

(c) and (d) There was no such complaint at the above Conference. The Industrial Disputes Act demarcates the respective spheres of the Central and State Governments. However, the Central Government have used their good offices in certain disputes, which had wide repercussions, to get them settled expeditiously.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

NOTIFICATIONS UNDER THE PERSONAL INJURIES (COMPENSATION INSURANCE) ACT, 1963

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table, under section 24 of the Personal Injuries (Compensation Insurance) Act, 1963, a copy each (in English and Hindi) of the following Notifications of the Ministry of Labour and Rehabilitation (Department of Labour and Employment);—

- (i) Notification S.O. No. 377 (E), dated the 25 May, 1972, publishing the Personal Injuries (Compensation Insurance) Rules, 1972.
- (ii) Notification S. O. No. 378 (E) dated the 25 May, 1972 publishing the personal Injuries (Compensation Insurance) Scheme, 1972.
- (iii) Notification S. O. No. 500 (E) dated the 22nd July, 1972, Publishing the Personal Injuries (Compensation Insurance) Amendment Scheme, 1972
- (iv) Notification S.O. No. 501(E) dated the 22nd July, 1972, publishing the Personal Injuries (Compensation Insurance) Amendment Rules, 1972. N.L.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT-3477/72 for (i) to (iv)].

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS (1970-71) OF THE HEAVY ENGINEERING CORPORATION LIMITED, RANCHI AND RELATED PAPERS

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table, under sub-section (i) of section 619A of the Companies Act,

1965, a copy each^v (in English and Hindi) of the following papers:—

- (i) Twelfth Annual Report and Accounts of the Heavy Engineering Corporation Limited, Ranchi, for the year 1970-71, together with the Auditors' Report on the Accounts and the comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India thereon.
- (ii) Review by Government on the working of the corporation.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT-3534/72 for (i) and (ii)]

ANNUAL REPORT (1970-71) OF THE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL FOR AUTOMOBILES, AUTOMOBILE ANCILLARY INDUSTRIES, TRANSPORT VEHICLE INDUSTRIES, TRACTORS, EARTHMOVING EQUIPMENT AND INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINES

श्रीद्योगिक विकास मन्त्रालय में उपमन्त्री (प्रो० सिद्धेश्वर प्रसाद) : सभापति महोदय : मैं आप की आज्ञा से 1970-71 के वर्ष के लिए मोटर गाड़ी, मोटर गाड़ी सहायक उद्योग, परिवहन गाड़ी उद्योग, ट्रैक्टर, मिट्टी हटाने के उपकरण और अन्तर्दहन इंजन सम्बन्धी विकास परिषद् के वार्षिक प्रतिवेदन की एक प्रति (अंग्रेजी तथा हिन्दी में) मभा पटल पर रखता हूँ। [Placed in Library. See No. LT-3478/72]

ANNUAL REPORT (1970-71) OF THE EMPLOYEES STATE INSURANCE CORPORATION

SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table, under section 36 of the Employees, State Insurance Act, 1948 a copy (in English and Hindi) of the annual Report of the Employees' State Insurance Corporation for the year 1970-71. [Placed in Library See No. LT-3479/72]

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

STRIKE CALLED BY THE EMPLOYEES OF THE RESERVE BANK OF INDIA, CALCUTTA

SHRI PRANAB KUMAR MUKHERI JEE (West Bengal) : Sir, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Finance

[Shri Pranab Kumar Mukherjee] to the demands of, and the strike called by the employees of the Reserve Bank of India, Calcutta, and the steps proposed to be taken in the matter.

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU) in the Chair]

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Reserve Bank of India has, after a review of the work in the Department of Non-Banking Companies, at Calcutta converted a temporary post of a record clerk in that Department to that of a Daftry with effect from 29.7.72. The Class IV (Subordinate Staff) Union of the Calcutta Office of the Reserve Bank of India wanted that the post of the record clerk in the Department of Non-Banking Companies should be restored. The Reserve Bank of India could not agree to this for reason that the downgrading of the post was done after a review of the workload in the Non-Banking Companies Department by its Inspection Wing.

