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Title: Regarding strike by contract workers in the Neyveli Lignite corporation.

SHRI S. ALAGIRI (CUDDALORE): Mr. Chairman, Sir thank you very much.

In Tamil Nadu in the Cuddalore District, the contract workers are on strike in the Neyveli Lignite Corporation. More than 10,000 workers are on the strike for the last 30 days, but from the Corporation side there is no good response. Till now, the Corporation is not involved in the dialogue with the striking workers. So, the management's attitude is not a good one. Also, they bring outsiders and outside workers are staying in the mines. They are doing the jobs whenever the contract workers are on strike. So, it is not good.

Sir, due to the strike, there is no surplus lignite there. The position is hand to mouth. So, if any problem arises, the whole power production would be stopped. Sir, for the last 20 years, the workers have been continuing as contract labourers. After the intervention of the Madras High Court and the High Court gave a strong ruling, the Neyveli Lignite Corporation prepared the seniority list, but the Corporation has not obliged with the list. Whenever and wherever the permanent workers retire, the contract worker should be posted in that post according to the seniority. But the management is not willing to fill up the vacant posts.

Sir, even though it is a *Navaratna* Company still it is acting like Sylac attitude. The equal work and equal payment is a universal concept. But it is rejected in the Neyveli Corporation.

Sir, contract worker's salary is very low. Even a *masan* gets Rs.600/- in our area, but the contract worker gets only Rs. 320/-. It is a very low salary. I know personally so many workers there. More than 1,000 workers are working there for the past 20 years as contract workers. The unskilled labour gets Rs. 302; semi-skilled worker gets Rs. 311/- and skilled worker gets only Rs. 320/-.

Sir, now the Corporation has recruited 100 engineering students in the Neyveli Corporation from the campus interview like a private company. Sir, this is a public sector company. So, this procedure is not good. As a company, it should call for the students through advertisement and conduct the examination and then held interview and then select the students. But the Neyveli Corporation trespassed everything. So, I want to convey my opinion through this august House that the hon. Minister of Coal should stop these postings and announce the new postings.

Also, the hon. Coal Minister should intervene in the workers' strike and settle the workers' problem. Then only, the problem would be solved.