

Opposition, it has become much more difficult to gather any meaning in his speeches. His criticism will have no effect because it was only meaningless jargon." To that, Dr. Khare gave a befitting reply and he said:

"My criticism did not have any effect not because it was meaningless jargon, but because Pandit Nehru had behind him serried ranks of voting automatons who had pawned their common sense to him."

Sir, he was a great orator, a great speaker, a good poet and a good writer. His biography itself is worth studying, as my hon. friend rightly said. We all associate with the sentiments expressed and convey our condolences to the bereaved family.

MR. SPEAKER: The House may stand in silence for a short while to express its sorrow.

The Members then stood in silence for a short while

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

SHRI SHRI CHAND GOYAL: Sir, before you take up the Question, I would like to invite the attention of the House to two important events. First, our victory in the Davis Cup and our young players, Shri Premjit Lall and Shri Jaideep Mukerjee deserve our congratulations.

MR. SPEAKER: We extend our congratulations to them.

SHRI SHRI CHAND GOYAL: Secondly due to the serious earthquake in Turkey, thousands of people have died and they also deserve our sympathies.

Need-based Minimum Wage for Central Government Employees

*661. SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a final decision has since been taken to include the feasibility of need-based minimum wage for Central Government employees in the terms of reference of the Third Pay Commission; and

(b) if not, the reasons for the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI P. C. SETHI): (a) Government propose to include the consideration of the need-based minimum wage in all its aspects in the terms of reference of the new Pay Commission.

(b) Does not arise.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: I am happy that after all the sacrifices made by the Central Government employees during 19th September strike, the Government have decided to include the question of need-based minimum wage in the terms of reference to the Third Pay Commission. I would like to know from the Government one thing. The minimum wage in H.S.L. is Rs. 207.50 p. in H. E. L. it is Rs. 195 and in H. E. C. it is Rs. 195 which are also Government undertakings whereas a Central Government employee, in Railways, in Defence or in Income-tax or anywhere, gets Rs. 141. I would like to know from the Government whether they have taken a decision to see that the interim relief is given to compensate for this loss, for the amount which falls short of ranging between Rs. 195 to Rs 207.50 p., and for the rise in prices and, if so, whether any time-limit has been fixed for that.

SHRI P. C. SETHI: The question of need-based minimum wage was also considered by the National Commission which submitted its report in August, 1969. I would like to point for the benefit of the hon. Member the main point that the Commission has made:

"We have, however, accepted the principle that the capacity to pay will be a relevant consideration in fixing the need-based minimum wage."

The Commission itself has recommended this. Now, the Pay Commission is being appointed and this question of minimum wage is also being referred to it. On the question of interim relief, the Pay Commission will be free to give their decision or their recommendation with regard to the interim relief that is to be given and, as I stated the other day during the Question Hour, the Government will consider that.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: I am not referring to the private sector or private organisations. I have only referred to the

H. S. L., H. E. L. and H. E. C. which are Government undertakings where the minimum wage ranges between Rs. 195 to Rs. 207.50 p. whereas a Central Government employee gets Rs. 141. The Pay Commission should consider it. The Pay Commission has not yet been appointed. It is still to be appointed; it is an unborn baby. I would like to know whether any time-limit has been fixed for that. The Government has already accepted so many wage board awards and tripartite agreements and has given a particular interim minimum wage to their employees in H.S.L., H.E.L. and H.E.C. What is holding it up? Why should they not give the minimum wage to the Central Government employees, or at least, pay a portion of it as interim relief without waiting for the Pay Commission.

SHRI P. C. SETHI: The Pay Commission is soon to be born. As far as the increase in the wage structure of HSL and HEL are concerned, they are governed by Wage Board Recommendations and they are separate and they are not linked up with Government servants. I have said that the Government's sympathy is quite clear and the Pay Commission is going to be appointed. We would certainly like them to go into this question and make interim recommendations if they so desire.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: I would like to know about this—it has come out in the newspapers—that the Pay Commission had already been appointed with 5 Members. Is there any truth in it? Who is the representative on behalf of Central Government employees? Who is the representative on behalf of labour? How these representatives are going to be nominated?