Class IV (Subordinate Staff) of the Calcutta office of the Reserve Bank of India have started an agitation from 7th August, 1972, as a protest against the action of the Reserve Bank of India. Since 7th August, 1972, the Class IV staff have been abstaining themselves from work for varying periods from 1 to 4 hrs. and the work relating to the bringing out of treasure, files etc. was not being attended to. As a result of the agitation the clearing had to be suspended in the Bank from the 10th August, 1972, causing inconvenience to trade and commerce in Calcutta.

Senior officials of the Reserve Bank of India have been holding discussions with the Union in the presence of the Central Industrial Relation Machinery as well as the West Bengal authorities. Negotiations are still continuing with a view to resolve the dispute, and it is hoped that an amicable settlement will be reached shortly.

SHRI PRANAB KUMAR MUKHERJEE: Sir, it appears from the statement of the hon'ble Minister in charge of Finance that agitation is going on since the 7th August. Today is 25th August. As it

appears from the Calcutta press, both the Chief Minister of West Bengal Government and its Labour Minister had expressed their inability in arriving at a settlement. In fact, the tripartite discussion in the presence of the Labour Minister, West Bengal, has failed and it has come in the Press that the employees were ready to accept the formula given by the West Bengal Labour Minister but the local management of the Reserve Bank of India were unwilling to accept it, as a result of which the Labour Minister of West Bengal had sought intervention of the Finance Minister here. In view of that I would like to know from the hon'able Minister what steps have since been taken by the Government of India here, without leaving it to the local management. Have they sent any senior officer from here, whether the matter has since been taken up by that senior officer deputed from here to Calcutta with the Government of West Bengal and the Union leaders? Secondly, Sir, may I know from the hon'ble Minister whether they have made any efforts? In a brief statement she has stated that it has affected trade and commerce. Sir, not only it has affected trade and commerce, it has affected the total clearing procedure of the banking system itself. I do not know how much amount of clearance is still pending. It appears from the Calcutta press that almost Rs. 360 crores—this was on 18th August. I do not know how much it has increased in these seven days—are still pending before the Reserve Bank of India. The West Bengal Government had to open an account in the State Bank of India. In view of these things I do not definitely suggest, Mr. Vice-Chairman, that any amount of indiscipline should be allowed in any Government concern. At the same time the Government should rise to the occasion and assess the emergency of the situation and expedite this matter. It appears to me from the statement which the hon'ble Minister has made on the floor of the House that the Government of India is not perhaps taking this matter seriously and is not paying that much of attention which the situation deserves. In view of this, I would like to know from her what positive, concrete steps the Government of India are going to take to come to an agreement so that an intolerable situation which has been created, because of which

the supply of essential materials is going to be stopped, is averted as early as possible. The various Chambers of Commerce have come out with open statement. They have also sought intervention from the Government of India. I fail to understand what prevents the Government of India, without leaving the matter to the exclusive decision of local management, from taking action. Why are they not taking it up at the Centre to find a solution which would ease the tense fiscal situation prevailing in that State?

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI : Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I would like to thank the hon. Member for having summed up the entire situation in a very reasonable manner. I would like to assure him that the Government is fully aware of the seriousness and the gravity of the situation. It is not that the Government has woken up all of a sudden. It is not that the Government has been in a stupor. It has been working right from the beginning. I would like to tell the hon. Member that the Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank, Mr. Damry himself was in Calcutta on the 23rd. He has met the people concerned there and he has discussed it with the various authorities there. As a matter of fact, the Chief Minister of West Bengal was himself in Delhi a couple of days back and the State Labour Commissioner was also here. The Central Labour Commissioner was there. So, all these machineries have been in operation right from the beginning and all possible attempts have been made. But I do not think there has been failure in the negotiations as such, because we feel that there is still scope for an amicable settlement because the repercussion upon business and industry has been very severe. We are not in a position to assess exactly how much arrears have accumulated, but according to Press reports, it might have gone up to Rs. 400 crores. There are no two opinions on this point that there has been dislocation of trade and industry. The Government is as keen as the hon. Member himself that there should be a settlement as quickly and as speedily as possible.

SHRI MAHAVIR TYAGI (Uttar Pradesh) : Sir, one question has not been answered. I am not putting any question, I only want a clarification. What action

is the Government of India or the Finance Ministry taking actually with regard to this? Or, are they sitting like nincompoops?

