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LOK SABHA

Saturday, September 3, 1961/Bhadra 12, 1888
(Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock.

[MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

SHORT NOTICE QUESTIONS

Mr. Speaker: The House will now take up Short Notice Questions.

श्री किशन पटनायक : अध्यक्ष महोदय, हमारे ग्रुप को आपने आश्वासन दिया था कि सीटिंग अर्रेंजमेंट आप करवायेंगे . . .

अध्यक्ष महोदय : इस वक्त इसको नहीं ले सकते हैं ।

Shri Hem Barua: Sir, may I draw your kind attention to a very relevant thing about the procedure adopted with regard to admission of Short Notice Questions?

Mr. Speaker: At this time we cannot discuss the procedure. Let us proceed with the questions now.

Paradeep Port

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S.N.Q. 24. Shri Vasudevan Nair:
Shri Indrajit Gupta:

Will the Minister of Transport, Aviation, Shipping and Tourism be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Paradeep Port authorities have issued retrenchment notices terminating the services of a large number of workers and technical personnel of the Mechanical Division from the 23rd August, 1966;

(b) if so, the reasons for such notices when even the first phase of the Port's construction has not yet been completed and the second phase is due to begin; and

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(c) Government's reaction in the matter?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Aviation (Shri C. M. Poonacha): (a) to (c). Yes, Sir. Retrenchment of these workers has been necessitated because of the completion of work on which they were engaged. 9 out of the 63 workers, to whom notices have been issued, have been absorbed in other employment at the Port and 15 more are likely to be offered alternative employment. Efforts are being made to find alternative employment for other persons to whom notices have been issued.

Shri Indrajit Gupta: Is the Minister aware of the fact that the Administrator of this port has informed the representatives of the workers that the project work of the first phase including building of township and of cargo berths is virtually at a standstill because enough finances have not been provided by the Centre, and that is the reason why this retrenchment is taking place, if so, may I know what steps are being taken by the Government in this regard?

Shri C. M. Poonacha: The first stage of main civil works and other works connected with this harbour project has been completed and the port has been formally inaugurated. But some additional works connected with extension work of berths and other things are under the consideration of Government for necessary sanction. There is no doubt a little bit of time lag in between the two. But, as for the older works which have been completed, the labour which is found surplus in some respects have had to be retrenched.

Shri Indrajit Gupta: The first phase and second phase of this project are already drawn up and it is a continuous process. I want to know, after the Central Government has taken over the responsibility

of this port as a major port, the responsibility being no longer that of the State Government, why is it that the workers of this mechanical department, who will be required for works throughout the two phases, were retrenched when they were given to understand that the work would go on for several years?

Shri C. M. Poonacha: Other types of work are quite different from major project work such as reclamation berth, sand pump trestles, slipway etc. These are different types of works. Other categories of workers who are engaged in a different type of work, who are found in that respect surplus, have got to be retrenched and they have been retrenched.

Shri Indrajit Gupta: Sir, one point he should clarify.

Mr. Speaker: First he said that there is a time lag and then he said that there are different kinds of work.

Shri Indrajit Gupta: He should say whether it is not a fact that the first phase includes building of township and iron ore berths etc., and that has not been completed even now.

Shri C. M. Poonacha: Those works are continuing. These workers 63 of them, belong to other categories such as handling of cranes at the quarries, boulder supply work etc. The work is almost completed at the quarries. A certain number of workers were employed there. That section of the work is complete and the labour connected with that type of work have been retrenched.

Dr. Ranen Sen: In today's condition, when unemployment is growing in the country, is it the policy of the Government to discharge the workers as soon as a particular project work is over or is it the policy of the Government to find out avenues for re-employment of those workers?

Shri C. M. Poonacha: The policy of the Government is to find employment to the workers to the maximum extent possible. But, under certain circumstances, certain amount of retrenchment will have to be effected, and that will be done under the Industrial Disputes Act, strictly according to the law. This very point was mentioned

by the Labour Unions concerned. In the memorandum of settlement reached on 17-6-66 the relevant portion reads:

"Regarding retrenchment, mentioned as Item No. 1 of the charter of demands, it is agreed that when the new schemes are sanctioned, for which the management have moved the Government, the retrenchment may be avoided, as far as possible."

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy: May I know whether the retrenchment notices have been issued under the Industrial Disputes Act? May I know why the discharge of workers like Shri Paria and Shri Mahanty, union leaders, is not referred to the tribunal yet.

