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Title : Regarding revival of Hindustan Cables Limited and non-payment of salaries to its employees.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (BANKURA): Sir, Hindustan Cables Limited was a premier public sector undertaking in the field of cables.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Dasgupta has already mentioned it.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: This company used to make profits up to 1993-94. Since 1995, it has been incurring losses. It had previously more than 7000 workers. But today, there are only 3350 workers in three units – one is in West Bengal, another is at Hyderabad in Andhra Pradesh, and the third one is at Naini, Allahabad.

There was an agreement, and that was done by BIFR, that VSNL (previously DoT) would place orders with Hindustan Cables Limited to the extent of 30 per cent with 50 per cent advance [\[KMR25\]](#).

HCL used to supply better quality of cables. But suddenly, BSNL stopped placing orders to HCL. When there was no production in 2002, because of our efforts, BSNL agreed to place orders with HCL and it continued for one year. Then, in July 2003, BSNL refused to place orders. In spite of our sincere efforts, BSNL did not agree. Then, HCL was referred to IIT, Kharagpur. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I have requested the Minister. He is here. Please be brief.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Subsequently, Tata Consultancy Services was appointed to recommend revival of HCL. Both these consultants have not recommended for the closures. Rather, I would quote what Tata Consultancy Services has stated: Tata Consultancy Study Report has clearly stated that revival of HCL is viable provided HCL is diversified into new products. The cost of revival, as per their recommendation, would be Rs.281.22 crore whereas the cost of closure would be Rs.1,766.61 crore. There are two options. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please be brief.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Hon. Minister has also written to the Prime Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: He is here. He is waiting to reply. I have called him.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Whenever we met – we met 12 to 15 times – he never said that it cannot be revived. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Let us hear from him what he wants to say, Shri Acharia. This is not a debate, you know.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : He himself has written to the Prime Minister requesting him to intervene to see that Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited takes over HCL. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Bansagopal Choudhury.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Another Member of your party has given notice.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : There is still a need for cables. We have landlines; we have basic telephone services; new exchanges are not being commissioned because of shortage of cables. Extension of telephone lines is not possible because of shortage of cables. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Therefore, it should be revived.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : This is a very important point. The Ministry has not recommended for revival. When I saw his statement in the newspaper that HCL cannot be revived and it should be closed down, in reply to my letter what he stated is..
...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: This is for raising matters of urgent public important. I cannot allow you indefinitely. Many important matters are there.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : This is very important. I have to point out this. The options that have been suggested by the Ministry of Heavy Industries are change in management ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Don't annoy the Minister!

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : If disinvestment of HCL as a single unit is not possible; then, disinvest HCL as a separate unit. Thirdly, its closure. Unless Ministry recommends for revival or merger, it cannot be done.

MR. SPEAKER: You cannot go on speaking until he agrees with you.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : There have been a number of mergers and a number of take-overs during a year. If HCL is closed down, it would affect 3,500 directly[s26].

Indirectly, there are a number of auxiliary industries that are dependent on Hindustan Cables Limited.

MR. SPEAKER: Please conclude. You have taken more time. Many hon. Members are to make their submissions.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: It will affect 50,000 workers and it will also adversely affect the economy of that area.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Bansagopal Choudhury.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : So, I demand that the Ministry of Heavy Industries should recommend to the Board for Restructuring Public Sector Companies, BRPSC, for revival of Hindustan Cables Limited, to save an important industry of our country. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: An hon. Member of your own Party is waiting to make his submission. Shri Bansagopal Choudhury.

SHRI BANSAGOPAL CHOUDHURY (ASANSOL): Sir, the matter has already been explained by the hon. Member, Shri Basu Deb Acharia. ...(Interruptions) A number of times, we have explained the matter to the hon. Minister. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will be recorded. I am appealing to all sections of the House. This is very unfair. It will not be recorded.

(Interruptions)* â€

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Acharia, why are you replying to him?

...(Interruptions)

SHRI BANSAGOPAL CHOUDHURY : A number of times, this matter has been discussed. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Do not record one word of him.

(Interruptions)* â€

MR. SPEAKER: Would you please take your seat? Please take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You have to take your seat. Please take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is being recorded. Why are you speaking and interrupting the House?

(Interruptions)* â€

* Not recorded

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (BALASORE): Sir, this is very unfair. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: It will always be unfair, I know that. Is your disturbing the House fair?

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I will request the senior leaders of his Party to come and see this.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Do you have a right to speak whenever you want to?

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Members do not cooperate, how will this House run? Whose House is this? Everybody is showing concern, but nobody is showing concern for running of the House.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: You may please show the same concern to everybody. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: How many times have I rung the bell? I am not here to explain to you my conduct. The whole country is watching this.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BANSAGOPAL CHOUDHURY: Sir, it was discussed with the Union Minister. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Please keep quiet now.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Please keep quiet.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BANSAGOPAL CHOUDHURY: Sir, actually, it has already been mentioned and explained by the hon. Member Shri Acharia. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Please be brief. If you all do not cooperate, how can I run this House?

SHRI BANSAGOPAL CHOUDHURY: I only want to associate myself with what he said. The matter is very serious that nobody knows what will happen to this public sector company. I will request the hon. Minister to explain to this House what will be the fate of this public sector undertaking. That is all; thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: I have gone out of my way because the workers are involved in this. So, I have requested him; he immediately agreed; and he is waiting here to respond. It seems, you will even stop him; and all sorts of advices are coming from all sections of the House. You are lifting the status of the House in this process!

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is one of the cases for which we take a long, long time. There was a request from the CPI (M), CPI, Congress Party in West Bengal, the West Bengal Government, INTUC, the BJP's Union; and all of them demanded that it should be revived. Hence, at their request, it was done.

It was Shri Gurudas Dasgupta and Shri Acharia who first suggested to me to refer it to IIT, Kharagpur for its report. I agreed. There was an objection from my Office saying that it was not capable of doing it. I overruled that and I referred it to IIT, Kharagpur. When the negative report came, then again, Shri Gurudas Dasgupta, Shri Acharia and others asked me to refer it to Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) for its report. I agreed and at an expenditure of Rs.7 lakhs, it was referred to Tata Consultancy Services. The Tata Consultancy Services submitted a report and there was no positive recommendation.

In the meanwhile, there was a pressure. In the previous question also, we have seen that Members were mentioning that it took a long time. BRPSE wants that such cases should be sent immediately. So, I have sent the case. I have given my recommendations. I have said that this is not a very good case to be revived.

Here, what Shri Basu Deb Acharia said is not correct. I have also recommended to close down M/s. Richardson & Crudas in Mumbai, but BRPSE did not agree; the Cabinet did not agree. They have said that it must be a joint venture [\[V27\]](#).

So, I would convey your views to the Chairman, BRPSE and to the hon. Prime Minister, who will be chairing the Cabinet meeting. They may think and recommend that it can be done. You have met the hon. Prime Minister. So, the matter is open. I am not the last person to say on this. It is the Cabinet. I have said what I thought is right. I have all sympathies for it. Our National Common Minimum Programme says that we should not do anything to affect the position. I have been told unofficially that those vintages of labour, which are working there, will not be able to adopt the new technology because one Chinese party went there at the instance of West Bengal Government and they had told me that nothing could be done there with this set of people and the machinery.

Anyhow, I assure you that I will again write a letter, if necessary, to reconsider it.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: What about the merger?

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: I cannot say about that. It is up to them.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, if you go on replying to everyone then we can never conclude the discussion.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: I conclude, Sir.