

Township for the Farakka Super Thermal Power Project at Farakka is sought to be located in Malda district. Farakka is in Murshidabad district and it is on the one bank of the Ganga and Malda is on the other bank. If the township for Farakka is built in Malda it will present great difficulty to the workers and officers of Farakka Thermal Project. For a power plant where operational problems are to be attended constantly this would also create operational problems. Hon'ble Minister for Energy should inform the House whether such a proposal is being entertained and if so, whether he would reject this so that the township and the Super Thermal Project at Farakka remain at the same place particularly when there is no dearth of place in Farakka.

(v) SUPPLY OF RICE TO KERALA

SHRI V. S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN (Palghat): Under Rule 377, I am making a statement.

The distribution of rice in Kerala has been paralysed. The situation is such that distribution of rice through ration shops will come to a complete standstill till at least January. It is quite regrettable that the move to deny the supply of rice to the people of Kerala is afoot at a time when we are exporting rice to foreign countries.

Kerala requires 1,35,000 tonnes of rice per month. But in the month of November, the Food Corporation of India did not have even one week's stock in its godowns. It is understood that the FCI did not take any step whatsoever to stock rice in time.

As per rule, applications for wagons for bringing rice should be submitted one month in advance. It has been found on enquiry that the FCI did not apply for wagons at the right time. By the time the application is submitted and wagons made available and then rice reaches the retail ends from the wholesalers, it will be at

least January. In January the price of rice will be up by 15 paise per Kg.

Disruption in the distribution of rice in Kerala will force the State Government to make direct purchases from neighbouring states. This will cause high losses to the State. The card holders will have to pay more price for the rice.

Therefore, I request the Government to take immediate steps to send rice to Kerala and then avoid disruption in the distribution of rice through ration shops.

(vi) BONUS TO L.I.C. EMPLOYEES

SHRI SUNIL MAITRA (Calcutta North East): Under Rule 377, I am making a statement.

The LIC (Modification of Settlement) Act, 1976 was successfully challenged first in the Calcutta High Court and subsequently in the Supreme Court by the All India Insurance Employees' Association and the Supreme Court struck it down as violative of the Constitution of India.

Bowing to the seven-judge-bench judgement of the Supreme Court, the Janata Government asked the LIC to release payment of Bonus illegally withheld. But all the same in 1978 the LIC served notice under Section 19(2) of the I.D. Act expressing its intention to terminate the settlement. Again by applying 9A of the I.D. Act the LIC changed the service condition relating to Bonus and deprived the employees of their right to it. Not content with it, the Government of India acting under Section 49 of the LIC Act issued a Gazette Notification amending Regulation 58 of the LIC Staff Regulations pertaining to Bonus and sought to deprive the employees of their right to Bonus. Perhaps as a measure of abundant caution, the Govt. of India again acting under Section 11(2) of the LIC Act issued a Gazette notification which in effect deprived the LIC employees of their right to Bonus.

The actions of the LIC under Section 19(2) and 9A of the I.D. Act were successfully challenged in the Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court. Another Writ Petition was filed in the Calcutta High Court challenging the validity of the LIC's actions under 19(2) and 9A of the I.D. Act and the Central Government's action under Section 49 and 11(2) of the LIC Act. Having lost the case in the Allahabad High Court, the LIC went in for appeal to the Supreme Court. The writ petition pending in the Calcutta High Court was also transferred to the Supreme Court. At preliminary stage of the hearing, the Supreme Court had passed order that in the event of the LIC appeal not surviving, the employees should be paid bonus along with 12 per cent interest.

On November 10, 1980, the Supreme Court by its judgment held all the actions of the LIC and the Government of India illegal and *ultra vires* the Constitution and struck down the orders depriving the employees of their right to bonus.

But now strangely enough report has appeared in a section of the press that secret confabulations are going on in the concerned Ministries to see to it that the effects of the Supreme Court judgment are nullified and employees are not paid any bonus, even the bonus that has legally accrued to them for the years 1978-79 and 1979-80. To a delegation of the All India Insurance Employees' Association, the LIC Chairman was reported to have told on 11-11-80 that in view of the Finance Ministry telephonically instructing him not to pay the bonus, he was unable to pay.

I urge upon the Government not to engage in such methods. What is involved in this issue is not merely the question of payment of bonus to 43,000 LIC employees only, but also far more basic and fundamental and that is whether this Government will submit to the judicial interpretation of law enacted by the Parliament or it will arrogate to itself also the

power of interpreting the laws irrespective of the judgments and interpretation by the highest judiciary in this country.

(vii) REPORTED GROWING GANGSTERISM
IN CERTAIN PARTS OF BOMBAY

SHRIMATI PRAMILA DANDAVATE (Bombay North Central): Mr. Speaker, Sir, on 7th December, 1980, a serious episode occurred in Bombay which constitutes a grave threat to the freedom of press.

The 'Mumbai Sakal' a popular Marathi daily published from Bombay has been exposing the growing gangsterism in World and Prabhadevi areas of Bombay where gangsters openly move with swords terrorising people. My letters of complaint to the Police Commissioner of Bombay regarding this gangsterism has produced no result so far.

Some elements probably engaged by the exposure of gangsterism through the columns of 'Mumbai Sakal' burnt the tempo carrying copies of the Marathi daily on 7th December, 1980. The driver escaped and was, therefore, saved from being burnt alive. This is an assault on the freedom of press.

I request the Minister of Home Affairs to instruct the authorities concerned to ensure that such acts of vandalism are prevented and freedom of press protected.

(viii) SUPPLY OF MAIDA TO TAMIL
NADU

*SHRI C. PALANIAPPAN (Salem): Mr. Speaker, Sir, under Rule 377, I wish to raise the following matter of urgent public importance. In Tamilnadu there are thousands of cottage units producing pappad, bun, biscuits etc., which are common people's delicacies. To give an example, in Salem district alone, there are 120 cottage units producing pappads in which more than 3000 people are working, out of whom about 2800 are women.

*The original speech was delivered in Tamil.