SHRI P. C. SETHI: It has not yet been appointed; it is going to be appointed soon. Once it is appointed the hon. Member will be able to know the names and the composition of the Commission.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: I want to know whether you are going to have labour representative or not. I want to know whether labour representative is going to be appointed or not.

SHRI P. C. SETHI: We would certainly have a person of repute, knowing labour

conditions, labour laws, knowing labour very well and very well conversant with the problems of labour.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: I am happy to know that the Government has now agreed to refer the question of the feasibility of this minimum need-based wage to the Pay Commission because it was just this question of feasibility which they refused to refer to arbitration in 1968 which led to the strike of September, 1969. Otherwise the strike would not have taken place. Anyway, better late than never. Now, they have referred the question of feasibility to the Pay Commission. I would like to know from him that after these carefully prepared and cautious steps are undertaken when the Pay Commission gives its verdict on this question of feasibility, is the Government prepared to say that they will accept without any further change or modification whatever the Pay Commission recommends on this score.

SHRI P. C. SETHI: We have already taken the position that we would not take it as an award but we would certainly consider all the recommendations given by the Pay Commission with greatest care and attention and with sympathy towards labour. (Interruption).

SHRI S.R. DAMANI: With all sympathy for the workers, in view of the poor performance of our Hindustan Steel, may I know from the Minister why at all refer the matter to the Pay Commission. I want to know whether production will be linked to wages or not so that if production can increase the workers can get better pay.

SHRI P. C. SETHI: I am sorry the hon. Member has some misunderstanding; the main question relates to Pay Commission and not to HSL.

SHRI SRADHAKAR SUPAKAR: May I know whether the terms of reference for this Commission has been finalised and also by which date this Third Pay Commission will be actually formed?

SHRI P. C. SETHI: It is our earnest desire and hope that during the current session of Parliament it will be announced.

SHRI SURENDRANATH DWIVEDY: Have the terms of reference been finalised?

SHRI P. C. SETHI: This will be announced along with the composition of the Pay Commission.

SHRI UMANATH: On the question of interim relief the hon. Minister said that that also will be left to the Pay Commission to be decided upon. The question is not what the Pay Commission is going to decide. The Question is what steps Government are taking because already the present scale of pay that they are getting are the scales of pay fixed ten years back. Secondly, the last commission headed by Shri Gajendra gadkar had suggested that after two years of the implementation of their recommendations, the wages must be revised. Now, two years have elapsed. Government also, since they themselves desire to appoint a Third Pay Commission, accept by implication that the present pay scales must be revised. When they concede by implication that the wages have got to be revised, the question of the appointment of the pay commission should not stand in the way. In Tamil Nadu also, the Tamil Nadu Government had appointed a pay commission for their employees; although they had also earlier taken up the position that this question would be taken up by the pay commission, subsequently, however, even when the pay commission was sitting, they had announced interim relief to be granted to their employees. In the light of these facts, I would like to know what stands in the way of Government straightway declaring interim relief to the Central Government employees. When the Madras Government could do it, if the Central Government could not do it, is it because Shrimati Indira Gahdhi is less progressive than Shri Karunanidhi or she is poorer than Shri Karunanidhi? What is the reason for the Central Government not declaring any interim relief?

SHRI PILOO MODI: That is because this is a good Government in Tamil Nadu.

SHRI P. C. SETHI: I would like to make it clear that it is not our intention to come in the way; but instead of taking an *ad hoc* decision, we would like to be governed by expert opinion as to what the quantum of the interim relief should be.

SHRI UMANATH: My question has not been answered. I am not asking about

the quantum. When the appointment of the commission does not stand in the way of the Government themselves declaring interim relief, and deciding even the question of the quantum, they can declare it themselves, and they need not wait for a report from the pay commission.

MR. SPEAKER: He has already replied to this question.

SHRI UMANATH: When Government themselves can decide on the quantum in consultation with the representatives of the Central Government employees, what is the special reason why they are not taking up the responsibility on themselves but instead they are laying it to the pay commission?

SHRI P. C. SETHI: I have already made it clear that it would then be a sort of an *ad hoc* decision. Rather, we would like to depend upon the expert advice of the pay commission.

