत में एक-दो वाक्य और कहूंगा कि अगर सरकार और खास तौर से लेबर मिनिस्ट्री इस गलतफहमी में है कि मजदूर शांत है, हड़तालें नहीं हो रही हैं और इस कारण वह जो कुछ चाहें कर सकेंगे, मनमानी कर लेंगे और मजदूरों को परेशान करेंगे तो बहुत बड़ी भूल कर रहे हैं। जैसाकि मैंने पहले भी कहा और आखिर में फिर कह रहा हूँ कि

आज आप एक वैल्कनो पर खड़े हुए हैं। एक ओर मजदूर बेकार होगा और आपने बेकारी को बचाने के लिए ही बी०आई०एफ०आर० और सिक इंडस्ट्रीज एक्ट का सहारा लिया है, आप उनको इस विषय को टालने का एक साधन न बनाएं। हो सकता है कि मजदूर दो-चार साल शांत रहे, लेकिन जिस दिन बंबंडर खड़ा होगा, मजदूर इकट्ठा होकर आपके खिलाफ संघर्ष करेगा। देश के अंदर आज जो उपद्रव आप देख रहे हैं, वह उपद्रव ऐसा होगा कि आपके सभाले नहीं संभलेगा क्योंकि कहा जाता है कि "पापी पेट क्या नहीं करता।" इसी के साथ समाप्त करते हुए मेरे द्वारा उठाए गए प्रश्नों के संबंध में आपसे जानकारी चाहूंगा।

श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज (हरियाणा): उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, मेरा एक पॉइंट ऑफ ऑर्डर है। गुरुदास जी ने वित्त मंत्री जी को यहां बुलाए जाने की बात कही है क्योंकि इस काल अटेंशन का सही रूप में जवाब वित्त मंत्री जी ही दे सकते हैं, वह बात बिल्कुल बजा है और हम सब लोग उससे सहमत हैं, लेकिन पार्लियामेंटरी अफेयर्स मिनिस्टर से बात हुई जिससे कि यह पता चला कि शायद वित्त मंत्री जी 5 बजे से पहले यहां नहीं आ सकते। अगर 5 बजे आकर उन्होंने जवाब देना है तो "लंच स्किप" करने के कोई मायने नहीं है। आप लंच स्किप न करें। ढाई बजे के बाद यह डिस्कसन चालू रहे और 5 बजे आकर वित्त मंत्री जी जवाब दें क्योंकि रूल्स ऑफ प्रोसीजर में बहुत साफ लिखा है कि जब तक काल अटेंशन समाप्त नहीं हो जाता, कोई डिस्कसन प्रेसीडेंस नहीं ले सकता। कोई दूसरा काम तब तक नहीं हो सकता। हम ढाई बजे शार्ट इयूरेशन डिस्कसन नहीं ले सकते। इसलिए हम ढाई बजे काल अटेंशन को कंटीन्यू करें और वित्त मंत्री जी आकर जवाब दें तो ठीक रहेगा। लंच स्किप करने की बात तब उठी थी जबकि वित्त मंत्री जी आकर जवाब लेते और हम शार्ट इयूरेशन डिस्कसन भी आज ले लेते। अगर वित्त मंत्री जी को यहां आने की सुविधा नहीं है तो फिर लंच स्किप कर के यह डिस्कसन काहे को चालू रखें।

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): Sir, the Calling Attention Motion was admitted in the name of the Minister of Labour. It is listed as "calling the attention of the Minister of Labour."

And it is not addressed to the Minister of Finance. Sir, there was a request this morning in the Chairman's room that the Finance Minister should be requested to come. I conveyed the message to him. He had to call on a foreign delegation with whom he was to have some negotiations and discussions.

Then he has the Finance Bill going on in the Lok Sabha. In fact, he excused himself from there because he had to call on the Delegation. So, he is tied up. Therefore, he said that he would not be free at all to come to our House. This was conveyed to the House by my colleagues as well. Sir, the Minister of Labour has been briefed. He is also a Cabinet Minister. He is here to answer. He will be able to satisfy the Members' requirement that all their questions should be answered. But I don't think that it is fair for us to say that unless the Finance Minister comes, no other business shall be transacted, because there is a very important Short Duration Discussion on the question of reservation for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Many Members have been asking for a discussion on this. Now to say that that shall not be taken up today will, I think, not be fair on our part. We should not ignore a very important issue which has been agitating many Members here. Therefore, since we have agreed to skip the lunch hour, I would request the Members to go ahead with the next discussion once the Minister has replied to the Calling Attention Motion. Finance matters are coming up before the House. The Appropriation Bills are coming up. There are also other issues coming up which are concerning the Finance Minister and whatever extra clarifications or pieces of information you would like to seek, you may put them to the Finance Minister at that time because the Budget Session is most essentially for economic issues. So, any questions that are further to be answered can be left open to the Finance Minister. I would appeal to the Members to co-operate with us because we have the Finance Bill scheduled

[Shrimati Margaret Alva]
two to three days from tomorrow onwards. We could not take it up today because it is being discussed in the other House. I would, therefore, request that we complete the discussion on the Calling Attention Motion and go ahead with the Short Duration Discussion which, I am sure the Members would agree, is as important and as much of a matter of concern for the Members of Parliament as this discussion is.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: Sir, can I raise a question concerning the Rules of Procedure? If you look at Rule 180 (5), it is clearly stated as follows: "The proposed matter shall be raised after the questions and the laying of papers, if any, on the Table and before any other item in the list of business is taken up and at no other time during the sitting of the Council." So, it specifically says, once you start the discussion on a Calling Attention Motion, the discussion has to be completed before any other business is taken up. Now, we are certainly very keen to discuss the question relating to the reservation for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in cases of promotion. All of us want to have that discussion. The question is, why cannot the Finance Minister spare five or ten minutes of his time from the other House because he is not going to reply to the Finance Bill until the discussion is over there? He can then say whatever he has to say on the Calling Attention Motion so that we can finish with the discussion and go over to the next business. The point made by the Minister of State in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Mrs. Margaret Alva, is that the Cabinet Minister of Labour is here and that he is competent to reply. But from the way the discussion has been going on, we must have noted that the problem does not relate to the Ministry of Labour, because the problem concerning the non-payment of wages...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Mr. Biplab Dasgupta, this point has already been

raised. I conveyed the sentiments of the Members to the Parliamentary Affairs Minister... (*Interruptions*) There is no point of order on it. Shri Pragada Kotaiah...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: It is listed as "calling the attention of the Minister of Labour". Now, they cannot just say that they will not accept the Labour Minister's reply....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: It is proper for Mrs. Alva to intervene. She has a very important role to play. She can definitely intervene. But the point is, it is not true that a request for the Finance Minister's intervention was made to the Chairman in his Chamber only today...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Let us not argue on this...(*Interruptions*) There was an understanding on this. We are only wasting the time of the House. The Finance Minister has been informed...(*Interruptions*) Kindly don't raise this issue again and again. Shri Pragada Kotaiah...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: Sir, I propose a via-media. THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Dr. Gupta, kindly take your seat.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: Mr. Vice-Chairman, let the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs give an assurance that the Finance Minister will come at 5.00 p.m. My point is that after hearing us, is the Government going to...(*Interruptions*)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): I have already expressed my view on this point. The Minister for Parliamentary Affairs has accordingly been informed of the sentiments of the House. Now you kindly allow other Members to speak. Now, Shri Pragada Kotaiah.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Mr. Vice-Chairman, we are very much

interested on the other listed subject also. But where is the reply for the current subject?

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Sir, the statement of the Labour Minister is clear and we raised our questions...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Now you kindly take your seat... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: Sir, I am on a point of order... *(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Mr. Mukherjee, you please take your seat. Mr. Mathur is on a point of order. He wants to say something.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर: श्रीमान, यह बात बिल्कुल ठीक है कि जो रूल है, उनके अनुसार हम कलिंग अटेशन के बीच में कुछ नहीं ले सकते। लेकिन जैसी स्थिति दिखती है और मैं भी चाहता हूँ कि फाइनेंस मिनिस्टर आ सकें तो बहुत अच्छा है, लेकिन अगर उनकी बहुत बड़ी मजबूरी है और 5:00 बजे से पहले वह नहीं आ सकते तो इस रूल को सस्पेंड किया जाए, जब डिबेट खत्म हो जाए तो आप दूसरा कार्य शुरू कर दें और फाइनेंस मिनिस्टर जल्दी से जल्दी जिस समय आ सकें, आकर जवाब दे दें क्योंकि जब तक रूल सस्पेंड नहीं करेंगे...*(व्यवधान)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): We will consider your suggestion. Anyhow, the Finance Minister is coming. I think the problem is solved. Now, Shri Pragada Kotaiah.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ (Haryana): Mr. Vice-Chairman, now the problem is over.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: We welcome the Finance Minister.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Smt. Sushma, you create the problem and say that the problem is over.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: No, Sir, I am not creating any problem. I am saying that the problem is over.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): If the House so agrees, I request Syed Sibtey Razi to take the Chair.

[The Vice-Chairman (Syed Sibtey Razi) In the Chair]

SHRI PRAGADA KOTAIAH (Andhra Pradesh): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I am happy that the Finance Minister has also come to the House because the Minister of Labour alone may not be in a position to answer the questions raised during the discussion on the subject.

Sir, when the Government has taken over more than 100 sick mills, I would like to know whether the Government has caused an enquiry into the conditions and circumstances as to why the mills had become sick. As far as I understand, there was no such enquiry. The Government has simply taken over the mills. It has also taken upon itself the liability to make good all the liabilities of the mills so taken over by it. I would like to know why the Government has failed to cause an enquiry into the circumstances that led the mills to become sick. I put this question because their managements have never become sick. They are well off. Only the mills have become sick. What is the reason? I don't know whether the Labour Minister himself would like to answer this question or he would put this question to the Textile Minister.

