

[Shri Joytirmoy Bosu]

Out of their total fund of Rs. 3,66,07,104.34 paise as on 15th December, 1976, an amount of about Rs. one crore has been kept in long term fixed deposit with a non-nationalised bank and it is suspected that some people in authority in the said society has done it for a monetary or/and other consideration.

The society also disposed of government loan scrips at a value which is much less than the face value without calling for tenders.

The Indian Red Cross is a body connected with an international organisation. Therefore, it has to be run without committing any irregularities. The Government should look into the matter and should institute an enquiry in order to ensure that this organisation runs properly in the country. I invite the Health Minister to make a statement on the same.

(v) DEMAND FOR PAYMENT OF 8.33 PER CENT. BONUS TO WORKERS INCLUDING THOSE IN PUBLIC SECTOR UNDERTAKINGS

SHRI CHITTA BASU (Barasat): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to draw the attention of the House and particularly the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Labour, who is present here under Rule 377 of the Rules of Procedure of the House. I think you will agree with me and the entire House will also agree with me that the demand for 8.33 per cent bonus for the workers, including the workers engaged in public sector industries has, by this time, enlisted or secured the widespread and possible support from the entire country.

13 hrs.

You would also know that the Janata Party, during the election campaign, had also made a promise that they would repeal the payment of Bonus Amendment Act 1975 and make an amendment so that the workers are paid statutorily the minimum of the amount of 8.33 per cent at the earliest possible opportunity. You would

also know that the Government, of late has come out with a statement regarding the existing concept of bonus as deferred wages. Having at these things into the background, the Government has been found dragging its feet on the matter of bringing about a specific and concrete legislative measure. You would also agree with me that the labour of our country today have become restive. If you cast a casual glance at the labour scene of our country today, you will find that there has been a large scale agitation being conducted by the workmen of our country. There have been also agitations and strike actions in various parts of our country. You may also know that the question was raised in the Chief Ministers' Conference held yesterday, and I am surprised to see that the Prime Minister of our country has been reported to have observed that the Government has not yet taken any decision on that and, therefore, no question of bonus should be raised in the Chief Ministers' Conference. You would also agree with me that the Chief Minister of West Bengal has made it very clear that the question of bonus should be immediately settled—the Chief Minister of Kerala also has done it—and that unless the bonus issue is settled immediately, there is every possibility of the law and order situation further worsening in the country.

I also want to draw your attention to the fact that the Government, particularly the Minister, who is the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, has been found to keep the Parliament in ignorance. They have taken pleasure in ignoring you and the whole House. Therefore, I would suggest that the Government should come out immediately with a concrete proposal, regarding the decision on the question of bonus, and accede to the demand of the working class of our country for statutory minimum bonus at 8.33 per cent and make an announcement on the floor of the House, not outside the House. If you allow the Government to make a decision outside the House, the House will lose the opportunity of

expressing its points of view. It is in the fitness of things that he makes the announcement here. In this matter he should assure that Parliament is sovereign and Government should provide the opportunity to the House to express its points of view on this national and very important issue. Therefore, there should be a discussion in the House, and Government should take the benefit of ascertaining the views of all sections of the House.

With these words, I request that the hon. Minister may make a statement on this.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Home Minister may move his motion. (*Interruptions*).

SOME HON. MEMBERS rose—

MR. SPEAKER: No, please sit down.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA (Serampora): Why don't you ask the Government to make the announcement?

MR. SPEAKER: If he wants, he can announce. I cannot compel anybody.

AN HON. MEMBER: About 40 Members of this House have already written. He should not ignore the wishes of the Members of this House.

MR. SPEAKER: If he wants, he can announce. I cannot ask him. (*Interruptions*). I do not know whether he will make a statement now because it is a very important issue. The hon. Member has made his observations already.

The Home Minister.

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13.04 hrs.

LOKPAL BILL—Contd.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHARAN SINGH): Today on the order paper appears a motion in my name regarding consideration of the Lokpal Bill. But,

instead, in deference to the wishes of the hon. Members on both sides of the House, Government has decided to refer it to a Joint Committee. So, with your permission, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move a motion for suspension of a proviso to a rule. I have given notice of my intention to move the following motion during the current session of the Lok Sabha. I beg to move:

"That this House do suspend the first proviso to Rule 74 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in its application to the motion for reference of the Bill to provide for the appointment of a Lokpal to inquire into allegations of misconduct against public men and for matters connected therewith to a Joint Committee of the Houses"

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That this House do suspend the first proviso to Rule 74 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in its application to the motion for reference of the Bill to provide for the appointment of a Lokpal to inquire into allegations of misconduct against public men and for matters connected therewith to a Joint Committee of the Houses."

*The motion was adopted.*

SHRI CHARAN SINGH: Now, with your permission, I move:

"That the Lokpal Bill, 1977, be referred . . ."

SHRI NARENDRA P. NATHWANI (Junagadh): On a point of order, I should be allowed to raise a point after the hon. Minister has finished his speech. It is an important point that I want to raise.

SHRI CHARAN SINGH: It is now Lunch time; shall I continue after the Lunch Hour?