SHRI M. L. SONDHU: The hon. Minister in his reply referred to the birth pangs of the pay commission; he hears the birth pangs of the pay commission but he does not hear the death pangs of the Central Government employees here after the 19th September strike. May I ask the hon. Minister whether Government have made any survey of the extent of indebtedness amongst the Government employees, especially the low-paid Government employees? What is the amount of increment that they get every year, especially in the lowest category? Can the hon. Minister mention the amount of increment at the time when the problem comes up every year, and what actually comes in the pay packet of the lowest-paid Government employee more than what came last year?

SHRI P. C. SETHI: The only difference is that the hon. Member speaks while we have to act. The very fact that we are going to appoint the pay commission is an indication of the Government's desire to increase the emoluments and relieve the Government employees of their present condition.

SHRI M. L. SONDHU: Appointment of commission is something which they have learnt from the East India Co. and the British. It is an old habit.

SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR CHATTERJI: It is a good thing that our Government have assured this House that the pay commission is going to be appointed soon to enter into the question of the feasibility of fixing minimum wages. It was this question which had come up at the time of the 19th September strike. In view of this, may I know whether a time-limit will be fixed for the submission of the report by the pay commission? The question of interim relief is also an important one, and it has to be settled very quickly and within a short time. Therefore, some time-limit should be fixed. May I know what time-limit is going to be fixed?

SHRI P. C. SETHI: As far as the pay commission's report is concerned, that may take a little longer time, but we would certainly like the commission to go into the question of interim relief if they are pleased to examine it and then report about it first.

श्री एस० एम० जोशी : नीड-ब्रेस्ट वेजेज का जो सवाल है, वह पे कमीशन को मुपुर्द करने का निश्चय तो हुआ, मगर इसके साथ साथ नीड ब्रेस्ट मिनिमम वेज फिक्स करने के लिए कौन-कौन से फैक्टर्स विचार में लिए जायेंगे। क्या इसके बारे में भी कोई सूचना दी गई है? उसके साथ-साथ में पूछना चाहता हूँ कि सेंट्रल गवर्नमेंट के जो कर्मचारी हैं उनका यह भी सवाल था कि जब महंगाई बढ़ती है तो उसका फुल न्यूट्रलाइजेशन होना चाहिए और क्या आप इस मामले को भी पे कमिशन को सौंपने के लिए तैयार हैं?

पे कमिशन जो इंटरिम रिपोर्ट इसके बारे में देगा क्या उसके ऊपर आप अमल करेंगे? फुल न्यूट्रलाइजेशन का मामला जुड़ा हुआ है और जो रिपोर्ट वह दे देगा उस पर आप अमल करेंगे?

श्री प्र० चं० सेठी : न्यूट्रलाइजेशन का जहां तक ताल्लुक है, इस समय नब्बे प्रतिशत न्यूट्रलाइजेशन हो रहा है। लेबर कमिशन ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में सिफारिश की है कि 95 परसेंट होना चाहिए। अब मांग यह है कि सौ परसेंट इसको किया जाए। इस वास्ते

न्यूट्रलाइजेशन का क्या अंश हो, यह मामला भी पे कमिशन . . .

श्री एस० एम० जोशी : क्लास 4 के लिए है, क्लास तीन के लिए नहीं है। क्लास तीन में किसी का साठ परसेंट है और किसी का चालीस परसेंट।

श्री प्र० चं० सेठी : नब्बे परसेंट है।

श्री मधु लिमये : पूरा मामला जाएगा?

श्री प्र० चं० सेठी : पूरा मामला न्यूट्रलाइजेशन का पे कमिशन तय करेगा।

जहां तक डी० ए० इन्क्रीज का सम्बन्ध है, जब दस प्वाइंट्स की इन्क्रीज हो जाती है तो उसके ऊपर डी० ए० में बढ़ोतरी होती है। जब तक दस प्वाइंट इनक्रीज या डिक्लीज न हों तब तक जो वर्तमान दर है उसमें परिवर्तन करना मुश्किल है।

जहां तक मिनिमम वेज का ताल्लुक है वह उन्हीं को तय करना है। वैसे माननीय सदस्य को मालूम है कि 1957 की जो 15 वी इंडियन लेबर कॉन्फ्रेंस थी उसने इसके बारे में कुछ गाइड लाइज दी है।

श्री मधु लिमये : आप ले लेंगे?

