

SHRI K R GANESH This case was detected only on the 27th June 1974. The investigation is in progress. Police will take some time to complete the investigation.

SHRI R S PANDEY My anxiety is to see that it is not kept in cold storage. That is why I want to know when it will be over.

MR SPEAKER The question hour is over.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION

Workers of Jamuna Colliery M P Attacked by Gangsters

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state

(a) whether some striking workers of the Jamuna Colliery in Madhya Pradesh were attacked by armed gangsters hired by the management on the 3rd August, 1974,

(b) whether two workers were killed on the spot and their heads cut off and taken away,

(c) whether the old private-sector management is still in charge of this nationalised coal mine, and

(d) if so, what steps Government propose to take in the matter?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI SUBODH HANSDA). (a) It is not a fact that the management had hired gangsters for attacking the workers of Jamuna Colliery who resorted to lightning strike without notice, on 3rd August, 1974. In fact the incident took place on 30-7-1974.

(b) Lives of two workmen of the colliery were lost in the incident whose bodies were found beheaded in the neighbouring forest.

(c) The Jamuna Colliery is a National Coal Development Corporation colliery and was started in 1966. The

question of private sector management being in charge of this mine does not arise.

(d) The whole issue is under investigation by the Madhya Pradesh Government and the State Police authorities.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA We are accustomed to hearing this kind of incident in the private sector collieries in the olden days. But it is really most alarming that such a thing could have taken place in a nationalised colliery. If I had heard him correctly, according to him, the workers went on a lightning strike from 3rd August, I want to know firstly, whether it is not a fact that the workers went on strike not from 3rd August but from 29th July. Secondly, is it not a fact that it was not a lightning strike at all and that the reason is, for the last seven years, the management of this colliery has been refusing to implement the award of the Central Wage Board for the mining industry which had laid down that the load and lift allowances paid to the leaders should be counted as part of the basic wages for computation of bonus? For seven years, is it not a fact, the Union there, the AITUC Union, has been agitating for implementation of this award and every time the State Government and the Labour Commissioner have given their finding in favour of the workers, even then the management for seven years has refused to implement it? Only after that, the workers who were driven to desperation went on strike on the 29th July. So, it was not a lightning strike by any means.

I want to know whether it is a fact that after the strike began, the Area Manager of this group of collieries, the Kothma Group, by name one Mr Sen Gupta sent from the neighbouring colliery for the services of this notorious man called Azhar Ali, who is very well known in that area, a notorious bad character and a goonda who has armed gangsters at

his command, who is connected with gambling dens and illicit distillation, and he was brought there in order to break the strike and it was he and his gang who launched this attack on the workers beheaded two of them and ran away with their heads and the headless bodies were found, as the Minister said, in the neighbouring forest. I want to know whether these are facts. These things are happening in a nationalised colliery.

SHRI SUBODH HANSDA: I do not know about the other demands of the workmen of this Jamuna Colliery. But the reason for the strike was this. This colliery was producing about 16,000 tonnes of coal per month. One of the mines of this colliery, Incline 314, was closed in the year 1968 because at that time there was no market. Now to increase the production of the colliery it was decided to re-open the Jamuna Colliery. With a view to working this mine, the authorities approached the Employment Exchange for recruitment of workmen for the colliery. For that purpose the local Employment Exchange sponsored certain candidates. But the leaders of the unions objected to that. In the Interview Board on the 29th the representatives of the management as well as of the State Government were there. And when this was objected, the local authorities tried to persuade the labour unions that it was not the fault of the Interview Board; it was not the Interview Board which had sponsored the candidates. It is the Employment Exchange which has sponsored the candidates and that is why the workers had gone on strike, not because that they have some other grievance as the hon. Member mentioned but it was not that the wage board award was not implemented. The reason for the strike was quite different.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: He has not answered many of the points. It is true that in addition, the dispute over the load and lift allowance was

going on for seven years. As he has now mentioned the re-opening of the incline 304 has come up and the policy of recruitment is also there was also an additional dispute. But how does it change the character of this attack and murder that has taken place? That is my point. He has not said a word about Afzar Ali who, to my information, is the President of Bhutma Block Congress Committee and the President of the so-called INTUC Union there and the gate leading to incline 304 is always kept closed and is a protected area and except vehicles with permits nobody is allowed but on that day, the gate was left deliberately to allow this gang into the mine. They had guns, pistols, spears and swords with them. The evidence is there. Two headless bodies were found and the heads have been cut off and taken away. I want to know whether the Government of India to whom these mines belong and whose own employees have been butchered in this most inhuman way, whether they just propose to entrust the matter to the local authorities who are under the influence of Afsar Ali. I want to know whether a CBI inquiry will be instituted and whether any compensation will be paid in a NCDC colliery to the families of the people who have been killed and also to the workers who have been seriously injured.

