

M.E.S. Civilian Employees Union, Port Blair, two employees are on indefinite hunger strike with effect from 12th December, 1980. I have received a communication from Port Blair that both the persons' condition is serious and any time something may happen to them. I would like to appeal to the Government of India particularly the Defence Minister to kindly intervene in the matter and accept the genuine grievances of the M.E.S. Employees stationed at Port Blair in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands immediately and to save the lives of two hunger strikers.

(xviii) ACQUISITION OF LAND FOR SALEM STEEL PLANT.

\*SHRI C. PALANIAPPAN (Salem): In 1964, a Notification under the Land Acquisition Act was issued for the acquisition of 24,000 acres of land in 50 villages of Sankagiri and Omalur Taluks of Salem District in Tamil Nadu and in 1967 it was announced that these lands would be used for the Salem Steel Plant. In October, 1970 in Karisipattj village of Salem District 50 more acres were acquired. During the period 1972 to 1976, about 4000 acres had been acquired in 25 villages. In 1972, 7000 acres of land were removed from the purview of the said Notification. An area of 13,000 acres of land should either have been taken out of the purview of the notification or the land should have been acquired and the compensation paid to the farmers. Neither of these things has yet been done. For the past 16 years

no development could be undertaken on this land because of the suspended animation and thousands of families of farmers have become destitute. Already 3000 families of farmers whose 4000 acres of land had been acquired have not got any benefit for the Steel project. The injustice being perpetrated on the hapless farmers should not be allowed to continue. I demand that justice be done to the farmers who are in suspense for 16 years about their land. I appeal to the Central Government to take firm decision about the Salem Steel Plant and remove this suspense.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Only the approved Statement will go on record. Sometimes, it so happens that the hon. Members may deviate from that.

14.50 hrs.

CHIT FUNDS BILL

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill to provide for the regulation of chit funds and for matters connected therewith, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of 21 members, namely:—

- (1) Shri Era Anbarasu
- (2) Dr. A. U. Azmi
- (3) Shri Maganbhai Barot
- (4) Shri Subarao Chowdary Chitturi

\*The original speech was delivered in Tamil.