Shri C. M. Poonacha: I do not know the details of the individual cases mentioned by the hon. Member.

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy: The hon. Minister has just now read out the settlement reached with the union. In the same settlement, it is mentioned that conciliation has failed and that this should be referred to arbitration. Why have you not done it?

Shri C. M. Poonacha: I was referring to the retrenchment that has been effected so far; which numbers 63. I do not have the names of the individuals in respect of these 63. But I can say that it has been done strictly in accordance with the Industrial Disputes Act. The other information relating to individuals, I do not have with me at present.

श्री किशन पटनायक : पहले मैं आपको बता दूँ कि इसका नाम पारादीप नहीं पारादीप है और पारा का अर्थ उड़िया में कबूतर होता है कबूतर का दीप ।

मेरा सवाल यह है कि ऐसी प्रोजेक्ट में जहाँ एक फेज के बाद दूसरी फेज का काम शुरू होता है पहले से क्यों मूल्यांकन नहीं हो जाता है कि एक असें के बाद इतने लोगों की छंटनी होगी, और इस पारादीप के सम्बन्ध में मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि कितनी छंटनी होगी इसका मूल्यांकन पहले हुआ था या नहीं हुआ था और क्या काफी पहले से इन लोगों को चेतावनी दे दी गई थी कि इनकी छंटनी होने वाली है और दूसरा काम ये बूँद लें ?

Shri C. M. Poonacha: Actually, evaluations are being made continuously. As and when the work progresses, certain numbers are recruited. When the work is completed, certain numbers will have to be retrenched. This is a normal feature of big projects which employ labour in hundreds or thousands. So, a small number of 63 or 80 workers who have been found surplus in certain respects have to be retrenched, and this is done after due evaluation has been made.

Mr. Speaker: Has advance information been given to them that they would be retrenched?

Shri C. M. Poonacha: Yes, Sir.

श्री किशन पटनायक : कितना पहले ? एडवॉस का मतलब क्या है ? दो, तीन या पन्द्रह दिन का मतलब एडवॉस नहीं होता है । कितने दिन पहले ?

Shri C. M. Poonacha: Advance notice of one month in accordance with the law.

Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri: The Minister has not answered one point. Since the conciliation has failed why are they not agreeing to have the matter referred to a tribunal for arbitration? Why is this happening in a government department or public sector project?

Shri C. M. Poonacha: I am unable to follow which failure of conciliation the hon. Member is referring to. We had two successive discussions, one on the 1st June and another on the 17th June. On the 17th June the memorandum of settlement was signed between the workers and the representatives of the management. So, a settlement has been reached. Therefore, I do not know what failure of conciliation the hon. Member is referring to.

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy: If you see the memorandum of settlement, you will find that the two cases mentioned by the hon. Member are there.

Mr. Speaker: They are individual cases.

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy: But the Minister wanted to know what those cases are.

Mr. Speaker: He has said that he does not have the individual cases with him.

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy: Since the hon. Minister has said that conciliation has failed, he must have information about the cases.

Mr. Speaker: Has he got information about those two cases?

Shri C. M. Poonacha: No Sir.

Re: SNQ 25

Mr. Speaker: Next Question, Shri Daljit Singh, Shri Sadhu Ram; both are not here. Shri Hem Raj.

Shri Hem Raj: Short Notice Question No. 25.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Sir, I want to raise a point of order on this question. In the booklet issued by your Secretariat about the various subjects for which the Ministries are responsible, I do not find any subject like 'corruption' under the Commerce Ministry, unless it be that recently there has been some change and in his portfolio has been included black-marketing alongwith other cognate matters. Because that is not the Commerce Minister's portfolio.

Mr. Speaker: Let us hear the answer.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: What is he going to answer? This is in connection with the campaign against corruption and blackmarketing. All that is the Home Minister's responsibility.

Mr. Speaker: It relates to trade and others probably; therefore, it was sent to the Commerce Ministry.

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Manubhai Shah): It relates to civil supplies.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Please read the question. It says: "corruption and blackmarketing".

Mr. Speaker: Let us hear the answer.

Shri Ranga: Where does he civil supplies come in? It reads like this:—

"how many arrests have so far been made in Punjab in connection with the campaign against corruption and blackmarketing;"

Mr. Speaker: All those arrests have been made during the civil supplies raids.