Thirdly, the load and lift allowance pending for the last seven years—whether the management will be asked to implement it and lastly whether anybody has been arrested in this connection or not, I want to know.

SHRI SUBODH HANSDA: I do not want to support this sort of incidents. It is true that this ghastly incident has taken place and I am sorry for that. But when this incident took place, some of the workers went on a lightning strike, I am told, but the other loyal workers wanted to work in that mine and they sought the permission of the Area

Manager. The leader of the workers who were on a lightning strike was just called to ask the strikers to allow the loyal workers to go into the mines. But, unfortunately, the loyal workers were not allowed to enter the mine. Now, in the meantime, this incident took place and as the hon. Member has said, two workmen were beheaded and their bodies were thrown in a forest. Although this thing happened in the colliery area, but it is completely a question of law and order and for that purpose, 10 people have been arrested and still investigations are going on. It may be that more people may be arrested and the State Government is taking very strong action against those people who have gone in for such action.

Regarding the compensation, the deceased families have already been it is not a compensation, it is a monetary help—given Rs. 1000 each and it has also been decided that from each of the deceased workers' families, one person will be given employment in the mines.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: What about Afsar Ali? Curiously enough he is avoiding his name.

How will the production go on if such things are allowed?

MR. SPEAKER: You are accusing a man in his absence. I think already the case is under investigation.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: He said that 10 people have been arrested. He can say whether Afsar Ali is one of them or not.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, you can put the question that way.

SHRI SUBODH HANSDA: The names of persons arrested are not with me here.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: Afsar Ali was seen roaming in that area with so many people.

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श्री बामोदर पांडे : यह जमुना कालियरी, जो इस समय सी० म० ए० के बैस्ट्रन डिविजन में है, इस से पहले एन० सी० डी० सी० की कोलियरी थी। वहां बेज बोर्ड पहले से लागू था। यह कोई नई बात नहीं है कि एन० सी० डी० सी० की कोलियरी में बेज बोर्ड लागू हो, और इस के लिए डिमांड की जाये। जहां तक एन० सी० डी० सी० में लोड एंड लिफ्ट एलाउंस देने का प्रश्न है, यह एक एवरबॉजिंग डिमांड है, क्योंकि वह हमेशा घटती बढ़ती रहती है। इस का लाभ उठा कर कोई भी यूनियन कभी भी यह डिमांड खड़ी कर सकती है। यूनियनों में राइवेलरी की वजह से भी ऐसी डिमांड की जाती है। आज कल नौकरी की स्थिति खराब है। हर जगह लोग अपने तरफदार लोगों को नौकरी दिलाना चाहते हैं। जब लोगों को नौकरी में लिया जा रहा है, तो दल यह प्रयत्न करते हैं कि उन के लोगों को नौकरी पर रखा जाये। इस कारण से, और यूनियनों से राइवेलरी करने के लिए, वहां कुछ लोग बदभ्रमनी पैदा करना चाहते हैं। वहां मजदूरों का ऐसा कोई बाजिब हक या मांग नहीं है, जो एन० सी० डी० सी० नहीं मान रही है।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : माननीय सदस्य सवाल पूछें।

श्री बामोदर पांडे : हम यह नहीं कहते हैं कि अपराधियों को सजा न दी जाये। क्या यह सही है कि नये लोगों को नौकरी देने के लिए और यूनियनों में राइवेलरी पैदा करने के लिए कुछ लोगों द्वारा यह मांग खड़ी की गई थी और यह झगड़ा शुरू किया गया था; यदि हां, तो सरकार इस को बन्द करने के लिए क्या उपाय कर रही है ?

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Sir, a very serious allegation has been made that he has been briefed by Government. I do not know why Members who come here are being briefed by Government.

MR. SPEAKER: There is no question of anyone being briefed. When you put a question you can also be briefed by your party.

SHRI SUBODH HANSDA: As I have already stated, that the N.C.D.C. had started the load and lift scheme allowance in 1960. Perhaps the hon. Member was repeating as to why this has not been implemented in all the collieries of the N.C.D.C. It has been implemented. Here the question is about Jamuna Colliery. This was closed down in 1968. Government wanted to increase the production. They wanted to reopen it. In the colliery, as per the decision taken by Government, employment is given to people through the Employment Exchange. There is no question of any sort of rivalry among the union staff of the collieries.

