

[Prof. Samar Guha] believe that the time is not off when the country will positively that Netaji is alive when he reappears there will be a kind of a political earthquake in our country. To-day I pray to all my countrymen that they be in good health and we may get back the greatest revolution of our country, the epic era of freedom, the greatest patrie country, the Netaji of the Indian people in our midst so that he the destiny of our people cherished goal.

I again pray to God along with all of you so that Netaji keeps well and we get him back in our midst as early as possible.

Sir, again, I thank the Minister, the government and all our friends for lending all kinds of support in undoing the mortal sin and crime that was committed against Netaji. To-day I will only again pray to God, give back our Netaji to us.

Jai Hindi, Jayatu Netaji.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you withdrawing your motion?

PROF. SAMAR GUHA: There is no necessity of any further inquiry because I know Netaji is alive.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So, it is the pleasure of the House to permit him to withdraw his motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes.  
The substitute motion was by leave, withdrawn.

17.55 hrs.

**MOTION RE: LARGESCALE DISTRESS SALE OF RAW JUTE BY THE GROWERS**

SHRI CHITTA BASU (Barasat):  
Mr. Chairman, Sir, with your permission, I beg to move:

"That this House do take note of the situation arising out of the large scale distress sale of raw jute at prices lower than the statutory price in West Bengal and other jute growing States and urges upon the Government to take appropriate actions to ensure remunerative price for the growers".

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I think you would agree with me that the Motion this House is discussing now is of vital importance not only for a large number of our people but also for the entire nation.

You know, Sir, that jute which we formerly called 'golden fibre' has played a very important role in the economy of our country and, particularly, in the rural economy of the jute growing States. It is quite well-known that the jute manufacturers account today for nearly 7 per cent of our total foreign exchange earnings. It is also well known that over 2 lakhs of industrial workers are directly employed in the jute industry. About twenty lakhs of our people are directly employed in the jute industry. About 20 lakhs of our people earn their livelihood from the secondary trade to the sectors of the jute industry.

17.57 hrs.

[SHRI N. K. SHELJALKAR in the Chair]

It is also to be mentioned in this connection that more than forty lakhs of our Indian families or thirty lakhs of farmers of six jute growing States are engaged in the production and cultivation of jute.

So far as West Bengal is concerned, it is, by far, the largest jute growing State. For every five persons, one person is getting directly or indirectly his livelihood from the jute production and in the jute industries. The jute industry is very important from the point of view of national importance. The jute industry over the last two decades directly contributed to the foreign exchange, on an average, of Rs. 200 crores in the form of export duty and another Rs. 250 crores or 240 crores by way of excise duty. I think the importance of this subject is now quite clear to the entire House.

Now, the entire policy of the Government of India in regard to the price and purchase of raw jute has, over the decade, rested on two major planks, namely, the fixations of a statutory minimum price for jute in the markets of different parts of the country and the market operation of the Jute Corporation of India to purchase jute whenever the prices tend to fall below the statutory minimum level. Mr. Chairman, I say, with all the emphasis at my command, that the past experiences have shown that the two-plank policy of the Government of India in regard to this has miserably failed—not only failed but it has also caused maximum harm and injury to the nation's economy, particularly, to the jute growers. They are forced to sell their jute at a much lower rate than the statutory price. What are the basic or fundamental reasons for this? There are many, but I will mention only four important reasons for the failure of the government's policy. First, the inadequacy of the support price; second, the late-starting operations of the Jute Corporation of India; third, inadequate number of the JCI purchasing centres; fourth, operations of the JCI are wholly in the secondary market. They are completely absent in the primary market.

18 hrs.

MR. Chairman, Sir, as regards the question of minimum price, I would

like to say that it is a myth to the growers and bonanza for the industrialists, tycoons and the eight monopoly families of the Jute industry. I say this on the basis of the documents. Sir, my charge against the government is that the pricing of raw-jute has all along been done in the interest not of the jute growers but in the interest of the industrialists, jute barons and the eight monopoly families in our country. I have got ample evidence to prove the allegation. This evidence I have been able to obtain after going through various documents, government publications and notings on the government files. Due to paucity of time I will only cite a few. To begin with, let me quote the relevant portion from the recent report of the Public Undertakings Committee of 1977-78:

"It is most distressing to note that during all these years the minimum prices of raw jute fixed by the government as also the prices being offered to the jute cultivators were much too inadequate."

It goes on further to say:

"It is most unfortunate that the very basis of the fixation of the said minimum statutory price, namely, the first-cost of cultivation of raw jute has been deliberately kept low by the various agencies concerned at an unimaginable low figure of Rs. 116."

Now, I revert back to explode the myth of the fixation of minimum support price. From the available documents, I find the cost of production per quintal was Rs. 163 calculated for the year 1974-75. The Agricultural Prices Commission fixed the minimum price at Rs. 125 per quintal for the year 1974-75. The cost of cultivation per quintal of raw jute was found out to be Rs. 163 per quintal but the minimum price fixed by Agricultural Prices Commission was Rs. 125 per quintal. It began with Rs. 116 and then came to Rs. 125 in 1974-75. What

[Shri Chitta Basu]

happened in subsequent years. In 1975-76 the statutory minimum price was Rs. 135 per quintal and in 1976-77 it was Rs. 140 per quintal. In 1977-78 it was Rs. 141 per quintal. The conclusion is quite apparent and irresistible that the jute growers incurred a loss of Rs. 28 per quintal. On an average during the last 3 years they have lost Rs. 25 for each quintal of raw jute. The total loss incurred by the jute growers of our country is difficult to identify. I would only mention one observation made by Shri Ranjit Roy, an eminent journalist of our country regarding this.

"The West Bengal Land Revenue (Floud) Commission reported in 1939 after extensive investigation that, if jute prices were to prevail, one tonne of jute should, in price, be equal to 2.1 tonnes of rice.

The relative prices of rice and jute have been, through the mechanism of the pricing policy of the Centre, changed so radically against jute, that between 1955-56 and 1969-70 (15 years), a total of Rs. 572 crores was drained out of West Bengal on this account. At today's value of the rupee, the amount is equivalent to Rs. 900 crores. If the State's loss is added up from 1947, it amounts to more than Rs. 1,500 crores. The money went out of West Bengal because the deficit in food she had on account of diversion of paddy land to jute had to be made up with food imports from other States. The other jute growing States have also suffered grievously."

Then again I quote him:

"Because the price of jute has been kept low compare to the prices of other agricultural commodities, particularly rice and wheat, the four Major Eastern States and Tripura have lost something like Rs. 3,000 crores during the twenty-five years of independence."

So, you would see the colossal injury which has been caused to the

jute growers of West Bengal, I say, not only West Bengal, but all the six jute growing States of our country.

What is the final recommendation of the Public Undertakings Committee on J.C.I.? I quote:

"The cost of production of jute per acre for the study as a whole which in turn worked out to Rs. 377.34 per quintal (including byproduct) and Rs. 344.34 per quintal (excluding cost of byproduct)...

The representative of West Bengal Government agreed that a minimum of 30 per cent return would be reasonable. On this basis, a fair remunerative price to the growers worked out to Rs. 447.64 per quintal (viz., Rs. 334.34 as cost of production plus Rs. 103.30 as return at 30 per cent."

Sir, I think, the whole House will be surprised to know this. In the current year they have fixed Rs. 150 per quintal. While the cost of production, as they say, is Rs. 344.34 per quintal, the Government have decided or fixed the minimum price of Rs. 150 per quintal.

You can calculate, this, anybody can calculate in this House, that the gap remains to be Rs. 197 per quintal. For every quintal of jute a worker is losing Rs. 200. You can well imagine the distress and economic injury which is caused to 40 lakhs of the jute growers in this country. It is inhuman. The Government should correct this position. Why would there be underpricing of the minimum support price? There are grievous allegations against Government; there are allegations against the Agricultural Prices Commission; there are grievous allegations against the Directorate of Economics and Statistics. Allegations are there against the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Industry. Here, I would only refer to the allegations made by the Committee on Public Undertakings. This Committee (1977-

(a) in its eighth report on the Jute Corporation of India has said:

"There is no doubt that in the entire process of collection, compilation and publication of data relating to cost of cultivation of jute and of fixation and announcement of minimum statutory price for raw jute, all these agencies including Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Agricultural Prices Commission and Ministry of Commerce (now Industry), have acted as the bitterest enemies of the poor jute grower. They completely sided with the jute industrialists and jute tycoons on the pretext of maintaining the so-called 'viability of jute industry' and their anxiety to protect export market of jute manufactures from an imaginary 'deleterious effect' of any increase in the price of raw jute. .... It is most unfortunate to find that the Cabinet Committee on Food and Agriculture, at the material time, was also a party to this. The entire machinery was positively working for the jute industry and the jute traders' lobby, and in this process many palms must have been greased."

Is this not sufficient to warrant a comprehensive enquiry? I demand that on the basis of the report of the Committee on Public Undertakings on JCI, where allegations have been made that many palms were greased—I knew whose palms have been greased—a probe should be instituted to find out whose palms were greased and who have been subjected to immense grievous injuries. I think the House will agree with me.

I shall be failing in my duty if I do not mention, in brief, some of the very vital problems of the jute growers in our country. I would only mention two factors, namely the non-availability of very essential credit facilities and secondly, the introduction of ISI grading system. The time

at my disposal is very short, therefore, I do not propose to explain how the growers are cheated and robbed off by the ISI grading system.

It is quite well known that the jute growers of our country are denied any credit facilities from the banks or other financial institutions of our country. On the other hand the jute barons and tycoons in the industry are basking under the lavish patronage of the banks and the financial institutions. To illustrate my point, I would only mention a few things. The total amount of credit limit available to the jute mills for the purchase of raw materials and for other operations amounted to Rs. 157.22 crores as on 30th June, 1977. The limit extended by the banks for trading in the raw jute amounted to Rs. 52.29 crores, i.e., about 200 crores. This also relates to 1977 figures. Then, the advance granted to 29 sick jute mills amounted to Rs. 67 crores at the end of March, 1977.

You will find that more than Rs. 250 crores have been advanced by the financial institutions to help them, these tycoons, barons, jute industrialists. But what happens to the JCI which is also a public sector undertaking? I have come to know that for the procurement by Government of 15 lakhs of raw jute—this is the target of the Government this year—JCI will require bank credit of Rs. 80 crores while the RBI has sanctioned only Rs. 28 crores. I do not know what will happen with the limited scope of the JCI for want of credit fund from the RBI.

Now I come to the second point about the operation of J. C. I. As I have mentioned earlier, one of the major plans of the Government is to purchase raw jute through the JCI and how the JCI is operating? From the old records, I find that the coverage of raw jute trade by the JCI has been very insignificant. The JCI could only purchase 5 to 11 per cent of the total

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production of the raw jute during the last three years. This year's figure is 50 lakh bales of the total estimated production of 75 lakh bales, that is, only 1/5th of the total production will be left to the private traders and middle men. Uptill now, as far as my information goes, the JCI has been able to purchase jute of only 47000 bales. Now the Government is very eloquent on account of operation of the co-operatives in jute. Let us understand what the cooperatives are doing. As far as my information goes, the number of cooperatives in jute in the whole country was only 103 in 1976-77. Their purchases worked out at best to a meagre 3.55 per cent in 1975-76. Therefore, you can well understand that more than 90 per cent of the total production of jute is left in the hands of the private traders and middle men. They take delivery of the jute from the jute growers under the *dadan* system, they are made to part with their jute at low prices. This is the situation that is prevailing today.

