

RAJYA SABHA

Wednesday, the 21th July, 1966/f/ie
Sravana, 1888 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock,
MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

DEARNESS ALLOWANCE

*61. SHRI D. THENGARI : SHRI M.
V. BHADRAM : SHRI P. K.
KUMARAN : SHRI SITARAM
JAIPURIA : SHRI T. V.
ANANDAN : SHRI JAGAT
NARAIN :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be
pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a
proposal under consideration of
Government for increasing the dearness
allowance or revising the pay scales of
the Central Government employees :

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that
the Central Government employees'
demand for full neutralisation of the rise
in the cost of living has been considered
by Government; and

(c) if the answers to parts (a) and (b)
above be in the affirmative, the details of
the Government's decision taken thereon
?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE
MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI L. N.
MISHRA) : (a) to (c) A statement is laid
on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. The employees' demand
for cent per cent, neutralisation of the rise
in the cost of living has been gone into
and was also discussed with
representatives of larger associations/
federations of Government servants. No
agreement, however, could be reached.

f The question was actually asked on
the floor of the House by Shri D.
Thengari.

(c) A high level Commission has been
set up to examine, in a wider perspective,
the principles that should govern the grant
of dearness allowance to Central
Government servants. This Commission
will also look into the question of
adequacy of the rates of dearness
allowance granted at the index level 165
and recommend within 3 months any
revision necessary.

SHRI D. THENGARI : Sir, months
back we have crossed the index level of
165 and even the Commission is going to
take some time to complete its work. In
the meanwhile, will the Government
concede the employees' fair demand of
granting interim relief of 15 per cent. of
their basic pay ?

SHRI L. N. MISHRA : No, Sir. That
question does not arise out of it and that
proposal is not before us.

SHRI D. THENGARI : Is the Gov-
ernment aware that the Central Govern-
ment employees had demanded that their
representative should be included in the
D.A. Commission? On what grounds has
their demand been turned down?

SHRI L. N. MISHRA : We have set up
this Commission under the retired Chief
Justice of India with one person who is an
economist and another having wide
administrative experience. We did not
think it worth while to have any
Government representative or any
employees' representative.

SHRI D. THENGARI : Can the
Government assure that this work would
be completed within three months,
because the experience of the employees
has been otherwise ? The Delhi
Administration had appointed a
Committee in August 1964 in connection
with the index but it submitted its report
in February 1966 and nothing has been
done so far about that report. In view of
this, can the Government give some
assurance that the report will be
completed within three months?

SHRI L. N. MISHRA : S the
ration part is concerned, we expect
that they will submit their report within
three months. About the rest there is
no time-limit.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: May I know why the well-accepted labour policy of the Government that the authorities deciding matters relating to wages be tripartite has not been followed in this particular matter? May I know if the Government has one labour policy for industrial workers and another where its own employees are concerned?

SHRI L. N. MISHRA: Of course, Sir, there are two different policies, one for industrial workers and the other for Government employees. The Pay Commission was also not a tripartite body.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: Sir, we have seen in today's papers that a sort of Commission has again been appointed to go into this question and they are to keep in view its repercussions on the State employees. Now in the Tripartite Conference they agreed to need-based minimum wage. They do not refer to that and, abnormally soaring prices due to devaluation, they do not take into consideration. Is it an attempt to freeze the wages and cut down the D.A. that is due to the Central Government employees?

SHRI L. N. MISHRA: That is not a fact, and there is no question of freezing the wages or cutting down the emoluments of Government employees. We have full sympathy for them and we think that they have a case and, therefore, a very high-powered Commission has been set up.

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA: I would like to know whether the Government is considering that this is a vicious circle—wages and prices. Will they consider, referring to this Commission whether this increment in wages could be given in kind? Some norms could be fixed that such and such essential commodities will be given to the employees at frozen prices, so that the rising prices will have no effect on them. Will the Government consider this and get some opinion from the Commission in regard to this matter, that such and such essential commodities will be supplied to them at standard rates, so that any rise in prices

will not affect the supply of those commodities at fixed prices to the employees?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would the Government get these commodities free?