The Labour Minister, in his statement, has referred only to the NTC mills and other nationalised or mills taken over by the Central Government. But he has not referred to the mills which are owned by the State Governments, not the Central Government, and the public sector units under the State Governments because in the operation of the National Renewal Fund, nowhere has it been mentioned that its funds shall be utilised only for the benefit of the NTC mills and the other Central public sector undertakings. The National Renewal Fund, as I understand, is meant for the benefit of all the

[Shri Pragada Kotaiah]

industrial units irrespective of the fact whether they are under the Central Government or under the State Governments. But that is not there. I would like to know why the Government of India has confined the utilisation of the National Renewal Fund exclusively for the benefit of the workers of the NTC mills and the Central public sector undertakings. Is it not desirable and justifiable that the amount is spent for the benefit of the workers in the cooperative spinning mills, textile mills, State owned units in the States and also other public sector undertakings run by the State Governments? Why this is being done like this? What is the justification in confining the utilisation of the National Renewal Fund only for the NTC mills and the workers of the public sector undertakings of the Central Government? Sir, the Andhra Cooperative Spinning Mills at Guntakal is the first of its kind in the whole of the country started by the handloom weavers in the year 1951. The foundation-stone of the mill was laid by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru in 1952 and the mill was actually started in the year 1954 by our great national leader, Tanguturi Prakasam Pantulu. Unfortunately, the Government had taken over the management of the mill in the year 1975 and from 1975 onwards it is being run by committees consisting of the henchmen of the State Governments and the mills have incurred huge losses and ultimately the mills are being kept closed for over three-and-a-half years. I don't know whether the Government has any heart at all. Eleven hundred workers were thrown out of their employment and not a single pie has been paid towards the back wages to the workers. Further, the provident fund contributed by the workers and other contributions towards ESI have been swallowed by the management. Did the Government ever go into the mismanagement of these institutions? Why has it not gone into them? On the 16th of this month I met our beloved Prime Minister and reported to him that all our cooperative spinning

mills started by the handloom weavers have been under the management of committees constituted with the henchmen of the State Governments and they have resorted to all sorts of malpractices. And what is that? There is corruption in cotton purchase, yarn sale and spare parts. How can the mills run profitably? When the managements themselves have resorted to corrupt practices in their day-to-days business activities, how is it possible for these mills to run profitably? The Labour Minister may not be able to answer certain questions. Five hundred and ten crores of rupees have been spent on the modernisation of NTC mills. What were the projects report given by the BITRA or AITRA or CITRA? These Textile Research Associations at Coimbatore, Ahmedabad, Bombay and some other places have given prepared project reports either for borrowing or for receiving funds from the Government. The Government have spent 510 crores of rupees for the modernisation of the NTC mills. Can the Government place before the House the project report which the Textile Research Associations have presented before the Textile Ministry either for borrowing from the Government themselves or from the financial institutions? What was the performance of these mills after modernisation? They say one thing in the project report, but actually after modernisation there will be some other thing. Can they come forward?

I am asking the Textile Ministry to place before the House all the old project reports, based on which you have spent money for modernisation and also the performance sheets of all the textile mills after modernisation. They say, '1,000 spindles are working' but, actually some 800 spindles would be working. They say '100 looms will be working' but after modernisation, only some 80 powerlooms will be working. What is the reason? Did the Government cause an inquiry into this? No, no. There is no interest in that. They are interested in spending money, public money, in the name of workers. I

am equally interested in workers. You see, when Chiraba Mills were closed for one year, the labourers had applied to officer concerned at Ongole and the Government said, 'No, do not issue orders'. Therefore, for one year, we could not get any judgment from the Deputy Labour Commissioner at Ongole, fixing the wages to be paid by the Government. Similarly today, our Government, after long pursuasion, has given Rs. 5 crores for opening the Andhra Cooperative Spinning Mills at Guntakal. They have put one condition. All the statutory dues shall be cleared before utilising the Rs. 5 crores for opening the mills. What are the statutory dues? The statutory dues are the mills are required to pay huge amounts to the Provident Fund Commissioner; the mills are required to pay huge amounts to the ESI authorities; the mills are required to pay to the cotton dealers. Why? Because, the prices of cotton are to be compared. The same cotton purchased by the Guntakal Spinning Mill by the management run by the Government is higher than the price of similar cotton purchased by a mill in the private sector. Therefore, a heavy amount is due to the cotton dealers today. Apart from that, electricity bills are there; apart from that, commercial tax bills are there; loans to the State Government are there. See the condition put by the Centre to the State Government. The State Government shall clear all the statutory dues. The situation is that the State Government is not in a position to clear these dues so as to make arrangements for opening the mill. So far, the amount of Rs. 5 crore made available to the State Government in the month of November last is pending with the State Government, and, perhaps, they are using it in their own way.

This is how things are going on. You had given the money but did you cause any inquiry, make any inquiry whether that amount was being utilised for the opening of the mill and for providing employment? They say, there are surplus

employees and also the Minister sometimes says that the man-machine ratio is not there. Why should he say like that? That means, the criterion of work force is not being implemented in several mills. The Minister himself should have directly said that the criterion of work force is not being implemented. Wage Boards are there, they are fixing wages and simultaneously they are fixing the work force criterion. Why is it not being implemented? Why is the management recruiting labour more than required? They now say that all the surplus labour is to be retrenched.

Here our Finance Minister will sanction some renewal fund to the workers of the NTC mills but not to the workers of my Andhra Cooperative Spinning Mill. Why? Why? Why there is this discrimination? I would like to know whether the Government is intended for all the workers of the country or the Government is only intended for the workers of the NTC mills. For all these things, the Government is responsible. No, whatever money you intend to spend for the benefit of the workers shall be extended to all kinds of workers in industrial units not only in industrial units but also in rural industries. Your National Renewal Fund is intended for the benefit of the rural industrial workers who have been affected by your liberalisation and faulty economic policies which have thrown thousands and thousands of handloom workers out of employment. Do you like to see them? How long can you be a silent spectator to the sad situation that is developing in the rural parts of the country? Do not forget that we have full faith in our democracy but the workers who are suffering, who are starving may be driven to the fold to forces preaching violence to the detriment of democracy. Do do not forget this. How long can we allow the poor people to suffer? We are living in big bungalows having all the facilities but we are not looking at the conditions of these poor people.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SYED SIBTEY RAZI): Mr. Kotaiah, please conclude. The Finance Minister is here and is interested in replying.

SHRI PRAGADA KOTAIAH: The policies of the Government are responsible for all this. One more point, Sir. There is another mill at Sattenapalli. It was closed five months back. Why? The Government had given a guarantee to the Industrial Development Bank of India to secure a loan of two or three crores of rupees for modernisation of the mill. The modernisation was not according to the time schedule but the Government has failed to pay the loan to the Industrial Development Bank of India. The State Government did not open its eyes. They did not go to the Industrial Development Bank of India with regard to...*(Interruptions):*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SYED RAZI): Please conclude now.

SHRI PRAGADA KOTAIAH: And they appointed a receiver and the receiver had gone to Sattenapalli and kept the mill under lock and key. Now the mill is under lock and key. Any day the Industrial Development Bank of India may auction the mill to recover the loan. All this had happened due to the faults of the Government and the management. The workers in the State are suffering. How long will you allow them to suffer? The Prime Minister said that he would appoint a committee headed by a sitting Judge of the Supreme Court or of a High Court to go into the malpractices and corrupt practices in all these mills and set things right. I would request the Labour Minister and also the Finance Minister, who are present here to see to it that a committee is appointed headed by a sitting Judge of the Supreme Court or of a High Court so that it can go into the malpractices and corrupt practices which are responsible for the sickness. Thank you, Sir.

2 P.M.

[The Vice-Chairman (Shri Satish Agarwal) in the Chair]

SYED SIBTEY RAZI: There was a

demand that the Finance Minister should come immediately and respond to the queries raised by hon. Members. He has to attend the other House also. If you permit, the Finance Minister may intervene just now and for the other points raised by other hon. Members, the Labour Minister may reply.

SHRI PRAVAT KUMAR SAMANTARAY: There may be points raised by Members regarding the Finance Ministry. Who is going to reply to them?

SYED SIBTEY RAZI: No. My point is you pressed that the Finance Minister should come immediately. So he has responded. He has a very pressing business agenda in the other House. There are only two or three speakers. I have regard for those speaker, but my submission is this. He has to immediately go. He is here because Members asked him to come. He was not supposed to come immediately but he has come. So he should be given the opportunity to intervene. Any other new points that may be raised by hon. Members, I think Labour Minister is confident enough to answer.

SHRI PRAVAT KUMAR SAMANTARAY: Does it mean that the other Members have no relevant points to be raised to be answered by the Finance Minister?

SYED SIBTEY RAZI: I never meant this. I said that there may be relevant points, the Labour Minister is here, he will respond to those points. The basic thrust of the discussion is something else. *(Interruptions)*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Mr. Razi, the Finance Minister does not need anybody else for advocacy. If he is so keen to go back early, he can make a request himself anyway; I will give him a chance, after one or two speakers have spoken.

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: How can we conclude that other speakers who are going to speak will not make some new reference to the Finance Ministry? How can we presume that? *(Interruptions)?*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Mr. Mathur, it is just a question of certain accommodation. The major points have been raised by Shri Gurudas Das Gupta, supported by many others. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: It he has such urgent business in the other House, let him go back and come here afterwards and reply to our points.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): When would you like to go back, Mr. Finance Minister? How much time can you spare now?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH): Sir, the Budget Speech is going on in the other House. I have to attend to it.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Naturally. SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH: This motion is listed in the name of hon. Labour Minister, but the House insisted that I should come here. So as soon as that House dispersed I have come here. but I have to be there in that House at 2.20 P.M.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): At 2.20 So twenty minutes are there. If the hon. Members want him to speak before 2.20, then I can give him precedence.

SHRI PRAVAT KUMAR SAMANTARAY: Yes, yes. So, we shall curtail our speeches.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): So you speak later on.

SHRI PRAVAT KUMAR SAMANTARAY: No, let me finish. I shall be making very few references.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGRAWAL): Okay, Mr. Samantaray, please conclude soon.

SHRI PRAVAT KUMAR SAMANTARAY: I shall be drawing the attention of the Government whether

they still remember or whether they have forgotten that in the year 1958, the Government of India and the first Prime Minister of India had moved the first Industrial Resolution for setting up the public sector, where he had emphasised he social obligations of all those public sector undertakings. I do not know whether the present Government has followed that the concept that had given birth to the public sector undertakings. But the present Government in the name of economic liberalisation has claimed to balloon up the country's economic status to the 21st century. I do not know where we will land up finally. But it is a fact that within these four-five years the country and the country's people have landed up in a place where they do not foresee their future. Sir, we have an infrastructure after independence through public sector undertakings providing social security to the workmen employed in it. It is an admitted fact that not only we have created an infrastructure but we have got returns from it. My esteemed colleague, Mr. Virumbi, had earlier stated and I do not want to repeat, that the public sector while making profits, has brought a bad name, that the public sector has become redundant for this country and that only multi-nationals can save this country. For that matter, I do not know whether it is a fact done intentionally or it is manipulated to be done.

