

MR. SPEAKER: It is a very big policy matter.

SHRI SHANTARAM POTDUKHE: As far as the Hon.-Plan Central assistance is concerned, as I said, it is given as per the recommendation of the Finance Commission.

SHRINIRMAL KANTICHATTERJEE: If it is a policy matter, let the Finance Minister reply; the Finance Minister is sitting here.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do appreciate the need to spend more money in dealing with the problem of metropolitan cities. But I must confess to you that in the present state, the Central Government is in no position to increase the Central assistance for the coming years.

Rehabilitation of The Retrenched Textile workers

*431. **SHRI MOHAN RAWALE:** Will the Minister of TEXTILES pleased to state:

(a) whether a sum of Rs. 53. 65 crores has been reserved for the rehabilitation package for the workers rendered jobless due to closure of the textile mills;

(b) if so, the details of the workers who have been provided relief from this amount so far;

(c) the number of workers who are yet to be provided relief;

(d) the time since when these workers are jobless;

(e) the time by which the payment is likely to be released to these jobless workers;

(f) whether there is any proposal to reopen the closed textile mills; and

(g) if so, when and if not, the reasons thereof?

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) The Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

(a) to (e). There is a provision of Rs. 40 crores during the year 1991-92 (revised estimate) for disbursement to the workers under the Textile Workers' Rehabilitation Fund Scheme (TWRFS). As on 21st January, 1992, 20349 workers have been provided relief amounting to Rs. 36.27 crores and 23,855 workers are yet to be disbursed relief under the Scheme. These workers were affected during the period 1985-89. Certain Procedural difficulties in the way of disbursement of relief have been removed and instructions have been given for expeditious disposal of all pending cases. As the position differs from mill to mill, it is difficult to indicate a definite date by which all disbursement would be made.

(f) and (g). The matter regarding the reopening of the closed textile mills which have been referred to BIFR, are examined by BIFR, which draws up the rehabilitation package for the same. For others, Government would assist any efforts made by promoters/ workers' Cooperative to reopen closed mills.

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister the date of inception of the Rehabilitation Fund. The Mills are closed down in Bombay for the last 10 years. May I know from the hon. Minister whether the Maharashtra Government has demanded for rehabilitation fund and the amount provided to them? I would also like to congratulate the Government for allowing the mills to operate on co-operative basis; but the poor labourers do not have money to run these closed mills. Will the Government provide equity capital to the labourers and will also participate in it? Otherwise it will provide a futile exercise

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: This fund was started after our policy of 1985, and the

results that we have got so far under the fund, are I can say, very satisfactory and a number of labourers have got benefits of this fund. Our efforts are to expedite it. We were facing some difficulties in doing so. Now those hurdles are removed.

As far as the worker's co-operatives are concerned, I have already said that we are interested in it. We welcome it and if somebody forms a Workers' Co-operative, the Government will extend its full co-operation. State Governments shall have to take initiative. If they form a Co-operative by bringing workers into co-operative Sector, it would solve a number of problems.

MR. SPEAKER: There was a question about equity contribution as well.

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: For the time being I can't say any thing about Equity shares. I can furnish information later on this subject.

SHRI MOHAN RAWLE: Mr. Speaker, sir, at the meeting of the meeting of the Plenary Committee of A. I. C. C., Late Shrimati Indira Gandhi announced the taking over of the taking over of the 30 mills by the Government, but these mills have not yet been nationalised. Hon. Minister has assured that if it is not done within a period of 15 years, the mills will be handed over back to their owners, and the land of the mills which remain closed in Bombay city, would be sold. In this way the mill owner will get a lot of gains. In the above circumstances, I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether he is going to oppose this proposal or not.

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: It has not been decided to nationalise it yet, because in the Policy of 1985, it was decided that no new mill would be nationalised. Our efforts are on to take decisions very soon in this regard.

As far as granting permission to them to sell their land is concerned, we are not going to do any such thing nor are we allowing anybody to privatise it and earn profit after selling the plots of land. Therefore, we are not allowing them.

