

1988-89, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT. 2246/97]

(c) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Lakshadweep Development Corporation Limited, Agatti, for the year 1989-90.

(ii) Annual Report of the Lakshadweep Development Corporation Limited, Agatti, for the year 1989-90, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT. 2247/97]

(d) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Lakshadweep Development Corporation Limited, Agatti, for the year 1990-91.

(ii) Annual Report of the Lakshadweep Development Corporation Limited Agatti, for the year 1990-91, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT. 2248/97]

(e) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Lakshadweep Development Corporation Limited, Agatti, for the year 1991-92.

(ii) Annual Report of the Lakshadweep Development Corporation Limited, Agatti, for the year 1991-92, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT. 2249/97]

(f) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Lakshadweep Development Corporation Limited, Agatti, for the year 1992-93.

(ii) Annual Report of the Lakshadweep Development Corporation Limited, Agatti, for the year 1992-93, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(2) Six Statements (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (7) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT. 2250/97]

12.03 hrs.

[English]

COMMITTEE ON THE WELFARE OF SCHEDULED  
CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES

Ninth and Tenth Reports and Minutes

SHRI K. PRADHANI (Nowrangpur) : Sir, I beg to present a copy each of the following Reports (Hindi and English

versions) of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes including Minutes (Hindi and English versions) of the sittings of the Committee relating thereto :

(i) Ninth Report on Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas--Reservation for and Employment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Engineers India Limited.

(2) Tenth Report on Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas--Researvation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in allotment of Gas and Petrol Agencies.

12.03½ hrs.

[English]

SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS FOR GRANTS-  
(GENERAL)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF  
FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : Sir, on behalf of Shri P.

Chidambaram, I beg to present a statement (Hindi and English versions) showing the Supplementary Demands for Grants in respect of the Budget (General) for 1997-98.

12.04 hrs.

RE : WITHHOLDING OF IMPLEMENTATION OF  
FIFTH PAY COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS

✓  
SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN (Mumbai-North East) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, as the Government have accepted the recommendations made by the Fifth Pay Commission for Central Government employees they were expected to issue the notification for implementation of the same by yesterday but all of a sudden an announcement was made yesterday in the afternoon that the Government have withheld the implementation of the recommendations for some time and that the notification will not be issued for the time being. In this regard, my first objection is that when the Parliament is in session and the Finance Minister is present in the House, there is no justification in making such announcement outside the Parliament, that too by a Government officer. I consider this action as contempt of the House. If at all, it became unavoidable to withhold the issuance of notification, it would have been better if the Finance Minister had made the announcement here. Making such announcements outside the House is violation of the conventions of the House and also disregard to the House. However, the most important matter is widespread resentment among the Central Government employees about the intentions of the Government regarding the implementation of the Vth pay commission. They want to know the reasons for postponing the above implementation and what actions the Government now propose to expedite the implementation? Therefore, we would like the Government to make a statement on this issue

mentioning the reasons for postponing the implementation of the recommendations of the Vth Pay commission. The Government employees eagerly wait for constitution of the pay commission and the report to be submitted by them and when the report is finally submitted, it is examined by the cabinet secretaries and ministers and finally the cabinet hold its meeting to give their formal approval to the report, only then the report is implemented. After such a lengthy process, if the implementation is withheld at the last moment, naturally, the House is concerned to know the underlying factors for taking such a step. The hon. Minister of Finance should issue a statement on this issue.

At the same time, we want to know the real intentions of the Government. Whether the Government would accept all the recommendations made by the Pay Commission or they would satisfy the grievances of the Government employees before finally implementing the recommendation? The Minister of Defence is present here. Though he has assured our armed forces to get attractive pay scales but the army personnel is still dissatisfied and demand better emoluments. So whether the Government, keeping this factor in view have withheld the notification in order to revise the pay scales of the government employees as recommended by the Pay Commission. Since, nothing is clear, I would like the hon. Minister of Finance to justify why the matter was not taken up in the House yesterday? Secondly, he should make a statement telling us why the Government have withheld the notification and what is their intention behind this move? Whether they propose any further ungradation of the scales? **Because the state Governments would also follow them. The Government should take the House into their confidence and take an early action in this regard.**  
action in this regard.

[English]

SHRI JAG MOHAN (New Delhi) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, my distinguished colleague has already mentioned a few points and I do not want to repeat them. What I wish to say now is that it does not behove the Government to adopt a confrontational attitude with its employees. It would have been much better to approach the problem with a sense of accommodation.

