

12.55 hrs.

Title: Regarding non-payment of salaries and the pending wages of workers of three public sector units of West Bengal.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (RAIGANJ): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to raise a very important matter. I hope, the Government will respond because Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar is here. For the last six months and more, the employees of the following public sector units in Bengal are not getting their salaries and wages. The employees of National Instrumentation are crying and there is almost a suicidal situation. The employees are deprived of their wages, and this unit falls in the constituency of Shrimati Krishna Bose. In the last six months, they came to Delhi five times, but not a single penny has been released.

In the National Jute Manufacturing Corporation (NJMC), several thousand employees are working, and 50 per cent of them belong to Eastern Uttar Pradesh and North Bihar. In the last four months, they could not send even a single penny to their villages because their entire wages have been withheld.

The Burn Standard employees were asked to opt for VRS, but the VRS fund is not available, and their due wages have not been paid. Three workers have committed suicide. Besides this, Hoogly Dock and Port Engineering is another unit. When you were a Minister, you tried to help us. Now, you are in this high Office, Sir, and I hope, your direction will give more strength to our demand. Till today, the package has not been settled and they have not been paid any money. Yesterday evening, Sir, I received a phone from a poor lady, and that is why, I gave the notice, saying that her three daughters have been sent away from school because they could not pay their fees. Her eldest daughter could not get married because people refused to come saying that she could not meet or comply with the minimum requirements of marriage. This is the plight of the people.

Therefore, I would request you, Sir, to give appropriate directions to the Government, at least, to settle the pending wages of workers in these three public sector units of Bengal so that they can survive. If we do not do it now, since the Parliament will be adjourned on the 17th, we will have no opportunity to bring it to the notice of the House. The Government should take this matter seriously.

Sir, when you were a Minister, you were kind enough to declare in the House that you would approach the Chief Minister of West Bengal to find out the viability of these units. With your intervention, at one point of time, when you were a Minister, the employees of Burn Standard got some payment. After that, nothing has been paid. Therefore, I sincerely desire, at least, on humanitarian grounds, that you give necessary direction to the Government, and the Minister should respond to it. ...(*Interruptions*)

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA (CONTAI): We also associate with what Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi has stated.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (BANKURA): Sir, I would like to associate with what Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi has said. The situation is very serious. I discussed this matter with you, when you were the Minister of Heavy Industries. Please give a direction to Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar on this issue. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Suresh Prabhu, you are now in-charge of Heavy Industries. I would request you to look into the matter raised by Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, the employees of National Instrumentation Limited have not received their salaries for 14 months, and the employees of Burn Standard have not received their salaries for four months. The Government should assure the House. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister wants to reply. Do you not want a reply from him? Please sit down, the Minister wants to reply.

...(*Interruptions*)

अध्यक्ष महोदय : सुनील खां जी, मंत्री जी खड़े हैं। वह इस विषय में उत्तर देना चाहते हैं, उन्हें उत्तर देने दीजिए।

SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI (SALEM): Sir, we also associate with what the hon. Members have said because one of the units of Burn Standard is in Salem, and something has to be done by the Government.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU (SRIKAKULAM): Sir, it is not a question of some hon. Members associating themselves with the issue that has been raised. The whole House is concerned about this.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (PANDHARPUR): I also associate with the hon. Member who has raised this issue.

13.00 hrs.

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): Sir, when the whole House is associating with an issue, the Government obviously would take cognisance of this and would act accordingly.

Sir, as you are aware our Government believes in the concept of a Welfare State and also recognises not only the rights and privileges of the workers but also the importance of the Working Class in the development of the society that has to be an egalitarian society in which all sections must stand to benefit.

Sir, but keeping in view the financial constraints of the State, the revenue earnings of the Government and also the demands of the workers, Government would take all appropriate measures to definitely ensure that the sentiments expressed by all the Members would be taken care of...(*Interruptions*)