Sir, before concluding, I would request the hon. Minister to try to incorporate some of the suggestions that I am now going to make. Now having regard to the situation as described by me, I would ask the Government to take the following steps, namely, the J. C. I. has to enter the market immediately as the crop has already started arriving in the markets of North Bengal, (2) the minimum remunerative prices must be fixed at Rs. 300 instead of Rs. 297 or something like that as suggested or recommended by the Committee on Public Undertakings in their Report on the JCI, (3) the J.C.I. has to purchase the entire quantity offered for sale at the market price, even if they are more than the minimum prices; and (4) the J. C. I. has to set up an adequate number of centres to purchase raw jute from the growers direct. If, however, this is not possible, only the Food Corporation of India may be involved in this purchase operations as the peak of the jute

procurement season does not clash with the cereal procurement from the farmers. I think these are the four immediate tasks and the Government should try to save the jute growers of our country. In conclusion, coming as I do from West Bengal, coming as I do from that area. I want to warn that there will be Nil Darpan, Titu Mir and Basher Khella if things do not improve. There was a great fight of the peasants in that part of the country. I do not want Nil Darpan enacted in this year of 1978. The Janata government is in power. Mistakes have been committed. Distortions had been made by the erstwhile government, erstwhile regime, hand in glove with the jute monopolists and jute barons and tycoons. I hope the Janata government which is pledged to support the cause of the growers and agriculturists will see the imbalances created and the mistakes committed in respect of the jute growers of the country, if they are sincere to their cause they must correct immediately the imbalances and distortions. If corrections are not there Nil Darpan, Titu Mir and Basher Khella will be there, you will then understand what the growers of our country are and what the villagers of our country are. I want to conclude by sounding this note of warning.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion moved.

"That this House do take note of the situation arising out of the large scale distress sale of raw jute at prices lower than the statutory price in West Bengal and other jute growing States and urges upon the Government to take appropriate action to ensure remunerative price for the growers."

There are some amendments. Are they being moved?

SHRI VINAYAK PRASAD YADAV (Sahasra): I beg to move:

That in the motion, —

add at the end—

"which should be at least one and a half times of the cost of productions because the growers sell their jute in the market before Dussehra." (1)

श्री लखन लाल कपूर ( पूणिया ) :  
समापति महोदय, पटसन उद्योग के सम्बन्ध में हम लोग बहुत दिनों से प्रयत्न कर रहे थे कि इस सदन में कुछ बर्बा हो। पिछले 31 वर्षों में पटसन उद्योग में पटसन उत्पादकों का शोषणतम शोषण हुआ है। मैं समझता हूँ कि इसकी कोई सीमा नहीं है। सोचा यह गया था कि जब सरकार बदलेगी, या जब जनता सरकार बनी तो पटसन उद्योग के शोषित उत्पादकों का, पीड़ित उत्पादकों का उद्धार होगा। खासकर के पूर्वी भारत के 6 प्रान्तों के, जहाँ कि नकदो फसल मुख्यतः जूट की शक्ल में पैदा होती है, शोषितों का उद्धार होगा। बड़ी उम्मीद लेकर चले थे कि जो सरकार बनी है, वह हमारे शोषण के अन्त का कोई मार्ग दर्शन करेगी।

समापति महोदय, आप को पता होना चाहिए कि मैं बिहार के उस हिस्से उत्तर बिहार के पूणिया जिले से आता हूँ जहाँ कि जूट का उत्पादन होता है। पूर्वी भारत के 6 प्रान्तों में जितना जूट का उत्पादन होता है उसका 17 प्रतिशत उत्पादन बिहार करता है। इसलिए हम ने उम्मीद की थी कि सरकार ने जो वायदा किया है वह पूरा होगा। खास कर के यह उम्मीद थी अधिक हो गई थी जब हम ने देखा कि इस विभाग के जो मंत्री श्री जार्ज फर्नांडीस हैं, वे समाजवादी हैं और गरीबों के असीहा भी कहे जाते हैं। लेकिन अफसोस उस वक़्त हुआ जब कि इन के विभाग के पास जूट उद्योग घाने के बाद पटसन उद्योग और जूट उत्पादकों के साथ कुम-आही पुराना खेल शुरू हो गया।

हमारे बित्त बसु साहब ने बताया है कि पी० य० सी० की तीसरी और चौथी रिपोर्ट में जो कास्ट आफ प्रोडक्शन दिखाया गया है जो डायरेक्टोरेट आफ एग्रिकल्चर वेस्ट बंगाल की रिपोर्ट पर आधारित है और जिस में कहा गया है कि 344 रुपये 34 पैसे प्रोडक्शन कास्ट पड़ता है और इस आधार पर कमेटी ने सिफारिश की कि 477.64 रुपये रिम्युनरेटिव प्राइस देकर किसान को बचाया जा सकता है। बहुत दिनों के बाद सरकार को ऐसा करने का मौका मिला था। और उसका चाहिये था कि पालियानेंट की फाइनेंसियल कमेटी की रिपोर्ट की पूरे तौर पर छानबीन करने के बाद वह इसकी प्राइस 447.64 निर्धारित करती। कमेटी ने अपने कंसिडर्ड प्रोपिनियन इस के सम्बन्ध में दी लेकिन उसके ठीक एक महीने के बाद एग्रिकल्चर प्राइसिज कमीशन की ओर से मिनिमम प्राइस की घोषणा होती है 150 रु० प्रति क्विंटल जबकि गत वर्ष 141 रुपये थी। सिर्फ ही रुपया ही कीमत को बढ़ाया गया। इसे देख कर कलेशा मुंह को धाने लगता है। इससे पता चलता है कि जो आज का उद्योग विभाग है जो इसके अफसर हैं, जो जूट कमिश्नर हैं, जो एग्रिकल्चरल प्राइसिज कमीशन हैं, जो आई० एस० आई० है, इंडियन स्टैंडर्ड इन्स्टीट्यूशन है ये किस तरह से काम करते हैं। आई० एस० आई० जूट के प्रेड्युक्शन करता है टी० डी० 1 टू 8 और इन्श्यु 1 टू 8—और ऐसा कर के भोले भाले किसान को भूलभुलैया में डाला जाता है। बेचारे किसान को पता ही नहीं चलता है कि कौन किसम की वह जूट है। जो मिडलमैन होता है, करिया होता है वह उसको फिर दहाड़े सूटता है, डकैतों की तरह उस की जूट करता है। सरकार द्वारा भी

### [श्री लखन लाल कपूर]

माइस फिक्ल की जाती है उस से भी उस को पंद्रह से पच्चीस वर्षों की निवृत्त कम दी जाती है ।

आप हमारे साथ बिहार चलें । पटना से आने आप जाएंगे तो सारा इलाका आपको शोषण का प्रतीक है, ऐसा देखने को मिलेगा । आठ परिवार जो भारत में जूट के टैक्यूज हैं, सिक्किमिया, बिड़ला, जालीन, गोयनका, आदि ये पूरे इस्टन इंडिया को पिछले तीस साल से लूटते आ रहे हैं, इन किसानों के घरों में डकैतियां डालते आ रहे हैं, खुले आम लूट करते आ रहे हैं । इसका परिणाम है पूर्वी भारत बिहार, असम, बंगाल, त्रिपुरा, उड़ीसा और आंध्र का वह हिस्सा जहां जूट पैदा होता है बहुत गरीब है । इन इलाकों के लोगों को आप देखेंगे उनकी बसा को देखेंगे तो आपका कलेजा मुंह की आगे लगेगा । पटना से चलने के बाद कोसी नदी आती है । कोसी नदी के इस पार ईंटों के पक्के मकान दीखते हैं, यहां के किसानों का रंग डंग और किस्म का आपको देखने को मिलेगा लेकिन ज्यों ही आप कुर सैसा पुल को पार करेंगे और पूर्णिया जिले में प्रवेश करेंगे तो वहां से आगे आपको मुश्किल से किसी गांव में दो चार मकान ईंटों के दिखाई पड़ेंगे, नहीं तो झोंपड़ी ही झोंपड़ी आपको मिलेगी और झोंपड़ी भी ऐसे जिन में रहना सुभर भी शायद पसन्द नहीं कर सकते हैं । पूरा पूर्णिया, सहरसा, कटिहार और बंगाल, असम, उड़ीसा, त्रिपुरा आदि में झोंपड़ियां ही झोंपड़ियां दिखाई देंगी और यह शोषण का प्रतीक है । वहां आप को पक्के मकान नहीं मिलेंगे, जो मंजिले मकान नहीं मिलेंगे । अगर एक प्राइव काई मकान दिखाई भी देता है, तो किसी कुजक या चमीयार कब होगा, जो शोषण का प्रतीक है । यह इस्टन इंडिया का मूल है । इस आर

भारत सरकार ने जे० प्रि० आई० के माध्यम से निम्नलिखित कदम निर्धारित किया है :

(i) Price support operations, where necessary, (ii) commercial operations, (iii) supply of jute to the taken-over mills, (iv) expansion of its coverage of primary markets with the help of the cooperatives and (v) operation of a scheme of buffer stock of raw jute to bring about stability in the supply and prices of raw jute. The Government expects that the above measures would enable the JCI to purchase during 1978-79 season about 15 lakh bales of raw jute, 20 per cent of which be from the growers directly.

भारत सरकार ने इस साल केवल टोटल जूट का 20 परसेंट खरीदने का प्रस्ताव किया है जो बकर स्टॉक का काम करेगा । लेकिन जे० सी० आई० का निम्नलिखित उद्देश्य होते हुए भी वह क्या कर रहा है :

(a) ensuring fair prices to the jute growers and

(b) stabilising raw jute prices by eliminating middlemen and speculators.

