

गन्दा पानी रहेगा, तो मच्छर पैदा होंगे और मलेरिया भी होगा। तमाम रोगों की जड़ है स्वस्थ खाद्य पदार्थ, शुद्ध जल और अच्छे मकान का न होना। और इन सब की व्यवस्था करने के लिए जनता पार्टी की सरकार आई है। अभी तीन महीने ही हुए हैं। क्या तीन महीने तीस साल के बराबर है।

**SHRIMATI V. JEYALAKSHMI:** May I know from the hon. Minister whether his ministry would arrange for a regular supply of the polio vaccine, triple anti-gen and other medicines specially for the children of the lower income group to all the Child and Maternity Centres as well as the primary health Centres in the rural areas?

श्री राज नारायण : डाक्टरों की सम्मति से जो उचित व्यवस्था होगी, वह की जायगी।

**MR. SPEAKER:** Now, next question.

**SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN:** Sir, I wanted to put a supplementary on this question?

**MR. SPEAKER:** No, please. This has taken 35 minutes. I had called you to put the next question.

**SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN:** Will you kindly allow me to put one supplementary only?

**MR. SPEAKER:** If I allow you, then there are so many other Members who are also interested in putting supplementaries. Will you kindly sit down?

**DR. BALDEV PRAKASH:** I want to know the criterion that is followed to put a supplementary?

**MR. SPEAKER:** We have taken 35 minutes already on this question. Besides, I have already called the hon. Member to put the next question. Will you kindly sit down now?

#### Revival of Mini Steel Plants

\*368. **SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN:** Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry has suggested a package of measures for the revival of mini steel plants; and

(b) if so, the facts thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

#### Statement

**THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI BIJU PATNAIK):** (a) and (b). A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

(a) Yes, Sir, the President, Federation of India Chambers of Commerce and Industry has suggested certain measures for revival of mini steel plants.

(b) The suggestions made and action taken/proposed are detailed below:—

#### 1. Suggestion made by FICCI

Excise Duty on production of Steel ingots by mini steel plants of Rs. 50/- and the whole of the duty of Rs. 130/- per tonne on rolled products should be abolished.

#### Action taken/proposed.

The excise duty on steel ingots production by mini steel plants stands reduced to Rs. 50/- from Rs. 200/-. In the Finance Bill, 1977 excise duty of Rs. 130/- per tonne on production of rolled products has been shifted from the rerollers to the ingots manufacturers, namely the main steel plants and the mini steel plants. The Finance Bill, 1977 also provides for exemption from payment of excise duty on identifiable types of fresh melting scrap cleared from the main steel plants as raw materials for the Mini Steel Plants

2. (a) Reduction in interest rate on term loans to 6% and moratorium on interest on long term loans for a period of 5 years.

(b) Grant of soft loans for diversification and installation of additional balancing equipment and provision of working funds on easy terms.

(c) Provision of IDBI refinance facilities.

(d) Captive rerolling mills should be permitted to be set up by mini steel plants.

(e) Reduction of power tariff rates to a rational level.

(f) Import of duty-free scrap should be allowed to the extent of 7 lakh tonnes. Subsidy of Rs. 138/- per tonne will be required in respect of imported scrap.

(g) Method of distribution of scrap should be rationalised for stabilising the price of scrap.

(h) Progress of setting up of Sponge Iron plants should be expedited.

(i) The Product mix between main plants and the mini steel plants should be rationalised to avoid *inter-se competition*.

(j) Cash subsidy of the rate of 15% of FOB value of units situated near Bombay Port and 20% for plants situated elsewhere should be allowed.

The matter is under consideration of the Government.

It has been decided that, if any existing electric furnace unit wishes to improve its viability through forward integration by setting up of rolling facilities suited to meet the demand for industrial quality steels, or acquire, or take on lease, an existing rolling mill, the proposal would be considered on merits depending on the viability of the proposal, condition, size and capacity of the existing rerolling mills in the area etc.