SHRIMATI M. GODFREY: This being a nationalised mine how is it that outside element are allowed to come in and do all sorts of killing and inflicting damages to the properties. Government should have taken action against them. I would like to know from him what protection Government proposes to give to the coal-mine workers.

SHRI SUBODH HANSDA: It is in the interest of the collieries that gangsters are not allowed to work in the collieries.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: Sir, a specific allegation has been made. Obviously persons who perpetrate ghastly deeds as behaving workers cannot be normal persons. In spite of the fact that there might have been a lightning strike as you say it is a trade union activity and by no stretch of imagination can one say that butchering people and cutting off their heads is a part of any trade-union rivalry. Therefore, I would like to know have you made any inquiry as to what drastic steps the State Government has taken to restore confidence in the people that such

actions will not be repeated and those guilty will be brought to book. However, as suggested there are some leaders of gangsters have they been brought to book in the interest of the confidence of the workers.

SHRI SUBODH HANSDA: As I have already said, I condemn such activity that has happened in this colliery. Already ten people have been arrested and more will be arrested.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: You must not spare any person. It does not matter to which party he belongs to.

SHRI SUBODH HANSDA: This is purely a law-and-order question and the Government is taking all sort of action to prevent such activities in future. The investigation is going on.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी: क्या यह सच है कि यह सारी घटना बोपहर के सठे बारह बजे हुई ? क्या यह सच है कि जब मजदूरों पर कातिलाना हमला किया जा रहा था और अकसर अली दोनों हाथों में रिवाल्वर लेकर गोली चला रहा था, तब कालियरी का सिन्डिकेटि स्ट्राफ़ जिस के पास बन्दूकें थी, खडा देखा ? क्या कालियरी के भीतर शक्ति स्थापित करना सिन्डिकेटि स्ट्राफ़ का काम नहीं है ? मंत्री महोदय स्वयं वहां गये थे । क्या यह सच है कि जिन मजदूरों के सिर काटे गये हैं, अभी तक उन के सिर नहीं मिने हैं ? मंत्री महोदय मध्य प्रदेश सरकार के बात कर रहे हैं । लेकिन मध्य प्रदेश सरकार इस बारे में जांच करने में कतरा रही है । जैसा कि मेरे मित्र, श्री इन्द्रजीत गुप्त ने पूछा है, सरकार इस मामले को सी० बी० आई० को सीपने का बिचार क्यों नहीं कर रही है ?

SHRI SUBODH HANSDA: I have already said the investigation is going on and until and unless this investigation is completed there is no question of handing it over to the

CBI. I do not know who this gentleman Afzar Ali is. But it is true there are some people who came with lathis and some other weapons at 12.15 hours and this message was received in the colliery that few workers have assembled with lethal weapons. When the leader of the workers who were on strike was called just to call off the strike, at that time just at 12.15 when the talk was over, the incident took place. The people who were there with lethal weapons, may be having some pipe-guns or some such thing, fired 12 to 15 rounds as a result of which five people were injured and two people had died.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: What about the security staff? I had put a specific question. Is it a fact that the security staff kept on looking? It was armed but did not intervene.

MR. SPEAKER: The case must be under investigation. Many things are being said.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: This is a fit case for the CBI.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: It is a question of fact whether the security staff intervened or not.

MR. SPEAKER: Was there any security man there at that time or not?

SHRI SUBODH HANSDA: While the tension was there, the colliery authorities asked for help from the police authorities. But the number of police people that were deployed there was inadequate; this was on the 30th. But when it was anticipated that there might be some clashes, again, some requisition was made from the State Government to send more police people there. But by that time the incident took place.

बी जेडक बिहारी वाजपेयी : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मेरे सवाल का जवाब नहीं आया। आंक कीजिए कि बार बार क्यों नहीं होता

जाहता। मैं सबसब यह पूछ रहा हूँ कि कोलियरी में जो सेक्युरिटी स्टाफ था उस के बारे में और ये कह रहे हैं मध्य प्रदेश पुलिस के बारे में।

MR. SPEAKER: At the colliery, was there any security man on duty at that time? That is the question that he is asking.

SHRI SUBODH HANSDA: I cannot exactly say whether the security man was there or not. But the chief security officer was not there and he came only on the....

MR. SPEAKER: This is under investigation; suppose it is found that he was there or he was not there, and the Minister says something else here....

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: The point of my question was this Mr. Sathe has also mentioned that point. In view of what has happened, we do not have confidence in a local investigation by the Madhya Pradesh Government. The Madhya Pradesh Minister of Law and Jail who comes from this district, namely the Shahdol district is a man reputed to be very much hand in glove with this Afzar Ali ...