लेकिन पिछले 6 सालों में जो हुआ है जे० सी० आई० के माध्यम से वह एक अष्टाचार का नमूना है कि कभी भी जूट मॉबर्स से डायरेक्ट परचेज नहीं हुआ । मिडिल मैन से परचेज करते रहे हैं और निम्नम माइस से भी नीचे खरीदने की कोशिश की है जिसका नतीजा यह हुआ है कि किसानों को वह वैसे भी नहीं मिले हैं और मिलनालों ने मिडिल मैनों के माध्यम से किसानों को लूटा है, और जे० सी० आई० के माध्यम से मिल मालिकों को क्रायवा हुआ है, उनके एजेण्ट के रूप में जे० सी० आई० ने काम किया है और शोषण के हिसाब की रकबा का काम जे० सी० आई० ने नहीं किया । कने कने कने

हाउसेज के एक्सेट के रूप में जे० सी० भाई० के जूम किया है। जे० सी० भाई० जब बना था तो तय हुआ था कि जूट का कौन्सिल-बैसन करेगे, पूरा जूट खरीदा जायेगा जे० सी० भाई० के माध्यम से ताकि प्रोविस को प्रोफिट मिले। लेकिन क्या हुआ? वह तो नहीं हुआ, उल्टे ऐसी मिलें जिनको बैंक भी खपया नहीं देता था उनके लिए बैंक टू बैंक भ्रंजमेंट किया गया और 22 करोड़ रु० का उधार माल मिलों को दिया गया। किसानों को लूट कर बैंक से पैसा निकाल कर पब्लिक ऐक्सचेंजर से उन पूंजीपतियों को लाभ पहुंचाया गया जो किसानों का सदा शोषण करते रहे हैं और आज भी जे० सी० भाई० का 15 करोड़ रु० लूट मित्र मासिकों के यहाँ बाकी है। जब हम कहते हैं कि प्राप प्रोविस के लिए क्या इंतजाम करते हो? तो जवाब मिलता है कुछ नहीं। हम कहते हैं कि प्रोविस को कुछ आसान दर पर कर्जा दीजिए, वह नहीं। स्टैंडिंग क्रॉप पर कुछ बैंक कर्जा है। वह भी नहीं। लेकिन पूंजीपतियों को देने के लिए बहुत पैसे हैं, जब कि 15 करोड़ रु० उन पर बाकी है। उधार तो छोटे प्रोविस को देंगे नहीं, इधर यह बेचारे दादन पर रिपेड करते हैं जो 200 परसेंट मुनाफा कमाते हैं। मिडिलमैन किसानों को कुछ खपया उधार दे देते हैं क्योंकि किसानों को बैंक से उधार मिलता नहीं है, और जब जूट लैयार हो जाती है तो खरी जूट उनकी कटवाली जाती है जिसमें विचोसिये को 150, 200 परसेंट मुनाफा होता है। तो प्राप कैसे उम्मीद कर सकते हैं कि वहाँ के लोगों की प्राथिक हालत सुधर सकती है, गरीबी दूर हो सकती है। गरीबी का सबसे बड़ा नमूना खरीलिय है कि वह लोग जूट पैदा करते हैं और खरके दिवों को काई रक्षा नहीं करवा। प्राप पूंजीपतियों को लोन देते हैं।

preshipment and post shipment export credit and soft loan for modernisation. The credit limits extended by commercial banks to jute mills covered by the credit authorisation scheme, i.e. mills enjoining aggregate limits of Ru. 2 crores or more from the entire banking system amounted to Rs. 157.22 crores at the end of June, 1977.

प्रभात प्रोशपमेंट भी देते हैं जो ऐक्सपोर्ट करते हैं, पोस्ट ऐक्सपोर्ट शिपमेंट भी देते हैं और सीपट लोन भी देते हैं, और मार्केटिंग के लिए भी देते हैं जिसका नतीजा यह है कि पिछले जून तक 157 करोड़ 22 लाख रु० उनको दिया गया है।

मैं सर्वेक्षण देना चाहता हूँ कि अगर पब्लिक बैंडर टैकिंग का रिकमिंडेशन 447 रुपये 64 पैसे है, तो प्राप मत दीजिए, लेकिन कम-से-कम 300 रुपये तो दीजिए उन्हें जीने के लिए। अभी हाल में मैं पूणिया गया था लास्ट बोक प्राफ जून में तब एक मन पट्टे का दाम 95 और 97 रुपये था, फ्रस्ट बोक प्राफ जुलाई में वह 85 रुपये हो गया और अभी 1 महीना गुजर रहा है, प्राज 28 तरीख है, प्राज मेस्ता जूट का दाम 60, 55 रुपये मन है और ह्वाइट जूट 40, 45 रुपये हो गया है। 100 परसेंट प्राइस नीचे गिरे हैं। यह जूट क्यों होती है? सरकारी मुलाजिम, जूट कमिश्नर, एग््री-कल्चरल प्राइसेज कमिश्नर, इन सब की कांस्पेसी है, तमाम लोगों का गठजोड़ है जो कि मिलकर करते हैं। जब जूट बाजार में आने लगता है, जुलाई, अगस्त और सितम्बर के महीने में कुछ लोगों से मिलकर मिल में स्ट्राइक कराते हैं। पावर फैक्ट्री के नाम पर मिल बन्द कर देते हैं और बहामा यह होता है कि जूट कम्प्लेयर नहीं है। क्या होगा है कि ब्रिस्टेस प्राइस पर छोटे किसानों को अपना मास बेचना पड़ता है उनको अपने बच्चों को खाया जिलाना होता है, कपड़ा लेना होता है। खजुरी के



[श्री लखन लाल कपूर]

100 रुपये की बजाये 30, 40 और 50 रुपये पर भाव बेचना पड़ता है। इस तरह से लूट का बाजार चलता है। मैं सरकार से उम्मीद करता हूँ कि वह इन लुटेरों के खानी पजे को तोड़ने की व्यवस्था करेगी। क्रांतिकारी मंत्री हैं। गरीबों के मसीहा हैं। समाजवाद का नारा देने वाले हैं। मैं आपसे कहना चाहता हूँ कि आप क्या कर रहे हैं। आप गरीबों को नहीं बचायेंगे तो फिर कौन बचायेगा ?

पहली बात मैं आपको कहना चाहता हूँ कि ₹० ली० आई० को ठीक भागे-नाइव किया जाये, इसका एक अलग बोर्ड बनाया जाये। यहाँ भी मंत्रिमण्डल में विमोच कर एक सैल बनाया जाये जूट प्रोसेस के लिए, जैसे कि चीनी उद्योग में अन्य उद्योगों के लिए आप संरक्षण देते हैं, उसी तरह जूट उद्योग के लिए भी संरक्षण देना चाहिए। इनके इलाके में जाकर देखिए रोड नहीं है, मीलों-मील कच्चे पर जट रखकर उनको बरसात में कीचड़ में चलना पड़ता है। रोड दिखाई नहीं पड़ता है। क्या यह कोई इम्प्रूवमेंट का तरीका है ? इन जूट प्रोसेस की मदद करने के लिए मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि सरकार को तुरन्त ध्यान देना चाहिए।

पिछले दिसम्बर, महीने में 300 रुपये पर क्विंटल जूट मार्केट में रहा था तो जूट कमिश्नर ने मक्सिमम प्राइस फिक्स किया 225 रुपये क्योंकि जब हैसियन जूट 450 रुपये के भाव पर बिक रहा था। जब बाजार में 300 रुपये पर क्विंटल जूट खरीद रहे थे तो आपने उसका सीलिंग कर दिया 225 रुपये। लेकिन हैसियन का दाम नहीं घटा, वह 450 रुपये के भाव पर बिकता रहा। यह किस को फायदेमंद है ?

इसलिए मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि जब मक्सिमम प्राइस प्रोसेस को मिन्नने लगता है तो आप पूजापति को संरक्षण देते हैं लेकिन जब गरीब का प्राइस नीचे गिरने लगता है, तो उसको कोई संरक्षण नहीं देते हैं। यह बात नहीं होनी चाहिए। मेरा सुझाव है कि —

Maximum prices should be removed with immediate effect.

Minimum prices should be raised keeping the recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee on Public Undertakings and should also be fixed for Calcutta.

JCI should be free to make purchases with a view to ensuring not less than Rs. 200 per quintal at the growers' level.

Canalisation of all mill purchases through the JCI should be introduced with effect from 1st December, 1978, by which time bulk of the growers would have marketed their jute. The JCI should fix reasonable prices for jute in the hands of the trade taking into account their carrying costs and normal profits.

The above measures would help the growers to get reasonable prices and also prevent speculative profiteering by the trade in the lean season. It would also save the mills from the price squeeze that they were subjected to during the last two years.

SHRI SAUGATA ROY (Barrack-pore): Sir, I have been listening with rapt attention to Chitta Basu and the other friend from the ruling benches who spoke. I shall not make an emotional speech though I am in a position to do so because the constituency I represent has 22 of the 62 jute mills in West Bengal and also it contains a rural part which is one of the producers of jute in this country.

Sir, the problems of lamentable jute growers have become almost a joke. Year after year people raise political slogans about them, the Government makes fiery speeches, but ultimately nothing is done. But what is

the situation, What happens actually? It is a vicious circle—how it happens. Year before last there was a large production of jute. Prices fell. So last year many of the jute cultivators switched on to paddy. There was not much production of jute. The mills raised the question of raw jute shortage. They threatened closure. Prices went up slightly. This year more farmers have taken to jute cultivation. More area has come under jute cultivation. Now, the buyers, the jute barons and the middlemen have conspired so that the prices go down. It is a vicious circle. When the prices go up, the production is less and when the prices go down, the production is more and all the time the jute grower is at the receiving end. The tales of woe of the jute grower had better not be told. They have been repeated time and again, thousands of times. All I want to say is that I do not think that this Government or any government under the present structure can do by make-shift arrangements which they are making to solve the problems of jute growers. To my mind there are only two ways in which the problems of the jute growers can be solved. First is the takeover of purchase of jute or trade in raw jute and second is the takeover of all jute mills and takeover of the export trade in jute. Which government in this country under the present structure has the courage to do that? So, it is talking in vain. There is also another way and I know that one day the farmer of Bengal started producing jute in this country after the jute producing areas went to East Bengal. But one day the farmers of West Bengal will stop producing jute altogether and shift to paddy. You will see from where the foreign exchange to India comes from. And this is all going to happen.

Sir, I come to a very practical position without going into what should be the actual remunerative price because under the present structure this Government is helpless as all other governments are helpless. In the previous Government people said that

nobody was there from West Bengal, so jute growers did not get a fair deal. We had a Commerce Minister from Bengal for 5 years. But the condition of the jute growers and the jute workers in the factories deteriorated.

**SHRI CHITTA BASU:** He was a caucus Minister.

**SHRI SAUGATA ROY:** He was a caucus Minister or whatever you call him. Now, there is a fiery trade union leader and son-in-law of Bengal, who is the Industry Minister and who has got jute under him and here is a daughter of Bengal though not from a jute growing area, but the daughter of Bengal all the same. What has happened to jute growers this time? Let me put it in substance that the talk of the Industry Minister is all fire and brimstone with no substance. I am making a charge on Mr. George Fernandes who is not here and who should have been here. I am making this because I want to point out how useless his statements are, how impotent his Ministry is and how incompetent he has proved in providing minimum price to jute growers.

Last year the best work that has been ever done in regard to the problem of jute growers was done by a Committee of this Parliament called the Committee on Public Undertakings.

In all, the Committee on Public Undertakings submitted five reports on Jute—the Third Report on the Exploitation of the Jute Growers, Eighth Report of Government's Unfair Pricing Policy for Raw Jute, Twelfth Report on Back to Back Arrangement on the Sale of Jute to Jute Mills, Thirteenth Report on Procurement and Marketing of Jute by the JCI and the Fourteenth Report on organisational matters. This is one of the best works done by any Committee on jute. The Government have these reports in front of their eyes.

The Committee has suggested some very concrete steps to be taken; nothing revolutionary—no taking over of

[Shri Saugata Roy]

the raw jute trade and no nationalisation of the jute mills—we know you are incapable of it, it is something which is capable of implementation. What is it that is suggested by this Committee of Parliament? It is saying that the JCI is entering the market late in the season and does not give any publicity to its procurement programmes, even though the JCI was set up to ensure remunerative prices to growers. It further says that the JCI's command over raw jute trade is insignificant and it wholly operates in the secondary market and has failed to reach the primary market. Then it says that the price policy of the Government of India in regard to raw jute is patently tilted to help the jute mill owners at the cost of the jute growers. Then it says that jute traders and jute industry continue to manipulate price of jute to their advantage, due to non-availability of very essential credit facilities, the jute growers continue to remain in the clutches of the merciless traders and moneylenders; both the private traders and JCI indulge in various malpractices such as down-grading of jute at the time of purchase, underweighting, deduction on account of moisture etc. thereby depriving the growers even of the support price fixed by Government, thus becoming their worst exploiters. Now before the season started, the Government had these Reports before them and the Minister had these Reports before him.