I do not know whether it is a thing done intentionally, or, it is manipulated to be done. The payment of wages and deposit of provident fund are statutory obligations on the part of the managements of the Central Government undertakings. It is known to the Government. When it is happening right under its nose, it has been ignored by the Labour Ministry. It is the nodal Ministry which has been empowered by the Industrial Disputes Act, the payment of Wages Act and other Acts to look after not only the welfare of the workers, but also to ensure that all these labour laws are adhered to. However, the Labour

[Shri Parvat Kumar Samantaray]

Ministry, instead of enforcing the labour laws, is behaving like a conciliatory organisation as if it does not have any role to play in this. Even though they had promised that they would do wonders, the result has been a big zero for the last three-four years. I would like to cite certain examples.

The Parliamentary Committee had suggested co-ordinated working of the units, the public sector undertakings. It had said that their products should be utilised by the Government. This has not been heeded to for the last so many years. They are purchasing, they are buying, from the private sector concerns.

Mr. Vayalar Ravi had said about the condition of the B.H.E.L. The N.T.C. has been cited. There has been talk of restructuring and financial reconstruction of the N.T.C. This was not being done. Only now this has been approved by the Finance Minister. The entire bureaucracy was saying that this could not be done, but they did it. What is the reason? Similarly, the Paradip Phosphates was incurring loss for the last many years. After its financial reconstruction and restructuring, this is becoming a profitable organisation and the workers are also happy. It has started giving returns.

I had drawn the attention of the House earlier also to the non-payment of wages to the workers of the dolomite mines in Birmitrapur. Does it mean that Parliament is the only forum where we should raise it? Does it mean that we need to approach Parliament for this purpose? Does it mean that Parliament should be used as an instrument to demand the fulfilment of this normal obligation? Sir, for the last four months, these workers numbering 7,000 -- they are mostly tribals have not been paid their wages. The provident fund has not

been paid for the last fifteen years. Another defaulter is the B.C.C.L. It is the biggest defaulter. It has not deposited the provident fund contribution of the workers. But no action has been taken against the company; it is simply forgotten. Several crores of rupees are involved in this.

When we see the Economic Survey as well as the Annual Reports of the different Ministries for the last four years, we find that the public sector undertakings have started giving good results. When this is the position, why should the policy of privatisation be thrust upon them? We have Hoogly dock-yards. The case has been referred to. They have built several ships, they have built several vessels. Now, they have been forced to close down and sold to a private organisation? We have such a big infrastructure. We cannot think of building up such a large infrastructure again. Should we just sell it at a throwaway price? Similar is the case of fertiliser industries located in Eastern India. It was decided to sell them to private parties. If these things are intentionally ignored by the Government, I do not know where we are going to land ourselves in.

My humble submission is that all these factors have to be looked into rationally. You should again look at your policy that only the multinationals can save the country. Earlier, we used to discuss in the House complaints against the private sector. Now we are discussing about the public sector. A time was there when we were always talking about foreign hands. Now, I think, the presence of foreign hands is evident in this country to jeopardize the future of the country by killing the public sector undertakings and the workers' involvement.

Thank you, Sir.

(SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH): Sir, I

am grateful to you for giving this opportunity..... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, the mike is not working.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: Sir, the Finance Minister is denied of the mike. Mr. Minister, come over to our side! ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): It is too early to ask him to come over to your side!

SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH: Sir, I am very grateful to the hon. Members who have taken part in this debate. My esteemed colleague, the hon. Minister for Labour, would deal with these issues in detail, but I can restate the Government's policies with regard to the public sector. Our policy is to give the public sector every opportunity to expand. We are not taking an ideological position in favour of privatization ...*(Interruptions)*..

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Mike, Mike! ..*(Interruptions)*..

SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH: All public sector units which are or which, with an amount of restructuring, that is, within the.... *(Interruptions)*...

श्रीमती मारग्रेट अल्वा: वह माइक को बार-बार क्या हो रहा है।....*(व्यवधान)*

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: For him the mike is not working....*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH: Sir, I was saying that our Government's policy is to give the public sector every opportunity to grow. Wherever public sector units are making profit, we will give them every opportunity to expand, to grow. With regard to those public sector units which are not profitable, we will explore opportunities of restructuring them. If they can be restructured within the limits of the resources that our Government has and these resources are limited ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: What are they doing? There is no mike....*(Interruptions)*...

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: Mr. Minister, you have no choice but to come over to our side! Please come. Why not? Come on....*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Mr. Minister, please move over to that seat.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: That is the seat of the Prime Minister, Sir.

SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH: I was saying that with regard to those public sector units which are not profitable, which are not viable, our effort will be to make them viable. If it requires balancing investment which is within the means available to the Government, we will revive those units. But if it is inherently unviable, to revive it requires....*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Whenever the Finance Minister is speaking, they are switching off the mike....*(Interruptions)*...

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: Sir, to save the time of the House, I would like to tell the Finance Minister that we are not talking about the general policy with regard to the public sector. We are talking of some specific issues like the salaries which remain unpaid to the public sector workers for a long time....*(Interruptions)*... Will he give a specific answer?...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: The time by which they will be paid....*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): He will answer that question. Please take your seat.

SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH: I was explaining that wherever those units which are not viable and cannot be made viable, we have no option but to close them down and, therefore, the

[Shri Manmohan Singh]

country has to prepare itself. We cannot, I think, live beyond means. Every day, in this House, all over the country, people express concern about the fiscal deficit. Now, how do you bear the fiscal deficit? If you are going to have a situation where all loss-making units, regardless of...*(Interruptions)*... But, having said that, I would say that it is this Government's intention that even when we have to close down these units, we will protect the interests of the workers.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: How? That is the question...*(Interruptions)*. Sir, wages are not being paid.

SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH: Sir, I am answering the question.

SYED SIBTEY RAZI: Sir, he is answering the question....*(Interruptions)*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Please take your seat....*(Interruptions)*. Please take your seat, Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: We had raised a specific point about payment of wages. We are not here to listen to the philosophy. Let him say about non-payment of wages....*(Interruptions)*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta, please take your seat....*(Interruptions)*

SYED SIBTEY RAZI: It is unfortunate that they asked for the Finance Minister to intervene and when he is on his legs and is speaking, they are not listening to him. This is very unfair.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta, you have to listen to him first, you must listen to him first....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: This is not the way. We are all walking out....*(Interruptions)*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Mr. Gupta, you

must listen to the Minister...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: The hon. Minister has fled away. He has not answered our queries. We are all walking out. It is shameful. It is absolutely shameful...*(Interruptions)*

SYED SIBTEY RAZI: It is very unfortunate on the part of the Opposition Members that when the Finance Minister was replying, they were not listening to him....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: It is unfortunate....*(Interruptions)*

SYED SIBTEY RAZI: They did not permit the Finance Minister to complete his statement....*(Interruptions)*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Mr. Mathur, please take your seat. Please take your seat *(Interruptions)*

Dr. Biplab Das Gupta, take your seat. Please take your seat.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: What is this?*(Interruptions)*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): If you want to protest, protest one by one. If you want to speak, speak one by one, not all together.*(Interruptions)*

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: It is an insult to the House....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, did the Minister seek your permission to leave? Sir, I wish to know whether the hon. Finance Minister, before leaving the House, got your permission. Did you allow him to go? You did not allow him to go. It is insult to the House...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, we should also be heard...*(Interruptions)*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): There should be no running commentary. Please take your seats. There should be some decorum.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: The Calling Attention was listed in the name of the Labour Minister. Since the House sat through the lunch time, we requested the Finance Minister, and he obliged us and said that he would intervene. He came here. He did not go for lunch. He came here straight. He did not go for lunch or anything else. He was here throughout.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: We also did not go for lunch.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: One minute. In fact, I told you that the Finance Minister was requesting for time because he was to go to the other House. You were kind enough to call him. Everytime he spoke, they did not allow him to speak. You wanted from him a reply...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: No, no. This is a Calling Attention...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: At least you should have listened to him. He said that at 2-20 p.m. he ought to be in the other House...*(Interruptions)*

He was not allowed to speak.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Did he seek your permission?
...*(Interruptions)*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta, let her conclude first...*(Interruptions)*. I am not running away from the House. I am in the Chair...*(Interruptions)* I will satisfy you, I will satisfy you on that score. Let her conclude. Nobody's speech will go on record unless she concludes.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: I came and specifically told you that the Minister would have to leave by 2.20 and therefore, you would please call him so that he can complete and go. And you obliged him. I specifically told the Chair that he would have to be in the other House by 2.20. He had requested for ten minutes to finish and go. When he was

not allowed to speak at all, and it is 2.20 now, he said: "If you don't want to hear me, I will go." You should at least have the courtesy to listen to the Finance Minister when he comes to answer your questions. Now that he has gone, let the other Minister reply.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: My point is that the Calling Attention was about the non-payment of wages and default in the payment of statutory dues.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: That was to be answered by the Labour Minister.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, the Calling Attention was specific. Since the default in payment is taking place because the Finance Ministry is not giving them money. This is not within the purview of the hon. Labour Minister.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: There is a responsibility on all Minister to answer. It does not matter who is there....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Let me finish. This Calling Attention was a specific Calling Attention. It is not concerned with the philosophy of the public sector. We are on a specific point. The hon. Finance Minister refused to reply to that question.

About the point that he was to go by 2.20, it is now 2.20. He has left at least five minutes before.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Because he was not allowed and he has to reach the other House.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: It is a question of Parliamentary etiquette. Before the hon. Minister leaves the House, he has to seek permission.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: No, he does not have to
...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Without seeking permission he has left the House in the way Mr. Kalpnath Rai had left the House some time before

[Shri Gurudas Das Gupta]
without being able to answer a question. There is only one parallel. Therefore, Sir, I have no alternative but to say that the hon. Finance Minister has committed a breach of privilege of the House. He has shown indignity. He has been behaving in a way which is not becoming of a Minister of a Cabinet rank, least of his stature. What he has done is against the traditions of the House. He should not have fled away like this without your permission.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: Sir, my point is simple.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:
(Interruptions)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): You will be given a chance to speak.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: I also have to say something. I may also be permitted to say something. There has to be enough somewhere.

DR. BIPLAB DAS GUPTA: All that the Finance Minister was to do was to give a specific reply i.e. by when the employees of the public sector organisations, who have not been paid for so many months, would be paid the money. That is all that we wanted to know from the Minister. If a reply came, we would have been happy and we would have gone for lunch. Rather than replying to that,....(Interruptions) Please do not interrupt.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: It was not a question-answer session.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: Rather than replying to our specific questions, he went into the general policy questions regarding the public sector — which units should be closed down, which units should be made viable and all.

