

LOK SABHA DEBATES

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LOK SABHA

Tuesday, June 29, 1971/
Asadha 8, 1893 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven
of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Court Cases against Employees Involved in July, 1970 Incident of Siliguri

*781. SHRI ESWARA REDDY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any Court cases are pending against the Railway employees in connection with the incidents that took place at Siliguri in July, 1970 ;

(b) the number of employees against whom wage cuts and break in service was imposed ; and

(c) whether any steps are being taken to withdraw cases, condone break in service and cancel other punishments ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI HANUMANTHAIYA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In accordance with the Railway rules, participation in an illegal strike automatically results in break in service and loss of wages for the days of strike, 2473 Railway employees of Siliguri who participated in the illegal strike had, accordingly, to bear the above consequences.

(c) As regards Court cases, it is not the policy of the Government to interfere with the natural course of justice. The conclusion of the legal proceedings is, therefore, awaited. In regard to those persons whose cases are before the courts, we have not taken any action against them by way of punishment. The break in service has been

condoned in November, 1970 treating the period as dies-non. Wages are, however, not admissible on the basis of "no work no pay".

SHRI ESWARA REDDY : This is a very serious issue where the non-implementation of a Minister's assurance is involved. In July last, when these incidents took place...

MR. SPEAKER : No introduction. Please ask a question.

DR. RANEN SEN : He is a new Minister. He does not know the background.

SHRI ESWARA REDDY : The employees requested the Minister to intervene. He refused and allowed the situation to drift. Later on, when this issue was brought to the notice of his predecessor, Shri Nandaji, he gave an assurance on the floor of the House that there would be no victimisation if the strikers resumed work. May I know if the Government is going to implement the assurance given by his predecessor ?

SHRI HANUMANTHAIYA : I also said that there must be no victimisation. Victimisation, as the hon. Member knows, has a definite meaning. Where cases are before the courts, we do not interfere.

SHRI ESWARA REDDY : May I request the hon. Minister to reconsider the whole case in view of the fact that these employees did creditable work in 1962 and 1965, and in view of the fact that the disturbance was not the creation of the railway employees ?

SHRI HANUMANTHAIYA : I have seen the circumstances under which this strike took place, and even if it is a matter of a little displeasure to you, I am going to relent.

SHRI R. P. YADAV : Is it a fact that these cases are pending due to the paucity of lawyers in courts, and if so, what steps are taken by the Government ?

SHRI HANUMANTHAIYA : I am thankful to the hon. Member. I will make enquiries. If the delay is merely because of the number of lawyers being less than required, I will take steps.

श्री रामाचतार शास्त्री : मंत्री महोदय का आश्वासन तो ऐसे ही चलता है। बरौनी और गढ़हरा के बारे में उनका आश्वासन अब तक पूरा नहीं किया गया। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या यह बात सही है कि जब वहाँ हड़ताल चल रही थी तब इंडियन रेलवे लोको मेकैनिकल स्टाफ एसोसिएशन के प्रेजिडेंट सरदार हजारा सिंह को हवाई जहाज में लेकर यहाँ के रेलवे अधिकारी वहाँ सम्झौता कराने के लिए गये थे? अगर गये थे, तो क्या वहाँ इन बात का आश्वासन उनके सामने दिया गया कि रेलवे मजदूरों के खिलाफ, जो लोग हड़ताल से वापस चले जायेंगे, कोई भी कार्यवाही नहीं की जायेगी? अगर इन बात का आश्वासन दिया गया था तो सरकार उस को पूरा करवाने में हीला हवाला क्यों कर रही है?

MR. SPEAKER : May I remind the hon. Member that suggestive questions are not allowed as supplementaries. You should put in it another form. Anyway this question is there.

SHRI HANUMANTHAIYA : There is no question of Government going back on assurances given. He understands the problem in one way and I understand it in another way. That is the difficulty.

Alignment of Subarnarekha Dam Construction in West Bengal

*783. **SHRI KRISHNA HALDER :** Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the present alignment of the Subarnarekha Dam Construction in West Bengal would affect the basin of the river ;

(b) how much amount has already been spent for this project ; and

(c) if the answer to part (a) above be in the affirmative the steps Government propose to take ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI B. N. KUREEL) : (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (c). A coordinated and agreed proposal for the construction of embankments along the Subarnarekha river for protecting areas against floods in West Bengal and Orissa has been drawn up after inspection and discussion of officials of the two States and the Central Water and Power Commission. The schemes have been prepared by the State Governments on the basis of the agreed decisions. The embankment scheme in West Bengal estimated to Rs. 128 lakhs has been sanctioned by the Planning Commission. The scheme for embankments in Orissa estimated to cost Rs. 10.5 crores is to be finalised by the Orissa State Government taking into account the observations made by the Central Water and Power Commission and the Ministry of Finance after scrutiny of the scheme.

After the implementation of the overall scheme, the depth of inundation in the areas on the river side of the embankments will be more than hitherto. Consequently, 35 villages, 1857 houses and 17700 people in West Bengal and 173 villages, 4774 houses and 50,000 people in Orissa will be affected

An amount of Rs. 14 lakhs has been provided in the West Bengal scheme for raising and or shifting of the affected villages. The Orissa estimate provides for Rs 4.02 crores towards compensation and shifting of the affected villages.

No expenditure has been incurred so far of the embankments in West Bengal.

SHRI KRISHNA HALDER : Is it a fact that the construction of the Subarnarekha dam in West Bengal has been given up by the Government because the construction would affect the basin of the river? What is the amount spent so far on the project? Is it also a fact that the suggestions given by the village panchayat organisations of that area was taken into consideration before the construction work was taken up?

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (DR. K.L. RAO) : It is