In the end of June there was a report that the Managing Director of the JCI, Shri Gautamukhil had resigned in frustration, he had submitted his report in frustration, because year after year the Government of India were not giving facilities for commercial transactions to the Jute Corporation, it was doing only price support operations but it wants to do commercial transactions, because it was under fire from the Committee on Public Undertakings.

When I raised that question, the Minister denied it by saying "nothing of the kind can happen; we are, in fact, going in for commercial transactions." In the budget session of Parliament a news item came in various financial papers that Government will wind up the JCI. It was a big lead story in all the economic papers. I raised the matter under rule 377 and in reply to that the Minister boldly stated "there is no question of winding up the JCI; in fact, we are going in a big way for commercial transactions." Within a short time a report appeared in the newspapers that the Managing Director of JCI resigned in frustration over Government's refusal to allow commercial transactions.

What is happening this year? I was in my constituency only yesterday. Shri Chitta Basu was speaking about a remunerative price of Rs. 300 for the jute growers. Government have fixed Rs. 150. I say: give them Rs. 150, but that should be the minimum. For how much is jute selling now? Yesterday at Barojaguli, which is one of the biggest jute markets in Bengal, only 30 miles from Calcutta, jute is selling at Rs. 135 per quintal.

This is the beginning of the season. The produce has just started arriving at the market. The JCI centres are conveniently located at the markets, big markets, not even at the secondary markets, what to speak of the primary markets. The poor jute grower has to go 20 miles to the big market, where the babu of the JCI sits. Often he will say "your jute is not good, there is too much moisture, this is not first quality jute, this is poor quality jute". In order to avoid all this harassment, instead of waiting for two or three days in the market, he says: let me go to the Faria, who will take delivery of my jute straightway. Has the Minister of Industries taken the trouble of visiting even one single jute purchasing centre? Last year there were 43 purchasing centres in West Bengal. The Minister made revolu-

tionary statements. I thought a revolution was going to come. This year, it has come to 47, according to a Government report, just an increase of four in a period of one year after a number of revolutionary statements. How are we to plan to solve this problem? I say that short of taking over the raw jute trade, the only other way is to allow the Jute Corporation to start the commercial purchase and the second way is to increase the number of purchasing centres from 100 or 110 that we have at present to at least 250. 400 jute purchasing centres would be necessary to cover the whole area. But let us have at least 250. We have got only 110. So, let us not talk about what has been done. There is still time in this season, upto October, jute will be arriving in the market, if the Government can still take care to see, that the Jute Corporation goes and buys jute at the primary markets, even at this late stage, if the Reserve Bank credit facility is available to the Jute Corporation, something can be done. But otherwise, the jute growers will be hit this year also. There is no way to save them. It is too late. The policy was to be taken in June or so when the Minister must have been busy in mediation. Now the jute has started arriving and it will be too late. But at least for the next year, after going through the report of the Committee on Public Undertakings, let us set up at least 100 more purchasing centres and at least try to give the support price to the jute growers. I can tell you that next year again there will be a glut in the Jute Corporation and again the jute mills will threaten to close and again the Minister will rush to Calcutta to issue revolutionary statements. We are tired of this vicious cycle every year, year after year. We want some action and not just words, words and words.

Lastly, let alone the private jute mills, everybody knows that the Birlas, Goenkas and Bangurs, all these people, send their farias into the primary market and buy the distress sale of jute at low price. What are the Government taken over mills doing? I

have a clear case of National Jute Mill Company, the biggest jute mill company, located in Samar Babu's Constituency. There is a Chairman by name, Mr. I. L. Tripathi. The company is employing 12,000 workers. What is happening there? The Chairman is taking a token remuneration of one rupee. But he has been running a consultancy farm in the name of Tripathi and Parekh Private Ltd. He has also been exporting the Jute goods and garments in the name of Ashoka and Co. Their consultancy firm has also taken an assignment as consultant of the Anglo-India Jute Mill, which is owned by R. P. Goenka of Emergency fame, which has been given a soft loan of several lakhs by IFCI for modernisation and renovation. You now understand the sample.

In a Government owned mill, a man is there who is helping the private sector and reports have come about National Jute Mills Company, regarding the raw jute purchases by the company stating that there have been the most severe irregularities. Why can't there be an arrangement between the Government taken over mills and the Jute Corporation so that the Jute Corporation do not have to enter into back-to-back arrangement, go and beg of the jute mills to take jute from them saying that their jute will be rotting in the godowns. That has not been done by the Minister. I am not optimistic. For the last five years, I have been seeing what the situation has been. We have had much worse in the Congress Government. From the present Government, we want some action. I am not hopeful that a lot will be done. But I want to see a little so that some relief is given to the poor growers.

I must also say that the State Government has a responsibility in this regard, because the cooperatives in Bengal have never been very strong. The State Government should come forward and give some help to the cooperatives. Again the question of finance will come. The Reserve Bank will have to come forward with cre-

[Shri Saugata Roy]

dit. Is the Reserve Bank in a position or in a mood to give credit to the cooperatives of Bengal, who can help the jute growers in some way. That is why, I have proposed a number of amendments to Mr. Chitta Basu's motion saying that at least let the Jute Corporation open Direct Purchasing Centres, buy some more jute from the jute growers, the primary jute markets and the revolutionary Minister instead of giving statements let him show some action, and give some relief to the jute growers. That is all. I do not expect a revolution in the short span of time.

श्री विनायक प्रसाद साहब (सहरसा) : सभापति महोदय, जूट की जो समस्या है और जूट के उत्पादक लोगों की जो हालत है, उस के सम्बन्ध में बहुत साहब और कपूर साहब ने आप के जरिए से ब्यारेवार निवेदन किया है। मैं भी उस इलाके से आता हूँ जहाँ किसान की एक-मात्र नकदी फसल जूट है और जूट का उत्पादन करने वालों की स्थिति यह है—जैसा कि आप ने कपूर साहब से सुना—जो जूट के मँगनेट्स हैं, मिलमालिक हैं, उनको तो कई तरह का ऋण नेशनलाइज्ड बैंकों से दिया जाता है, लेकिन जूट के उत्पादक की यह हालत है कि तीन या चार बीघे वाला किसान जब अपने यहाँ जूट लगाता है, उस पर लागत इतनी ज्यादा आती है कि उस का सारा जूट, जो अभी पीछे की शक्ल में ही होता है, उसको बहुत सस्ते दामों पर बेचना पड़ जाता है। चूँकि उसको भाजकोई भी ऋण देने वाला नहीं है, इसलिए उसको 15 से 20 रुपये प्रति मन में ही सेठ लोगों को बेच देना पड़ता है और उन से कर्बा ले कर वह काम को चलाता है। जो किसान थोड़ा सुखी है और जो इस प्रकार नहीं बेचते हैं, वे जब अपना जूट मार्केट में लते हैं—तो आपने सुना होगा—भाज से एक या दो महाना पहले बाजार में जूट का भाव 70 से 80 रुपया मन था, लेकिन जैसे

ही बाजार में बहुत थोड़ा जूट का दाम 80 या 90 रुपये मन से गिर कर 40-45 या 50 रुपये मन हो गया। जूट वाले इलाके के बाजार में भाज किसान का इस तरह से शोषण हो रहा है।

मैं आपको बतलाता हूँ—1946-47 में हमारे यहाँ जूट का दाम 100 रुपया मन था और उस वक़्त जो जूट का बोरा मिलता था, वह केवल चार भाने का था यानी हम को चार भाने से जूट का बीग मिलता था। भाज जब कि जूट का दाम 100 रुपये मन से घट कर 40 या 50 रुपये मन हो गया है, तो बोरे का दाम बढ़ कर 5 रुपया प्रति बोरा और जो बड़ा बोरा है, उस का दाम 8 रुपया प्रति बोरा हो गया है। 100 रुपये मन में जब किसान का जूट लिया जाता था, उस वक़्त किसान को बोरा मिलता था—4 भाने में और भाज जब उस का दाम घट कर 50 रुपया हो गया तो बोरे का दाम 6 रुपया, 7 रुपया और 8 रुपया हो गया है। इतनी बड़ी लूट भाज जो जूट के मँगनेट्स हैं, वे कर रहे हैं। जब हमारी जनता सरकार बनी, तो हम लोग यह समझते थे कि कांग्रेस राज्य में 30 सालों तक जो लूट हुई, वह अब खत्म हो जायगी, लेकिन मुझे दुख है कि जनता सरकार के आने के बाद भी इस में कोई परिवर्तन नहीं हुआ। आप चाहे उख का दाम ले लीजिये, चाहे जूट का दाम ले लीजिये, भाज किसान जो भी पैदा करता है—तमाम फसलों में बड़ी लूट चल रही है, जो 30 साल पहले होती थी।

अभी आप ने सुना—बसु साहब ने कहा—हमारी पब्लिक अण्डरटेकिंग कमेटी जूट की स्टडी करने गई थी। उस ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में कहा है कि किसान को एक किबटल जूट पैदा करने में 165 रुपया खर्च आता है, उस के मुकाबले में सरकार ने सपोर्ट प्राइस क्या निश्चित की है—केवल 150 रुपये प्रति किबटल। कोई जस्टीफिकेशन नहीं है। एक

व्यापारी, एक गृहीतमत्त लूट करे—ती यह बात समझ में आ सकती है, लेकिन जब सरकार ही इस तरह से काम तय करे, इस तरह से लूटना चाहे—तो यह बात समझ में नहीं आती है, इसका कोई भी जस्टीफिकेशन नहीं है। हम चाहते हैं कि पिछले तीस सालों से जो लूट चल रही है, वह अब बन्द होनी चाहिये, लेकिन यह कैसे बन्द होगी? जब तक सरकार कोई प्राइस पालिसी, काम नीति, तय नहीं करेगी, तब तक यह लूट बन्द नहीं हो सकती है। इसी लिये हम लोगों ने शुरू में कहा था और पिछले 15-20 साल से कहते आ रहे हैं—कि सरकार को कोई न कोई दाम नीति तय करनी चाहिये, तभी यह लूट बन्द हो सकती है। हम यह समझते हैं—यदि 165 रुपये प्रति बिबटल जूट का उत्पादन खर्चा होता है तो कम से कम 225 रुपये प्रति बिबटल किसान को मिनिमम मिलना चाहिये, पब्लिक प्रोचरटेक्टिंग कमेटी ने जो 350 रुपये प्रति बिबटल की बात कही है, उस को भी छोड़ दीजिए। हम समझते हैं कि किसी भी सरकार को उत्पादन खर्च का कम से कम डेढ़ गुना दाम निश्चित करना चाहिए तभी किसान को राहत हो सकती है। लेकिन लगता है कि सरकार की प्राइस की कोई पालिसी ही नहीं है। जब 150 रुपए जूट का दाम था उस समय बैग का दाम चार आने प्रति बैग था। अभी जब 50 रुपए कच्चे जूट का दाम हो गया है तो बैग का दाम हो गया है, 6 रुपए। यह जबर्दस्त लूट नहीं तो क्या है? यह तो विन-वहाड़े कागुनी डकैती है किसानों के घर में।

19 hrs.

