

(v) STRIKE BY EMPLOYEES OF GARDEN REACH SHIP BUILDERS AND ENGINEERS, CALCUTTA

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): Under rule 377, I wish to raise the following matter of urgent public importance:—

About 10,000 employees of the Garden Reach Ship Builders and Engineers, Ministry of Defence Production, are on strike for nearly three months and as a result of the uncompromising attitude of the authorities, the country has already lost production worth about 15 crores of rupees. Every category of employees has joined the strike.

Because of the devotion of the workmen it is a well run workshop and it has recently built Asia's biggest bulk carrier of 26,000 tonnes—Lok Priti, which was launched by the Prime Minister only the other day.

From 70 lakhs ship repairing company in 1961, today it is a 20-crore Ship-Building Workshop and they are able to manufacture 80 per cent of its ancillaries, thus saving huge amounts of foreign exchange on imports. The production has risen from 231.30 lakhs in 1960-61 to 5069.94 lakhs in 1977-78, and the gross profits for the said years are Rs. 8.71 lakhs and Rs. 405.37 lakhs.

The wage content in total production in 1960-61 was 36 per cent whilst in 1976-77 it has come down to 12 per cent. Wage rates are also very low. An unskilled worker gets Rs. 440/- per month while a highly skilled worker gets Rs. 561/- p.m. In spite of this, the productivity has gone up from 33 per cent in 1964-65 to 54 per cent in 1977-78.

On 25-5-78 Shri D. N. Prasad, Joint Secretary and Member of the Board of Directors of the Garden Reach Ship Builders and Engineers gave a written assurance:

"Workmen would not lose anything in view of the fact that the ensuing settlement which would arise at least for the period of 5 years might be given effect from 1-1-1977 (ref. Company's minutes dated 25-7-1978.)"

On this basis the Managing Director also gave a similar written assurance stating that workmen would not lose since settlement would arise from 1-1-1977.

What has been given to Mazagon Dockyard and Goa Shipyard must be given to Garden Reach Workshops also.

I demand that the Government immediately move in the matter and with the help of West Bengal Government make joint efforts to settle the dispute without any further delay and to the best satisfaction of the employees concerned.

I would invite the hon. Member who is present in the House to make his observations on the same.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (PROF. SHER SINGH): The hon. Member has raised many questions. Many of these questions he raised today, these very questions were raised last month also and I have given a reply to all these questions.

It is very unfortunate that the strike is still going on. With regard to the demand made by the hon. Member in his statement, we are already doing what he wants us to do. In fact we moved in the matter immediately and referred it for conciliation to the Labour Commissioner of West Bengal Government and we are making joint efforts with the West Bengal Government to settle the dispute.

GRSE is a public sector undertaking and it is not a private property of any company or individual. It is engaged in producing important items and equipment for the defence of the

country. There is a loss of production to the tune of about Rs. 15 lakhs every day.

I must make it clear that the workers and the management are bound by a tripartite settlement and within that settlement whatever benefits or incentives can be given, have been offered to the workers... (*Interruptions*) But they are not coming round. I think it will be settled soon. That is my information. But, through you, I would like to request the workers to come back to work in the interests of the country and in their own interests.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: The Joint Secretary who is on the Board of Directors has given an assurance and how can he go back on his words?

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is not Question Hour. The Minister has been kind enough to reply to you.

SHRI VINODBHAI B. SHETH: In his case the Minister is present whereas in our cases the concerned Ministers are not here. You kindly make it clear whether the Ministers should remain present to reply to 377 statements.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is very clear. He is here and he was kind enough to give a reply.

(vi) NEED FOR IMMEDIATE SUPPLY OF RAILWAY WAGONS TO LIFT HIGH GRADE COAL FROM THE EASTERN AND CENTRAL COALFIELDS

SHRI VINODBHAI B. SHETH (Jamnagar): With your permission, Sir, I want to make the following statement under Rule 377.

The reported news that coal on fire as pithead stocks are mounting near mines in Eastern and Central Coalfields due to failure of the Eastern Railway to supply adequate wagons to lift high grade coal. The government should take immediate action before fire breaks out in many areas

threatened. In view of shortage of coal in many parts of the country, this reported fire, if unchecked in time, will upset industrial output in the nation.

(vii) SPORTS GOODS MANUFACTURING UNITS PUNJAB

SHRI IQBAL SINGH DHILLON (Jullundar): Under Rule 377, I want to make a statement on the matter of urgent public importance as under:

"That the Sports goods manufacturing units in Punjab State are facing closure due to non-availability and sharp rise in the price of inputs required".

The industry had already reached the export target of 18 crores last year and is expecting to hit the target of 30 crores this year.

But difficulties had been cropping up during the last three months due to export of leather and leather manufactures. This has caused shortage and encouraged thereby rise leather prices. Now this has caused hindrance to compete the manufacturers of sports goods in the foreign market.

Again Karnatak Government has also imposed 100 per cent cess on cane and this has raised the prices of cane steeply, and above all, the supply of Willo wood has also been stopped by the J. K. Government.

There are 500 units in my Parliamentary Constituency namely, Jullundar, employing about 30,000 workmen. These small scale industrial units are very labour intensive and employing skilled labour who is doing the profession for the last fifty years. This skilled labour migrated from Sialkot (now in Pakistan) earned a very good name in the industry in foreign markets after partition of country and took up this profession in Jullundar City and similarly, they enjoy the old reputation in the foreign and internal markets. As 50 per cent of these small