MR. SPEAKER: Order Let him not take advantage of this to cast some reflections on persons who are not here.

यह केम चल रहा है वहाँ पर इन्वेस्टिगेशन हो रही है। कौन्स पूछ सकते हैं।

They can only ask for facts but they cannot have a debate on it.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI: This incident has taken place in the Madhya Pradesh colliery....

SHRI R. S. PANDEY: Since this has happened in Madhya Pradesh, I must also be given an opportunity to ask a question.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI: For your information and for the information of the hon. Minister, I would like to submit one thing. Immediately after the taking over of the coal mines, the trouble started between the trade union leaders and the management. The management, of course, was in the private sector earlier and now in the public sector. They were in league with the gangsters earlier and that is so at the present time also.

The tension started in regard to the enlisting of the labourers in the muster rolls. I would like to know whether it is not a fact that due to pressurizing by certain political sections, whether it be the Congress or the Communists or the CPM people, some section of the management had created an atmosphere in the colliery which prevented the enlistment of the genuine labourers in the muster roll while only some bogus persons or gangsters buttressing certain trade union leaders in all the nationalised coal mines were enrolled. Is the hon. Minister prepared to make an investigation by an impartial authority other than the management in this regard.

SHRI SUBODH HANSDA: In this case, the two parties wanted to push their own candidates for employment....

SHRI A. P. SHARMA: Who are they?

SHRI SUBODH HANSDA: I do not want to mention that. But there were two parties who wanted to push their own candidates for employment....

SHRI PILOO MODY: Why can he not mention the names?

SHRI SUBODH HANSDA: But for ensuring employment to the local people, the authorities there decided that the recruitment should be made through the employment exchange; the employment exchange should sponsor the names of the people;

the recruitment committee which was set up under the management then interviewed

When they were interviewed and the interview was continuing, one of the groups objected saying that it is wrong to allow candidates sponsored by the local employment exchange. It was in pursuance of that objection that they called a lightning strike.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI: Is he prepared to make an investigation in all the coal mines? Otherwise you cannot stop this. It will go on every day.

श्री बनशंह प्रधान : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं आप के माध्यम से जानना चाहता हूँ कि घटना घटित होने के तुरन्त बाद अपराधियों को अरेस्ट क्यों नहीं किया गया ? शहडोल जिले के "दैनिक जनबोध" पत्र में यह निकला है कि अफसर अली के पास से एक पिस्तौल, ग़लाम मोहम्मद के पास से एक पिस्तौल और मूति सिंह के पास से तलवार बरामद की जा चुकी है। सिर काटने वाले प्रमुख धुजवा और मूति सिंह पुलिस की गिरफ्त में आ चुके हैं और इन्होंने खेत में कटे हुए सिर के अवशेष बरामद करवा दिए हैं। तो मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि इन को तुरन्त अरेस्ट क्यों नहीं किया ?

दूसरी बात—मृत श्रमिकों के परिवार और अपराधियों के बारे में क्या किया जा रहा है ?

तीसरी बात—क्या मंत्री महोदय को पता है कि झगड़ा कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी और सत्ताधारी पार्टी की युनियनों के माध्यम से हुआ ?

चौथी बात—क्या पूरे देश भर में सभी राष्ट्रीयकृत कोयला खानों में इस प्रकार की हत्याएं रोकने के लिए सरकार क्या कर रही है।

SHRI SUBODH HANSDA: I have already replied. I have already said that 10 persons have already been arrested. The hon. member said

that some of these people had some arms in their hands. I cannot say now about it. Since investigation is going on that will bring out whether they had any arms in their hands.

Regarding Compensation, I have already said that each family has been given Rs. 1,000 as a sort of relief. It has also been decided that one person from each family will be given a job in the colliery.

SHRI R S PANDEY I do not want to make it a political or regional issue. But there is an important and cogent question to which I want a categorical answer. What protection are you going to give to those workers who are working in the colliery? Rivalry is bound to be there. There may be two or three trade unions. It was a very old and common practice in the private sector to engage gangsters. But after nationalisation this tarnishes our good name and fame and the very purpose of nationalisation is defeated if any worker is to be butchered like this. So I want to know whether after nationalisation you have made arrangement for giving proper protection to the workers who are working.

SHRI SUBODH HANSDA. I have already said that the workers are protected. Without the assistance of the State Government, it is not possible to keep the law and order problem in a very safe position.