अभी आपने सुना है कि हमारे यहाँ अभी जूट का समय है। हमारे यहाँ जूट की खेती काफी होती है। जब से जूट मार्केट में आया है तो 40 रुपए, 45 रुपए, 50 रुपए पर लोग जूट बेच रहे हैं। सरकार की तरफ से एजान्ट हुआ कि जूट कारपोरेशन सभी जगह पर अपने सेंटर बोलिगी और सपोर्टिंग प्राइस पर किसानों से जूट खरीवेगी। हमारे

यहाँ जूट कारपोरेशन का सपोर्टिंग प्राइस पर खरीदने वाला कोई केन्द्र नहीं है। साहू ही ऐसा कि कूपर साहब ने कहा कि जूट कारपोरेशन का केन्द्र किसान से सीधे जूट नहीं खरीदता है। वह भी दलालों के द्वारा किसानों से जूट खरीदता है। इस तरह से किसानों की भयंकर लूट चल रही है।

आपने सुन लिया है कि किसानों की क्या हालत है। आप उनके किसी भी गांव में चले जाइये, आपको कोई भी पक्का मकान नहीं मिलेगा। आप गांव की बात तो छोड़ दीजिए। हम लोग एस्टीमेट कमेटी में एक स्टेट कपिटल प्रपोजिटलियां गये थे। उस स्टेट कपिटल में हमने कोई भी पक्का मकान नहीं देखा। बी-चार पक्के मकान होंगे। हमारे देश में यह स्थिति है। जट प्रोडस की भी यही हालत है। जूट सेविंग एरिया के स्टेट कपिटल में भी पक्के मकान नहीं बन पाये हैं।

इसलिए हम मंत्री महोदय से निवेदन करना चाहते हैं कि आप कम से कम इतना तो कर दीजिए कि एक प्राइस पालिसी तय कर दीजिए कि किसी भी बीज का दाम, जो उसका उत्पादन खर्च पड़ता है, उसका कम से कम डेढ़ गुना उसके उत्पादकों दिया जाना चाहिए। किसानों को उनकी पचावार के उत्पादन पर खर्च का कम से कम डेढ़ गुना से कम दाम नहीं मिलना चाहिए। यही दाम नीति उस बीज की भी होनी चाहिए जो कारखाने में पदा होती है। तभी यह लूट बन्द हो सकती है। आज जो जूट की भयंकर लूट हो रही है, वह भी तभी बन्द हो सकती है।

जैसा कि कूपर साहब ने कहा है आप से हम भी कहते हैं कि आप जूट कारपोरेशन के जरिए जो भी जूट खरीदना चाहते हैं, उसमें जितना भी जूट आप खरीदें, वह आप सीधे किसान से खरीदें, किसी प्राइवेट प्राइवेट की मारफत उसे आप न खरीदें, आप अपने सभी केन्द्रों पर यह कर दीजिए कि

[श्री विनायक प्रसाद याचक]

किसान जितना भी जूट लावे, यह कारपोरेशन ही खरीदे, कोई प्राइवेट लोग उसके बीच में न आवे। इस तरह से किसान की लूट बन्द हो सकती है।

हमने यह भी कहा कि प्राप प्राइस पालिसी तय कीजिए और यह भी तय कीजिए कि जो प्राइस आपने निश्चित की है उस से कम कीमत पर किसी भी हालत में किसान की पैदावार नहीं बिकने दी जाएगी। प्राप ज्यादा प्राइस निश्चित न करें कम से कम डेढ़गुना उत्पादन खर्च को प्राइस तो तय कर लीजिए। किसानों को भी बाजार से खरीदारी करनी पड़ती है। वे जो जीजे बाजार से खरीदते हैं उनका दाम माकाश में चला जा रहा है। इस तरह से किसान का एक्सप्लोइटेशन होता है। मैं सरकार से कहना चाहता हूँ कि जूट के मामले में जो भयंकर लूट हो रही है, उसको सरकार बन्द करे और जो जूट कारपोरेशन के द्वारा खरीद है वह हर जगह उसके द्वारा ही होनी चाहिए। मिनिमम प्राइस सरकार ने जो निश्चित की है उसको 165 रुपए प्रति क्विंटल से बढ़ा कर, जो उसका उत्पादन का खर्च है कम से कम दो सौ रुपए प्रति क्विंटल कर दी जानी चाहिए। इस दाम का सरकार को एलान कर देना चाहिए ताकि जूट ब्रोकरों की हालत सुधरे। इतना कह कर मैं आपको धन्यवाद देता हूँ।

**SHRI K. A. RAJAN (Trichur):** On this particular motion much has been said on the various aspects of the industry, about the miserable plight of the jute-growers, the pitiable plight of the workers and persons engaged in the industry and the overall position of the industry. In this particular industry, problems arise year after year, sentiments are expressed year after year, problems are posed year after year and remedies suggested year after year. My humble opinion is that in the light of the opinions or suggestions or remedies suggested especially by a large number of grow-

ers as well as farmers connected with it and a large number of industrial workers connected it—recently, two conferences were held in Bengal, one sponsored by the ruling party and its allied organisation and the other by the CPI and its allied organizations and there the whole problem was discussed by the jute-growers as well as the workers connected with the industry—their firm opinion is that a hotch-potch solution for the industry does not solve the problem. There is a case for nationalisation, nationalisation from the purchase point, at the manufacturing stage as well as the export trade. This has been expressed not only this year or last year, it has been there from the various interests, the major interests connected with the industry. That is the only solution, that is the only panacea for the evil that this industry is in the midst today.

But, unfortunately, no government has dared to come with such a bold policy because of its own reasons, because of the powerful grip the tycoons or the barons have over the industry as well as the administration. For the last 30 years or so this was the problem. But we hear so much of talks from the Ministers. Even as late as last month our Industries Minister was there. He knows the problem he exposed the industry when coming to brasstacks, no one dares to take it in his own hands.

Regarding this particular resolution, I need not narrate what relevancy the jute industry has to the economy of Bengal. If I am correct one out of five in Bengal is directly or indirectly connected with the jute industry. If I am correct, 80 per cent of the farmers are only having cultivable land of 2 acres and below. Thereby you can see what is the structure of the industry. As Comrade Chitta Basu has stated, 40 lakhs farmers are directly involved in this industry. But what is the attitude of the government? What is the attitude of the commercial banks? What is the atti-

tide and policy regarding credit to the jute industry?

Comrade Chitta Basu has very well exposed the commercial banks' and nationalised banks' credit policy towards this industry, how the exploitation is there of the jute-growers and what a strangle-hold the money-lenders and the wholesale trade have over the industry. Comrade Chitta Basu has stated what is the credit policy of the commercial banks. As on 30th June, 1977 their advances to the jute-growers were of the order of Rs. 155.72 crores. The limit extended for banks for trading in raw jute amounted to Rs. 53.2 crores. The advance granted by banks to 29 sick jute mills amounted to Rs. 67 crores by the end of March, 1977. The banking system is abetting jute barons really. The policy of the nationalised banks is just to help the weaker sections in essence, in effect, but in practice how it falls into the trap of jute industry. This is not a new phenomenon. The eight barons—eight families—really have the grip over the monopoly of the jute trade. This is the position regarding the actual state of affairs.

Regarding the growers, it is reported from reliable quarters that in 1977—according to a communique issued by the Commerce Ministry—hundreds of crores of rupees worth of black money just had run the industry. Hundred crores of black money is circulating in the jute industry alone. How can you then talk of imbalance or talk of balancing the industry. Hundreds of crores of money are put in just to run the industry at the risk of the poor raw jute growers who are holding two acres only in their hands. I am not going to elaborate on this because my hon. friend has already touched that point by his resolution by making an elaborate speech.

I shall only come to one or two points. I would like to be enlightened on them. What is the function of the J.C.I.? What was the performance of the J.C.I.? The J.C.I. I believe was constituted in 1971 or so. Up to the year 1977, what was their performance? What was the motive in

constituting the J.C.I.? Government's communique constituting the J.C.I. if I quote is for the following main objective :

"a centralised agency with its judicious purchasing should be able to ensure for the grower a better price than he is getting today by a process of elimination of the many tiers of intermediaries now operating in the jute market. This will be the long term objective of the corporation which should in course of time save the grower from the clutches of the middlemen. In this endeavour, the corporation will make arrangements to buy jute directly from the jute growers and build up its direct relationship with them." The objective framed by the Government was further supplemented by a Commerce Ministry directive on August 9, 1972...."

I further quote:

"It has been decided that price support operations to ensure against decline in jute prices below the levels of the minimum prices will be solely the responsibility of the Jute Corporation from the current season onwards. The President is accordingly pleased to direct the Corporation under article 139 of the articles of association (of the JCI) to make all necessary arrangements to ensure this objective."

Now, Sir, what was the performance? What is the miserable way in which the JCI is? It was constituted in 1971 with the objective of giving relief and by giving shelter to those small farmers in the jute-industry. I need not narrate the whole thing because it has been clearly narrated by the hon. Mover of this Resolution. He has said how many purchasing centres have been opened and how many have come to the field to purchase them? The whole thing is in a mess. The farmer has to sell it a distress price. After all the J.C.I. gets so much. I charge the J.C.I. that it is a tool in the hands of the tycoons; the J.C.I. is a tool in the hands of the barons. The J.C.I. was constituted with a good intention. It is manipulated in such a way that it



[Shri K. A. Rajan] was detrimental to the interests of the farmers and other people. This is the performance of the J.C.I. I need not narrate about the number of purchasing centres opened in 1967 and then in 1977 and how many are being opened in the year 1978? People's misery can be imagined in the jute growing areas of West Bengal. It is a question of Central Government or the concerned ministry of the Government who wants to coerce West Bengal Government by putting it into the difficulty. It will only be a dream. West Bengal Government will see that the farmers' interests are protected.

Then I come to the second point. That is regarding the price fixation policy. There is a report of the Lok Sabha by the Committee on Public Undertakings, 8th Report. What is the price fixation mechanism and how does it work? I would just like you to consider our raw jute pricing policy and the system. I quote:

"The basic data for the purpose is collected, organised and assembled in the Directorate of Economics and Statistics (Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation) and the figures of cost of production, as analysed by the Directorate, are passed on to the Agricultural Prices Commission for the final fixing prices. For collecting the data, the directorate depends on agricultural universities in respective States. The Public Undertakings Committee found during its investigation that 30 fieldmen collected data for 4.41 lakh acres where jute and mesta is cultivated in West Bengal."

"secondly, the prices are fixed basing on data collected earlier. For example the prices for 1977-78 were based on data collected during 1974-75. According to the PUC, the deficiencies cropped up on cost calculation by the directorate on many counts. For example, instead of interest on the cost of land as part of capital, the directorate took a token rental value of the land; the cost of transportation to primary market

was not included in the data; there was no provision for cost of storing the jute; there was no provision for supervisory cost; there was no provision on account of 'hazards' which have very often to be faced by jute cultivators and finally there was no provision for interest on borrowings by the cultivators from private money lenders."