The second point which I would like to make is, what is the Government's position with regard to such a wide gap that has been kept between the maximum pay and the minimum pay? This is also not acceptable to most of us.

The third point is, is it not a fact that such a wide gap is also being kept in the salaries and emoluments that are available in the private sector and the public sector? This policy of allowing a free play to the private sector to have as much pay as possible will mean that the entire talent would be going to that sector and also an attitude is being created in the nation to grab more and more money. So, this type of attitude will lead to more conflicts between the Government and the employees because their level of aspiration is now going to a different place. These are the few points that I wanted to make.

SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY (Krishnanagar) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir instead of removing the anomalies and the discriminations which are there in the recommendations of the Fifth Central Pay Commission, the Government has preferred to withhold the implementation of the entire recommendations all of a sudden and they are giving no justification in support of that. The Cabinet Secretary appeared on the television and he was in a mood that by withholding the implementation of the recommendations he was doing a very good thing and that the Finance Ministry is doing a very good thing.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : When did I say that? I never said anything. Why do you bring in my name?

SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY : No: it was Cabinet Secretary.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Then, say about the Cabinet Secretary.

SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY : Yes, I have said that. I have not said 'Finance Minister' : I said 'Finance Ministry'.

Sir, the point is, the recommendations of the Fifth Central Pay Commission are full of anomalies and discriminations. The pay fixation policy has been recommended in such a way- the Government has not rejected that, they have not improved that - that the pay of thousands of employees will be reduced from what they are getting now. Then, there is a discrimination between the lowest pay and the highest pay. Even the Group 'B' officers are being denied of their legitimate claims. Not only that, the allowances, including the House Rent Allowance, are not being given from 1st January, 1996, but from 1st August, 1997. All these things are peculiar, it does not stop there. The approach and the outlook of the Pay Commission which has been reflected in its recommendation tell, that it has been prepared at the dictates of the I.M.F. and the World Bank. There is recommendation by which three-and-a-half lakh posts will be abolished. There is another recommendation to downsize the Central administration by 30 per cent. These are the most retrograde recommendations not to speak of rejecting these retrograde recommendations ....(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI ILIYAS AZMI (Shahabad) : On the one hand they are taking much time during Question Hour and on the other they are making lengthy speeches during this time also so what will happen to others in the list? .....(Interruptions)

(English)

SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY : They have not even removed the discrimination and anomalies that are very much there in the recommendations. So, the employees, organisations and associations have taken a decision to go on an indefinite strike.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Shri Mukhopadhyay, please take your seat, That is all, please sit down. Please allow Shri Basu Deb Acharia to speak now.

..... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI ILIYAS AZMI : Not only the Government employees are living hand to mouth, there are other people also in the country who are facing starvation.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Only those Members will be called who have given their notices.

[English]

SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY : The Government by withholding the implementation of the recommendations is practically waging a war against the Central Government employees throughout the country. I condemn this attitude because it is condemnable. I think, the Government should review the whole thing and come forward with a final decision.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Okay, please sit down now. Please take your seat.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : The notification was to be issued yesterday, but suddenly the Government took a decision to withhold the notification in regard to the implementation of the Fifth Pay Commission's recommendations. No justification has been given as to why it has been withheld. There is a great resentment among a large section of the Central Government employees in regard to the implementation of the Fifth Pay Commission's recommendations. For the first time, in the Fifth Pay Commission's recommendations, there is such a wide gap between the lowest and the highest paid employees - Rs. 2,500 is the pay of a Group 'D' category employee, whereas Rs. 30,000 is the pay of a Group 'A' category officer, So, the gap is much more, which was not there in the earlier Pay Commissions' recommendations. There are a number of anomalies, and the Government employees' organisation and associations have given their views on it.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : It would be better if you associate your points with this one. Please, do not go in detail.

SHRI ILIYAS AZMI : A number of Members may speak the same thing but my matter is also very important.

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : There was time for resolving all these issues and anomalies, but without resolving those anomalies or without removing those anomalies, the Government decided to withhold the implementation of the recommendations.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I am helpless. I will call only those members who have given notice. It is a long list and it includes your name also.

..... (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I urge upon the Government to have a discussion with the Government employees' organisations and associations to sort out the problems and to remove the anomalies, and also to implement the recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission after removing all those anomalies in the recommendations.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please sit down now. Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee to speak now. I have passed on to the next item.