We did not ask him any question on this. The Calling Attention Motion is a very specific one, but he did not go into the specifics. I would say that the way he walked out is something deliberate. It is

not that he was angry with some of the interruptions, because there was a lot of time still left. Even now it is the slightly past 2.20, the time he himself set for leaving. The reasons why he left was that he did not want to answer. The reason is that he did not want to pay the money. He wanted the workers to suffer. That is the reason. Because he had no answer, he left like this. Sir, this question cannot be resolved like that. We want an answer from the Minister.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Sir, I wish to say something today. I have been a Member in this House for eight years. The tragedy is that the conduct of both sides of the House is only deteriorating. I am in full appreciation of the situation today. I am sorry I am standing in the centre. I am not taking sides. The fact remains that the Finance Minister was to reply. I am equally concerned as my hon. colleagues on this side of the House are, being involved in the trade union movement myself. The fact is that I have just won a landslide victory in the trade unions in Hyderabad, I am concerned about this and I have been waiting patiently to speak regarding this business. Now, the finance Minister was half-way through the statement where he said we are committed to the workers. And we all jumped up and said, "how?". We did not give this gentleman a chance to conclude his statement before we all rose. I think my hon. friends on this side were hasty. I appreciate their anxiety in wanting to know the answer. I also want to know the answer. I also regret that the gentleman, Mr. Manmohan Singh, our hon. Finance Minister, who is known for his exemplary patience and whom I admire much more than I do any other human being on the earth I have deep appreciation for him as an individual....(Interruptions). Mr. Biplab, if you do not have the courtesy towards a lady also, I am sorry, it is a sad reflection on your party politics. I am not in a mood to be entertained today. If this is the way you are concerned about Mr. Rama Rao,

all of you have turned capitalists and are supporting Mr. Rama Rao and his wife....(Interruptions). Saralaji, please tell your party colleagues. I am absolutely sore that an incident like this has happened. (Interruptions). I am also saying that. Sir, it is both the hands that have clapped. It is regrettable that Mr. Manmohan Singh left the way he did. It is equally regrettable that we did not allow him to complete his statement and then ask him how he was planning to pay. The tragedy is that the questions remain unanswered.

Now, Sir, with your permission, may I please say what I wish to about the public sector? I have been slated to speak and I am not being allowed to speak. (Interruptions).

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर: सबसे पहले आप कन्कलूड करें, इससे पहले की भाषण पर आएँ, मुझे दो बातें कहनी हैं।

श्रीमती रेणुका चौधरी: नहीं, नहीं, पहले मुझे कहनी हैं और फिर उसके बाद आप कहिए। मैंने बड़ी शांति से, आपने अब तक जो कहा, सुना है।

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर: मैं उस पर नहीं कह रहा हूँ।...(व्यवधान)...

श्रीमती रेणुका चौधरी: अभी आप प्लीज़ बैठ जाइए।...(व्यवधान)...

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर: मैं मनमोहन सिंह जी की जो घटना हुई, उस पर बात करना चाहता हूँ।

श्रीमती रेणुका चौधरी: मुझे थोड़ा नहीं करना है।...(व्यवधान).... आप बाद में कह लीजिएगा।

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर: मुझे मनमोहन सिंह जी की जो घटना हुई, उस पर कहना है।...(व्यवधान)...

श्रीमती रेणुका चौधरी: आप बाद में कह लीजिए, मुझे जो कहना है वह कहने दीजिए।...(व्यवधान)....

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर: बाद में कैसे कह दे? अब तमाशा है।...(व्यवधान)....

श्रीमती रेणुका चौधरी: आप ऐसे कैसे जुल्म कर सकते हैं?

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर: आप रूलिंग दीजिए।...(व्यवधान).... डिबेट शुरू होने से पहले जो घटना, हुई, उस पर मुझे...(व्यवधान).... इजाजत दी जाए।

डिबेट में शुरू हो जाए, फिर उस पर कहें, वह अनुचित होगा।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री सतीश अग्रवाल): माथुर साहब, उस विषय पर तो आप बिना इजाजत के कह चुके हैं। वह तो रिकार्ड में आ गया है।

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर: मैं नहीं कह चुका हूँ।...(व्यवधान).... मेरा क्वेश्चन दूसरे प्रकार का है।...(व्यवधान).... जब आपने गुरुदास दासगुप्त और इनको इजाजत दी है तो मुझे भी इजाजत दीजिए या फिर मनमोहन सिंह जी की घटना के विषय में किसी को भी इजाजत नहीं होनी चाहिए थी।...(व्यवधान)....

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Sir, Please allow me to say what I wish to on public sector.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Yes, You will get a chance. Now let him have the satisfaction of saying a few words on this. Let Mr. Mathur speak now. (Interruptions).

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर: श्रीमान्, जो कुछ भी घटा है, बहुत दुखद है, अच्छा नहीं हुआ और मैं जानता हूँ, अपनी बहन के साथ सहमत हूँ कि मनमोहन सिंह जी अत्यंत शिष्ट, बहुत संभले हुए व्यक्ति हैं, इसमें मुझे कोई शक नहीं है। कल्पनाथ राय जी के बिहेवियर से उनकी तुलना करना अन्याय है, मैं उनसे सहमत नहीं हूँ। लेकिन उनसे एक छोटी सी भूल हुई है। यदि एक शब्द कहकर वे हाउस से चले जाते कि श्रीमान्, मैं इस समय जाना चाहता हूँ, तो शायद बात न बिगड़ती, उनकी मजबूरी है और उस मजबूरी को भी हमें एक्सिप्ट करना चाहिए। परन्तु श्रीमान्, मनमोहन सिंह जी भी थोड़ा शांत अगर हो जाते, यह बात ठीक है कि उत्तेजना थी इस तरफ से, क्योंकि उनको जवाब देना था और क्वेश्चन यह था कि जो आज तक पैसा दिया गया है, कितना है, आप कब देंगे? इतनी सी बात का जवाब दे देते तो हमारा समाधान हो जाता लेकिन उन्होंने भूल की या कहिए अपने अनुसार एक्सप्लेन करना चाहें। मैंने जो पार्लियामेंट्री अफेयर्स मिनिस्टर साहिबा हैं, उनसे अनुरोध किया था कि क्योंकि इसका जवाब ढंग से जाना चाहिए इसलिए आप रूल सस्पेंड कर दीजिए और अंत में आकर फाइनैस मिनिस्टर जवाब दे दे। अभी भी मेरा निवेदन यह है कि फाइनैस मिनिस्टर को इस बात पर कि जितना पैसा ड्यू है, कब देंगे, मजदूरी कब मिलेगी, एक कमिटमेंट देना चाहिए। यदि यह कमिटमेंट सरकार की तरफ से नहीं आता तो हमें मजबूर होकर अपना एतराज़ रजिस्टर करना पड़ेगा। मैं मनमोहन सिंह जी की इज्जत करता हूँ लेकिन दुख मुझे यह है कि इतना भला, शरीफ आदमी मजबूरी के कारण

एक छोटी सी गलती कर गया, इस पर इतना ज्यादा शोर मचाने की आवश्यकता नहीं है।

श्री सैयद सिद्दीक रज़ी (उत्तर प्रदेश): सर, मेरे विद्वान दोस्तों की तरफ से जो वित्त मंत्री के बारे में आज यहां व्यवहार हुआ, उस पर मुझे खेद है। वाईस चेयरमैन साहब, आपको याद होगा कि शुरू में भी मैंने आपसे अनुरोध किया था कि वित्त मंत्री जी को इसमें इंटरवीन करने के लिए कई मर्तबे कहा गया। जो रूटीन था उसके अनुसार ही हमारे श्रम मंत्री को ही इसका जवाब देना था। लेकिन हमारी सरकार की जो सहिष्णुता है उसके बारे में किसी तरह का डाउट नहीं होना चाहिए। वे यहां पर आए और अपनी बात कहना चाहते थे। आपने भी उनसे यह कहा कि आपका कितना समय है, आप कब तक रह सकते हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि—मैं 2-20 बजे तक रह सकता हूं। जब वे जवाब दे रहे थे तथा अपना पक्ष रखना चाहते थे, लेकिन इतने में ही हमारी तरफ से डिस्टर्बेंस हुआ। दो हाऊसेज हैं पार्लियामेंट के। इस हाऊस के प्रति भी उनकी जितनी जिम्मेदारी है और उतनी ही जिम्मेदारी उस हाऊस की है। वहां जाने का उनका कमिटमेंट था। तो जाते वक्त उन्होंने कहा भी कि यदि आप हमको नहीं सुनना चाहते तो मुझे अब दूसरे हाऊस में जाना है और उसके बाद वह चले गए। तो इस तरह से मैं समझता हूं कि यह ठीक नहीं है इस बात को ज्यादा बढ़ाना। यहां श्रम मंत्री जी हैं। जो पौइंट्स रह गए हैं और जो भी वह कह रहे थे, यह इसके अंदर ही था। जो जनरल बाते भी कही गई हैं वह जनरल बाते कहने के बाद किस मुद्दे पर आना चाहते थे, उन्हें मौका दिया जाना चाहिए था। दोनों पक्षों से यह सदन चलेगा, मान्यवर, और आप इसके कस्टोडियन हैं। इस तरह से एक पक्ष को ही हर वक्त लांछित करना यह कोई मुनासिब बात नहीं है। हम दोनों को मिलकर इस हाऊस को चलाना है। मेरा अनुरोध यह है कि जितना हो गया वह बाते खत्म की जाएं। लेबर मिनिस्टर यहां पर हैं। जो बचे हुए तथ्य हैं उसका जवाब होगा।.... (व्यवधान)

असिद सैयद रज़ी "अत्र प्रवेशः" सर-

मिरा वदवान दोस्तों की طرف से जो वोट मंजरी के बारे में आज यहां विलुट होना अस पर कहे कहे हैं-

वाँस चिन्नमिन साहब - आपको पता होगा कि शुरू में मैंने भी आप से अनुरोध किया कि वोट मंजरी की