The State Government has scientifically calculated the cost of jute per quintal as Rs. 344.43 and with all the relevant facts the Public Undertakings Committee has come to the conclusion that it should be nearly Rs 434. Now, even the poor farmers cannot aspire to get such a price but the West Bengal government has clearly stated that the authority for price fixation should be left to the State Government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRI K. A. RAJAN: Sir, lastly I would only say that there should be streamlining of the machinery of Jute Corporation of India. It should be an instrument to save the poor farmers rather than abetting the tycoons and jute barons who are out to sabotage and eliminate the poor farmers. If this step is not taken, I am sure, one thing is going to happen. If you are not going to give remunerative price to the farmer, the farmer will be left with no option but to change the cultivation to some other crop. Then you will have to face the music. What will happen to our export industry? I would only pray that it should not happen in the best interest of our country, industry and Bengal.

Lastly, Mr. Chairman, I still stand by the basic question that unless nationalisation comes through, this particular sector has no future. With these few words I conclude.

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE (Howrah): Sir, the situation is very serious. Only last week I got a telegram from the President of the Bengal Chalkul Mazdoor Union, Shri Niren Ghosh, an ex-M.P. that the price of raw jute has started falling rapidly and it has reached Rs. 150 per quintal.

So, Sir, immediate action is necessary. That is why we have tried to raise this issue on the Floor of the House. Now, Mr. Saugata Roy has also told that in his constituency it has reached Rs. 135 per quintal. Mr. Joarder also said that in North Bengal it is rapidly falling down. In these circumstances, unless the Government takes it up very seriously and immediately try to check fall in prices the peasantry will be completely ruined. There is a big head-line in *Economic Times* dated 27th August: Maximum prices of raw jute go. I quote:

"That from August 28, the Union Government has decided to do away with the maximum prices of raw jute both at the up-country centres and in the Calcutta delivery market."

Some measures they are thinking but actually what is the real position. I further quote from *Economic Times* dated 27th August:

"The Jute Corporation, informs Mr. Gautam Ukil, Managing Director, bought till Thursday a total of 21,000 bales mainly from the markets of North Bengal and Bihar and also from Assam and South Bengal."

Mr. Chitta Basu told us, 47,000. That is not correct. The fact is, only 21,000 bales have been purchased. This is from yesterday's paper.

**SHRI CHITTA BASU:** It is all the more pitiable.

**SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE:** The report says:—

"It is now buying at a daily average of 2500 bales but has the capacity to mop up 10,000 to 11,000 bales per day. The present market arrivals are around 1,25,000 maunds per day. Raw Jute prices in most markets are Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 higher than the statutory minimum...."

but in reality, it has already gone down below this statutory price declared by the Government.

So, the capacity of the JCI is 10,000 to 11,000 bales per day, if their full capacity is utilised, but actually, they are purchasing only 2500 bales per day. Regarding total production, the initial estimate of the Jute Corporation was 75 lakhs bales and of the Directorate of Jute Development, 73 lakh bales. Now the commodity has started coming to the market for sale. Immediately there are the Id and Puja festivals. They are very much forced to sell at any price which they are getting. So they are now selling at a distress price. You can see from these figures that the Government is not at all coming to their help. The machinery which has been set up by the Government to purchase through the JCI and the limited capacity of purchase through the cooperatives cannot help the peasantry from this dire situation and this try from this dire situation and this dire crisis, unless in a very big scale, the Industries Ministry of the Government of India takes up the issue, opening centres at various important markets to purchase from the peasantry directly. The workers' union, the agricultural associations, the Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union and the Kisan Sabha have repeatedly stressed that the cost of cultivation has increased very much. So, immediately, at least the price should be fixed at Rs. 300 per quintal. The gap is so big. Government fixed Rs. 150; the demand is Rs. 300, because the cost of production has increased very much.

But, the Government is not responding to this. Only I see that the maximum price of raw jute was withdrawn by Government for a particular period. But this will not help, namely, withdrawal of this maximum price and not coming to purchase directly from the growers who are forced to sell at distress prices. If that machinery is not set up and adequate amount of fund is not placed at the disposal of the JCI, if the help and cooperation of the various mass organisations and politi-

[Shri Samar Mukherjee]

cal parties are not enlisted to provide the jute-growers with the fair price for their produce, I am afraid, the economic life of the peasantry will be hard-hit, particularly in West Bengal, because the economy of West Bengal is very much linked with jute cultivation as well as the jute industry in general. You have North Bihar, Orissa....

SHRI CHITTA BASU: Assam, Tripura....

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Yes. All the six States. Their economy is very much linked with it. Already 80,000 workers have been removed from jobs, in the name of Badliwala. Originally there were 3-1/2 lakh workers, last year 2-1/2 lakh workers and now only 2 lakhs. Their number is getting reduced. Both the peasantry is being very hard hit and the workers are faced with this type of attack from the jute magnates. The purchasing trade is now mostly in the hands of the big traders and they are directly linked with the mill owners. Here, the *Economic Times* further says:

"The current season has started on a different note with traders forecasting as big a crop as 80 lakh bales. The intention, according to knowledgeable circles, was to depress prices and get permission to export raw jute up to 2 lakh bales."

This is the machination of the big traders. They want to create an impression that there is surplus production, and, therefore, no accommodation of stock is necessary and thus they will force the peasantry to sell the raw jute at a much lower price. This is the conspiracy of the big traders. The *Economic Times* report further says:

"The jute mills have started their purchases, but still not to the normal extent. Financial stringencies have not allowed a good number of units to build their fibre inventories and cover their future positions. As they

have not cleared their earlier dues, the suppliers of raw jute have stopped selling to them on credit and are insisting on cash payment.

This is also another aspect, a big factor and the jute mills are saying that they do not have cash. These are the manoeuvres, which year after year the jute mills have been using. When the peasants come for selling their jute, they are forced by these manoeuvres to sell their jute at a distress price. This blackmailing mechanism has been operating for several years; its ramifications are also widespread, the jute lobby are very powerful and it is very much difficult to change these conditions.

After the Janata Government came into power, no basic change is there. As other hon. Members have said, these ramifications are quite powerful and the Ministers have been taking a casual attitude towards these things. That is the reason, why the peasantry is faced with serious problems today and the jute price is going down; it has already reached Rs. 130/- per quintal. Shri Saugata Roy has just mentioned about the situation in his constituency and Shri Dinesh Joarder will bear me out as far as North Bengal is concerned. Unless this Government takes up seriously to curb these manipulations of the tycoons and big traders, to strengthen the JCI from all aspects and seek full cooperation of the trade unions and organizations of the growers as also various political parties, you cannot bring about a change in the situation. Unless you do this, the economic life of the peasantry is going to be ruined and the entire economy of jute growing areas is sure to be vitally affected.

This question is being repeatedly raised in this House year after year. In this very House, late Shri Lalit Narain Mishra, the then Minister for Foreign Trade, had categorically stated in this House on 24th July, 1978 that within three years, Government will fully undertake the entire pur-

chasing of the raw jute production but what is the position today? Just now as I quoted from the *Economic Times* JCI is purchasing only 2500 bales per day, whereas the daily jute arrival is 1,25,000 maunds per day. Only a few weeks are there and in these few weeks, a big damage would be done to the growers unless the Government comes forward to their rescue in a big way. The permanent solution would, of course, be for the Government of India to take over the entire responsibility for the purchase of raw jute directly from the growers. Along with this, the jute mills and export trade should also be completely nationalised. That demand has been raised in this House year after year; this has been the demand of the various organizations also. The recommendations of the Committee on Public Undertakings have lent support to these demands. These are the permanent solutions. For the present, to prevent further fall in the price of the raw jute and give the peasantry remunerative prices, this Government should come in a very big way to strengthen the purchasing agencies, particularly the Jute Corporation of India and the cooperatives. Sufficient amount should be placed at their disposal. A large number of centres have to be opened without much delay, and purchases should be made directly from the peasantry, eliminating the middle-men. Credit facilities to the cooperatives have also to be given. Without these, this crisis cannot be overcome, and peasants cannot be saved from the manipulations of the traders and the jute mill owners—who have deprived them of a legitimate price.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The time now left is only half-an-hour, and the hon. Minister has also got to speak. And Mr. Chitta Basu will also take some time. There are 3 Speakers. I want that everybody should participate in the discussion. It is upto the Members to limit their speeches to a short duration. Dr. Ramji Singh will now speak and will take only 3 minutes.

**डा० राजजी सिंह (भागलपुर):** सभा-पति महोदय, जूट के विषय में यहाँ पर बत सारी बातें कही गई हैं। व्यापार कमी जो इस बात को जानते होंगे कि 1961 में जो जूट का निर्यात 71 प्रतिशत था वह 1977-78 में घटकर 41 प्रतिशत रह गया। रा जूट के उत्पादन में 60 लाख लोग लगे हुए हैं। जसा कि समर बाबू ने बताया है वे लोग अपने को पूंजीवादी दुश्मक में पा रहे हैं। पब्लिक प्रण्डरटेकिंग कमेटी ने 447 रुपए प्रति क्वींटल की बात कही है और एग्रीकल्चरल प्राइसेस कमीशन ने 141 से बढ़कर बहुत हूपा की तो 150 रुपए क्वींटल की बात कही लेकिन अभी कलकत्ता में डिस्ट्रेस सेल जूट का 125 रुपए क्वींटल पर हो रहा है। सरकार के लिए यह स्थिति बहुत ही दयनीय है। एक जगह कहा गया है।

“Government decision to raise the statutory minimum price of W-5 variety of raw jute by Rs. 9 to Rs. 150 a quintal is likely to disappoint the growers and the mills and the Committee on Public Undertakings of Parliament might feel strongly about the decision.”

तो ऐसा काम करने से क्या लाभ जिसमें जूट उत्पादक भी हतोत्साहित हो रहे हैं और मिल मालिक को भी शिकायत है। लगता है इस बीच में जो मिडिलमैन हैं उन्हीं को सब से ज्यादा प्राफिट होता है। इसलिए समर बाबू ने ठीक कहा है कि जूट के उत्पादकों को तभी ठीक प्राइस मिल सकती है। जबकि उनकी खरीददारी का पूरा जिम्मा सरकार ले ले। अगर सरकार ज्यादा पैसा देकर खरीददारी का पूरा जिम्मा ले और तब जूट इण्डस्ट्री को सब्सिडी दे, उसको भी फायदा पहुंचाये तो उससे क्या लाभ है? इसलिए जब तक व्यापक वृष्टिकोण से जूट इंडस्ट्री पर बिकार नहीं किया जाएगा तब तक काम नहीं चलेगा। प्रत्यथा एक तरह जूट के उत्पादक मरेंगे और दूसरी तरह मिल मालिक हल्ला करते रहेंगे कि उनको मुकसान हो रहा है।

[डा० राज जी सिन्हा]

वह जो जूट कारपोरेशन आफ इंडिया बना था उसके बहुत भारे काम थे लेकिन हम लोग इस बात को जानते हैं कि ठीक समय पर जबकि सीजन होती है उस समय यह खरीदखारी के लिए उतरते नहीं हैं। कहा गया है :

"About 20,000 quintals of raw jute were coming to the market daily this season, but the JCI had not started its operations in the State as yet."

यह "स्टेट्समैन" में कहा गया है। इसीलिए बंगाल सरकार, दूसरे लोगों तथा कर्मचारियों में मिलकर बातें कीं और उन्होंने जूट कारपोरेशन आफ इंडिया पर आरोप लगाए हैं, मैं समझता हूँ हमारे व्यापार मंत्री जी इसके सम्बन्ध में बतायेंगे :

"JCI need not have purchased raw material from the market directly and operated almost like a Mahajan. As a result, the jute market had turned into a gambling market."

