

claiming that they were sick and accordingly refrained from discharging their normal duties. The agitation started at Basin Bridge, Arkonam, Tondiarpet and Madras Area and gradually spread to broad-gauge portion of Madras, Guntakal and Olavakkot Divisions. Subsequently, all Divisions of the Southern Railway were affected in varying degrees. Out of a total sanctioned strength of about 7000 staff, the number of employees on strike varied from 1057 on 10.5.70 to 3161 on 14.5.70. This caused considerable disruption to traffic and though the Railway maintained most of the main line mail and express trains with the aid of the loyal section of the Running staff, most of the passenger trains and goods trains had to be drastically curtailed.

On the 11th May 1970, after two days of consideration, the Southern Railway Administration issued a notice calling upon all employees, who had resorted to stoppage of work, to resume duty by 12.00 hours on 12.5.70 failing which they would be treated as on illegal strike.

A large number of employees, however, remained away from duty. I held a meeting with the representatives of the recognised unions, viz. S/Shri T. V. Anandan, M. P., and K. H. Kulkarni, General Secretary, representing the N. F. I. R., and Shri Priya Gupta, General Secretary of A. I. R. F. Both the recognised Federations stated that the demands put forward by these employees had already been put forward by them and were in the process of negotiation. They were also in agreement with the policies followed by the Ministry of Railways of not recognising sectional and category-wise associations. Shri J. M. Biswas, M. P. and a few others met the Deputy Minister for Railways and pointed out that they would endeavour to bring the staff back to duty if they could be given an assurance that the earlier assurances given by the Ministers would be implemented in full. They were given such an assurance in writing by the Deputy Minister for Railways.

Subsequently, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu was contacted by me and I brought to his notice the trouble and loss that has been entailed by the disruption to traffic and requested him for assistance in our endeavour to restore normal conditions. Appreciating our stand, the Chief Minister issued an appeal to the staff asking them to

resume work and assuring them of his good offices in settling the dispute. Consequent on this appeal, the leaders of the striking employees met the Chief Minister and decided to withdraw their agitation with effect from the after noon of 15th May, 1970. I have arranged to meet some of these employees today in the afternoon to ascertain their view point and their grievances.

The demands put forward by these employees have varied from time to time but 9 demands have been listed in the Tamil pamphlet brought out by them and in their earlier resolutions. The main demand appears to relate to an alleged failure to implement an earlier assurance in connection with the agitation in July 1968. I am told that all assurances given earlier have been implemented, but when approached by Sarvasbri K. Ananda Nambiar, J. M. Biswas and T. V. Anandan I undertook to review the position and fulfil any commitment that remained unfulfilled.

With regret I have to report that on this Section alone the Indian Railways have incurred a loss of approximately one crore.

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13.08 hrs.

STATEMENT RE : STRIKE BY DOCK  
WORKERS AT MADRAS PORT

MR. SPEAKER : He may lay it on the Table.

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND  
REHABILITATION (SHRI D. SANJI-  
VAYYA) : I lay the statement on the Table.

Statement

I am happy to inform the House that the strike by the workers under the Dock Labour Board, Madras and the workers of the Food Corporation of India in Madras Port which had commenced on April, 30, 1970, has been called off with effect from Saturday, May 16, 1970.

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13.09 hrs.

CONSTITUTION (TWENTY-FOURTH  
AMENDMENT) BILL, 1970

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS  
(SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN) : Sir, I beg to