SHRI AYUB KHAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, The Hon. Minister hails from Rajasthan, and I know him thoroughly. He is a man who can understand the problems of poor people? May I know, through you, from the hon. Minister whether he is going to frame a policy under which maximum number of mills can be re-opened so that maximum re-opened workers can be employed in those mills? Is there any such scheme to be undertaken in future, because from every corner it is a pressing demand that more and more mills should be restarted. So that more and more workers any get employment. I would like to know whether the Government is going to formulate any policy in this regard.

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are going to extend the existing textile Workers Rehabilitation Fund Scheme and I would inform the hon. Member through you that previously there was a condition that unless the mill was completely closed under I.D. Act 25 (0), the scheme could not be implemented. Now, we have decided that we will allow the scheme to be implemented even if a mill is partially closed. In this connection a study has already been conducted for Ahmedabad and Gujarat. According to that scheme, there is a possibility that out of 25 mills, ten will resume work. So, even the labourers of partially closed mills would be benefited. It means that we are going to extend the scope of the present scheme, and it will fetch a profit of nearly Rs. 22 crores, and there is also a scope that 7 thousand unemployed labourers will get reemployment. Likewise, the labourers who get wages upto Rs. 1600, get the benefit of the Textile Rehabilitation Fund, now we are going to increase this amount from Rs. 1600 to Rs. 2500. Now the labourers getting wages upto Rs. 2500 would also be covered under this scheme, so that these labourers would also get the benefits this scheme.

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPEDAR: The programme framed for textile modernisation has not been circulated among the Members so far for their information, no has it been subjected to any criticism in the Consultative Committee. Besides, a seminar is being conducted tomorrow and the day after in a

Five star hotel in Bombay to discuss the challenges being faced by the textile industries. What is the objective of this seminar? Who are the people invited to participate in the seminar? Without any information a committee named Textile Committee, Government of India, Ministry of Textiles, is being formed. I would like to know which committee is this.

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: The supplementary asked by the hon. Member is not related to the main question. Textile committee was formed a long time ago and it has been doing its work.

SHRI GABHAJI MANGAJI THAKORE: Through you, I would like to submit to the hon. Minister that I myself have worked in a textile mills, I have been a worker there and thus I know very well the problems of a worker. In Gujarat and Ahmedabad about 30 mills are closed. Out of these 30 mills three mills are being run by JTC and due to the closure of these mills about seven thousand workers have been rendered unemployed. I am very well aware how miserable a worker feels if he is not given work even for a day. The issue of reopening these mills has been referred to B I F R. I would like to know as to when the matter was referred to B I F R? How many meetings of B I F R have been held to consider this issue and what decision has been taken in regard to those mills? I would like to know all these things clearly.

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member has referred to Gujarat, about 35,561 workers in that state will be benefited by this scheme. The cases of other remaining workers who are not eligible for this, have already been referred to B I F R. As stated by the hon. Member unless B I F R takes a decision on those cases, the Government is unable to do anything.

MR. SPEAKER: When the cases were referred to it? How many meetings have been held so far?

SHRI GABHAJI MANGAJI THAKORE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, no attention is being paid to

workers and this is what bitches us. I would like the government to ask B I F R why the matter has been kept pending. Government should get the matter decided at the earliest.

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: That is between the management and B I F R we would not be able to do anything in the matter.

MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps you do not have the information. You please get the information and furnish it to the hon. Member.

SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT: Alright.

MR. SPEAKER: Question No. 432.

SHRI KALKA DAS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is also an issue related to DCM Mill in Delhi. You did not give me an opportunity even to raise supplementary question in spite of raising hand by me for such a long time.

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

SHRI KALKA DAS: I shall sit down. But look at my helplessness. I want your protection.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You have been the Presiding Officer. You know what are the difficulties.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI KALKA DAS: Kindly pay attention to the injustice being done to me.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You don't have to argue like this with me because I am trying to accommodate all the Members.