

[Shri Dharendra Nath Basu]

textile mills and Textile Workers' Association have served notices that they would start strike in all textile mills with effect from 15th March. The minimum demands of the textile employees have neither been met with by the management of textile mills nor by the National Textile Corporation. Negotiation for settlement is far from sight and it is most likely that the textile employees will go on strike, as already notified, that is, from 15th March 1979. As a result, the mills will have no production and the export commitments already made by the managements of the mills will not be fulfilled and the suffering of more than one lakh and eightytwo thousand people who were workmen in the eastern zone alone will know no bounds. Some textile mills and some jute mills are already lying closed with the result about 67,000 employees have been thrown out of employment. The members of their family are now almost starving. The Government of India should immediately intervene in the matter and try to settle all the disputes sympathetically and in a proper way. Unless the disputes are settled promptly, I am afraid this will have serious repercussions in other industries. It is reported that some of the promoters of jute and textile industries now under closure in West Bengal have already started new mills elsewhere. So, I would request the Minister of Labour and Parliamentary Affairs to settle the issues without delay.

(iv) REPORTED ARREST OF A SIKH YOUTH BY U.K. POLICE FOR WEARING 'KARA' STEEL BANGLE

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOO-WALIA (Faridkot): Mr. Speaker, I want to make a statement on the following matter of urgent public importance.

The U.K. police arrested a Sikh youth in England for wearing *kara* (steel bangle). The UK authorities have described *Kara* as an offensive weapon. It is a great insult to the religious rights of the Sikh community, since it is ordained by the tenth guru, Guru Gobind Singh, to keep the five

*K's*, and *kara* is one of them. No true Sikh can have real satisfaction without *kara*. The whole of the Sikh world is mentally, spiritually and socially pained and perturbed over this offensive action of the UK police.

I will urge upon the External Affairs Minister to take up this matter of utmost importance with the UK Government. I will appeal to the British MPs and the people of Great Britain to honour and support Sikh cause, while keeping up the glorious traditions of religious liberalism.

(v) REPORTED STRIKE BY THE WORKMEN OF GARDEN REACH SHIP-BUILDINGS AND ENGINEERS LTD.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Jadavpur): Sir, I want to raise the following matter of urgent public importance.

10,000 workers of the Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Limited (GRSE Ltd.) have been forced to go on strike on and from January 22, 1979 for the redressal of their outstanding grievances. The industrial relations in GRSE Ltd., have been fairly satisfactory and all disputes have so far been settled amicably or through conciliation since 1961.

With a view to improve the wage structure and fringe benefits of workmen, at least at the level of the newly set up Central Public Sector and Shipyards, the Union submitted a charter of demands for the GRSE Workmen in February 1977, after the expiry of the previous settlement. But the management adopted dilatory tactics; yet, the workmen waited patiently for nearly two years to give sufficient time to the management for settlement. The workmen were assured that the charter of demands would be settled irrespective of industry-wise settlement in West Bengal, and the effect would be given from 1st January 1977. With a view to give time to the Management, the strike notices were twice deferred, on the assurance and condition that all workmen would be paid *ad hoc* at the rate of Rs. 500 subject to adjustment.