.....(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I am sorry, I cannot accommodate everybody. Your name is there.

[Translation]

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES (Nalanda) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Pramod Mahajan ji has raised a question whether the announcement made by the Cabinet Secretary outside the House is the contempt of the House. Whether the House does not concern the matter? Whether the House find it irrelevant to discuss the matter regarding the contempt of the House .....(Interruptions) We want the Deputy Speaker and not the Prime Minister to clarify the matter. Pramod Mahajanji has raised the point.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Yes, he has raised.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : So, it is an important question. The sitting of the House is going on. This would have a bearing on the future of employees and the country as well.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I want to know whether the Minister would like to say something in this regard? Ram Vilas Ji, something has been said in this regard outside the House and that too through an officer. Will any statement be made in this connection?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Call the Cabinet Secretary and ask him for an explanation..... (Interruptions) How does it matter if the Prime Minister comes or not.....(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please say something Geetaji. Please take your seat. Speak after he concludes.

[English]

SHRI P.CHIDAMBARAM : Sir, there is some misunderstanding which I think I should clarify. The Cabinet took a decision on the Pay Commission's recommendations, I believe, about the 21st of July, 1997.

That decision stands. That decision has then to be translated and issued as an order. There is no particular date for issuing that order. No particular date was fixed for issuing that order. The orders translating the Cabinet decision into an order are to be issued by the Finance Ministry, the Ministry of Personnel, the Railway Ministry and by various other Ministries. No Particular date is fixed for the order. I asked the Cabinet Secretary. He said that orders were under preparation and orders were ready, more or less ready by yesterday and in the ordinary course those orders would have been issued yesterday. At that stage, I am told, some members of the Government brought it to the notice of the Prime Minister that they would like to look at one or two aspects before the orders were issued. So, the Prime Minister consulted the Cabinet Secretary and said "Bring it to the Cabinet today and then orders can issue thereafter." I do not think there is any policy decision to withhold implementation of Pay Commission recommendations. It is just that the orders were under preparation. They were more or less ready. I think they could have been issued yesterday. They can be issued today. I think the Prime Minister has suggested to the Cabinet Secretary that in view of the views expressed by one or two hon. Members to the Government it may be brought to the Cabinet again and then orders could be issued.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN : It has gone on to the electronic media. You should not have given scope to it.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The sort of statement made by the Cabinet Secretary gives it a different impression.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Let us not read too many sinister meanings into it and not too little either. I believe the Press asked him as he came out "Are orders being issued today? He said "No, Orders are being withheld for the time being."

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : What he said was totally different.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : There is no policy decision. Let me make it very clear. There is no decision to withhold the decision of the Cabinet to implement the Pay Commission's recommendations.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN : It is a very serious matter that when there is no policy decision of the Government to withhold, the Cabinet Secretary goes to the media also saying that "We are withholding it."

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Mulayam Ji would you like to say something.

.....(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV) : I want to say that ..... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Let me also say something.

.....(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV : The decision will be implemented simultaneously..... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Newspapers have reported that it has been withheld because they have threatened to go on strike.

[English]

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : There is no policy decision. It was a question asked by some Press people and he simply said, I am told, that "We are holding it back to some other date." .....(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : This is not a satisfactory reply .....(Interruptions)

[English]

This is not a fair discussion and explanation .....(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Do you want to say anything, Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav?

[Translation]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV : I want to say something on this very subject .....(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Do not try to mislead the House. This is an insult to injury .....(Interruptions)

[Translation]

Your are adding salt to injury. You get an inquiry of the House done into what he has said .....(Interruptions) All papers have been reporting about this. Have all the newspapers misreported.....(Interruptions) Are we and all the newspapers in the wrong .....(Interruptions) Does the hon. Minister not see .....(Interruptions) We read newspapers daily .....(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : When there is no policy decision, why should you go to the press ?

[Translation]

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : To say that he just spoke casually is not right. This is not a matter to be spoken casually .....(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI I.D. SWAMI (Karnal) : When there is no date fixed for the issuing of order, where is the necessity for a statement by the Cabinet Secretary and that too on the Television?

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (Chittorgarh) : By what the hon. Finance Minister has said, in fact, the situation appears to be far more serious than as it appeared either by simply witnessing what has appeared on the Television or by reading what has appeared in today's headlines. The hon. Finance Minister said that a Cabinet decision accepting the distillate of the Pay Commission was taken on 21st July.

