

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: May I know the reasons for these restrictions?

SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: There are restrictions in various places in frontier areas, not only in the North East Frontier Agency but in Uttar Pradesh, etc. These are called Inner Lines and permits are required to go there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question hour is over.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION AND ANSWER

LOCK-OUT OF THE INDIAN IRON AND STEEL COMPANY, BURNPUR

3. SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Will the Minister for COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the serious situation created by the declaration of lock-out by the management of the Indian Iron and Steel Company at Burnpur;

(b) if so, what steps were taken by Government to avoid this lock-out and what steps are being taken to re-open the factory immediately;

(c) what are the causes for this lock-out; and

(d) what are the demands of the workers and what has been done to satisfy them?

THE MINISTER FOR COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d). The State Government have been doing their best to persuade the workers to give up their 'go-slow' tactics and help in maximising production, but the members of what is called the Action Committee would not agree. The management fearing damage to plant and equipment declared a lock-out with effect from 24th

August 1953. The demands of the workers include recognition of the 'Action Committee' as the sole representative of all workers, reinstatement of discharged workers, revision of conditions of work, etc., but none of these demands carry with them the assurance that the production would be maximised.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: May I know as to when it came to the notice of Government that the workers were adopting the go-slow tactics in the works?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: Sir, that is a long history. The process of slowing down started in the sheet-mill some time in January-February; it then spread to the rest of the works in June.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Sir, do I understand that although this information was in the possession of Government in January last they did not take any steps to prevent the closing down of the factory, in the interests of production of iron and steel?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: Government have been keeping in touch with what has been happening. Both the State Government and the Central Government have been kept informed of what has been happening in Burnpur. I think it was some time in June that we sent out two responsible officers of the Commerce Ministry to have a look into the situation. The Chief Labour Commissioner to the Government of India has been there many a time. The State Government has been taking a very active interest. But when workers start 'go-slow' tactics and are being supported by labour leaders, the inevitable must happen; and the inevitable has happened.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Sir, if the presumption that the main demand of the workers was a fresh election is correct, and if the process of slowing down could be arrested by having the elections, could not the Government

take action to have fresh, free and fair elections?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI.

Unfortunately, Sir, the elections that should be held in respect of the Unions are not a matter in which Government could dictate. It is not as if the Election Commissioner can order an election. The Union has to do it. The Union leader has promised to hold elections. It was pointed out to him that it was not correct not to have elections. But the demand is that even non-Union members should be allowed to vote. That seems to be the demand. Naturally, no Union would agree to such a demand. While the Union is not a closed shop this is not possible and Government could not object or perhaps withdraw recognition of the Union. They cannot persuade the Union to accept what might be called 'a free and fair election' of Union officials by non-Union members and Union members. Government have advised the Union to have elections, and I am assured that the Union leader has spoken at a public meeting recently and has promised elections some time in September.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Have Government any information that the difficulties are primarily due to the differences between the Congress elements in the Union and the Congress groups in the States and that this has prevented the Government from taking action?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI:

It is an extremely tangled skein and it is rather difficult for me to unravel it. It seems there are various political organisations concerned in this. The Congress is there, the Praja-Socialist Party is there, the Forward Bloc is there, the R.S.P. perhaps is there, and the Communist Party is certainly there. Whether they are all acting in unison or whether each is acting in its own way, it is rather difficult for me to say. When responsible leaders go on addressing

meetings sometimes in Bengal and Bihar and sometimes outside the Bengal and Bihar areas to circumvent the police regulations in respect of meetings, it is very difficult to isolate the causes or apportion the blame. The facts are crystal clear. There is a Union. The Union leaders do not want the go-slow tactics to be adopted by the workers, primarily because, I think, the Union leaders know the intricacies of iron and steel mills. The iron and steel mill contains three important parts—the coke-oven plant, the blast-furnace and the melting shop. All these have got to be kept at a particular temperature; otherwise, the Union leaders know that it would cause damage to the plant and ultimately the workers will suffer. The Union leaders who know this do not want the go-slow tactics to go on. For the other people who do not know the working of the plant, it does not matter.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Is it not a fact that this dispute would have been completely settled earlier if Government and the Company had not tried to boost up the President of the Union, Mr. Michael John?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI.

Sir, I deny that charge; I can go further and make a counter-charge. If the hon. Member's friends there had exercised some patience and had also knowledge of the iron and steel plant the present situation would not have come into being.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Is it not a fact that the Iron and Steel Controller visited Burnpur, perhaps, in the last week of June and met the members of the Action Committee and gave the idea that the demands of the workers could be met only if the workers agreed to settlement through Mr. John?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI.

The fact is that the Iron and Steel Controller and various officers of the Commerce and Industry Ministry were going to Burnpur from time to time.

In fact, the Iron and Steel Controller's office happens to be my contact-man in Bengal. We have told the workers that we will do our best to see that their grievances are remedied provided they do not adopt go-slow tactics. I said in the other House that the Action Committee had said, "We will not increase production by more than 5½ annas in the rupee? That would mean complete destruction of the plant. The workers can depend upon it that the bias of Government is in favour of the workers and not in favour of anybody else.

SHRI S. BANERJEE: Does the Government contemplate taking over the whole of this factory in order to put an end to the serious situation there and prevent the occurrence of such a situation in the future.

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: Sir, the Government do not contemplate anything of that sort because in this dispute it is not the primary issue; it is a secondary issue.

SHRI V. G. GOPAL: Sir, is it a fact that the President of the Union negotiated with the management and made them agree to reinstatement of all discharged employees and agreed to hold the Union executive election provided the Action Committee was dissolved soon after the announcement of the settlement? If so, what was the reaction of the Action Committee to the proposal?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: Sir, I will not be able to answer that question precisely. It is perfectly true that we have been getting a lot of co-operation from the Union leaders. The best thing for us, and for this country, is to set our face against these go-slow tactics, and for that reason we admire the courage of the Union leaders. They have also promised their full co-operation in the re-starting of the mill. In regard to the other details, I am afraid, I have not got precise knowledge.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

SURVEY OF PROJECTS

*165. **SHRI T. R. DEOGIRIKAR:** Will the Minister for PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the final surveys for executing the projects (i) Kosi (Stage I); (ii) Krishna (Stage I); (iii) Koyna (Stage I); (iv) Chambal (Stage I) and (v) Rihand have been made;

(b) if all the five projects are not finally surveyed, how many surveys are complete and how many are in the process of completion; and

(c) whether there is any project the survey of which has not yet been started?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI J. S. L. HATHI): (a) The surveys have been completed for the Koyna and Rihand projects. Detailed investigations on certain aspects connected with the Krishna, the Chambal (Stage I) and the Kosi (Stage I) are nearing completion.

(b) A statement is placed on the Table.

(c) No.

STATEMENT

Progress of investigations and surveys

1. *Chambal*.—Excavation of foundations at the Gandhi Sagar Dam site has been taken in hand. To end of June 1953, about 1.5 million cubic ft. of earth work has been excavated. The site of the Kotah barrage (Rajasthan) which is the next item of work to be taken up for construction has not been fixed. Field investigations, in this connection, are nearing completion. Detailed drawings and estimates are under preparation. Survey of alignment and preliminary estimates for main canal have been