को असमिन् अत्र प्रवेशः करने के लिये कभी मर्तबे किया गया जो दोस्तों के अनुसार ही हमारे शुरू मंजरी को ही असमिन् दिना जलपे है- लेकिन हमारी सरकार की जो समिन्शुता है- असके बारे में किसी तरह का डाउट नहीं होना चाहिए- वोट पर आपने प्रश्न और अपनी बात कहना चाहते हैं- आपने भी उनसे यह कहा कि आपका कितना समय है, आप कब तक रह सकते हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि—मैं 2-20 बजे तक रह सकता हूं। जब वे जवाब दे रहे थे तथा अपना पक्ष रखना चाहते थे, लेकिन इतने में ही हमारी तरफ से डिस्टर्बेंस हुआ। दो हाऊसेज हैं पार्लियामेंट के। इस हाऊस के प्रति भी उनकी जितनी जिम्मेदारी है और उतनी ही जिम्मेदारी उस हाऊस की है। वहां जाने का उनका कमिटमेंट था। तो जाते वक्त उन्होंने कहा भी कि यदि आप हमको नहीं सुनना चाहते तो मुझे अब दूसरे हाऊस में जाना है और उसके बाद वह चले गए। तो इस तरह से मैं समझता हूं कि यह ठीक नहीं है इस बात को ज्यादा बढ़ाना। यहां श्रम मंत्री जी हैं। जो पौइंट्स रह गए हैं और जो भी वह कह रहे थे, यह इसके अंदर ही था। जो जनरल बाते भी कही गई हैं वह जनरल बाते कहने के बाद किस मुद्दे पर आना चाहते थे, उन्हें मौका दिया जाना चाहिए था। दोनों पक्षों से यह सदन चलेगा, मान्यवर, और आप इसके कस्टोडियन हैं। इस तरह से एक पक्ष को ही हर वक्त लांछित करना यह कोई मुनासिब बात नहीं है। हम दोनों को मिलकर इस हाऊस को चलाना है। मेरा अनुरोध यह है कि जितना हो गया वह बाते खत्म की जाएं। लेबर मिनिस्टर यहां पर हैं। जो बचे हुए तथ्य हैं उसका जवाब होगा।.... (व्यवधान)

ہم نے کئے جو کس مد سے پر آنا چاہتے تھے
 انہیں موقع دیا جانا چاہئے تھا۔ دونوں
 یکیشوں سے یہ سسٹم چلے گا۔ مانیوور
 اور آپ اس کے کسٹومر ہیں اس طرح
 سے ایک یکیش کو ہی ہر وقت لاچھت
 کرنا یہ کوئی مناسب بات نہیں ہے۔ ہم
 دونوں کو ملکر اس پاؤس کو چلانا ہے۔
 میرا نو رورڈ یہ ہے کہ جتنا ہو گیا وہ
 باتیں ختم کی جائیں بیئر مشین یہاں ہر
 جگہ ہیں۔ جو بچے ہوئے تھے ہیں اسکا جوا
 ہوگا۔ ... قیود اخلاقیات ...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): You mean to say enough is enough.

SYED SIBTEY RAZI: Yes, Sir.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Sir, much has been said about the public sector undertakings and the closure of sick units across the floor, cutting across party lines, because the nation is seized with this very important issue. The fact remains that we cannot view the public sector in isolation and in terms of statistics and monies and profit-making or loss-making alone. What was visualised for the public sector by Jawaharlal Nehru himself was that the public sector has a social responsibility towards terms of employment and payment. Jawaharlal Nehru also had said that irrespective of the situation in the industry, the commitment to the workers remains supreme and uppermost. The fact is that today we have a nation-wide fear psychosis that the public sector units are being closed down at the altar of privatisation. Many political parties have aligned themselves and opposed privatisation for the reasons best known to them, for various political gains, perhaps. But the spectre of unemployment is looming large before

us. I am not going to go into the statistics or figures of the individual public sector undertakings which are running at a loss today. The fact remains that they have become synonymous with loss and mismanagement. Today, what nobody has taken cognizance of in the House is that the top level management of the public sector is in a mass exodus for job or employment in the private industries and the multinationals who are coming into our country. I want to know whether anyone of you are aware of this fact and I want the Minister to make a specific statement if he is aware of how many top-level officials—the CMD, the General Managers and the Managers have left the public sector and joined the private sector, thereby further compounding the injury that is being caused.

The second point is, who bells the cat in the public sector undertaking? There is no accountability of any single individual when the public sector units goes into the red and we have gone into the red and the tragedy lies in the fact that after the industry has gone into the red, the gentleman concerned in the upper hierarchy of employment in these sectors is rewarded by being given a promotion or another unit to look after or the worst is that they resign and go and join some rival organisation in the private sector and foreign companies and then indulge in sabotaging from those organisations. To compound this, they have family networks where sons-in-law are agents or suppliers of vital ingredients which are being given to the public sector units. In other words, corruption has spread like cancer and has got a stranglehold on the public sector undertakings in India. So, we need to have a radical reform and an attitudinal change if we are going to view the public sector. However, all is not so dismal as many of my hon. colleagues have said. We do have success stories. But when we have success stories, what is the attitude of the Government today? We talk about privatisation. And we are talking about *Videshi*, *Videshi* in this land which talked about *Swadeshi*! We have

socio-economic problems in our hands. What is the ethos, the glue that keeps India united? What is the sense of Indianness that holds us together? Cutting across party-lines, you have a fantastic work force in terms of labour where you see a secular spirit and people working together, earning their livelihood with self-respect. Today when we talk of privatisation! I do, see the exodus on the top level. You have a fear psychosis amongst the labourers that they are going to be unemployed. In our State the Chief Minister talks about privatisation and says "Privatisation is the only answer." But he gives an assurance that there is going to be no unemployment. Is there an understanding between the Government and the foreign companies, the multinationals, that they will not remove any persons who are employed in the public sector? Are we giving a level-playing field to the public sector success stories that have been made in India? In the core sector, power, we have the BHEL which is competing successfully, not only in India but abroad also, and has quoted several crores less. But the BHEL is not given a level-playing field to compete with other multinationals who come to India today. And worse is, we have State Governments making assurances and underwriting foreign equities which come into our country, saying that we will see that they get a return on their equity, irrespective of what the unit will cost to the consumer. But BHEL is not given these undertakings or underwritings. Recently, even an organisation like the ONGC, when they put out the fire in Andhra Pradesh, in one of the worst blow-outs in the globe that we have ever seen, Neal Adams was invited to come to India. We will not pay the same money to our people that Neal Adams had to be paid for. We have a lopsided bias, prejudice inherent in our system against public sector undertakings. And, Sir, besides this, what is looming large and dark on the horizon just now is the tragedy that we have had today and that is, the people, Indian citizens, who have worked for earning their livelihood, who have not

in during their life-time 22 years or 25 years or 30 years of service, are not receiving their salaries today. The crux of the matter lies in it, and the tragedy is that this is going to reflect on the society immediately and then you have no solutions. You are going to give rise to crimes, you are going to give rise to unrest and you are depriving your citizens of self-respect! They have yearned for the money. And you are talking about budgetary allocations when you are equating it with human lives.

Sir, we have industries like the IDPL about which many of my hon. colleagues have mentioned. The IDPL in Hyderabad has a quality product which is unmatched. We have a ready market, we have an infrastructure, we have an organisation, but nobody wants to give money to the IDPL to revive itself. Yes, we talk about overemployment. We talk about employing far too many people in jobs which automation can replace. Sir, let us for one minute pause and I beg of this House: "Don't compare India with China. China has no democracy and I do not see China as a success story. People there do not have freedom to think. Don't compare India with Mexico because we are not talking of investments which come in the way as they did in Mexico. We are talking of development, investments and equities from foreign countries, but do not erode the existing infrastructure on which the ethos of India depends and the work-ethos develops." And that is the fundamental identity of ours, of the people, of the nation as a whole. So, my plea, Sir, with the Government is: "As far as the IDPL is concerned, I want an immediate recourse where the plans will be provided with full working capital so that they can run it to the full capacity. I want the employment of workmen." About 9,000 families are on the brink of starvation because they are not given the salaries for which they have worked for. This is not a charity, Sir. This is not a Rs. 2—Rice Scheme, this is not a populist scheme that they announce. They have money for all this, they give an enhancement in

Plan—allocations, but they do not pay to the people who work for their livelihood.

I want the banking operations to be normalised immediately, urgently and expeditiously. Deferred facilities like wage revision, LTC, conveyance allowance, etc., should be restored to the employees of the IDPL. In my discipline of industrial psychology—perhaps, none of you are aware of it—there is a terrific implosion which is taking place. Unemployment is a global phenomenon. It is staring us in our face.

Mr. Hanumanthappa, do you want me to yield?

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA (Karnataka): Sir, I should not be mistaken that I am interrupting the weaker section. But I am interrupting in favour of the weaker sections. Actually, according to the schedule, the Short Duration Discussion on continuance of reservation in promotions for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is to start at 2.30 P.M. I am only bringing to the notice of the House that you are encroaching on the time of the weaker sections.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: You don't realise, Mr. Hanumanthappa, that we have Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes employees also.

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: That is why I stated that I should not be mistaken that I was interrupting the weaker section, but in favour of the weaker sections.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Let us not be too technical. The Short Duration Discussion was to start at 2.30 P.M. But with the consent of the House we have to finish this item. Then we will have lunch.

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: We are in your hands, Sir.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: We have to look after their salaries. I would request that the BIFR should be empowered to invoke section 33 of SICA where the financial institutions lag behind in executing the necessary help and they may be penalised further. Justice delayed is justice denied and this applies to the financial

institutions also. If they do not come to the help of sick units immediately, there is not point in paying lip service, at the expense of the public, in the Parliament. I want my hon. colleagues to realise that it is for this one matter that we should fight, that is, the economic survival. The workers should get their salaries immediately. We have to sit together and demand that the Government should spell out the policy. Where are they going to stop the multinationals? What is the hire-and-fire policy that they are dictating to the multinationals? How are the State Governments and the Chief Ministers giving assurances that privatisation is the only answer but no unemployment, no retrenchment will take place? What is the solution to the problem of salaries which they are not getting? Perhaps, we don't know. In order to cut corners, the IDPL in Andhra Pradesh has removed their securitymen saying that they cannot afford to pay their salaries. The people, who are working in pharmaceutical companies like the IDPL, are qualified technicians. Even women sit on guard to protect the properties of this public sector undertaking so that no vandalism or goondaism takes place. There is such an exemplary awareness among our citizens. The multinationals are not going to wipe out their tears. They are hungry. They want what they have asked for. They have to get their salaries. I would appreciate it if the Labour Minister comes up with a solution to that first and then go to the rest of the points.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Shri Muthu Mani. You have asked for three minutes. I will give you five minutes. You please conclude within that time.

SHRI S. MUTHU MANI (Tamil Nadu): I will take only three minutes.

