

LOK SABHA DEBATES

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LOK SABHA

Friday, April 1, 1977/Chaitra 11, 1899
(Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

MEMBERS SWORN

Shri S. B. Shah (Kheri)

Shri Madhav Prasad Tripathi (Doma-
riaganj)

Shrimati Kamala Bahuguna (Phul-
pur).

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION

Re-opening of Jute Mills in West Bengal

SNQ 1. SHRI DHIRENDRANATH
BASU: Will the Minister of COM-
MERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND
COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the closed jute mills of
West Bengal will be re-opened or
taken over by Government; and

(b) whether Government are con-
sidering to provide or make arrange-
ment for adequate compensation for
the unemployed workmen of the
closed jute mills?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE
AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND CO-
OPERATION (SHRI MOHAN
DHARIA): (a) and (b). A State-
165 L.S.—1

ment is laid on the Table of the
House.

Statement

The Jute Industry is one of the
major organised industries of the
country and occupies a significant
position in the national economy. Al-
though its share in the country's ex-
port trade has of late declined for
various reasons, it still holds a pre-
eminent position and accounts for a
sizable portion of the country's dollar
earnings. With about 43,000 looms
installed in 74 units, the industry ac-
counted for about 32 per cent of world
production and about 46 per cent of
world export of jute goods in 1974.
The total capital employed in the in-
dustry is of the order of Rs. 300
crores approximately, generating em-
ployment to approximately two and
half lakh workers. Moreover, culti-
vation of jute provides a living to
nearly forty lakh farm families.

To a large extent, the jute indus-
try depends for its health on the
external market. Of late, our foreign
jute market has shrunk to a disturb-
ing extent. Besides recession, com-
petition from synthetics and other
jute exporting countries added to the
difficulty of the industry. The lack
of investment for modernisation, re-
search and development and out-
dated family based management
system are some of the well-known
causes of the present situation of the
jute industry. Due to various rea-
sons, the jute industry has been pass-
ing through a serious situation.

As on the 30th December, 1976, the
following jute mills are affected by
work stoppage:

1. Khardah Jute Mill.
2. Union Jute Co.

[Shri Mohan Dharia]

3. Bharat Jute Mill.
4. Waverly.
5. Naffar Chandra.
6. Alexandra.
7. Kelvin
8. Rai Bahadur Hurdutrai Motilal Jute Mill, having resumed production on 13-10-1976 again was affected by work stoppage with effect from the 25th December, 1976.

On the 30th December, 1976, a Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri P. K. Kaul, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Commerce was formed for ensuring that closed jute mills, capable of being reopened, would start functioning. The Committee has gone into the cases of work stoppage and has been making a case by case study of the problems of the affected jute mills.

Kelvin Jute Mill and Waverly Jute Mill resumed production with effect from 1-2-1977 and 31-1-1977 respectively. Moreover, Kinnison Jute Mill, which was almost on the verge of closure, has also been revived.

The Committee has been holding series of meetings and is trying to tie up all financial arrangements required for reopening the affected jute mills. The work of the Committee has been further activated. Dialogues have been held by the Committee with the Banks concerned as also with the Industrial Re-construction Corporation of India, Industrial Finance Corporation of India, Industrial Development Bank of India and the Reserve Bank of India. It has been generally agreed, in principle, that in viable cases, start up expenses and additional margin requirements would be provided by the Industrial Re-construction Corporation of India. It has further been agreed, in principle, that working capital requirements would be provided by the concerned commercial banks and that capital requirements for modernisation, re-

novation, balancing etc. will be provided by the Industrial Finance Corporation of India. The cases of reopening Khardah Jute Mill, Union Jute Company and Alexandra Jute Mill are in advanced stage of consideration.

The State Government of Bihar has been requested to examine the viability of Rai Bahadur Hurdutrai Motilal Jute Mill so that they may obtain institutional finance for reopening the same jute mill, in case it is found viable.

Negotiations have been initiated for arranging some concessional finance for restarting Naffarchandra Jute Mill.

