

families. This is their only crime they have committed. And the Government of India—I have been saying probably too often—are sitting like a Mouni baba. Nothing is happening. The Finance Minister knows about it. I believe, as a change here, you should have some sympathy, so far as the Bengal Pottery is concerned. You don't have sympathy for them. *(Interruptions)* Don't say that. I am sure, you have a sympathy for them.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONICS AND DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT) AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARAMANGALAM): Always.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Very good. I stand corrected because of Mr. Rangarjan Kumaramangalam. *(Interruptions)* I am emboldened by the assurance of the hon. Finance Minister. He has always got sympathy for the workers for a change. Very good. He expresses that for a change. *(Interruptions)* What about that? Then kindly tell us about it. You are holding the purse of this country. Please tell us something about it. We have to go and tell those people.

SHRI CHITA BASU (Barasat): These workers have been under tremendous pressures for years together. They have agreed to get their salary reduced and wages also reduced. They want to work there and see that the factory continues. They are probably prepared to cooperate with the Government to the fullest possible extent. In spite of that, you do not accept their cooperation. When the Prime Minister promised, naturally it is unfortunate that this information which he was to give to us has not yet been given. Therefore, I want that the Finance Minister should make a categorical statement what is their attitude towards this factory.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOUDHURY (Katawa): They ended their fast on the assurance of the Prime Minister. We conveyed that to them: It is a very serious matter and has to be honoured.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Sir, ask the parliamentary Affairs Minister to go to the Prime Minister. Why do not you and find out, please?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH): The hon. Member had raised this matter with me day before yesterday and I assured him that this matter was not pending in the Ministry of Finance. To the best of my ability and knowledge, I do not think it is pending with us. But I will go and convey the feelings and find out where the file is.

SHRI CHITTA BASU (Barasat): The workers should be allowed to live.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If you permit, we can now take up 377.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Everything has lost relevance in this country. What is this 377? 3,000 people are starving. Why do not they go and tell us? Why cannot they go to the Prime Minister and bring the information? He is going for all sorts of things, I do not want to say in detail.

15.11 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

(i) Need to Lay foundation stone at Barsinghsir Thermal Plant at Bikaner

[Translation]

SHRI MANPHOOL SINGH (Bikaner): The Barsinghsir Thermal Plant at Bikaner district was cleared 10 years ago, by the Government of India. However, the foundation stone of this Thermal Power Plant has not yet been laid whereas Rs. 20 lakh were spent on the preparations of laying its foundation. In the spadework of thermal plant all the arable land has been taken away from the farmers and they have been given compensation for their agricultural land.

In this connection the Rajasthan Government had assured that each account holder would be given one 'murabba' land. However, this assurance is yet to be fulfilled. Secondly, this thermal plant will function only on the basis of lignite whereas all lignite reserves are situated at Barsinghsir and Palana. Its spadework has been going on for the last 10 years and an amount of Rs. 50-60 lakh has already been spent on it. I, therefore, urge the Government to lay the foundation of this Thermal Plant immediately and its work at the earliest.