

there, Baba Amte is leading them. Nobody on earth can say that Baba Amte is an anti-national person. He has been doing selfless service to humanity for the last forty years. He travelled through the length and breadth of the country from north to south and east to west for "Bharat Jodo" movement. Sir, not only this, he has received "Ramon Magsaysay Award" also. He is a person of international fame. These people have proceeded to the place under his leadership but neither Gujarat Government, nor Madhya Pradesh Government nor even Central Government wants to enter into a dialogue with him. This is great injustice. Baba Amte fell unconscious on the banks of Aambhadra river. He is a sick man like me and is nursing an injury in his back bone. He can not travel on foot and has to move in an ambulance. A Commissioner of Gujarat passed an order that if he could go on foot but he could not travel in an ambulance. He can't go on foot, he moves in ambulance only. It is a fundamental right enshrined in the Constitution of India granting us freedom of movement in the country.

When there is firing or massacre at some place, the Government says that they are ready for negotiations. There can be a dialogue with the people who resort to massacre, but the people who are following the Gandhian way with their hands at their back and indulging neither in killings or looting, are being stopped. Borders have been sealed as if it is Indo-Pak boundary.

MR. SPEAKER: You may please sit down, Mr. Shastri.

SHRI YAMUNA PRASAD SHASTRI: If talks can be held with people who gun down and massacre people why can't there be talks with these Adivasi leaders and Baba Amte?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Shastri, please be seated. We have heard you.

SHRI YAMUNA PRASAD SHASTRI: Sir, please allow me to speak. Kumari Meghapatkar and her five associates are on

hunger strike, and the condition of Baba Amte is serious. I would like to say that our Prime Minister is a very broad-minded person. He is ready for talks with everybody. I support him. He should have a dialogue with these people, who are being displaced. I am not against dams or irrigation schemes. Many people are being displaced. There is the question of their re-habilitation and other grievances. Central Government should at least discuss these matters. Gujarat Government and Madhya Pradesh Government should at least discuss these problems.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The House now stands adjourned, for lunch, till 2.45 p.m.

13.45 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned, for lunch, till fortyfive minutes post Fourteen of the Clock

The Lok Sabha reassembled after lunch at forty-nine minutes past Fourteen of clock

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now the House shall take up Calling Attention. Shri P. R. Kumaramangalam.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Non-settlement of dispute of employees of NABARD

[English]

SHRI P. R. KUMARAMANGALAM (Salem): I call the attention of the Minister of Finance to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:-

"Situation arising out of the non-settlement of the dispute of the employees of

[Sh. P.R. Kumaramangalam]

national Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development and their alleged victimisation by the management and the steps taken by the Government in regard thereto."

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): Mr. Speaker, Sir. The issue to which the attention of the Government has been called relates to the non-settlement of the dispute of the employees of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and their alleged victimisation by the Management. At the very outset, I would like to inform the House that as NABARD is a statutory body, which enters into negotiations under the Industrial Disputes Act, with the employees' associations on their various demands independently the Government does not interfere with them. Though originally NABARD adopted for, new recruits, the pay scales applicable to commercial bank employees, since 1986 it is, by and large, following the settlements reached between the RBI management with its employees' union. Five rounds of discussions were held during January and June 1990 between the Bank Management and the All India NABARD Employees' Association (AINEA) on its charter of demands for revision of pay, allowances and other service conditions. While an understanding was reached on various issues, settlement could not be reached due to differences on certain minor issues which mainly related to the categorisation of employees in Group C and the avenues of promotion for employees in Group B to Grade A posts in officers cadre.

Following the stalemate in the negotiations, the employees resorted to various acts of indiscipline and gross misconduct. This resulted in chargesheeting of 21 employees of the bank, including 16 who were placed under suspension. Necessary disciplinary proceedings have been started against them.

Recently, on a review of the cases of

suspensions, the management has revoked suspensions in respect of 14 of the 16 employees. NABARD has reported that in respect of the remaining two cases there are criminal complaints lodged with the police.

The two major issues on which the stalemate in negotiations arose, were:-

- (i) Categorisation of employees in Group C; and
- (ii) Avenues of promotion for employees in Group B (Clerical) to Grade A in the officers cadre.

I can assure the House that the NABARD management is too keen to resume negotiations with its employees which had been called off by the latter. I am sure, the pending issues can be resolved amicably in the spirit of give and take, the employees will respond positively and return to the negotiations table and the Members would use their good offices with the employees and counsel them suitably in this regard. In fact, the areas of disagreement are so minor that there should not be any serious difficulty in reaching mutually acceptable solution.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do you have any questions after this statement?

SHRI P. R. KUMARAMANGALAM: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the question you posed to me is very relevant, that whether I have anything to say after this statement. I would like to at the outset mention that a certain background I feel I should bring to the notice of the Minister through you.

In 1986 there was a settlement and this was a first settlement between the employees of NABARD and its management. The settlement did not just come about like that. Though NABARD came into existence on the 12th July, 1982 as a statutory body, by merging the erstwhile Agricultural Re-finance Development Corporation and the Agricultural Credit Department of the RBI, the last agreement came into being only because the then Finance Minister and the Prime