The question relating to grant of admissible reliefs to the industrial workers affected by work stoppage falls within the jurisdiction of the respective State Governments.

SHRI DHIRENDRANATH BASU: May I know whether the Government is considering giving any compensation to unemployed workmen, who remain unemployed due to closure of jute mills in West Bengal?

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: I have said in the statement that five jute mills are closed in West Bengal and one jute mill in Bihar. All efforts are being made by the government to see that the mills which are now closed resume work. It is in this connection that I referred to the committee which has been appointed under the chairmanship of Shri Kaul. The House will be happy to know that Waverly Mill had started working on 31 January 1977 and Kelvin Mill on 1 February 1977. Besides Khardah Jute Company, Alexandra and Union Jute Company are in an advanced stage of negotiations because the public financial institutions have agreed to come forward in respect of those mills and we are trying our best so that employees would not suffer and

production of jute also would not suffer.

SHRI DHIRENDRANATH BASU: Will the Minister be pleased to probe into the causes of closure of jute mills in West Bengal?

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: Sir, I said in my reply that lack of investment for modernisation, research and development and out-dated family based management system are some of the well-known causes for the present situation of the jute industry and it shall be the endeavour of my Ministry to go into the whole thing.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: Are the Government aware of the fact that the jute industry in West Bengal is in severe crisis and would the Government make any assurance that they would make an in-depth study of the crisis of the jute industry? Of course, the previous Government had appointed a committee of this nature and it did not bring in any fruitful results. Would the hon. Minister be pleased to state whether there is another Committee going to be appointed which will go into crisis in this industry and suggest remedial measures? My second question is whether the Government proposes to nationalise the industry as a whole in the interests of the workers, in the interests of the jute growers and in the interest of the country's economy? Whether it is also a fact that about 80,000 workers in the jute industry have lost their jobs during the last few months? What relief the Government proposes to give to these people who have lost their jobs? Whether it is also a fact that a large number of Badli workers are working in the industry? What steps the Government proposes to take to employ them on a permanent basis in the industry?

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: Sir, so far as the working of the Committee is concerned, it will be a great injustice to the Committee to say that they

have not done any job. I am thoroughly satisfied with their work and since I took charge of the Ministry, I activated the working of the Committee itself and in this connection, we have contacted some public financial institutions. This is the first time that the public financial institutions have come together to help this industry, particularly the jute mills. Regarding the nationalisation of jute mills, there is no such proposal before the Government. My friend would agree with me that by nationalising jute mills, all these problems cannot necessarily be solved because the issues and the reasons are quite different. Regarding relief to workers, I do have all my sympathies so far as the workers are concerned. I wish that early steps had been taken by the previous Government when the apprehensions regarding the closure of the mills were there. Unfortunately it was not done. However, this House will appreciate that labour matters of this industry is under the jurisdiction of the State Governments and not under the Central Government. Regarding 'badli' workers, it is for the State Governments to take into consideration how many badli workers are working there. However, I can assure the House that I shall take up this issue with the State Governments so that these workers do not suffer.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Sir, both my hon. friends are considering that the jute industry problems are the problems of West Bengal only. But it is the problem of whole of India because it is a large foreign exchange earning industry and it is also maintaining thousands of labourers in Bihar, Orissa, and West Bengal. And in view of the crisis, there seems to be a belief that there had been some under-hand dealings in jute mills by the erstwhile Congress Ministers. This had created a kind of suspicion there. It is also believed that certain artifi-

[Shri Samar Guha]

cial crisis had been created in the jute mills and also in the functioning of the jute Corporation. I would like to know whether the government would institute enquiries at two levels. The first enquiry should be to see whether there has been any underhand dealings with the jute magnates for the collection of funds for the election as well as party funds and also whether in dealing with the Jute Corporation a similar thing happened. That is one cycle. The second cycle is that the committee which has been appointed should be reoriented or reorganised with mostly experts to go into the details about the nature of the crisis and suggest solutions not only to save the industry but also to enhance the production as well as jute cultivation in West Bengal.