The Cabinet decision was taken on the 21st of July .....(Interruptions) I can accept that the Cabinet had not decided upon any one particular date for the implementation of that decision. Thereafter, that decision was to be implemented yesterday which was tentatively fixed as the date for the implementation. Whether it is to be implemented or not to be implemented is decided by a casual conversation between the hon. the Prime Minister and his Cabinet Secretary and the announcement was made through the Television that it is withheld.....(Interruptions)

Thereafter, the third point which the hon. the Finance Minister has himself said is that certain Members of the Cabinet had then gone to the hon. the Prime Minister to protect about it. Thereafter a decision was taken .....(Interruptions)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : No. You are using your own words .....(Interruptions) You are putting words into my mouth. I have not used those words. Do not put words into my mouth.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : He has not used the word protest

.....(Interruptions)

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN : Some Ministers had objected the decision taken on the 21st of July .....(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : He has not used the word objection as well.

.....(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Let me explain. He is putting words into my mouth. All that I have said is that there was no date fixed to issue the order. Whenever the order is issued in August, the decision is that it will take effect from first of August. That decision is already there. Orders would have been issued on the 2nd or 3rd or 4th or 5th. Orders are under preparation. In a meeting, the Prime Minister said ; "Well, there are one or two questions that have arisen. Let us bring it back to the Cabinet to see if anything has to be done. Please hold it back for today. I believe, as he came out, the Press asked him : "Are you issuing the orders today?" I am sure, the Cabinet Secretary would not go before the Television again. He was asked : " Are you going to issue the orders today?" He said : "No, we are withholding the orders for today and probably will take a decision tomorrow. I do not know what he said on the Television.....(Interruptions)

SHRI JASWANT SINGH : I would like to finish it now .....(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please be seated, I will give you a chance.

[English]

Hon. Member, you have already had your say. Please take your seat.

.....(Interruptions)

SHRI JASWANT SINGH : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, for as distinguished a lawyer as the hon. the Finance Minister, this is a very feeble defence. If no date had been fixed, then what was with him? .....(Interruptions)

Secondly, when did the hon. the Prime Minister realise that some points have arisen? It is only after that he had instructed the Union Cabinet Secretary to go ahead and withhold it. I personally feel that there is a great division within the Cabinet itself.....(Interruptions)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : There is nothing like that.....(Interruptions)

SHRI JASWANT SINGH : The issue that has come up is far more serious than he is attempting to make. The Prime Minister owes it to this House to come and explain what has happened and what is going to happen tomorrow. The Members of the Cabinet were divided on the issue .....(Interruptions)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Nobody is divided .....(Interruptions)

SHRI JASWANT SINGH : Now, they are attempting to play to the House. What they have done is certainly not acceptable to us. It is the hon. the Prime Minister who has to come and explain the confusion that he has caused. He has

caused it by telling the Cabinet Secretary to withhold it. Suddenly he realises that certain other Members of the Cabinet come and say :

"What you have done is not acceptable" He said : " No. It is not withheld, Now, hold the Cabinet meeting" Equally, we are not satisfied with it. Therefore, he owes it to the House to come and explain what has happened" .....(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Mr. Azmi, if you want to say something in this regard, please do speak.

SHRI ILIYAS AZMI : I will speak during zero hour.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please speak out something in this regard if you desire so

.....(Interruptions)

SHRI ILIYAS AZMI : I would like to say that we are having long discussions on this issue we are wasting our zero hour.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Do not bother about that. If you desire to say something, please speak out or I will allow you later separately. I will give you a chance. Please take your seat.

..... (Interruptions)

SHRI JAG MOHAN : Sir, I only want one straight reply to be given. I would like to know whether it is a fact that the Cabinet Secretary has said on the television or in the Press like : " I have told the employees whether to take it or leave it. "This is the heading in one of the newspapers : "Take it or leave it" Is the Government in a position to deny this or not? That is the simple question .....(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV : Hon'ble Deputy Speaker, Sir. The Finance Minister has given replies to all other issues. I would like to say to Hon'ble Pramod Mahajan that there is no discontentment of any kind in the army. If something more is to be done, it will be done. We have already stated that the army is fully content. So, you are requested not to speak at least about the army.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : It is a serious matter. Two things have happened. One is policy statement has been made outside the House and secondly it has been made by an officer.