श्री प्र० चं० सेठी : पे कमिशन लेगा।

SHRI LOBO PRABHU: There is a total of 187 million workers in this country. The number of Government servants is about 10 million. The number of Central Government servants is about 2.5 million and that of State Government employees is about 5.2 million. My question is based on the principle of distributive justice which the Prime Minister is emphasising. If Government are going to give a need-based wage to Central Government servants, will they ensure at the same time that the State Government employees will also get an equal addition to their wages? Secondly, will they ensure, even if they cannot go right up to the 187 million workers in the country, that

something is done to increase their wages or then income proportionately with the wage increase arising out of need-based minimum wage which they are giving to the Central Government employees?

SHRI P. C. SETHI: As far as the appointment of the pay commission is concerned, this pay commission would certainly go into the problems of the Central Government employees and would give their recommendations with regard to them. But it is also true that whatever recommendations they make and whatever recommendations Government may thereafter accept would certainly have their repercussions on the State Government employees and the employees of the municipalities and others. But as far as the State Government employees are concerned, it is our consistent view that it is a matter for the State Government to decide.

SHRI S. KUNDU: The hon. Minister while replying to the question in a quiet and subtle manner used the phrase 'capacity to pay'.

MR. SPEAKER: What is his question?

SHRI PILOO MODY: He has not got a question.

SHRI SURENDRANATH DWIVEDY: His is relating his question to the reply of the hon. Minister and, therefore, he must refer to the reply.

SHRI S. KUNDU: He very subtly used the words, "I presume from the recommendations of the National Labour Commission, 'capacity to pay', and then he connected it with the need-based wage. I think the hon. Minister is aware that the National Commission has also reported that the real wages have gone down considerably as compared to 1936-39, while the productivity per hour, has increased by about 60 per cent."

SHRI PILOO MODY: 230 per cent.

SHRI S. KUNDU: Let my hon. friend keep quite.

This phrase 'capacity to pay' is used as a bogey by the capitalist to deny a reasonable and living wage to the workers all along. I would request the Minister not to use such words as are used by industrialists,

The concept of need-based wage has nothing to do with capacity to pay and will be direct the National Pay Commission to see that the need-based wage is paid irrespective of the capacity of Government to pay?

SHRI P. C. SETHI: All these problems and aspects would certainly be considered by the Pay Commission. I am sure the hon. member certainly does not put us in the category of industrialists because whatever we say is in the capacity of representatives of labour and employees and whatever funds available with the Government belong to the people.

SHRI PILOO MODY: It depends on who uses them.

श्री प्रताप सिंह: बीस साल पुराने जो वादे सरकार ने किए थे उनको भी वह पूरा नहीं करती है। अभी हाल ही में सरकार ने कुछ निर्णय लिए हैं लेकिन उनमें भी पुराने वादों का ध्यान नहीं रखा गया है। हाल ही में सरकार ने यूनियन टैरिटरिज में जो गवर्नमेंट एम्प्लायीज काम करते हैं, उनके पे स्केल क्या होंगे, इसके बारे में निर्णय लिया था। लेकिन इससे यूनियन टैरिटरिज के एम्प्लायीज की जो मांग है वह पूरी नहीं होती है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या आप थर्ड पे कमिशन को यूनियन टैरिटरिज के एम्प्लायीज के पे स्केल के मामले को भी सौंपेंगे?

श्री प्र० चं० सेठी: यूनियन टैरिटरिज के एम्प्लायीज का मामला भी पे कमिशन के मुमुदं किया जाएगा।

Off-Shore Drilling by Oil and Natural Gas Commission

+

*662. **SHRI K. M. KUSHIK:**
SHRI H. AJMAL KHAN:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND MINES AND METALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Oil and Natural Gas Commission have decided to start off-shore drilling in the near future; if so, the details thereof; and