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: As I said this is one of the major industries of our country. Unfortunately, the countries which used to import jute from us have started using synthetic materials instead of jute. That is one basic reason for the demand going down. There is also a tendency in the world today to handle in bulk and naturally articles like foodgrains and others are carried through holds. In retail packaging lot of plastics are used. That is why the demand has gone down. About internal consumption, we are trying our best to see that the jute industry does not suffer for lack of demand. The other problem is about per-acre yield. There were not much efforts made to have better yield. The yield is about 1100 lbs. per acre. If we can increase the yield, it may be possible to take care of the prices and also ensure that the mills get adequate raw material. We are aware of the problems of the industry. About underhand dealings and collection of funds, we shall have to go into it. I cannot say offhand anything today. I shall certainly go into this aspect. About the committee, I can assure the House

that the Kaul Committee has been (doing an extremely) good job. We shall certainly take the help of expertise that may be needed so that we can modernise the industry and take it out of the crisis that it has been facing.

श्री युवराज : क्या वाणिज्य मंत्री जी यह बताएंगे कि बिहार राज्य की सरकार ने इस सम्बन्ध में आर० बी० एच० एम० जूट मिल्स, कटिहार को शीघ्र अपने अधीन लेने की सिफारिश की है ?

श्री मोहन धारिया : माननीय सदस्य ने जो सवाल उठाया है, उस के बारे में मैं यह बता दूँ कि बिहार गवर्नमेंट के साथ हमारा डाइलोग चल रहा है और वहाँ पर जो एक जूट मिल, राय बहादुर हरिदत्त राय मोती लाल जूट मिल, बन्द है, वह शुरू हो सके, इसके लिए हमने कोशिश की है और हम उम्मीद करते हैं कि वहाँ की गवर्नमेंट का सहयोग हमें मिलेगा। हमारी तरफ से हमारी जो फाईनेन्शियल इंस्टीट्यूशन है, उस का पूरा सहयोग दिया जाएगा।

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: You are no doubt aware of the fact that 40 lakhs of farmers from Andhra, Bihar, Assam, Orissa and West Bengal are engaged in the jute industry. There are 2½ lakh workers, majority of whom are from Bihar, UP and Orissa; 16 to 17 lakhs are engaged in the trade of jute; 60 to 70 thousand workers have been laid off or retrenched. As of today, I want to know how many mills are really lying closed. On 8th February, 1977 after my release from the black era of emergency. I spoke to Prof. D. P. Chattopadhyaya, the then Commerce Minister and he had promised that he was ensuring opening of at least two mills in the Budge Budge area. What has been done about it?

The IDBI is also going to give soft loan to jute, engineering and textile industry. Is it not a fact that the

Indian Jute Mills Association have paid Rs. 2 crores through one of your predecessors during UP elections and Rs. 5 crores in the current elections.

The trouble had been the greed for maximum profit. Rs. 100 crores have been given for modernisation. What is modernisation? Modernisation means shrinkage of job opportunities. Will this be suitable in our conditions?

Export duty is virtually abolished. They have purchased it under pressure. Jute is one of the highest foreign exchange earning commodity. Therefore, regarding reinstatement of those who have been laid off, you cannot shrink the responsibility because you reap the harvest. The money that is earned through foreign exchange comes through the central exchequer. You cannot pass on the liability to the State Government. You have to intervene in the matter.

About compensation to the workers to cover debt for survival, what are you going to do about it? They are living in semi starvation conditions. Many have become destitutes and they are on the streets. The only remedy is nationalisation of jute mills. There is a very interesting report from Dedhalm laboratory in the United States which has said that jute could be processed to make it fit for human garments. Why that report has been shelved? And why that report has not been implemented?

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: Regarding information about the present jute mills, the production, number of workers employed and all that, if the hon. Member refers to the statement which has been laid on the Table of the House by me, in its first para, it contains lot of information. Anyway, I cannot prevent Mr. Bosu from making the statement while he is asking a supplementary.

I have already said that nationalisation of jute industry is not the solu-

tion to the present crisis. The issues are quite deep. Presently while facing the marketing problem, particularly in the foreign areas because of the use of synthetics instead of jute, I do agree with Mr. Bosu that all possible efforts shall have to be made so that along with the use of new science and technology, jute is converted for some other purposes so that the demand and the markets could be propped up.