.....(Interruptions)

[English]

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : Sir, I most humbly submit to you that there was no policy statement. I do not know what words

were used. Orders could have been issued yesterday, today or day before yesterday. When orders are under preparation and ready to be issued, the Prime Minister says, "Hold it back for a day. We would like to look into one or two aspects". I do not think that even Shri Jaswant Singh really believes that there is anything more. It is much ado about nothing. There is no policy decision and I submit most humbly that there was no policy decision. If there was a policy decision, one of us would have come to this House. And when the Press asked him he said, "We are holding it back today and we want to discuss it". I do not know what else he said.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : This news has not appeared in any newspaper.

[English]

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : It is not a policy statement. Therefore, there was not a policy statement. I beg most humbly to submit to the Chair to take my statement that there was no policy decision whatever.

[Translation]

SHRI G.L. KANAUIA (KHERI) : Please yes or no while replying in this regard.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I have allowed him. Please sit down.

SHRI SONTOH MOHAN DEV (Silchar) : I had the opportunity to listen to the Cabinet Secretary on two news items, one on Zee TV and the other on Doordarshan, saying, "some demand has come from certain quarters and we are going to look into this. "He did not say that his decision would be nullified. I had heard it myself. Where is the policy decision?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : There was no policy decision.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : You can get the manuscript of that TV news, play it and see for yourself and then take a decision whether it was a distortion or not. I have heard it myself. But generally, when Parliament is in session, Government officials should not go to the TV and say something. But what can you do? When you go out of this House, twenty TVs come in front of you. Sometimes it is difficult and our temptation is also there. Sometimes we feel hurt when we go home and find nothing on the TV. I spoke for two minutes but nothing was there. All these things are there. It is good that it has been raised now. I will request Shri Chidambaram to be magnanimous. When some of the employees are protesting, you should not be objecting to everything. Try to give something.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : It was because they are protesting, the Cabinet Secretary said, "We are holding it back."

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Look at the IPS officers and others.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : We are looking into it.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly) : What has come out in the Press or for that matter in different channels of the electronic media, has clearly given an impression that this withholding is related to the strike. That is the impression. Now the clarification has been given by the hon. Finance Minister that this is not a Cabinet decision and the Government is going to issue the order today.....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : I did not say 'today'. I said, "We will issue it, Any day we can issue it. It could be 'any day' .....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : Our concern is about the anomalies and the discrepancies against which there is a protest. What is the response of the Government for removing these anomalies and discrepancies?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : I am glad that he has raised it and I will answer it .....(*Interruptions*) When things have cooled down, Shri Jaswant Singh, please do not add fuel to the fire now.

Sir, I am grateful to Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev and I am grateful to everybody. I am not saying that different words could have been used, this word could have been used or that word could have been used. I would have said "held back". If they said, they held back for the day the sense is the same. Please take my word that there is no policy decision and I think, we should leave it there.

I want to answer this question as it is very important. I was the Minister of Personnel in 1986. I was the Minister of Personnel when the Fourth Pay Commission gave its report and we implemented it smoothly. There was no problem. I have told this House that there was an established procedure and we would follow the established procedure. We followed it. There is an Empowered Committee. The Empowered Committee reported to the Cabinet. The Cabinet constitutes the Group of Ministers. The Group of Ministers then met with the JCM and reported back to the Cabinet.

Now, we have, according to our calculations given about Rs. 13,250 crore. You can always say that this is high or this is low. But that is not the issue. The Government has taken a decision having regard to its finances, having regard to the needs for expenditure and other areas. There are claims by Defence, there are claims by the social sector and there are claims by the Infrastructure sector. We have taken a decision. Nevertheless, we recognised—that is what I wanted you to appreciate—that there are serious issues and we have identified some.

We have established a Fast Track Committee. We have told the employees, "Be patient, let the Fast Track Committee look into it." The Fast Track Committee is different from the Anomalies Committee. The Anomalies Committee will always

have to be constituted to look into individual departmental anomalies. That will come later. The hon. Member has used the word 'anomaly'. That will come later. After every Pay Commission, there is an Anomalies Committee. That will come later. Today, we have the Fast Track Committee to look into six or seven—I cannot give you the exact number now — major issues which are troubling the employees.

Therefore, the employees should also remember that we are sympathetic. We are looking into it. Let me tell you, the Pay Commission did not compute two costs and that has added to Rs. 1,600 crore. The Pay Commission did not compute the cost of gratuity and one other pensionary benefit which have added Rs. 1,600 crore. Originally, it was about Rs. 11000 and odd crore and now, it has ballooned to Rs. 13,250 crore.