The matter is under consideration of the Government.

The availability of scrap is adequate for the present level of production by Electric Furnace units. If in future there is increased demand for scrap, the position will be reviewed and appropriate action taken.

The matter is under consideration of the Government.

Government Policy has been to encourage setting up of Sponge Iron Plants.

This is under consideration of the Government.

The matter is under consideration of the Government.

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN: From the statement, I find that some matters are under consideration of the government for some time. I would like to know as to what does the government intend to do in regard to reduction in the interest rate on term loans?

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK: Sir, the entire matter is receiving my consideration. It is a complex matter. I hope to find a solution to it—to a certain extent—within a week or so.

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN: While the matter is under con-

sideration, I would like to know whether the Minister had talks with any of these petitioners? If so, what has been the outcome?

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK: Sir, I may tell the House that in the very first week of my assuming office I myself summoned all these associations and have been working out as to how to revive them.

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: Sir, in view of the controversy surrounding mini-steel plants and the statements of the Minister himself I would like to know whether he has

examined the original decision of 1971 to set-up mini steel plants and whether he thinks the decision was motivated by economic considerations or otherwise?

**SHRI BIJU PATNAIK:** On this issue I have already made full statement while replying to the Demands of my Ministry.

**SHRI S. R. DAMANI:** I would like to know whether the Minister thinks that the concessions given in the Budget are sufficient to revive the health of this industry? If not, what action is he going to take to revive the closed units?

**SHRI BIJU PATNAIK:** My earlier answer covers this question.

**चौधरी बलबीर सिंह :** मंत्री महोदय बताएंगे कि मिनि स्टील प्लांट जो बन्द हो गए हैं उनको ठीक ढंग से चलाने के लिए चैम्बर आफ कामर्स की तजवीजों के अलावा क्या सरकार की अपनी कोई पालिसी है और उन्होंने कोई स्कीम इसके लिए बनाई थी ?

**SHRI BIJU PATNAIK:** I am provoked to speak that the defenders of the mini-steel plants may be on either side of the House but I have no defence for starting these plants.

#### Reinstatement of Jute Mill Workers

\*369. **SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU:** Will the Minister of PARLIAMEN-TARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) total number of jute mill workers laid off/retrenched during the last two years;

(b) what steps have been taken to get them reinstated/re-employed;

(c) what steps Government are taking to compensate them for the lay off/retrenchment period; and

(d) what steps Government are going to take to enable them to pay

off the debts incurred for their livelihood during the lay off period through payment of compensation?

**THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMEN-TARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR (SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA):** (a) to (d). The matter falls essentially in the State sphere. According to the information made available by the Government of West Bengal, the total number of workers laid off on different dates during the last two years is 1,38,628. During the period the State Government did not receive any application for prior permission under the recently amended Industrial Disputes Act, for retrenchment. In cases of lay-off and retrenchment, the State Government takes the necessary steps under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, and according to the Government of West Bengal, lay-off compensation has been offered to the workers in almost all cases of lay-off for the lay-off period.

**SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU:** Sir, this golden industry which could have employed lakhs of people and benefited millions of people in the jute growing areas like Assam, Bengal, Orissa, etc. has become an industry of misery and sorrow. In 1947 when the Britishers left this country there were 3.5 lakh workers employed in this industry. In 1975 it has come down to 2.5 lakh. Sir, I am distressed to find in the answer that during the last two years—the so-called golden era of Mrs. Gandhi—1,38,628 workers have been laid off to starve on the streets of the country. Now, Sir, I want to know how could the Minister justify his saying that it is the responsibility of the State Government. The foreign exchange earnings on this account go to the Central Government. But the responsibility goes to the State Government. The State Governments get very meagre resources. The State Governments in the country are not better than the Municipal Offices. The hon. Minister has quoted the figure of 1,38,628. Does it include badli workers or non-badli