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI : Sir, I think the steps that I have enumerated will clearly show that the Government has not been sitting like nincompoops. It has taken all possible action. If the hon. Member puts forward any specific suggestion, I would answer him.

श्री भोला प्रसाद (बिहार) : उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, क्या माननीय मंत्री जी यह बताएंगी कि 17 तारीख को बैंक के चीफ मैनेजर और पर्सनल आफिसर तथा दूसरी ओर बैंक के इम्प्लायी और युनियन के पदाधिकारियों के बीच समझौते की बातचीत हुई और समझौते का फार्मूला दोनों के बीच मान्य भी हुआ और उसके बाद चीफ मैनेजर और पर्सनल आफिसर ने यह कहा कि अगले दिन 18 तारीख को एकजीक्यूटिव डाइरेक्टर आएंगे और उनकी स्वीकृति के बाद यह फार्मूला मान्य समझ कर उस पर अमल किया जाएगा लेकिन फिर 18 तारीख को पर्सनल आफिसर ने युनियन के अधिकारियों को बुला कर कहा कि जो समझौते का फार्मूला तय हुआ था वह मान्य नहीं और फिर उसके बाद वेस्ट बंगाल के लेबर मिनिस्टर ने भी इन्टरवीन किया और उन्होंने भी एक सुझाव दिया, उसके आधार पर समझौता करने का, और उसको भी डाइरेक्टर ने नहीं माना। इस सूरत में क्या सेन्ट्रल गवर्नमेंट की ओर से, खास तौर से फाइनेंस मंत्रालय की ओर से, यह इन्टरवीन करना क्या जरूरी नहीं हो गया है जिससे कि वहां जो विवाद चल रहा है उसको सेटल किया जा सके और उससे जो नुकसान हो रहा है उससे बचा जा सके ?

श्रीमती सुशीला रोहतगी : मान्यवर, जो माननीय सदस्य ने कहा, यह इन्टरवीन तो शुरू

[श्री भोला प्रसाद]

से ही किया है। यह चीज शुरू से ही हमारे समक्ष है और सरकार सारी कार्यवाही कर रही है। जैसा माननीय त्यागी जी ने पूछा था कि सरकार की तरफ से क्या सक्षम कदम उठाए गए हैं, मैं उनसे कहूंगी उनकी जो पहली मांग थी कि जो पोस्ट है रिकार्ड करके डाऊनग्रेड करी गई है उससे प्रमोशन के जो चान्सेज कम हो रहे हैं, इस चीज को मान लिया गया है और एक अतिरिक्त पोस्ट रिकार्ड क्लर्क की बढ़ा दी गई है और जो आदमी हटा दिया गया है, जो डाऊनग्रेड हुआ है, जूनियरमोस्ट क्लर्क, उसको दूसरे डिपार्टमेंट में अकमोडेट करने की इजाजत स्वीकृत हो गई है। अब केवल बात यह है कि जो लोग एजिटेड कर रहे हैं, जो लोग विरोध कर रहे हैं, वे लोग ही ड्यूटी पर रिपोर्ट नहीं कर रहे। सरकार की तरफ से यह बात मान ली गई है और मेरा ख्याल है कि जो आपत्ति उठाई गई है उसका उत्तर वहाँ पर मिल चुका है।

SHRI K. P. SUBRAMANIA MENON (Kerala) : May I know from the Government what the reason is for the Governor of the Reserve Bank to turn down the compromise formula arrived at by the West Bengal Labour Minister, Dr. Kalidas Nag and union labour leaders? According to this formula the unions had agreed to go back to the old situation and negotiate the whole issue with the management. But it seems that while the local management was willing to accept the formula the Governor of the Reserve Bank turned it down. As this has created prolongation of the problem, may I know from the Government if it will persuade the Governor to accept the formula as suggested by the Labour Minister of West Bengal in consultation with the union leaders?

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI : I am not very sure what formula he is referring to. If it is a formula that they should be given wages for the days that they have not worked—is that the formula you are referring to?

SHRI K. P. SUBRAMANIA MENON:

According to the Press reports there was a formula arrived at between Dr. Kalidas Nag and the union leaders. I do not know the details. This is what I read in the 'Hindustan Standard'.