Regarding relief to workers, I have said that we are sympathetic and I entirely agree that this problem shall have to be resolved as early as possible. It shall be my endeavour and I can assure the House that out of these 8 mills which were closed on 30-12-76 at least six mills will be operating within the next three or four months. That shall be my endeavour. But the problem will be regarding the raw material. My friend Mr. Bosu is very well aware that the raw material shall be available from July onwards, particularly from September/October onwards. Till that time we have no buffer stock and no imports are possible. I have examined that possibility also. Let us be realistic to the problem. Anyway, I assure that I have all my sympathies so far as workers are concerned. If we resume the working of the mills, we can solve the problem to a great extent. Regarding interim relief, I shall request the Labour Minister of the Central Government to take up this matter with the State Government.

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI: May I know from the Minister whether, as a result of the closure of jute mills, our exports of jute and jute goods have declined? If so, what is the amount of loss suffered so far?

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: Our exports have not declined because of the closure of the mills. They have declined because there is no demand in the foreign market.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: It is so because it is being manipulated.

शौचरी बलबीर सिंह : जूट से बने हुए माल को प्रोत्साहन देने के लिए और इंटरनेशनल मार्किट में जो इसके एक्सपोर्ट में मी आ गई है सको प्रोत्साहन देने के लिए क्या पोलिथीन के थैले जो सरकारी इदारे इस्तेमाल करते हैं उन पर आप रोक लगाएंगे ?

अध्यक्ष महोदय : वह इस सवाल से नहीं उटता है। आप सवाल को पढ़ें और उसके बाद पूछें।
The Minister will answer you; but it has no bearing on this question.

शौचरी बलबीर सिंह : मांग को बढ़ाने के लिए पोलिथीन बैन्ज जो सरकारी इदारे इस्तेमाल करते हैं, उनको बन्द किया जा सकता है। मिलें बन्द हो रही हैं। यह बहुत इम्पार्टेंट सवाल है।

श्री मोहन धारिया : हमारा इसका एक्सपोर्ट बढ़े इसके लिये जो एक्सपोर्ट ड्यूटी है उसको पूरी तरह से एबालिश कर दिया गया है। दूसरी बात यह है कि पूरी दुनिया में अगर सिथेटिक का इस्तेमाल होता है सिमेंट के लिए भी होता है, फटिलाइजर के लिए भी होता है तो अगर जूट का इस्तेमाल करते हैं तो उससे सिमेंट हो या फटिलाइजर हो उसका काफी नुक्सान होता है। यह भी हमें खयाल रखना होगा। पूरी बात को खयाल में रख कर हमें काम करना होगा। ज्यूट इंडस्ट्री बढ़े ज्यूट का उत्पादन बढ़े इसके लिए जो कोशिश करनी है वह हम करते रहेंगे।

(Interruption)

MR. SPEAKER: The question is about West Bengal.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYA: My question is very simple. Mr. Mohan Dharia is a knowledgeable person, I know. His predecessor, Mr. Devi Prasad Chattopadhyaya,

made a categorical statement on the floor of this House just before dissolution of Lok Sabha that the Khardah jute mill will be re-opened. A question was put to him and he gave a reply. May I ask the Minister whether his predecessor has run away with the file? If the files are available with the new Minister, he may consult them and take steps immediately. I know that he has already committed to this that within 4 months, 6 mills will be re-opened. May I appeal to him kindly to see that the Khardah mill is re-opened within a month, and not 6 months? The new Minister should not follow in the footsteps of his predecessor of simply expressing pious wish and thereby hood-wink the people.

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: From my little experience I can say that even though Mr. Chattopadhyaya is no more in the Ministry, the files are available in the Ministry. I would be glad to start the mills as early as possible. But there are several inherent difficulties. I can tell them. The matter regarding one mill has gone to the High Court.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYA: Regarding Khardah mill, I can tell you that the case is no longer in the High Court.

