

SHRI T. A. PAI : The complaint of increase in the price of commercial vehicles was referred in August 1972 to the Bureau. But in the meantime, after April when there was a sudden increase in the prices of these vehicles and this complaint was brought to my notice, I wanted the Bureau to give an interim report and I had called for a report from the manufacturers themselves giving us the reasons to find out whether there was any justification. We found from the Bureau's recommendation that in one case the price charged by the company had been slightly more and in another case it was very much less—the military vehicles supplied to the Government. On the whole, we found that they had standardised the price increase at Rs. 3,555. We have asked them to freeze it at that level until a final decision is taken by the Government after receiving the recommendations of the Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices, which are expected shortly.

Clash among the miners of Kuju coalfields

*265. SHRI NIREN GHOSH : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether there was a clash among the miners in Kuju coalfield area, Hazari bagh on 21-9-1973 ;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the details of the clash ;

(c) whether the miners' union led by Ramanika Gupta is a recognised one ; and

(d) whether G.M.A. had any role in the clash ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE
MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES
(SHRI SUKHDEV PRASAD) : (a) Yes,
Sir.

(D) The clash was due to inter-
union
rivalry between two factions.

(c) Smt. Ramanika Gupta is a leader of a union affiliated to INTUC.

(d) No, Sir.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH : Sir, the Minister has said that there was a clash between two factions. Obviously, as he has said, one faction is the union led by Shrimati Ramanika Gupta of the I.N.T. U.C. What is the other faction ? What are the reasons for the clash ? Is it because the C.M.A. was pampering the union led by Shrimati Ramanika Gupta, which is a minority there, and they led the attack on the other union with the connivance and help of the C.M.A. ?

SHRI T. A. PAI : Sir, this is a fight between two factions of the I.N.T.U.C. itself, however unfortunate it may be. The investigation officer has alleged about the participation of the Assistant Colliery Manager and this allegation is being looked into to find out whether there is any substance in it. In the meantime, the Managers are being transferred pending investigation.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH : Sir, I have not got the full answer. I had asked : what are the reasons for this clash ? There may be two factions of the I.N.T.U.C. It is a valuable admission because in [my State, Congressmen are killing Congressmen. But what are the reasons for this clash ? Was the C.M.A. a party to one of the factions ? Just as they get a political mandate from the I.N.T.U.C. not to go on strike, will the Government give a political mandate not to involve the miners with the help of the C.M.A. in clashes, create chaos, stop production and create coal shortage for no valid reasons ? If there are any grievances of the workers, one can understand. But what was the reason here ?

SHRI T. A. PAI : Sir, I highly appreciate the valuable advice given by an important trade union leader like Mr. Niren Ghosh that the workers must unite and they should not only not have rivalry among

themselves but they should even avoid inter-union rivalry in the interest of increased production. I will convey to the respective unions to avoid internecine quarrels for personal reasons. I am unable to say what were the exact reasons. But allegations were made that the C.M.A. was involved in it. They are investigating into it and we are taking necessary action to see that the management keeps out of all these factions.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH : Will the C.M.A. be brought to book ?

SHRI T. A. PAI : I am taking action.

SHRI KALYAN ROY : I would not subscribe to the view of Mr. Ghosh that the C.M.A. is encouraging all these things. There are some bad as well as good officers. Mr. Pai would agree with me that in this particular belt there have been large number of inductions mainly from the various factions of the Congress. This question was replied on the 3rd August, 1973 by Mr. Hansda that allegations about the induction of a large number of outsiders in the coal mines of Hazaribagh have been received that induction is going on in a large number of mines unfortunately because of the pressure of the ruling party of West Bengal and Bihar. My question is : Is it not a fact, Mr. Pai, that the agitation and discontent in the coalmines today is partly because (i) the man-power per mine has not been properly decided; it has been decided in an arbitrary, whimsical manner without consultation with any of the Central trade union organisations ? (ii) is it not a fact that there is no close co-ordination either between the unions and the management, the managers and the area managers ? Before the take-over they had their vested interests inside the mines. May I know what steps he is taking to see that the relation between the Central trade unions and the local management improves and how the dialogue can be continued ? What steps is he taking to remove those corrupt and dishonest officers, Managers and Labour Officers who were in-charge there before the take-over ?