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI : It may be something else. What I am in a position to do is to place the facts before the honourable Member and I will leave it to his judgment how far it would be correct for the Government to accede to these demands. One of the suggestions was that those people who had not reported for duty till 12 O'clock for a certain number of days—they had come to duty after 12 O'clock or nearly after 4 hours of work; all the banking work of the public is done in the first four hours and the banks only cater to the needs of the public in the first four hours—they should be given wages for those days. Since no work had been put out during these days, a notice was issued to these people in consonance with an office order dated a number of years back, that those who had not reported for duty till 12 O'clock would be treated as absent for the rest of the day. Now the workers are demanding that they should also be given pay for the days they have not reported for duty or for the days they were absent. How far would it be correct to accede to such a demand, I put it to the judgment and wisdom of the Member concerned.

SHRI MAQSOOD ALI KHAN (Mysore) : There are two events that emerge out of the whole unhappy episode. One is that the Reserve Bank authorities were negotiating with the workers' union till about 7th August. Then the man was downgraded to the post of Daftry on 29th July. But on 14th August they created another post of Daftry in another department of the Reserve Bank. Could they not have given an assurance to the person who was downgraded when they were negotiating with the union people early on 7th August or even earlier than that when the agitation began? Afterwards they created the post. Another thing that happened is this. Though negotiations are being held, in the meantime the incumbent has been dismissed. Can the situation be worsened like that? When you are at the negotiating table along with others, I

think they should not have gone to the extent of dismissing the person though earlier the Reserve Bank gave an assurance that he would be adjusted in another post of Daftry created.

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI : There has been no question of any dismissal. As the honourable Member has stated, this new post which has been created will have retrospective effect. So there will be no break in service for the person whose post was downgraded. He will be in a position to go back to the same position as earlier. Therefore, the question of any dismissal does not arise. It is only that the workers have chosen not to report for duty.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal) : I would ask first of all the Ministry of Finance to get directly seized of the matter with a view to helping the solution of this dispute which is really not difficult to solve at all. It is a dispute which it is really not difficult to solve at all if only the Government would intervene a little to see that things are settled.

Firstly, Sir, almost a settlement was arrived at. But certain assurances were given by some authorities which were not kept up. I have got a note of the Chief Secretary of their Union, the Reserve Bank workers' Union, signed by one Shri Lalit Kumar Mukerjee and this note itself gives the whole story. The suggestion of the Labour Minister of West Bengal was that the *status quo ante* was to be there till the matter was settled and till the next all-India negotiations took place. That was the suggestion. Then, Sir, the Union says.

"On 20th August 1972, we issued a Press statement that whatever has appeared in the Press as a the Labour Minister's suggestion for a settlement, though not fully satisfactory to the Union, the Union does not want to reject this proposal of the Labour Minister in the larger interest of the public. As such, the Union hopes that they would give up their uncompromising attitude and accept the Labour Minister's proposal for the settlement of this long-drawn out agitation at the earliest."

Sir, this is the attitude they took although the Labour Minister's suggestions were not quite satisfactory to them in full measure and they were ready to abide by them and to bring to end the dispute provided the other party, namely, the employers, that is the bank authorities, would accept it. In fact, they were duty-bound to do so having regard to the earlier assurances. They went back on their assurances. The allegation was that they were themselves violating Section 9 of the Industrial Disputes Act. Sir, the Manager who stayed there till 20th August told these people, the bank employees' representatives, that he wanted a bipartite settlement. Now, things went on like this and I do not know why they should suddenly take such a rigid attitude and create an impossible situation, where, after all, things are not as bad as they are sought to be made out by some people.

