

The Minister of Information and Broadcasting (Dr. Keskar): (a) No, Sir. Categorisation and scales of pay are not done on basis of language.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

12 hrs.

MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT

CLOSURE OF MOSABARI COPPER MINES

Mr. Speaker: I have received notice of an adjournment motion from Shrimati Renu Chakravartty.

It reads:

"The closure of Mosabari Copper mines laying off over three thousand miners and its adverse effects on the copper factory of Indian Copper Corporation."

What is the position?

The Deputy Minister of Labour (Shri Abid Ali): Sir, on the 14th of last month intimation was received from the Union that about 3,000 workers in the mines and 1,300 workers in the factory, that is, a total of 4,300 workers, were likely to be laid off. Enquiries were made and it has been found that only 96 workers are likely to be laid off and not more, because of certain reasons.

Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kanpur): What are the reasons?

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty (Basirhat): The main reason for this is that they are short of zinc and explosives due to shortage of foreign exchange. This is the only copper extracting organisation in the whole country. Therefore I would like to know why Government is not rushing these matters so that the factory and the mines can work. It is a very important concern.

Shri Abid Ali: The hon. Member has tried to give very much seriousness to this question by mentioning the figure 4,300. During the process of work some difficulties might arise and, as I said, only 96 workers are

affected. Of course, the local government will take appropriate steps and as far as possible attempts will be made not to lay off even these workers further.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: Are we to take that only 96 workers have been laid off? The information that we have received is that over 3,000 miners have been laid off since 14th August. This information is from the Indian Copper Corporation Workers' Union. It says that it is not a fact that only 96 workers may be laid off. Therefore we would like to know how they have been laid off. This is a very serious thing.

Shri Abid Ali: The information which the hon. Member has given is wrong.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao (Khammam): The hon. Minister has stated that it is for the local government to take the necessary steps, but industrial relations in copper mines is the responsibility of the Central Government. Now, the reasons for which they are going to be laid off are not clearly stated. If the reason is a defect in the mines or in the factory, it is solely the responsibility of the Central Government. There is shortage of copper in the country. Even if zinc is not made available, copper could be produced and the mines could run.

Mr. Speaker: The difficulty arises when hon. Member exaggerates the figure from 96 to 3,000. Then the hon. Minister also says, 'All right' in the usual course. If merely a question had been asked as to why even 96 workers had been laid off, possibly he would have gone into details. Largely on a kind of exaggeration, hon. Members ought not to table adjournment motions, unless they are thoroughly satisfied that the information that they have got is true. If it is the responsibility of the Centre, the hon. Minister shall make enquiries and as early as possible give it. I do not give my consent to this adjournment motion.