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: I am quoting several difficulties that are there and in one case the liquidation proceedings are there. We are telling the States that they should not be liquidated. So, naturally, now we shall have to go to the High Court. In the case of other mills, it is not a question of finance so much. Those mills require repairs. They are old mills. There should be replacement of everything, right from the management. There are several questions. Without applying my mind to all those problems, I am not really going to pump the money of the people into these jute mills. But I can assure my hon. friends that all possible care will be taken to see that the jute mills

which are closed, start as expeditiously and early as possible. But we should not do anything in haste because of which we will again be the sufferers.

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY: The Minister has correctly stated that one of the causes for the closure of the mills is that there is no demand for jute goods in foreign countries. I want to know what sort of arrangements he is making so that there will be a good market for jute goods abroad. Secondly, Shri Samar Guha has said that we have got suspicion about some people making some money. I want to know whether he has got any definite information about it which he can supply to the House.

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: I have mentioned in my statement:

“That lack of investment for modernisation, research and development and out-dated family-based management system are some of the well known causes of the present situation of the jute industry.”

I have not stated that the jute mills have closed because the foreign markets have gone down. I have not made any such statement. Secondly, regarding the malpractices, it shall be my endeavour to go into them. But, as the hon. Member is well aware, all these under-hand dealings are carried out without any evidence. So, it is very difficult to find them out because of want of evidence. What we can do is to take care of them for the future.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYA: What can the Minister here do when the Minister in the State is hand in glove with the Jute Mill Owners' Association?

MR. SPEAKER: No, Mr. Bhattacharya, this is not the way to ask a question.

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYA: It is a fact. If you will kindly permit me, I will prove that it is a fact.

MR. SPEAKER: Will he kindly sit down? Even if it is a fact, it cannot be raised like this between the two Members. There is a procedure for that in the House.

श्री उपसेन : माननीय अध्यक्ष महोदय, इस बात को देखते हुए कि पश्चिम बंगाल की जूट मिलों का उत्पादन ठीक से नहीं हो रहा है क्या मंत्री जी अपनी सरकार की नीति की स्पष्ट घोषणा करेंगे कि इन तमाम मिलों का जो पश्चिम बंगाल तथा दूसरे प्रान्तों में हैं उनका तत्काल राष्ट्रीयकरण किया जायगा ?

श्री मोहन धारिया : मैं ने तो बता दिया है कि केवल राष्ट्रीयकरण करने से यह मसला हल नहीं होगा और जो कारण मैं ने अपने स्टेटमेंट में बताये हैं उन के आधार पर इस बात का ध्यान रखते हुए कि जूट इंडस्ट्री हमारे देश की बड़ी इंडस्ट्री है हमारी पूरी कोशिश रहेगी कि यह इंडस्ट्री आगे बढ़े ।

I am not going into the question whether previously one Minister was hand in glove with the Jute Mill Owners' Association. But this House can rest assured that, so far as this Government is concerned, there will not be any sort of under-hand dealing as in the past. In fact, I have already started operations to clean the Commerce Ministry, which has got some notorious name outside. I can assure this House further-more that not only in the case of the officers but also the industrialists or the exporters, if they try to play any unfair practice, all possible care will be taken to see that they do not have any place in the Commerce Ministry, they do not get any co-operation from the Commerce Ministry. The House can rest assured of that.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA: In the course of his reply, the hon. Minister has stated that the States have got a

[Shri K. Lakkappa]

certain responsibility. So, I would like to know the attitude of the Government towards the financial assistance required by the States from the Centre for easing the situation there.

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: I have already stated that this question is related to the sick jute mills. We have already discussed the matter with the public finance institutions. It is the first time perhaps that they have come forward, as they have done in the case of the textile industry or the engineering industry, to give proper assistance to these sick jute mills. To that extent all possible co-operation will be given to these mills and the State Governments, and no party politics will come between the State and the Centre as in the past.

श्री लखन लाल कपूर : बिहार में 30 फीसदी जट पैदा होता है, मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि कटिहार के राय बहादुर हरदत्त चमरिया जूट मिल को सरकार अपने हाथ में लेने के लिये क्या कोई समय निर्धारित करेगी ?