Thank you, Mr. Vice-Chairman, for giving me this opportunity. It is a matter of great regret that the Central Government has been going ahead with this new Economic Policy in spite of the serious apprehensions expressed by most of the political parties. My party and our leader, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Dr. Puratchi Thalaivi, are not opposed to economic reforms as such. But the economic reform should be directed

towards the welfare of the people. Since the new Economic Policy is misguided and misdirected we are criticising it, Sir. Several of our fears have been turned out to be true. The worst-affected people, as a result of the new Economic Policy, are the working class. Over 1,75,00,000 employees of the Central public sector undertakings like BHEL, NLC, HPF have been put to a lot of hardships. The fear of retrenchment is still hanging over their heads like Damocles' sword. In spite of the assurances given by the Finance Minister and the Government a large number of workers have been thrown out of employment all over the country. The Government is indulging in jugglery of figures to show its achievements. There is no use in showing the figures of augmented exports, huge foreign exchange reserves and so on. The practical situation in the country is very grim. The buying power of the workers is so low that they are not able to meet even their essential requirements from the wages which they get. All the trade unions throughout the country have been demanding wage revision for quite some time. But the Government's attitude is one of indifference towards it. On the one hand, the prices of essential commodities are increasing everyday and on the other hand, wage of the workers are not being revised to enable them to buy their necessities.

The Union Labour Minister, Shri P.A. Sangma, has said that directions have been issued to the managements of all PSUs to settle wages in consultation with the trade unions locally. When the trade unions approached the managements, they said, "They have no directions from the Centre to go in for wage revision." When the complaint is brought to the notice of the Government, the Minister or the Secretary says that wage settlement would be done locally according to the directions. Sir, I only wish to point out the callous attitude of the Central Government towards the working class. Already, there is simmering discontent among the workers of the PSUs. If their genuine demand for immediate wage settlement is not met soon, I am afraid, the workers would have no option but to take up cudgels.

Therefore, I urge upon the hon. Minister to take necessary steps to complete the wage settlement process at the earliest.

Sir, modernisation is an important aspect of the New Economic Policy. In a democracy like India, there is no point in creating wealth for the sake of it. Until and unless this wealth is utilised for the welfare of the common man, it is useless to create this wealth. Through the process of modernisation, the Government is only harming the interests of the working class. In a country whose wealth is enormous manpower, it is ridiculous to have more machines which would displace workers. Therefore, while undertaking modernisation, the Government should identify areas where our manpower potential could be best utilised to the advantage of the workers and the nation. But, what is happening now is a misplaced modernisation. The Government is indulging in a short-cut method to retrench workers. By misusing the Voluntary Retirement Scheme, lakhs of workers are being sent home under the pressure of the management. Such workers, who lose employment, get a meagre amount as terminal benefit which is too low to support their families. It is a pity to see how the families of these workers live in utter misery. Sir, through you, I appeal to the Labour Minister to take it up with the Management of the PSUs and see that the Voluntary Retirement Scheme is not misused.

Sir, I have a few words to say about the bonus scheme for workers. Year after year, the workers have been demanding to scrap the ceiling on for being eligible for bonus. The workers have also been demanding bonus on the basis of their actual monthly salary rather than the present maximum limit of Rs. 1,600.

Every year, the Government has been giving assurances to consider their suggestion, but nothing has been done so far. The demand of the employees for pension as a third benefit has not been agreed to by the Government so far. Sir the employees are very agitated on this matter. I know the pulse of the workers since I meet them everyday, being the General Secretary of the Andhra Pradesh

Sanga Peravai which is affiliated to the AIADMK.

Sir, through you, I request the hon. Minister to agree to both the demands of the workers and bring in necessary legislation in this Session itself to scrap the ceiling in the Bonus Act and to give pension as a third benefit.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Before I call the Minister to reply to the debate, I would like to make the record straight so far as certain allegations or insinuations or charge of running away from the House are concerned. Shri Gurudas Das Gupta, particularly along with some other friends, raised a question that it amounts to a contempt of the House. He gave the example of Shri Kalp Nath Rai, the former Food Minister. As a matter of fact, the Motion moved by Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta, has to be replied to by the Minister of Labour. The Finance Minister was summoned to the House on the insistence of the hon. Members of this House, because a part of the Motion related to the Ministry of Finance. The Finance Minister was kind enough to respond to the call of this House and he was present here. Then, he made a request to me, saying that he was to go to the other House at 2.20 PM. I permitted him to intervene in the debate with the permission of the House. So, he started his speech at 2.10 P.M. and he finished his speech at 2.17 P.M. He was to go to the other House at 2.20 P.M. That is also a compulsion as that is also a House.

The Members wanted specific replies to certain questions with regard to financial institutions. He could not reply to them. It is true, Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta, that he did not seek specific permission from me to leave the House. But as things stand, he had made it abundantly clear, at the very beginning that he was to attend the other House at 2.20 PM because the Budget debate was going on.

After all, the Finance Minister is not a superman who could have reached the House within half a minute. Naturally,

feeling frustrated with all the interruptions that were taking place at a particular point of time, he suddenly left the House. But that does not amount to any sort of contempt. There is also no parallel to what Mr. Kalpnath Rai, the then Food Minister, did, when he left the House. Mr. Kalpnath Rai was duty-bound to reply to the House. But he left the House without seeking permission. The Finance Minister was summoned to the House at the request of hon. Members of this House. So, this does not amount to any contempt or breach of privilege. Anyway, it would have been better, if he had, before leaving, sought the permission of the Chair. But that was practically implied when he was to leave the House. So, I did not take serious note of his not asking me for permission to leave the House. Now, I will call upon the hon. Minister of Labour to reply to the specific points raised by Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta and Mr. Dipankar Mukherjee and others with regard to the issue in question.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर: फाइनंस मिनिस्टर साहब जवाब नहीं दे सके हैं। लेकिन फाइनंस मिनिस्टर की सलाह से या आपकी तरफ से हम यह जवाब चाहेंगे कि यह जो पैसा बाकी है जितने वेजेज नहीं मिले हैं, इनको कब तक दिया जाएगा। यह सीधा-सीधा सवाल है। मैं चाहता हूँ कि इनकी निगाह में अपना जवाब देते समय यह रहे। जो बकाया पैसा है, जिससे मजदूरों को मजदूरी दी जा सके उसका कौन सा समय होगा... (व्यवधान)... इसका जवाब हमें दे दें यही निवेदन है।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री सतीश अग्रवाल): यही उत्तर वे देंगे। यही अपेक्षा रखिए आप।

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI P.A. SANGMA): Mr. Vice-Chairman, I am grateful to the hon. Members who have participated in this debate. It is a very important issue as it concerns the welfare of our working class. I am grateful, particularly to Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta and Mr. Dipankar Mukherjee, who moved this Motion. Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta and many other friends have been raising this issue at various forums because they are very much concerned

about the working class. On behalf of the working class, as Minister of Labour, I would like to thank all the Members. I will be very brief. As far as the question of not revealing the truth and also the remark that I am trying to take shelter by using the word 'delayed payment' instead of 'non-payment' are concerned, I think the legal position is very-very clear. I agree with the hon. Member. I do not mean to mislead the House. Delayed payment is non-payment and that is very clear according to law.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: It is default.

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: Yes. According to section 5 of the Payment of Wages Act, industries which employ less than a thousand employees should pay the wages by the 7th of each month, of the previous month. The industries which employ more than a thousand people should pay by the 10th of the next month. Therefore, if the payment is not made by the 7th and 10th respectively, naturally, it amounts to non-payment of wages. I do agree with that. Then there is a provision in the law. What is the position if the wages are not paid? Sir, section 20 says that non-payment of wages is an offence and that it is punishable under the law...*(Interruptions)*. I am only mentioning the law...*(Interruptions)*.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Mr. Minister, *themore and more you agree with the Member, the more and more applause you will get.*

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: *But the law makes provisions for the first offence and the second offence. If an establishment does not pay wages to the workers, in the case of the first default, the punishment is penalty, payment of fine. If the establishment commits a second offence on non-payment, of course, the law provides for imprisonment up to a period of one to six months. So, the law is very clear. ... (Interruptions)*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Sir, our cause is up-

held. I compliment the Minister for a forthright statement.

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: I know that the hon. Member knows the rules. I brought in the provisions of law only to clarify...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Mr. Minister, I compliment you because there has been no such forthright statement from any Member of the Government that non-payment of wages amounts to default and that that default is punishable.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta, if you have some patience, then you will have more such forthright things from the Minister.

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: Sir, as far as the present position concerning the non-payment of wages in Government undertakings is concerned, I have contacted all the administrative Ministries. The position today is that except in the case of some units in Raniganj, namely, the Burn Standard Refractory Units and the NJML, the wages up to February have been paid. So, everywhere, the wages have been paid...*(Interruptions)* In the NTC also, the wages have been paid. In fact, the House will remember that in the last Budget, there was a provision of one crore of rupees only towards the Budgetary support for the National Textiles Corporation. But the Finance Minister, who, of course, could not be present here, was very kind enough;—I must compliment him; I communicate with him every month on the issue of delayed payment of wages or non-payment of wages, whatever you may call it—he was very, very generous to sanction Rs. 138 crores towards the payment of wages and salaries for the NTC workers, even though the Budgetary allocation was a mere one crore of rupees. Therefore, payment of wages to the workers is our obligation and we are committed to it. Mr. Dipankar Mukherjee himself was very kind to mention that whenever he

met the Finance Minister, the Finance Minister always maintained that whatever statutory dues for the workers were there, he would be willing to pay them. So, there is no difficulty as far as the payment of wages is concerned. The wages have been paid. Now, coming specifically to NJMC there were dues amounting to around four crores of rupees towards the payment of wages to the working class. A few days back, the Finance Minister was kind enough to sanction Rs. 30 crores to the NJMC to enable it to meet all the dues including payment of wages to its workers. I had a meeting with the Ministry of Textiles in the morning and I was given to understand that the workers of the would be paid their wages out of Rs. 30 crores sanctioned by the Finance Minister. I also had a meeting with the Minister of Industry. As far as the Burn Standard Refractory Unit at Raniganj is concerned, the workers of this unit will also be paid their wages. So, the non-payment or the delayed payment of wages is there for say, two weeks only. There are certain difficulties of the public sector undertakings. I don't think that I will have to explain the position of the public sector undertakings.

3.00 P.M.

Sir, every hon. Member knows very well the financial position, the financial condition of the public sector units. On the subject of payment of wages which we are discussing today, I can assure the House that payment of wages is the responsibility of the Government and the Government will do it. But I think the debate today, very rightly, has gone beyond the payment of wages to the workers. What we are worried about is the future of the public sector; how to make the sick public sector units viable; how to make the public sector profitable and what are the things to be done. I think these are the vital questions to which the House, the Government, the trade union leaders and the Members of

Parliament should apply their minds in order to improve the public sector. As far as the policy of the Government in regard to the public sector is concerned, I think the Finance Minister had already stated it and I don't want to say it again on this. It is not the intention of the Government to close down the public sector units. Who said so? We have never said so. The Government has consistently taken the position...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: But the Finance Minister has said so, just now.

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: We are not closing down any unit...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI ASHOK MITRA (West Bengal): Mr. Vice-Chairman, I have one specific question. This is a very simple question.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Mr. Vice-Chairman...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Mr. Virumbi, what do you want?