Then, Sir, as far as the wages for the whole day and such other things are concerned, these also have been gone into. They wanted something and there is a minor dispute and that can also be settled. Sir, I do not wish to take much time. But I would only request the honourable Minister to go through carefully the memoranda prepared by the Union and examine the suggestions and the proposals. I think it will sound very reasonable to anyone who is interested in the solution of the problem and the Government and the authorities should not stand on prestige, least of all, the Reserve Bank, because what has happened is causing great inconvenience to a large number of people and the workers are very eager to come to a settlement. This is, in fact, a forced dispute. That is how I look at it. So, Sir, I would suggest one thing to Shrimati Sushila Rohatgi. Why not herself take the initiative in this matter and call the officers here or get in touch with them? It will be a good thing to take personal initiative and get the matter thrashed out and settled and I think she can very well settle it. Apart from other considerations, a fresh mind will be brought to bear upon the issue and perhaps all the pros and cons will be gone into in an objective manner. If the labour people are unreasonable, tell them. In my opinion, they are not at all unreasonable. If the

[Shri Bhupesh Gupta.]

bank authorities are rigid, tell them that they should not be so rigid and unreasonable. I think the problem can be settled. When the Labour Minister of West Bengal was ready, I think you should not hesitate to step in and have the matter settled especially when it is the Central Government which is concerned.

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI : Sir, I feel highly flattered by the compliments paid by a senior parliamentarian and if he thinks that my good offices can be of any avail, I can always spare my good offices. I think the other day when I was not in the House, he was good enough to say that I was a good nurse. I wish I could use my healing touch and see the matter is amicably settled. As the matters stand, things are at the negotiating stage and there might be a settlement. I would appeal to the seasoned parliamentarian, the healing touch does not come from the Government alone, the Government is very, very, keen on finding a solution, but also from all political forces, all political parties, from the leadership of all political affiliations, which do not always have a fresh mind. Therefore, I would appeal to him and through him the other various political parties also that they pool their wisdom together and see that the climate of normalcy is restored here and the work does not suffer.

SHRI N. G. GORAY (Maharashtra) : Both sides are keen, but the solution is not very clean.

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI : The solution will be clean if the intentions are clean, and I am sure, . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : Sir, in medical science one thing is there : nurses do not deliver lectures ; they just nurse...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU) : It is not relevant.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : Sir, when I said she was a good nurse, I had something in mind. She is a good nurse, but the doctor who makes the diagnosis is such a doctor that his diagnosis leads to the death of the patient despite a good nurse being present there.

श्री गुणानन्द ठाकुर (बिहार) : उप-सभाध्यक्ष जी, यह हड़ताल पिछले 17 18 दिनों से चल रही है। इस हड़ताल में छोटे-छोटे गरीब कर्मचारी भाग ले रहे हैं। समस्या का निदान होना चाहिये और खास करके मैं आप के जरिये उपवित्त मंत्री जी से आग्रह करूंगा जैसा कि भूपेश गुप्त जी ने भी कहा कि व्यक्तिगत रूप से इसमें थोड़ा हस्तक्षेप कर के उन कर्मचारियों की मांगों की पूर्ति जहां तक सम्भव हो सरकार से करा दें ताकि वह हड़ताल समाप्त हो जाय और सुचारू रूप से काम चलना शुरू हो जाय।

श्रीमती सुशीला रोहतगी : श्रीमन्, अभी रक्षा बन्धन का पर्व हमने अपने घर पर मनाया है और जब आपकी तरफ से इतना अच्छा आग्रह आता है, तो बहन के नाते में उसे हृदय से स्वीकार करूंगी। लेकिन मैं आपसे यह अवश्य कहना चाहूंगी कि यह चीज कोई नई नहीं है। हम पहले से उसी विचारधारा के हैं और उसी तरफ हम अग्रसर हैं और मेरा विश्वास है कि बहुत शीघ्र इसका निर्णय हो जायेगा।

SHRI SHYAMLAL GUPTA (Bihar) : In a welfare State such strikes put the country to loss and we go backwards. I find we are now being accustomed to it. It is time that strikes are put an end to in the Reserve Bank of India where there is inefficiency already prevailing. I find that the emoluments of a clerk in the Bank are much more than that of a Member of Parliament. Now the Government employees are playing into the hands of the Communists who bring all this trouble to this country and they are putting industry and trade to such a big loss resulting thereby in lesser and lesser growth rate in the industry. I would request the honourable Minister not to play into the hands of the Communists and to seek stringent measures to put an end to the strikes if the country is to progress.

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI : I think the honourable Member has warned the Government, and I am grateful to him.