As regards the working of the mines, there is complete normalcy in the mines where this incident took place and the mine is working normally.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYYA: Sir, Mr. Das Munshi has put a very relevant question. All trouble started with the enrolment of the workers after nationalisation. My specific question is, what has the Government done uptill now with re-

gard to enrolment of actual workers who were working before nationalisation. Secondly, he has mentioned that ten or twelve persons have been arrested. Who are they? So far as our information goes, they are all outsiders headed by Afsar Ali. How is it that these persons were allowed to enter the coal mines when there is security posted at the gate. Outsiders cannot enter the colliery which is a protected place. What is the answer?

SHRI SUBODH HANSDA Sir, regarding the enrolment of genuine workers, the question is too general. This is a colliery owned by the NCDC. There is no question of enrolment of genuine workers. As regards the other point which the hon. Member has raised, I have no information whether the security man was present on the spot or not. So I cannot off hand say.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: You should have got that information.

SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA. Sir, the reply of the Minister reveals a disappointing state of affair. From the picture he has presented, it seems that the dispute was between the loyal workers and the workers who were on strike. If this is the reply, then, this amounts to reducing the investigation and enquiry into a big crime. Therefore, Sir, I would like to know whether the Management itself had brought these criminals from outside, against the striking workers. I would like to know whether the Minister has any information on this or not. I would also like to know whether it is a fact, when he visited the mine, the man killer Asaf Ali was with him and due to that the local officials of Madhya Pradesh had no courage to arrest him because a Central Minister was with him, with the accused. I would like to know about this.

MR SPEAKER: Don't bring in the names of persons who are not in the

House. This is not the practice in the House. You are mentioning the names of persons who are outside the House. The investigation is already going on.

SHRI BHOJENDRA JHA: I want to know a simple thing whether the Minister is aware of the fact that the main killer was with him. I would also like to know whether any action has been taken against the Management who have got these murders committed. My another question is, as put by Mr. Indrajit Gupta, whether any compensation is proposed to be given or not.

SHRI SUBODH HANSDA: Regarding his first question, I should say 'No'. This is because, the authorities had not allowed any person from outside. It is in the interest of the Mines Authority that they should have no person from outside. Secondly, he asked whether Afsar Ali or somebody was with me. I do not know. I have not visited the mines. The Madhya Pradesh Minister visited that colliery. I do not know whether that gentleman was with him or not. As regards compensation, these workers died not inside the mines or while working. The question of compensation does not arise. We have given monetary help to their families.

श्री हुकूम चन्द कछवाय : मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूँ—जिस समय यह घटना हुई, उस के कितनी देर बाद पुलिस को पता लगा ? इस घटना के कितने दिनों बाद आप दौरे पर गये ? आप ने जांच के आदेश कब दिये ? इन दोनों में कितने समय का अन्तर है ? घटना के कितने दिनों बाद इन लोगों की गिरफ्तारी हुई तथा जितनी गिरफ्तारी हुई है उन के नाम क्या हैं ?

MR. SPEAKER: You are putting questions as if the minister is a witness in a court. It is not in the interest of the enquiry itself.

श्री हुकूम चन्द कछवाय : अध्यक्ष महोदय जो एन्कवायरी की जा रही है, उस पर किसी को विश्वास नहीं है, क्योंकि वह मन्त्र अदेश सरकार द्वारा कराई जा रही है। इस लिये हमारा कहना है कि सी० बी० आई० के द्वारा जांच कराई जाय। वहाँ पर पहले और भी ऐसी घटनाएँ हुई हैं तथा एन्कवायरी भी हुई लेकिन किसी की रिपोर्ट आज तक नहीं आई।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : देखिये, मैं भी इस प्रॉफेशन में रहा हूँ इन से ऐसी बातें न कहलवाइये, जिस से एन्कवायरी पर असर पड़े। मैं आप को ठीक राय दे रहा हूँ, यह काम आप उन पर छोड़ दीजिये—एसे सबाल पूछने से एन्कवायरी असरप्रन्दाज हो सकती है।

SHRI N. SREEKANTAN NAIR: The hon. Minister stated in his reply that in order to recruit the local people the employment exchange was consulted. Is he aware of the fact that whether it is a public sector or private sector undertaking, under section 25(b) of the Industrial Disputes Act the first priority has to be given to the retrenched workers? Will he and his Government at least in future follow this principle, instead of being parochial and trying to be political in recruiting local people?

SHRI SUBODH HANSDA: This mine was closed in 1968. So, there is no question of retrenched workers.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: There were workers who worked before the closure.

SHRI SUBODH HANSDA: Most of the workers have been absorbed in the other mine. Here it is a question of recruiting new people for the new mine which was going to be opened.

SHRI N. SREEKANTAN NAIR: The Minister has not answered the question whether he is aware of section 25(b) of the Industrial Disputes Act.