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: While replying to the debate, the Finance Minister has said that in case a public sector unit is viable, he is prepared to take it. If it is not viable...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): He is very correct.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: But what about the social obligations of the public sector units?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Just a minute. Mr. Ashok Mitra wants to say something.

SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Mr. Vice-Chairman, I want to make a suggestion to the Labour Minister.

Even during this year, they are raising Rs. 3,500 crores by selling the assets of some of the public sector undertakings, some of which are making profits. Cannot the Labour Minister approach the Finance Ministry with a proposal that a

portion of this money should be utilised for the rehabilitation of the public sector undertakings which are in difficulty? This is my first question.

My second question is, the Chairman of the BIFR has made a specific request to the Government that when the BIFR makes a recommendation that a particular undertaking should be offered a line of credit by the bank, it should be mandatory on the part of that bank to extend that loan. On these two issues, I hope the Labour Minister would consult the Finance Minister and inform us of the outcome of the consultation.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, we are thankful to the Minister of Labour. At a time when the viability is being considered, when the revival package is being prepared, the Government withdraws the money, banks do not give the loans and orders from the Government do not forthcome. The point, therefore, remains that despite your best intentions to revive a sick public sector unit, the *modus operandi* being followed by the Government deliberately, in my opinion, leads to the virtual closing down of the public sector unit even before its revival package is prepared. That is our experience for the last three years. I agree with you. But the point is, how does the Government propose to deal with the public sector units in the transitional period? How does the Government propose to deal with the public sector undertakings when they are being discussed by the BIFR? That is the main issue.

Secondly, what is the position of the tripartite agreement? There was a tripartite agreement on the question of revival of the National Textile Mills. For eight months, the agreement has not come into force. In the meantime, losses are mounting. In the meantime, its revival has become impossible. Despite the philosophical concept to which the hon. Finance Minister may be subscribing, despite his sympathies with the public sector units, the situation is that the Government is moving in a way

which leads to the closing down of many public sector units. How do you deal with this problem?

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: Sir, I was submitting...(Interruptions)...

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर: श्रीमान्, तीसरा जो सवाल कर रहे हैं बी०आई०एफ०आर० वह जहां और बताए हैं वहां पर लेबर फोर्स कम करने के लिए भी बाध्य करते हैं। जैसे मेरे पास स्कूटर इंडिया लि०, लखनऊ का है। पहले आई०डी०बी०आई० ने उसको स्वीकार कर लिया। उसके बाद उनको कहा गया कि तीन हजार वर्कर्स जो हैं इनको दो हजार करिए। अब दो हजार को भी नहीं मान रहे हैं और कह रहे हैं कि एक हजार करिए। तो यह जो नया टैक्रिक है, जिसका मैंने उदाहरण दिया स्कूटर इंडिया लि०, लखनऊ का, दिस आउटो बैड। आप फोर्स करते हैं कि आप तीन हजार में से दो हजार छंटनी कर दीजिए तो यह नीति उचित नहीं है। अगर उचित है, तो बताइए कि आप क्या करना चाहते हैं? क्या आप मजबूर करेंगे लेबर को हटाने के लिए? This is a point.

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: Sir, as far as the case of Scooters India Ltd. is concerned, I know it very well. I have discussed it with the hon. Member. I have discussed it with the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha. It is very much in our mind. It is before the Group of Ministers. You don't have to worry about that. We are looking into it. But, if I go on answering about every unit, it will be very difficult for me. I was submitting to you, Sir, that our policy is not of closing down for the sake of closing down and we are not shifting from the philosophy of the public sector to the private sector. No, Case by case, we are doing it. In fact, in the case of 12 public sector undertakings which are chronically sick, the Government has decided to revive those public sector units. Out of those 12 units, seven happen to be in West Bengal. The total financial implication for the Government of India to revive these chronically sick units will be Rs. 788 crores. The Government of India has taken a final decision on that. Therefore, where there is a possibility we are doing it, but there are four or five extreme cases where we are not in a position to help. Therefore,

we are for the revival of the public sector. There are so many cases and I don't want to go into all those things now.

Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta said that our economic reforms are without a human face and we don't take into account the sufferings of the working class. I beg to differ because, right from the very beginning, we have been maintaining that where it is possible to give protection to the working class, we have been doing it. Sir, I only want to cite a few examples of what we have done in the last three years towards the welfare of the working class. Only a very limited number of examples I want to give because it will be difficult for me to give all the examples. Sir, for example, in the social security area, the provident fund contribution for the textile industry employer was 8.33% which has been raised to 10%, recently, and the number of employees who will be benefited by this increase will be 1.82 lakhs. The ceiling for the coverage of provident fund was Rs. 3,500. We have raised that ceiling to Rs. 5,000 per month and the additional coverage, additional number of workers who will now come under the purview of the provident fund will be ten lakhs. We are also contemplating Sir, we have not taken a final decision to include industries which are employing less than 20 because today it is 20 more, and we are trying to bring it down to ten. If and when this decision is taken, there will be an estimated additional coverage of five million workers.

Then, Sir, there was a demand in this House and there was also a demand from the trade union leaders that the ceiling for gratuity should be removed. We have removed that and, as a result of that, eight lakh more people will be benefited and the annual financial gain that will go to the workers will be to the tune of 250 crores. Sir, about the enhancement of Variable Dearness Allowance on account of half-yearly revision based on the movement of the consumer price index, you know very well. As a result this decision, in the mines sector alone, 11

lakh workers are being benefited and the annual money that is going for the workers is Rs. 224 crores. In the construction sector, 13.5 lakh workers are being benefited additionally and the amount of money that is going annually to the workers is Rs. 214 crores. Sir, there was a controversy as the D.A. formula was not revised for many years. We settled it in a tripartite meeting. From 1.65 paise per point it was raised to two rupees.

SHRI JIBON ROY (West Bengal): We cannot agree You are simply opening the issue.

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: You do not want to listen to the good things done for the workers, then what to do?

SHRI JIBON ROY: You have not at all done anything.

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: I have said 'payment will be made'. As a result of the revised DA formula, from Rs. 1.65 to Rs.2/-, the amount of benefit that is going to the workers is Rs. 185 crores. Then, as regards wage negotiations, as the hon. Member has referred to, I have to give a few examples, but I do not know the number of public sector undertakings that have already ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JIBON ROY: It covers neither the public sector nor the sick industry. It covers only the speech of the Labour Minister. Let there be an agenda, we can discuss.

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: I can once again assure the hon. Member ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, I had referred to the NTC tripartite agreement which the Government has not implemented.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): You have already raised that point. He is replying to it.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: One important point...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN: (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Let complete the

debate. Mr. Virumbi, this is not a question-and-answer session. If some clarifications are there, I am prepared to give time, but not like this.

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: On the modernisation and revival of the unit.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN: (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Mr. Minister, you keep yourself confined to the points raised here. Do not submit the annual report on the performance of your ministry.

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: Okay, Sir. As far as NTC revival is concerned, a unanimous tripartite agreement was signed under my Chairmanship under which the plan is to modernise and revamp the NTC at a cost of Rs. 2,005 crores. This proposal is before the Cabinet now. It went to the Group of Ministers. We had some legal problem and now we have overcome it. I can assure the hon. Member only yesterday it was stated in the other House—that we are going ahead with the modernisation and revival of the NTC mills on the basis of the unanimous tripartite agreement signed. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Sir, they have not paid the Provident Fund amount.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN: (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Hon. Members, if you want to have certain things ... Mr. Virumbi, if hon. Members want to have some clarifications, they can raise their hands and I can call them by their names and comfortably one can ask questions. If three Members stand simultaneously, you will not be able to have answers. Give chance to everybody to have clarifications. Yes, Mr. Mukherjee.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: I am the mover of the Calling Attention Motion. I had put forth four summarised points and of these, none of them has been answered specifically by the Minister. Firstly I would like to put the record straight. He says, all the salaries have been paid for the month of February.

Kindly check up. I think, your information is not correct. So far as Jessops is concerned, it is learnt that 7,000 people are employed there. Salaries for the month of January have been paid this month! This is one. As regards the Hooghly Dock and Port Engineers this has been deferred by 21 days for the month of February.

We regard to the statutory dues, I think you know the figures. They are astronomical.

I can give you two figures. For the MAMC it is Rs. 25 crores. For Jessop, it is Rs. 16 crores.

My major question on the whole Calling Attention is, after salary and wages, as Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta has put it, what exactly the Government is going to do when a company is referred to the BIFR. That is what is holding on operation. You know, Sir, last time also I raised the same question. What is your policy on holding on operations? Do you want to give salary and wages or do not you want to give that also? Do you want to keep the holding on operations which you have settled for the capitals, whether the running plant should run or not? You are totally silent. For three years even if you do not give salary and wages, you cannot revive them. This is number two. Number three, and the last question. You have a group of Ministers. I have specifically two cases. The tyre Corporation and the MAMC. What is the time frame for the Group of Ministers to give consent? Can you tell this? Is it three months, six months or one year? Can you give us any assurance? On 12th July the Minister of Fertilisers made a scheme concerning the Fertiliser Corporation of India and the Hindustan Fertilisers. Has the Group of Ministers given a decision so far? What is the import of fertiliser involved? Can a fertiliser factory run without any working capital for months together? Unless you answer this question, the sick industries are being led to their natural death. You are not closing them down but it is a question of political will, political

strength and political courage...*(Interruptions)*... Do you want the sick industries to go to their natural death...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, I do not want to make any speech. I would only say that the information of the Labour Minister is not correct. He has not been given the correct position. I can give a list of units where wages have not paid. Not far to go—I do not want to go to West Bengal—here in Delhi there is a unit of the National Textiles Corporation, the Ayodhya Textile Mill, where the workers have not been paid wages for three to four months. I do not blame him because the nodal ministries have not been giving him the correct information. There is a very important unit in Rajasthan, a very big textile mill where the workers have not been paid their wages for the last four months. I do not want to prolong my list. There are so many units where the workers have not been paid their wages. Therefore, my only question is: Will you put an end to this practice? Let us not call the hon. Finance Minister generous because he has released some funds. That is not generosity. That is his constitutional obligation.

My next question is: Will the Labour Minister see that the Government of India does not become a defaulter in the payment of wages and violations are stopped for once and all? Can it be ensured?