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA: They will have to subsidise those commodities. Instead of paying higher wages to their employees the Government can supply them these essential commodities at fixed prices. Let them have some such scheme and they can refer it for opinion to this Commission.

SHRI SACHINDRA CHAUDHURI: May I answer that question, Sir? Actually, in my discussions with the representatives of the Government employees I myself raised this question but there was no unanimity in the matter and it was not accepted. That is why it was necessary to appoint this Commission. Otherwise it would not have been necessary to appoint it.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: May I know whether the Government knows that there is a proposal regarding wage-freeze? Will the Government give a categorical assurance in this House that the Government has no wage-freeze policy under contemplation?

SHRI SACHINDRA CHAUDHURI: There is no such proposal. Sir, I do not know how that is relevant to this particular question. Of course, wage-freeze has been dealt with in England and, therefore, there is a lot of talk about it in this country. But before this question can be gone into, the Government must apply its mind to the serious situation obtaining in the country.

SHRI MULKA GOVINDA REDDY: What are the terms of this Commission and whether any time-limit has been fixed by which this Commission would submit its report and also whether any interim relief is going to be given to the Government employees?

SHRI SACHINDRA CHAUDHURI: Well, Sir, so far as interim relief is concerned, this is only a Commission;

this is not a Tribunal. Therefore it is not naturally empowered to enforce any interim relief but if it makes any such recommendation, naturally the Government will give its best consideration to that recommendation. So far as the time-limit is concerned, as has already been stated by Mr. Mishra, no time-limit could be fixed for the purpose of determining the broader question, but there is a time-limit of about three months in so far as the arbitration part is concerned.

SHRI M. V. BHADRAM : Sir, the 15th Indian Labour Conference has decided the principles of wage fixation. Will this Commission take those norms into consideration while fixing D.A. ?

SHRI SACHINDRA CHAUDHURI: The Commission is a Commission which has as its Chairman a gentleman who has occupied the highest position in the judiciary of this country and he is completely free to take into account anything which is put before him and if I may tender any advice, then I would suggest that those who are interested in this matter should place before him all the material which can be considered for this purpose.

SHRI T. V. ANANDAN : Cannot Government decide this question without referring this matter to a Commission ? This dearness allowance question has been there in our country from 1940. One Committee, by name Rao Committee, was already there. Then came the first Pay Commission, then the Gadgil Committee for merger of D.A. Then came the fourth Commission, namely, the Second Pay Commission. Then, in 1964, Mr. S. K. Das, a reputed Judge of the country sat over this issue and recommend on page 42 three formulae . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN : What is your question ?

SHRI T. V. ANANDAN: My question is this : Reduce both the factors— time to 6 months and points to five. The third formula has the approval of the largest number of Associations. When the Government servants are in

favour of the third formula recommended by the Das Commission, what necessity is there for the Government to appoint another Commission, unless it is for dilatory and delaying tactics?

MR. CHAIRMAN : Leave out your comments. You want to know why this Commission has been appointed. Is it not so ?

SHRI T. V. ANANDAN : What need is there for this new Commission to be appointed unless it is for delaying tactics ?

MR. CHAIRMAN : I think you have made your point.

SHRI SACHINDRA CHAUDHURI:

Well, Sir, let me tell you that we tried to get an agreement with the representatives of Government employees but we could not get that. Therefore a third party had to be brought in and that third party has been this high-powered Commission. As is known to this House, it is in two parts. There is this narrow question whether there should be a hundred per cent, neutralisation of the rise. That is the subject-matter of arbitration. Then there is a broader question as to what should be the rate of D.A. and what should be the principle which should govern the payment of non-payment of D.A. in the event of any further rise in prices. That is a matter for the Commission. It is true that the persons in the Commission and the persons in the Board of Arbitration are the same, but they have got *two* different functions to discharge.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question.

NEYVELI PROJECT

* 62. SHRIMATI SEETA YUDH-VIR: Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state :

(a) the present generating capacity of the thermal power plant at Neyveli;

(b) the total cost of the plant;

(c) whether the power generated there is supplied to States other than Madras; and