

beyond any proportion. The retail prices should certainly bear relation to the wholesale prices.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: I want to know what effective steps have been taken. He is talking theory.

Allowances for P. & T. Employees

***654. Shrimati Renu Chakravartty:** Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 170 on the 24th March, 1962 and state:

(a) the special considerations for which Central Government employees were given city compensatory allowance and house rent allowance in North Barrackpur Municipality;

(b) in view of the fact that in contiguous municipal areas and cantonment boards, exactly the same conditions prevail, why these privileges should be denied to them;

(c) whether it is a fact that for several months employees living in Barrackpur enjoyed these privileges; and

(d) whether any representation has been received in this matter?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Bhagavati): (a) Some years back the non-gazetted employees of a Defence Ministry's establishment at Ishapore were given the allowance on *ad hoc* basis. The concession admissible to those drawing pay up to Rs. 200 p.m. was extended to other Central Government employees working at Ishapore, and later this was extended to the North Barrackpore Municipality of which Ishapore forms a part.

(b) Compensatory allowance is admissible on the basis of population of a locality or its contiguousness to a locality, declared to be a compensatory allowance station, on the basis of population. Ishapore, which does not qualify for compensatory allowance

on the basis of population, was a special case.

(c) Yes.

(d) Yes.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: In view of the fact that all the areas from Baranagar right up to Kalyani is almost a contiguous area, contiguous to Calcutta City, as far as living conditions and house rent are concerned, and in view also of the fact that North Barrackpore Municipality is not physically contiguous to Calcutta, why should all the other smaller municipalities which form one contiguous area as a suburb of Calcutta be denied what has been given to the North Barrackpore Municipality?

Shri Bhagavati: The industrial belt contiguous to Calcutta seems to have a case for special consideration. But there are certain difficulties. The yardstick of cost of living index cannot be applied to all the areas which fall within this industrial belt. Then again the question of applying this principle to other categories of employees under the Central Government is also to be considered. So, there are certain difficulties.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: May I know whether the Government is going to consider this matter which the hon. Deputy Minister says has a good case, and whether that matter is going to be looked into because three of the municipalities out of the ten or twelve municipalities are already getting city compensatory allowance?

Shri Bhagavati: This is a suggestion for action. It is proposed to re-examine the whole situation.

Shri Priya Gupta: What is the criterion for extending the city compensatory and house rent allowances? Is it the basis of declaring a particular city to be A, B or C class, or is it any other criterion like the cost of living being higher in particular areas.

Mr. Speaker: That was the principle.

Shri Priya Gupta: No, Sir. In his reply the hon. Deputy Minister said that the question of bazaar prices is to be judged, but my question whether the criterion for paying these allowances is not the population there on the basis of which a city is declared to be A, B or C. I want clarification.

Shri Bhagavati: Yes, Sir. Certain stations have been classified on the basis of population as A, B and C—A Class exceeding 20 lakhs, B Class exceeding 5 lakhs and C class exceeding one lakh. It is presumed that where the density of population is very high, the cost of living index is high because the house rent may be high and some other incidental charges may also be very high.

Shri Priya Gupta: My point has not been clarified. What is the criterion?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. Shri Banerjee.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: I want to know whether it is a fact that the Defence employees and railway employees of areas like Shyamnagar, Kankinada and Kanchrapara have also started a strong agitation against the nonpayment of city allowance and if so, whether it is a fact that the financial authorities are considering the matter, and whether it is within the knowledge of the hon. Deputy Minister.

Shri Bhagavati: I could not follow the question.

Mr. Speaker: The question is whether a demand has been made by other municipalities also and whether the Government is going to consider that or not.

The Minister of Shipping in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): So far as this particular point is considered as to whether these other Defence employees have made any demand or not, we have not got any information for the time being, but so far as the question of North Barrackpore and Ishapore was concerned, that was a

special case decided on an *ad hoc* basis, and it does not apply to other contiguous areas. That was entirely on an *ad hoc* basis.

Mr. Speaker: Next question.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: Arising out of this, may I ask one more question.

Mr. Speaker: I am very sorry.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: The answer prior to this is contradictory to this.

Mr. Speaker: The matter may be cleared some other time. After his clarification I have gone to the next question. I am sorry.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: You have allowed only three or four questions.

Shri Nambiar: Ladies are generally considered.

Mr. Speaker: I think she has no complaint. Shri Nambiar need not come to her help.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: I have a complaint, but I am helpless when you are not giving me an opportunity.

Telephone Bills in Calcutta

***655. Shri Indrajit Gupta:** Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether telephone subscribers in Calcutta are lodging hundreds of complaints every month regarding incorrect telephone bills;

(b) if so, the reason for the sharp increase in such complaints; and

(c) whether any inquiry has been held to determine whether mechanical or human defects are responsible for wrong billing?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Bhagavati): (a) Yes.

(b) There has been no increase in complaints.