किशनगंज और फारबेसगंज में सरकारी जूट मिल खोलने के लिये शिलान्यास हो चुका है, इन दोनों स्थानों पर कब तक मिल खोलने की व्यवस्था होगी ?

जो मिल बन्दी और मन्दी के कारण जूट उत्पादकों को घाटा हो रहा है, मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि सरकार एस० टी० सी० के माध्यम से उनकी जूट खरीद कर क्या उनके घाटे की पूर्ति की व्यवस्था करेगी ?

श्री मोहन धारिया : माननीय सदस्य के सवालों का जवाब मैंने पहले ही दे दिया है। बिहार गवर्नमेंट के साथ हमारी बातचीत चल रही है। कि वहां पर जो जूट मिल बन्द हैं वह कैसे जल्दी से जल्दी चालू हो सकते हैं। इसकी कोशिश हमारी चल रही है।

SHRI T. A. PAI: In view of the fact that jute is one of the most important industries of the country employing lakhs of people and that the future of the industry depends upon our international markets, apart from short-term measures that the Government would like to take, I would request them to look into the long-term prospects within three months and prepare a comprehensive plan because so far we have been attending to it in a piece-meal manner to meet expediencies from time to time. It is a question of not only the international markets but also how the internal market can be stimulated and how the industry, which has failed to take advantage of research and development in the course of these years, can meet foreign competition. Would the Government therefore consider not only substitution of old machinery by new machinery but, if necessary, the restructuring of the industry?

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: I entirely agree with the hon. Member and I can assure him that with the co-operation of the hon. Member and other Members of the House we would very much like to take care of this industry and take measures in a proper perspective. My Ministry will endeavour to see how we can have that sort of planning.

श्री ठुक्कमदेव नारायण यादव : मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ कि बीमार जूट मिलों के लिये क्या उन्होंने किसी दवा का अब तक आविष्कार किया है जिससे उनको जल्द से जल्द तन्दुरुस्त बनाया जा सके ? जूट मिलों के बन्द होने से, किसान जो उत्पादन करता है, उससे उसकी खेती पर भी असर पड़ता है। अगर जूट मिल बन्द होगी तो किसान की हालत भी बदतर होगी और उसके परिवार पर भी असर पड़ेगा। बीमार मिल जल्द तन्दुरुस्त हो सके और किसान की खेती भी सुधर सके, इसके लिये जल्द कदम उठाये जाने चाहिये।

श्री मोहन धारिया : माननीय सदस्य ने जो सवाल उठाया, मैंने उनका ही जवाब दिया था। मैं फिर कहना चाहता हूँ कि इस बारे में हमारी पूरी कोशिश होगी।

SHRI S. KUNDU: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I read the statement of the hon. Minister with great care and attention. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the crisis in Jute Industry would be accounted for to the gains of emergency? The jute industry started facing crisis after June 25th soon after the second emergency was declared and more than 50 jute mills were closed down with the result that about 80,000 workers, direct and indirect, were thrown out of employment. Concessions amounting to about Rs. 16 crores are given to them. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he would make a statement regarding this so that we could know what are the gains of emergency? Day before yesterday, there was a report in the Economic Times. According to that report, some more jute mills are going to be closed. I would like to know what is the real state of affairs in this industry? Thirdly, in the statement, in the second paragraph, it is mentioned, "Of late, our foreign jute market has shrunk to a disturbing extent." I think this is a story of about one year back. This story was given by the Ministry of Commerce which administered the department during the emergency. I think the hon. Minister would throw some light on this. I think as usual some officers must have prepared this statement. The facts are not upto date. I would like to know what is the actual position of the entire market?