समयाभाव के कारण कुछ अधिक कहना मुश्किल होगा लेकिन इतनी बात तो है कि पब्लिक प्रोव्हाइटींग कमेटी ने खास कर प्राइस के विषय में जो कहा है, उसको न भी मानें, लेकिन दूसरी जगह जैसे इलाहाबाद के एकोनामिक रिसर्च सेंटर ने भी 367 और 462 रुपए की बात कही है, इसको भी धरर हम न मानें तो भी कहा जा सकता है :

"Bosu's report can be considered as a pace-setter on the raw jute question."

धरर हम सरकार की बात मान लें कि बहुत साहब की जो रिपोर्ट है उसमें कुछ ज्यादा प्राइस है तो क्या हम आपके माध्यम से व्यापार मंत्री जी से मांग नहीं कर सकते हैं कि इसके लिए कोई एक प्रायोग जिज्ञाया जाए ?

जो पी०यू०सी० की रिपोर्ट है, एबी-कल्चर प्राइस कमिशन की रिपोर्ट है और इलाहाबाद के एकोनामिक रिसर्च की जो रिपोर्ट है—इन सब की प्राइसेस अलग-अलग हैं—इसलिए उस की सही प्राइस क्या होनी चाहिए, यह उस को निश्चित नहीं कर सकती है।

दूसरी बात, समापति महोदय, मैं सजेशन के रूप में कहना चाहता हूँ। हमारे व्यापार मंत्री तो खास कर मिडिल-मैन को एलिमिनेट करना चाहते हैं—लेकिन यह कैसे हो सकता है ? उद्योग और व्यापार दोनों मंत्रियों का यह विषय है। इसलिए हम कहना चाहेंगे—जब तक मिडिल मैन को एलिमिनेट नहीं करेंगे, जूट उत्पादक को पैसा नहीं मिल सकता है। जूट का उत्पादन भी अब दिनों-दिन खत्म होता जा रहा है। चौथे प्लान में जूट का उत्पादन 7.4 मिलियन बेल्टज था, लेकिन पांचवें प्लान के अन्त में जो एबीवमेंट टारगेट है—वह 6.5 मिलियन बेल्टज है—इस तरह से जूट का उत्पादन दिनों-दिन गिरता जा रहा है। ऐसी स्थिति को सुधारने के लिए—जबकि यह एक्सपीट प्रोरिपण्डेड इण्डस्ट्री है—क्या ऐसा नहीं कर सकते हैं कि मिडिल मैन को एलिमिनेट कर दिया जाए ताकि जूट के उत्पादकों को सही प्राइस मिल सके ?

\*SHRI GANANATH PRADHA/  
(Sambalpur): Mr. Chairman Sir, the discussion is going on in the House about the problem of jute growers. I am representing a district of Orissa which is mainly irrigated by Hirakud dam and land in my area are quite favourable for jute cultivation. There are also jute farmers in my area. It will be improper if I will not speak on this topic, since I am an agriculturist.

Sir, so far as the present condition of the jute farmers of my area are

concerned. I am sorry to say that there are number of obstacles for them to grow jute.

Firstly, the Government officials are not guiding them properly. The farmers are not getting fertilizers, seeds and other equipments at due time. The main difficulty with them which I would like to say with sorrow and anguish that no jute industry has so far been set up in Orissa. That is why the jute growers are not getting remunerative market price. They are under these circumstances compelled to sell the raw materials to the agents of West Bengal. In this case, the middle man are getting all the profits. Therefore, I request the hon. Minister to take some solid steps to protect the farmers from the middleman.

With all humility I request the hon. Minister to look into the matter. I hope the hon. Minister will take sympathetic steps to extend all sorts of cooperation for the improvement of jute cultivation in Orissa. At the same time I would request the Minister to set up some jute industries in Orissa in order to encourage the jute growers.

With these words I conclude.

**SHRI DHIRENDRANATH BASU** (Katwa): Only in the eastern region, 87 factories are under closure or on the verge of closure. There are many sick jute mills. Jute industry employs more than four lakhs of people. You will be surprised to know all the big factories are being controlled by the Indian Jute-Manufacturers' Association who have engaged some traders, or *farias* to advance money to the growers and purchase jute at the distressed rate, that is much below Rs. 135 per quintal. Jute is purchased at Rs. 130, 125, etc. per quintal. Even the government fixed rate is Rs. 150. Government have some centres, the Jute Corporation of India have got 107 centres throughout India. That is very small. Jute Corporation of India should set up at least one centre in each assemb-

ly constituency so that they can meet the growers and purchase direct from them. Unfortunately this is not going to happen. So many jute mills such as Nashkarbara, Kelvin and Chalbasa jute mills are still under closure. Thousands of persons have been thrown out of service. Government cannot nationalise those industries, we understand, for want of funds. Mr. Mohan Dharja told us last year that he was proposing purchases through the cooperative societies. That was a very good idea and we must congratulate him for that. He made an honest effort last year. So many cooperative societies were started in West Bengal but due to lack of money and credit facilities the cooperative societies cannot purchase jute as a result of which *farias* engaged by IJMA and the middlemen are purchasing jute at lower rates and this cannot be stopped. It was reported that Khardah jute mill was short of jute. On enquiry the government found that several lakhs of bales were hidden by the management. What we suggest is this. Let the government fix the price not at Rs. 150, but at least Rs. 200 per quintal. Let them purchase. Let them open more centres where the growers can sell jute direct, so that these malpractices do not come in. They have enunciated so many principles and policies. None of the policies have so far been implemented. Nice speeches of M.Ps or Ministers will not serve the purpose of the growers. They are suffering heavily. Prices are falling down day by day. The present position is that if the government do not purchase, there will be heavy suffering. Many mills will be closed down, the *farias* of IJMA and their agents will purchase jute and get them in hidden places. They are stocking all this raw jute. They pressurise the Government to get all the facilities and they are making profits. Much of the resources of many of the jute industries have been taken by Nashkarpara Jute Mill, Chalbasa Jute Mill, Kelvin, and others. Their main point is that they will not allow the Govern-

[Shri Dhirendranath Basu] ment to function properly. They will not allow the Government to purchase jute from the growers and this is to be stopped at all costs.

With these words, I conclude.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI-MATI ABHA MAITI): I share the anxiety expressed by the hon. members here in regard to the condition of the jute growers and the jute industry. The time at my disposal is very short. So far as I have gathered three points arise from the discussion which has taken place here:

1. The statutory price of jute.
2. Marketing operation by J. C.
3. Price stability.

Please see the motion tabled by the hon. member Shri Chitta Basu. It says:

"That this House do take note of the situation arising out of the large scale distress sale of raw jute at prices lower than the statutory price in West Bengal and other jute growing States and urges upon the Government to take appropriate actions to ensure remunerative price for the growers."

As I have said that I have little time at my disposal, so I want to say what action we have taken in this matter so that at least minimum statutory price which the Government has fixed can be got by the growers. Till about the first week of August, 1978 the price of raw jute was very firm around the maximum level. It was only from 6th or 7th August that the price started to come down and the Jute Corporation of India considered the whole thing and entered into the market from that date. They are purchasing at the moment at the price a little higher than the statutory price—Rs. 160 to Rs. 165. That is in all the States. In order to arrest unwarranted decline in the price, the following steps have been taken:—

1. Maximum stock holding limit of the mills has been increased to

eight weeks from the level of four weeks.

2. It has been decided to do away with the maximum prices of both in the Calcutta and up-country markets. Actually, we have notified to-day.

3. Jute Commissioner has been asked to import minimum weekly purchase quotas for all mills and minimum stock holding of raw jute so that they may be forced to go to the market and buy jute from the jute growers.

Cooperatives in Bihar and West Bengal have also been persuaded to start their operations without any further delay and it is expected that the combined operations of the cooperatives and JCI will contribute to the firming of the prices. All these steps are expected to generate sufficient buying pressure in the market and ensure price stability. Besides, the State Governments have been requested to keep a watch on any violations of minimum statutory prices for necessary action. We think our growers also must be educated about the policies of the Government and the steps that Government want to take in regard to price stability.

publicity campaign has been launched by the JCI to dissuade the growers from making any distress sales and also to counter any panic which might be created by the unscrupulous traders. The jute crop this year is expected to be reasonably good and it is possible that certain interested parties would mislead the growers to part with their crop at a low price. That is quite possible. I can assure the House that we will take all measure so that our jute growers can at least have the statutory minimum price, which had been suggested by Shri Saugata Roy also. At least they must get that price, because we know there are middlemen and whatever price we offer, the growers do not get. That is our every day experience. There is no denying that fact. So, we will do everything to check it.

Upto 28-8-78 Jute Corporation of India have bought—there are some contributions from cooperatives also but that is very little—25,137 bales only. But I would like to say that really jute will come after September 5th and by that time, all the arrangements have been made by the Jute Corporation of India we are having touch with the State Governments every day so that they can induce their cooperatives to go to the market and buy, because there is a limitation for the Jute Corporation also. Everybody will appreciate that. All of a sudden they cannot go everywhere and manage everything. If we expect that, it will be too much. Therefore, in each State, so far as my knowledge goes, in most of the villages there are primary cooperatives. If we can give them encouragement and if we arrange finance, which I think we will be able to do, they can intercept in the market. If they do so, we can have the desirable effect and we can help the jute growers.

Members might be interested in knowing the prevailing prices. Actually we have received information from different places and it is like this: In Assam, in Nowgong area the maximum ruling rate is Rs. 182 per quintal and in Gouripore it is Rs. 160. An Agartala it is Rs. 163. In North Bengal, it is, Rs. 167 in Dinahata and Rs. 170 in Islampur. In South Bengal, in Karimpur it is Rs. 194 and in Champadanga it is Rs. 188. In Bihar in Kishanganj it is Rs. 170. Recently we have got this information.

**SHRI SAUGATA ROY (Barrackpore):** Prevailing rates in the primary or secondary markets?

**SHRIMATI ABHA MAITI:** I have already said that there are middlemen. This is in the intermediate market, may not be in the primary market.

**SHRI L. D. KAPOOR:** What are the growers getting?

**SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE:** On that they have no information. The JCI is not interested to get that information.

**SHRIMATI ABHA MAITI:** That is not correct, because so far as our knowledge goes, they are getting this. In some places it may be different.

**SHRI SAUGATA ROY:** For Nadia and the 24-Parganas have you got any figures?

**SHRIMATI ABHA MAITI:** No, these are the figures.

My second point is about the market operations by the JCI. This year, from the very beginning a plan had been drawn up, well ahead of the season, by the JCI, so that the jute growers can have remunerative prices and their interests can be safeguarded. Many things have been said about the JCI which may be true to some extent, may not be true to some extent, but now it has been reorganised, and we are trying to see that the JCI looks after the interests of the growers and also the interests of industry because we know that if we cannot run the jute industry, ultimately it is the jute grower who will suffer. That we cannot deny. So, they will protect the interests of the jute grower and also see that the jute industry can go on. Under the plan of operation finally decided upon by the JCI, the target of procurement for the 1978-79 season has been fixed at 15 lakh bales.

Procurement during 1978-79 will not be restricted to price support alone, but the Corporation will make commercial operations, subject to the condition that the JCI's entry into the market is not exploited by speculators by pushing up prices to unwarranted levels, and that there would be no loss in such an operation.