Lastly, Sir...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Only one question. At a time you cannot be asking all the questions.

SHRI KALYAN ROY : There are not many questioners today. I am asking the first question. Is it not a fact that West Bengal...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Mr. Kalyan Roy, you cannot ask all the questions. You must confine yourself to one question.

SHRI KALYAN ROY : It is part of the first question. Is it not a fact that eight unions of the various Congress leaders are functioning in the Asansol coal belt alone ?

SHRI T. A. PAI : It is unfortunate that the number of unions are multiplying depending upon the number of political parties, and, perhaps, individual leaders. Perhaps all the union leaders will also think of finding out a solution along with us. I cannot, as an employer, prevent any body from forming a union because any seven people can register a union and come forward and say that there is a union.

So far as the other points that my hon'ble colleague has raised are concerned, I say that we are now thinking of reorganising the entire coal industry division-wise. There is the manpower that is required to man them properly and also do the maximum exercise. I have requested the Negotiation Committee to take greater responsibility than merely fixing the wages in the coal industry. If it is alleged that in the old management anybody is not playing the game, certainly we shall take necessary action to see that proper discipline is enforced and whatever action is called for is taken*.

SHRI D. THENGARI : Regarding absorption of previous employees, can the Government say it with confidence that the rules prescribed are being followed strictly ? Secondly, may I know which.

particular union the C.M.A. is representing, and whether the C.M.A. or the Government has ascertained that the union which is taken as representative or recognised is a really representative union on the basis of verification of membership or it is there because of the sweet-will of the management ?

SHRI T. A. PAI : Sir, whether in the absorption of the labourers strict rules are being observed, they have been advised to observe the rules. Any deviation will be taken note of. So far as the recognition of the unions is concerned we have gone on the basis of recognition that has been accorded to them by the State Government. The G. M. A. has no authority to behave at its own sweet-will.

SHRI D. THENGARI : My specific question was about verification of membership.

SHRI T. A. PAI : It is done by the State Government. We go on by their advice.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Next question, Mr. Kalyan Roy.

SHRI KALYAN ROY : Sir, on a point of order. Mr. Pai either does not know it or he is deliberately misleading the House...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : I have asked you to put the next question.

SHRI KALYAN ROY : All right, I am putting my question under pressure.

Industrial unrest in Calcutta Docks

♦67. SHRI KALYAN ROY : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether loading and unloading in Calcutta docks was seriously affected by industrial unrest in September, 1973 ; and

(b) if so, the reasons for the workers' discontent and the steps taken to redress their grievances ?

†(Transferred from the 14th November, 1973-

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI BAL-GOVIND VERMA) : (a) As a result of partial strike and go-slow from 12th to 27th September, 1973, about 59 ships were affected.

(b) The discontent related to the demand for the payment of bonus at the rate of 20 per cent for 1972-73, whereas the employers were willing to pay bonus at the rate of 8-1/3 per cent. Efforts were made to settle the demand by conciliation and by direct negotiations, but without success. Discussions were continued thereafter at the level of the Chief Minister of West Bengal and an agreement was arrived at between the parties as a result of which the strike was called off from 28th September, 1973. The agreement provides for ad-hoc payment of bonus for 1972-73 at the rate of 37 days' averages earning, pending receipt of the adjudication award.

SHRI KALYAN ROY : Sir, the agitation was confined to the workers engaged by the stevedores. One of their major demands was abolition of the stevedoring system and nationalisation of stevedoring system. My first question is : Is he aware of a note on nationalisation of stevedoring which was prepared on the basis of a study team of the International Association of Ports and Harbours and Major Ports Committee, Planning Commission, etc. which stated, "The stevedores in Calcutta are quite small and a family business passed on from father to son and they are mere middlemen or labour suppliers rather than stevedores". So the main discontent is because of the presence of the middlemen who made crores of rupees per month which neither go to the Shipping Department nor to the workers. So what is your view about the stevedoring system ?

SHRI K. V. RAGHUNATHA REDDY: This question has been answered to the extent of the strike and also the bonus