Sir, we called the Chief Ministers. We took the Chief Ministers into confidence and told them that 'this is what we are doing'. All the Chief Ministers assured us that broadly, they will support the Government of India because there are other claims by other sectors, because one has to divide the cake in a manner which is fair, reasonable and just.

It is not that we are unsympathetic. We are sympathetic. It is very easy for the former Finance Minister to say 'give more'. If I was the former Finance Minister, I would also say 'give more'. The point is, let us not divide this on partisan line. We are sympathetic.

Sir, there is a Fast Track Committee. There will be an Anomalies Committee. We will look into it. We will try to resolve it as best as possible.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : That means, the Cabinet Secretariat has become a Confusion Committee.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : No. You must keep in mind, the larger interest of the country, what this country can afford and what we can afford to pay. If there are problems, we will look into the problems. Nobody here is unsympathetic to the employees. I also want the employees to show greater understanding of the Government's difficulties and respective shares.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Now, Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee.

.....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE : Sir, the argument is strenuous, The major problem is the differential between the low paid and the high paid employees .....(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : No details about this now.

.....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE : He has mentioned about anomaly .....(Interruptions)... No other Pay Commission has done this.....(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Shri Nirmal Kanti, let Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee speak. Please allow her to speak

.....(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please take your seat.

.....(Interruptions)

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: He is trying to mislead the House.....(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Nothing will go on record except what Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee says.

.....(Interruptions)\*

[English]

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE (Panskura) : As far as the other issue is concerned, I hope that the Government will come forward with a just solution.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Come to your subject.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Yes, Madam.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : About that issue we would ask the Government to quickly come out with a solution.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : I agree, Madam.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : Another point that I wanted to raise is that the employees from hundreds of colleges and Universities of India, under the auspices of All India College and University Employees' Federation, are sitting on a *dharna* at Jantar Mantar today to press for their demands, the main demand being inclusion of non-teaching staff of colleges and universities within the purview of the UGC for the purpose of prescribing the pay scales and other service conditions.

It is learnt that the Minister for State of Human Resource Development has agreed to convene a joint meeting involving the officials of the Union Education Department and the UGC along with the delegation of the Federation on 26.6.1997. Unfortunately, the meeting did not take place. Today also the Prime Minister had given me a word that their demands would be discussed. But I came to know that for some other reasons the Prime Minister had to cancel that appointment. Therefore Sir, through you, I would request the Ministry, the Prime Minister and the Human Resource Development Department to see to it that the just demands of these employees are quickly settled.

\* Not recorded.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I also support what has been stated by Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I have received notices from three members on this issue.

SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY (Basirhat) : I fully endorse the demand which has been placed by the hon. Member. I request through you the Government, Ministry of Human Resource Development to come forward and take notice of it. The employees of the universities and colleges are a part and parcel of our education. Without them we cannot get education. But they are being neglected year after year. So, I request the Government of India to come forward and convene a joint meeting of the employees of the colleges and universities to remove their problems and plight.

[Translation]

SHRI DHIRENDRA AGARWAL (Chatra) : Mr. Deputy Seaker, Sir, the large number of members of All India College and University Employees Association, New Delhi are holding a demonstration in front of the Parliament House stressing their five points demands.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the teachers and employees both work in the same condition in the same institute. Therefore, the employees of the colleges and university, like the teachers, should be provided the facilities of service condition of UGC.

[English]

SHRI PRAMOTHES MUKHERJEE (Behrampore) (WB): I am thankful to you for giving me this chance to support the demands raised by the hon. Member Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee. It is a fact that the successful functioning of the teaching process and the research work in colleges and universities largely depends upon the quality service of the university and college employees. The demands and grievances of the college and university employees must be met by the Ministry of Human Resource Development. I urge upon the HRD Ministry to take into consideration their demands for the adoption of uniform scale of pay at UGC level all over India and to provide them security of service, model service rules and at the same time leave and other fringe benefits.

[Translation]

SHRI LAL BIHARI TIWARI (East Delhi) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Delhi is the capital of the country. Lakhs of people migrate to capital to earn their livelihood and they depend on the wheat, rice and sugar being provided under Public Distribution System. But I am sorry to say that prior to June 65,000 metric tonnes of wheat and 20,000 metric tonnes of rice used to be supplied in Delhi. The Union Government have sliced it down to 40,000 metric tonnes of wheat and 20,000 metric tonnes of rice. Therefore, through