The Corporation will take up plans for expansion of its primary market coverage to the maximum extent possible through its own infra-structure.



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ture as well as with the assistance of the cooperatives.

Of the total purchases made by the Corporation, 20 per cent at least will be procured directly from the primary markets, so that JCI's presence in the market is felt in the rural areas among the farmers.

The Corporation will come to an agreement with the managements of the taken-over jute mills for supply of a percentage of their requirements of jute on mutually acceptable terms. The Corporation will come to similar arrangements also with jute mills in the private sector with a view to increasing its total turnover.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think you have to continue on the next day because it is 8 O'clock now.

SHRI SAUGATA ROY: You can extend the time by a few minutes. Let her finish.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If the House so agrees, it can be done. How much time would you require?

SHRIMATI ABHA MAITI: In ten minutes I think it will be possible to finish.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it the pleasure of the House to extend the time?

HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

SHRIMATI ABHA MAITI: I have said already about the training of farmers. The Corporation has also decided to take up a training programme of the farmers in the grading of jute on a planned basis. Because it is the middlemen who can take advantage of different gradations. So, about grading, we are undertaking training courses for the farmers.

20 hrs.

श्री सखन साहू : क्या येश्वर को कम करने के बारे में कुछ किया जायेगा ? इस वक्त 8 प्रदक्ष हैं !

SHRIMATI ABHA MAITI: That we will consider, but I can say that previously we had, I think, 38 grades or so, but now there are 8. So, if

here is any need, we will definitely consider, but there is no hard and fast rule that we have to stick to the number. We can consider it.

Now, the Corporation has set up 100 Departmental Purchasing Centres and 29 sub-centres in 1977-78. This year we have already six more sub-centres. That means, they will be in the jute growing area, in the local markets and our endeavour will be to increase these sub-centres so that directly growers can sell their jute to the Jute Corporation people.

I have already stated the importance of the cooperatives. So long as cooperatives will not come into the field, it is impossible to guarantee the reasonable or the maximum or the minimum price. We cannot give the guarantee to them if the local cooperatives cannot come and it is here the State Governments can do much. So, I request the Members concerned in all the States to persuade their State Governments so that they can come forward and induce the cooperatives to take up the jute business.

SHRI DHIRENDRANATH BASU: The cooperatives in West Bengal particularly have the dire necessity for credit facilities. Would you kindly enlighten this House if you are in a position to extend more credit facilities to cooperatives for purchasing jute?

SHRIMATI ABHA MAITI: Yes, we have arranged it and we are arranging also.

The governments of jute growing States have been requested to strengthen and expand the coverage of the cooperative sectors to help JCI in its operations. The Corporation has discussed various aspects of the operational plan with representatives of the cooperatives. The plan for 1978-79 provides for substantial expansion of the cooperative coverage. A target of procurement of 6 lakhs bales by the cooperatives had been fixed of which the share of cooperatives in West Bengal is 4 lakhs bales.

**SHRI CHITTA BASU:** What about money?

**SHRIMATI ABHA MAITI:** We will arrange money and they will also arrange money.

**SHRI SAUGATA ROY:** You have a meeting with the Reserve Bank people.

**SHRIMATI ABHA MAITI:** We already have meetings with them.

The JCI has also agreed to pay Rs. 1.35 per quintal as service charges to the marketing cooperatives for purchase of loose jute from village and primary societies in order to encourage direct purchase from the jute growers.

The last point is about the price. Sir, there is great controversy about it and definitely most of the people desire that the maximum price should be given. The Committee on Public Undertakings expressed their views and the Government of West Bengal also has expressed their views. The Agricultural Prices Commission has taken into account all the things and fixed up the price at Rs. 150/- per quintal. Next year, or after some time, they can revise their attitude and revise the whole thing. But, at the present moment, this is the price. Some Members have expressed the view that it should be at least Rs. 300, while some others have said it should be Rs. 200. I do not know on what basis they have arrived at these figures. I have no knowledge about this.

**SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE:** It is the cost of cultivation plus a margin.

**SHRIMATI ABHA MAITI:** The Governments of West Bengal, Orissa and Tripura for some time past are wanting to enhance the minimum price of raw jute. They are of the view that it should be higher than Rs. 150 per quintal as announced by the Government for W5 Grade in Assam.

The Committee on Public Undertakings accepted the cost of production of

raw jute worked out by the Government of West Bengal for 1977-78, namely, Rs. 344.34 per quintal. On that basis, the Committee recommended the minimum price of raw jute of Rs. 447.64 per quintal, after adding 30 per cent return to the growers.

The Agricultural Prices Commission had formulated its recommendation regarding the minimum support price for the 1978-79 season on the basis of the prevailing prices of the inputs and the average rates of wages prevailing in selected centres in the jute-growing districts in West Bengal, which is higher than in Assam... (Interruptions). The minimum agricultural remuneration in West Bengal is Rs. 8.10.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** It is prevailing in most of the areas in the villages.

**SHRIMATI ABHA MAITI:** My constituency is in the rural area and I also know the position.

According to the estimates compiled by the comprehensive scheme for studying the cost of production of principal crops for Assam and West Bengal, it is Rs. 132.63 per quintal for 1975-76 in West Bengal. As against this, the estimated cost of production for 1976-77 for West Bengal was Rs. 197.73 per quintal. As against that, for 1977-78 the Government of West Bengal has estimated it at Rs. 344.34 per quintal. So, it is higher than the figure for previous year, which was again higher than that of the previous year. Now what is the explanation for such a big gap?

**SHRI SAUGATA ROY:** Part of the gap is political.

**SHRIMATI ABHA MAITI:** I am not saying it is political. I cannot say so. The explanation for this wide disparity in the three estimates is that the Government of West Bengal has taken the cost of human labour at the minimum wage notified by it. The Comprehensive scheme for studying the cost of production of principal crops has taken the average wages prevailing in selected centres in jute

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growing districts of the State. That is the difference between the two estimates. The State Government's estimated cost of production for 1977-78 shows an increase of 74 per cent over their own estimates of the previous year. It may be that there is some apprehension as to what will be the effect if we have such a high price for the raw jute on the industry. Now, as I have already told you, we have to go both ways, we have to protect the interest of the jute growers and at the same time we have to see that our jute industry can grow can thrive, because we have already experienced that it is very sick in West Bengal. There are tycoons and so many factors are there and it is going on far such a long time. So, all of a sudden we cannot over-ride everything. So, we have to look to these two interests, viz., the interests of the jute growers and also of the industry. Therefore, after looking into all these aspects, the Agricultural Prices Commission has fixed the price. It may not please me, it may not please you, but this is the fact. Let us try to see to it that the jute growers can get at least the statutory minimum price and if there are any constraints in between, let us try to remove them. I can assure you, as I have already told you, that whatever possible measures we have at our command, we will take so that their interests can be safeguarded.

**SHRI DINESH JOARDER (Malda):** One question. Just one minute.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** No question. How can you put a question now?

**SHRI DINESH JOARDER:** That the Id festival is coming up in the 1st week of September and the jute growers need money just now, so the jute is being sold in advance when the jute is still in process and either it is being dried up or it is still in the rotting tank.... (Interruptions). It is not yet ready for the market.... (Interruptions). I would like to know whether the Government can ask the JCI to give some advance money to the growers against the subsequent

sale of jute in view of the Id festival approaching very fast?

**SHRIMATI ABHA MAITI:** We will look into it.

**SHRI CHITTA BASU:** I have got the right of reply.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** How much time will you take? Otherwise, we will take up the next time. It is already 8.15 p.m.

**SHRI CHITTA BASU:** She cannot get away with her reply.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** I did not mean that you should not reply. If necessary, you must finish in two minutes.

**SHRI CHITTA BASU:** I will take five minutes.

I also agree with the consensus of the House, if I may say so, that the panacea lies in the nationalisation of the entire industry, right from the point of purchase to export trade. Secondly, it is my allegation, even now that the jute growing State Governments are not consulted in two matters in particular, viz., in the fixation of minimum price and gradation. Can I have an assurance from the Government that the State Governments will be involved in the matter of fixing the minimum price. Then, I want to mention again one thing. She has mentioned the West Bengal Government calculated the cost of production for each quintal of jute taking into account the statutory minimum wages for the agricultural labourers. It is the policy of the Government to ensure the statutory minimum price for the agricultural labour. What is the crime or in on the part of the West Bengal Government if they take into account the rate of wages of agricultural workers that was statutorily fixed by that State in the matter of calculating the cost of production?

I again rise this point from a larger socio-economic problem of the country that unless that is taken into account, never it will be possible for any Government to ensure the enforcement of

the minimum wages for the agricultural worker. Therefore, the West Bengal Government is right and they have done perfectly the right thing to take into account the minimum wages statutorily fixed for the agricultural workers in the matter of calculating the cost of production. I would also suggest that even at this late stage the Government of India should start a dialogue with the Agricultural Ministers of six jute-growing States to find out the ways and means as to how the JCI operations can be further extended and the benefits can be given to the growers.

It has been admitted by the hon. Minister that the Calcutta price is not simultaneously announced. Why? I have no time to explain in detail. One of the allegations against the Agricultural Prices Commission it, as has been made by the PUC, that they deliberately do not announce the Calcutta price and the up-country price simultaneously. The object is to allow the middle-men, the tycoons and the barons to depress the price in the upcountry markets. This time also, the Government have not taken any lesson from it. The minimum prices for the up-country markets have been declared earlier. Only today, they have declared the minimum price in the Calcutta market. Why is this practice being indulged in? It is only to allow and barons and the tycoons to dampen the prices of raw jute in the upcountry markets. I think, the Government should take note of it. There should be simultaneous announcement of the Calcutta price as well as of the upcountry market prices.

Lastly, I would say that the question of the minimum price of jute should be *de novo*, discussed and we should not rely on the recommendations of the APC alone. This is a very important aspect of the problem. Therefore, instead of relying on the recommendations of the APC against whom I have made certain allegations and the PUC has also made certain allegations, I would suggest that the very question of fixing the minimum

statutory price of raw jute should be discussed *de novo* and that it should not be fixed only on the basis of the recommendations of the APC. It should be decided upon after consulting the jute growers, the respective State unions and the industrialists also. I Government, the concerned trade think, the hon. Minister would take note of it and see how far this question could be solved with the satisfaction of all the interests concerned.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is Amendment No. 1 which was moved by Shri Vinayak Prasad Yadav. He is not here. Though in his speech, he said that he was not pressing for it. I have to put it to the vote of the House.

Now, I put the Amendment to the vote of the House.

*Amendment No. 1 was put and negatived.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, I put the main motion of Shri Chitta Basu to the vote of the House.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: I do not like to take a vote on it. I want to withdraw it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it the pleasure of the House to allow Shri Chitta Basu to withdraw the Motion?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

*The Motion was, by leave, withdrawn.*

20.30 hrs

#### HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

BUNGLING IN EXPORT OF READY MADE GARMENTS

डा० लक्ष्मी नारायण पांडेय : (मधुबनी)  
सभापति महोदय, सिने हिसाबे बस्त्रों के निर्यात में प्रशासनिक कारणों के कारण, प्रशासनिक प्रक्रियाओं के कारण जिस प्रकार से भारी नुकसान होने की खबर संभावना हो गई है, तब नुकसान घटा हो ही रहा है, उसकी प्रतीति देकर प्रशासनिक कारणों के निवारण