I might assure him that the Government is aware of these consequences not only from the Communist side but from the reactionary side also. But the fact remains and I do agree with him that any strike that occurs is a strike which takes us backwards and it strikes at the very vitals of our economy. Particularly, a strike which affects the Reserve Bank definitely has its reaction upon the economy as a whole; the trade and commerce is paralysed. It is the magnitude. And therefore, we feel concerned about it, and also recently there has been some complaint before the Government that there has been deterioration in the service of the banks. It has also been brought to our notice that there have been a number of strikes recently, whether it was in Hyderabad or whether it was in Bombay. Therefore, it is here precisely that I would appeal to all the sections, all the unions, all the political parties, all the political affiliations, since this is a matter of national interest, it is such an issue, we see that we are not carried away by local unions or by whatever unions, whatever political affiliations, that are there, because the sum total is a strike affects the vitals of our economy.

REFERENCE TO SCARCITY CONDITIONS IN BIHAR

श्री गुणानन्द ठाकुर (बिहार) : देहात के मुताल्लिक मैं कुछ कहना चाहता हूँ।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री वी० बी० राजू) : अभी आप बैठिये।

श्री सुरज प्रसाद (बिहार) : श्रीमन्, आप के द्वार मैं केन्द्रीय सरकार का ध्यान बिहार में जो सूखा पड़ा है और जिसके चलते कितने ही लोग बड़ा भूख से मर गये हैं, उसकी आर आकर्षित करना चाहता हूँ। समूचा बिहार करीब-करीब आज अकाल से ग्रसित है। 1966 में भी बिहार में अकाल पड़ा था, लेकिन उस अकाल से इस साल का अकाल बहुत बड़ा है और अभी तक जो खबर खबरों से मिली है, उसके मुताबिक एक सौ से ज्यादा लोग बहा मर चुके हैं और राजनीतिक दलों के लोगों की बात तो छोड़ दीजिए, सर्वोदयी नेता श्री ब्रज-

राज चौधरी ने भी इस बात को स्वीकार किया है कि पूर्णिया में लोग मरे हैं, सधाल परगने का जो छोटे नागपुर का पूरा इलाका है, उस इलाके के जो आदिवासी हैं वह पेड़ के पत्ते और छत्र खा कर किसी तरह जिन्दा हैं और उनके चलते उन को तरह-तरह की बीमारियां हो रही हैं।

श्री श्री प्रकाश त्यागी (उत्तर प्रदेश) : क्या कोई मिनिस्टर महोदय हैं वह इसके लिए ?

श्री सुरज प्रसाद : गृह मंत्री जी क्या बड़े हैं सामने। गया जिन की जो कांग्रेस कमेटी है उसने बयान दिया है कि गया जिले का 75 फीसदी धान का बीज सूख गया है और 80 प्रतिशत भदई की फसल सूख गयी है। पटना जिले के बिहार सब डिवीजन में 5 प्रतिशत क्षेत्र में भी धान की रोपनी नहीं हो सकी है। गया जिले के 46 ब्लाक्स में से 44 ब्लाक्स में अकाल की हालत है। बिहार के मुख्य मंत्री के अनुसार पूर्णिया जिले का आधा हिस्सा अकाल से ग्रसित है। यह शाहबाद जिले के जिला मैजिस्ट्रेट का बयान है कि सासाराम और पखवा सब डिवीजन अकाल से पीड़ित हैं। मैंने कुछ उदाहरण दिये, लेकिन यही हालत करीब-करीब पूरे बिहार प्रान्त की है। हेमन्त कुमार झा, स्वायत्त मंत्री, बिहार सरकार ने कहा है कि सधाल परगने के 32 लाख लोगों में से 32 लाख लोग अकाल से पीड़ित हैं और यही हाल करीब-करीब पूरे राज्य का है। ऐसी हालत में जहां केन्द्र सरकार की ओर से बिहार को काफी सहायता मिलनी चाहिए थी वहां केन्द्र की हुकूमत जब बिहार जल रहा है, तो केन्द्र की हुकूमत बशी बजा रही है। जो वहां की राशन की दुकानें हैं उनमें कोई राशन नहीं है। अभी शाहबाद जिले के जिला मैजिस्ट्रेट ने बयान दिया है कि हमारे यहां 1,200 दुकानें हैं और 1200 दुकानों में से मुश्किल से उनके