Sir, provident funds dues are piling up. He had been referring to me as the Chairman of a Committee. We had found out the default in the payment of the provident fund in the public sector belonging to the Central Government is piling up in crores. I have with me a letter written by the Director (Marketing) of the National Jute Manufacturing Corporation, written to the Chairman of the NJMC. This is a lamentable story. I do not want to take your time. It says that it is impossible for them to run the NJMC because they are not giving the money. Now, how long does it take for the statutory dues to be paid? I know, Sir,

thousands of workers have not been paid provident fund dues even three years after their retirement. There had been cases of suicide. There has been default in the payment of gratuity. My question is: Let us not call someone generous. It is our own money. Will he ensure that default in the payment of the provident fund becomes a criminal offence and defaulters in the public sector are treated in the same way as defaulters in the private sector? One question that has been repeatedly asked is whether during the transitional period you will be giving money to the public sector to survive or not. Let the Government not violate the law and after it violates the law, let us not call the Minister generous because he is paying the arrears. This is not the way in which the Government should function.

SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Sir, I only want to touch the basic issue which, I am afraid, the Minister has been avoiding. It is pure economics to simply pay the wages to the workers and not to run the factories. It is demoralising to the workers, demeaning to their dignity. On top of that, I would say that you are not using the capital stock that is already there. You have spent hundreds of crores of rupees in setting up these undertakings and yet you are not making any use of them. On this issue, I am afraid, there has been no response from the Government, for political reasons because you are afraid that the workers will vote against you. You are offering them some bribe. But the basic issue of economic development you are ignoring.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर: मैंने एक प्रश्न बहुत सीधा-सादा न्यू सेंट्रल जूट मिल के बारे में पूछा था, उसका आप मुझे जवाब दें। दूसरा अपने-अपने वक्तव्य में दावा किया था, मैंने शुरू में ही कहा था कि एन०टी०सी० के लिए पैसा फरवरी तक दे दिया गया है। मेरी जानकारी यह है कि पैसा दे दिया गया होगा। कानपुर की पांच मिलों के मैंने नाम लिए थे आज सुबह तक उनको तनखाह नहीं दी गयी है। आप श्योर करके बताएं कि दी गयी है या नहीं दी गयी है। दूसरा जहां आपने कहा कि एन०टी०सी० का पैसा लीज किया गया

है, मैंने अपने भाषण में कहा था कि इसका मतलब है, बाकी का पैसा नहीं दिया गया है। तो वह पैसा कब देंगे और क्या अगले महीने में उनको 10 तारीख से पहले, सैक्रेड डिफॉल्टर मैं मानता हूँ, उनको पैसा दिया जाएगा या नहीं दिया जाएगा? इसका स्पैसिफिक एश्योरेंस हमें चाहिए।

SHRI JIBON ROY: One basic question is, 'On what does the revival of basic sector depend?' One basic question that Mr. Ashok Mitra has raised is whether the Government will make some capital investment in the public sector. In the last Budget also nothing is given. About Rs. 40 crores has been given to Hindustan Photo Films. In this Budget also, probably, to the Tyre Corporation of India something has been given. Will capital investment be made and will the money accruing out of the disinvestment be ploughed back? Disinvestment is not made of the sick industries but will the money be ploughed back? The second question is whether Government will give orders to the public sector. The factory where I was working before joining this, Rs. 4,500 crores was invested for modernisation. One plant is built to supply wheel to the Railways. The Railways refuses to give orders. After an investment of Rs. 4500 crores, Government refuses to give orders to the industries and they are giving orders to the foreign companies. The answer to the two basic questions depends on whether the public sector will revive or not, which we will have to do.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: As far as the specific areas pointed out by hon. Members like Ayodhya Mill, Kanpur and other areas are concerned, I will again check it up. I had a meeting with the Minister this morning, and I was specifically told that payment has been made. I will re-check it and I will certainly see. *(Interruptions)*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): You are holding regular meetings regarding defaults or you

are holding meetings when there is Calling Attention Motion? You must hold regular meetings with the concerned Ministries so as not to have recurrence of such motions hereafter. This was debated last time also. Naturally Members are agitated over non-payment of wages and default in the payment of Provident Fund and some other defaults, really this is criminal. You must see to it and you must strictly comply with the provisions of law because the rule of law is democracy.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: As far as the new Central Jute Mills are concerned, I am looking into it personally and I am monitoring it personally.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर: मेरा सवाल तो यह है कि 20 करोड़ आप सूद में ले चुके हैं, 12 करोड़ की जिम्मेदारी है, फिर भी उन पर है। जिम्मेदारी सरकार की थी कि जो पिछला बकाया है, वह मजदूर जो चला रहे हैं, उन पर क्यों डाली है? जिम्मेदारी आपकी है। मैं आपसे निवेदन करता हूँ कि आप कैबिनेट में ले जाएं। इसको राइट ऑफ कीजिए, जो पिछली जिम्मेदारी है। 3 करोड़ आपने दे दिया, बहुत अच्छा किया। The entire responsibility should be dealt with by the Government not by the labourers.

श्री पी० ए० संगमा: मिल के जो एम०डी० साहब हैं, गुप्ता जी, वह कल दिल्ली में आ रहे हैं, बात करने के लिए। मैंने उनको बुलाया है। मुझे मालूम था कि माथुर जी यह सवाल इधर पढ़ेंगे।

Sir, I agree with Shri Ashok Mitra, that Government should not merely be happy that wages are being paid or not delayed or whatever it may be. But the main issue is the survival of the public sector and this is precisely the reason why I do not agree with Mr. Mukherjee on the so-called holding on operation because we are paying idle wages. We would like the public sector industries to function and to produce. Therefore, it is in our own interest. We are trying to expedite our decision. But then matters are not that easy. Revival of any sick unit

does require quite a bit of scrutiny and going into in depth. Therefore, it takes some time. It is never our intention to hold it on. I can assure that.

As far as the statutory dues....

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Mr. Minister, that is not 'holding-on' operation. 'Holding-on' operation is where there is a running plant and it is incurring loss, it should continue to be run. That is 'holding-on' operation. 'Holding-on' operation does not mean stopping the running of it.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Mr. Mukherjee, have you been a teacher in some school? We cannot go on like this.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: Sir, as far as the statutory dues are concerned—provident fund and E.S.I. contribution—I know. We have gone into that. It is not as if the Government does not have the money to pay.

Sir, under the revival package, what we are trying to do now is, once a public sector unit's revival package is through, twenty per cent of the dues are paid to the Corporation and the provident fund organisation straightaway. This is a part of the package; payment of twenty per cent of the dues is a part of the package. The remaining eighty per cent of the dues would be released to them over a period of time, in instalments. This is the arrangement which is being made. But without the revival package, I have a problem in taking legal action against the public sector.

Mrs. Renuka Chowdhury talked about the exodus of our executives to the private sector industries because it has become much more attractive for them to go there, because they are offering better salary and other perks. Now, on top of it, if I start prosecuting our public sector executives for non-payment of dues, I do not know how the public sector would run and what would be the effect of it on the working class.

All these considerations are there. As far as the worker's dues are concerned, delays are there—I agree—of one year, two years, and so on. They are not paid. But money is not a problem because, as I said during Question Hour, we have the Special Reserve Fund. From that Special Reserve Fund, whatever statutory dues are there to the workers are paid to them, whether the employer has remitted the money or not.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Not the case of exempted?

SHRI P. A. SANGMA: It is in both. It is working better in unexempted. As far as the public sector is concerned, they are in the unexempted category. Therefore, all these things are looked after. Thank you, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): What is the sense of the House about adjourning for lunch? We have another Motion here which is equally important. This is in regard to ensuring continuance of reservation in promotions for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Government services after November, 1997. I would like to take the sense of the House. For how much time the House would like to have the lunch-recess? Half-an-hour?

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: No, Sir. One hour.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): We can meet again at 4 p.m.

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH (Bihar): We should reassemble at 4.30 p.m., Sir. We should have one hour.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: We have been sitting here from 11 O'clock.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर: लंच स्किप करने के बारे में तय कर लिया गया था.....

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री सतीश अग्रवाल): लंच कर लीजिए। उसके लिए जरूरी नहीं है हाउस एडजर्न किया जाए। डिबेट चलती रहे।

श्री जगेश देसाई: आते रहे, जाते रहे। (व्यवधान).....

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री सतीश अग्रवाल): सरला जी, आपने क्या कहा?

श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी (पश्चिमी बंगाल): लंच स्किप करने का डिजीन ले लिया गया तो लंच के लिए क्यों एडजर्न कर रहे हैं?(व्यवधान).....

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री सतीश अग्रवाल): 4.30 तक लंच के लिए एडजर्न करेंगे तो फिर बिजनेस 1.30 घंटे में पूरा नहीं होगा।

श्री दिग्विजय सिंह: 4 बजे तक कर लीजिए।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): As decided by hon. Members, we adjourn for half-an-hour for lunch. We will meet again at 4 O'clock.

The house then adjourned for lunch at twenty-nine minutes past three of the clock.

The House reassembled, after lunch, at three minutes past four of the clock,

(THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI) IN THE CHAIR.)

SHORT DURATION DISCUSSION
RESERVATION IN PROMOTIONS
FOR S.Cs. AND S.Ts. IN
GOVERNMENT SERVICES

SHRI RAM RATAN RAM (Uttar Pradesh): Thank you, Sir. At long last we have been given this opportunity to express our opinion regarding the reservations in promotion of SCs and STs in Government services. Before commenting upon the question, I would like to go into the genesis of the problem.

After the issue of Office Memorandum dated 13th August, 1990 regarding the

implementation of the recommendations of the Mandal Commission reserving 27 per cent of the posts in Government service for Backward Classes, several petitions were filed in the hon. Supreme Court. These petitions were heard in the first instance by a Constitution Bench presided over by the then Chief Justice, Shri Ranganath Misra. After hearing them for some time, the Constitution Bench referred them to a Special Bench of nine Judges to finally settle the legal positions relating to reservations. After hearing the parties, the first Bench, with the assistance of advocates of all the parties, framed eight questions, of which question No. 8 is important.

It reads as follows:—

“Would reservation of appointments or posts in favour of any backward class be restricted to the initial appointment to the post or would it extend to promotion as well?”

Sir, the question was exclusively related to Backward Classes. The Court was deciding the case of reservation for Backward Classes, and they were thinking whether reservation can be extended to promotions as well. But, later, the Bench of nine Judges reframed the question and increased them from 8 to 11, out of which question No. 7 is very important and very damaging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. Question No. 7 reads as follows:

“Whether Article 16 permits reservations being provided in the matter of promotions?”

Up till now, there was no dispute affecting the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. The entire trouble started when these questions were reframed. This question is the bone of contention so far as the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes are concerned. Strangely enough, no individual or no association belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was arraigned as parties to defend their interest. It is a clear case of flouting the fundamental principle of law that no person or parties can be convicted or orders can be passed against them without giving them an opportunity to