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: So far as this industry and the emergency is concerned, perhaps the present state of affairs of the jute industry itself is enough to reflect over the so-called gains of emergency. This industry had suffered badly during the emergency. It has never happened in the

past. So far as the next point regarding some additional mills falling sick is concerned, I have taken note of it. If the reference of the hon. Member is towards those jute mills from Andhra where there is a strike, I may say that I am equally ignorant because I have read about it this morning. I have called for the reports of the State Governments. I may further add that I am as ignorant as the hon. Member is. As far as your third point regarding the entire position of the market is concerned, I have already replied to that point.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, about 90,000 workers have been retrenched due to the closure of these jute mills. I want to know from the hon. Minister whether any measures will be taken against the owners of these mills for illegally closing these mills? I also want to know from the hon. Minister whether Government will advise the Jute Corporation of India to supply raw jute to the flour mills for reopening of the jute mills?

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: That is the reason why the word 'stoppage' of the jute mills has been used in my statement. I have not used the word 'closure'. I do not know whether it is legal or illegal. It is for the State Governments to find out whether the management has closed these mills legally or illegally; whether there was any lay-off or not and whether they would pay compensation for it or not. I know nothing about it. I am very much concerned about the stoppage of work which amounts to retrenchment immediately. Regarding the other aspect, I have already explained.

श्री मनोहर लाल : मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि जो बड़ी-बड़ी जूट मिलें बीमार पड़ी हैं, उन की व्यवस्था ठीक करने के साथ साथ क्या सरकार छोटे पैमाने पर जूट उद्योग की तरक्की के लिए कदम उठाएगी जिस से कारखानों को भी फायदा होगा ?

श्री मोहन धारिया : यह जूट कारपोरेशन जो हमने पैदा किया है वह ऐसे काश्तकारों की मदद करने के लिए और जूट इंडस्ट्री को डेवलप करने के लिए किया है। इन का काम जितना अच्छा होना चाहिए था वह नहीं था। अब यह कारपोरेशन अच्छा काम करेगा ऐसी हमें उम्मीद है।

श्री मनोहरलाल : मेरा प्रश्न साफ नहीं हुआ। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि जो बीमार मिलें पड़ी हुई हैं उन की व्यवस्था करने के साथ-साथ छोटे मोटे रैमाने पर जूट उद्योग की तरक्की के लिए भी क्या सरकार व्यवस्था करेगी।

MR. SPEAKER: We have taken a long time on this short notice Question. Because there is no Question Hour, I wanted to be liberal. That was why I allowed 40 minutes on this Question. When we have Question Hour next week, if we take up time like this on a Question, we will be able to dispose of only one or two Questions. It is not possible. Today, there is no Question Hour and that was why I thought, let all the Members get a chance. That is enough.

11.40 hrs.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

CERTAIN REMARKS BY SHRI T. N. KAUL,
ON TELEVISION NETWORK IN U.S.A. IN
JULY, 1975

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Under Rule 222/223, I have already given notice seeking your consent to raise an issue of privilege. The facts of the case are as follows:—

On 11-7-75, after the proclamation of Emergency, Shri T. N. Kaul, the then Indian Ambassador in U.S., presently Chairman, Indian Council for Cultural Relations—I am told he

has resigned today or yesterday—in an interview telecast by the B.B.C., one of the national television network of the USA said:

“Political leaders had not been jailed but detained in houses.”

This is a gross distortion of truth and it wholly contradicts publications already made in Part II Bulletins of Lok Sabha under your orders and authority notifying arrests and detentions of a number of political leaders in the Opposition. By this action, he has committed a serious breach of privilege of the House as well as of the Members detained in jails.

I, therefore, request that the matter be referred to the Privileges Committee for proceeding further into it.

11.40 hrs.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister.

श्री मधु लिमये (बांका) : आप मुझे थोड़ा सुन लीजिए। इस पर मैं बोलना चाहता हूँ।

MR. SPEAKER: I have asked the Minister to reply.

श्री मधु लिमये : जवाब बाद में देंगे न ?

MR. SPEAKER: That means all the Members can speak on this. I would like to have your assistance and cooperation on this, in future also, in regard to the procedure to be adopted as to whether other Members can speak on a matter of privilege raised by an hon. Member. If other Members also participate, then it becomes a debate. If I allow Mr. Limaye, I will have to allow Mr. Subramaniam Swamy also and other Members from the other side also. Am I to allow all the Members to support him or oppose him?