

54-1

346.2(13-3-61)

(21.2)



To:

The Hon'ble Members of Parliament,
New Delhi.

Sub: Proposal for levy of 5% excise duty on machine spun woollen yarns which includes machine spun woollen carpet yarns used in making pile carpets on hand looms. -----

1. That carpet making is a 100% hand loom industry and it is woven by weavers residing in the rural area in their own cottages on handlooms belonging to them. It provides employment to several lacs family working either on looms or fed by its other subsidiary processes.

2. That more than 95% of the total production is exported to U.K. and the Continent, U.S.A, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Carpet export has already suffered a serious set back owing to fixation of disproportionate rates of wages on designed carpets with the result that during July/September, 1960 quarter, the export to Canada and U.S.A which are interested in higher grade designed carpets made with machine spun woollen yarn has fallen as under:-

	July/Sept. 1959	July/Sept. 1960	Fall
Canada	2219075	1669091	549984 or 33 %
U.S.A	2862426	1537872	1324554 or 86%

3. That the proposed excise duty will very adversely affect export of carpets to the above countries and the dollar and sterling earnings of the country will consequently be greatly reduced.

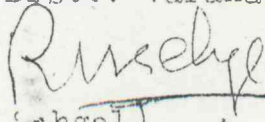
4. That the carpet industry has got great employment potential and more and more cottage workers may draw towards this industry. Any further decline in export will throw most of them out of employment and create a serious unemployment problem.
5. That the levy of excise duty will mean open violation of the Government's avowed objects of promoting and increasing export trade at all costs.
6. That the woollen yarn spun by the mills for carpet making is a class by itself and cannot be used for any other purpose owing to the special blending of the wools for the purpose.
7. That Indian carpets have to face a very tough competition in foreign countries with carpets made in Pakistan, China, Japan, Hongkon, Morocco and Iron. This competition has been made more fierce owing to the fact that countries like Pakistan, Japan and China are subsidising this industry to boost their exports.
8. That according to the figures compiled by the All India Carpet Manufacturers Association, Bhadohi, the total consumption of machine spun woollen yarns for carpets in terms of money is about Rs. 80,00,000 of which more than 95 % is used in carpets exported out of the country.

Total expected revenue at 5% excise duty proposed	Rs. 4,00,000
It is Govt's policy to allow draw back on exports on 95% exports, the amount refundable will be	Rs. 3,80,000
Net revenue income to Govt. through machine spun carpet yarns	Rs. 20,000/-

This is a very insignificant amount to fill up any gap in the deficit budget.

9. That the carpet industry is purely a handloom industry and in addition it is an export and dollar earning commodity. As such it is entitled to same treatment as machine spun cotton yarn used in manufacture of handloom cotton fabrics in respect of which the excise duty has been exempted.

for and on behalf of All India
Carpet Manufacturers' Association,
Bhadohi, Distt. Varanasi (U.P.)


(R.K. Sehgal)
Hony. Secretary.

Dated: March 10, 1961.

56-1-2

from: -
General Secretary,
Katihar Jute Mills Workers Union
Regd No, 428
P.O. Dabaria Mills, Katihar (Purnea)

Dated 12.4.61.

A. I. T. U. C.	
Received.	928/19-4-61
Replied.
Katihar Union, Calcutta.	

No.

The General Secretary -
Bazgal Chakral

Dear Comrade,

262

In reply to your letter I am to inform you that our trade union (Katihar Jute Mills Workers Union) is not in a position to give you any concrete answers to the questions put forth by the Chairman, Central Wage Board for Jute Mills, as because no relevant papers and documents are available whereas the informations give by the workmen are not reliable at all. The government authorities are completely reluctant to supply us with facts and figures though we tried our level best to know things. Therefore our only suggestion is that the Wage Board should make special arrangement to know things for itself for Katihar and if you feel our suggestion has some value please place it before the Board on behalf of our union.

Please also inform if there is any scope to prefer appeal against the agreement struck between the management and I. N. T. U. C. Union concerning interim relief.

Hope you will excuse us for our failure to help you here.

Comradely yours

Radda Choudhury
General Secretary

Katihar Jute Mills
Workers Union
Regd no: 428.

Copy to:
Secret...
A. I. T. U. C.

File
19/4/61

A. I. T. U. C.
I. R. No. 1956. Date 22.6.61
File No. Blank

Hyderabad
19.6.61

I have seen your letter of June 10th regarding the Inter-Dept Board. I met Mr. Mohd. Afrit on the 16th and had discussions regarding the same. Don't you worry, I am attending to that job. Hope you all in good cheer

Vallabhan

~~Handwritten signature~~

Handwritten initials

BENGAL CHATKAL MAZDOOR UNION

(Regd. No. 289)

249, BEPIN BEHARI GANGULY STREET, CALCUTTA-12

June 28, 1961.

Com. K.G. Sriwastava,
Secretary,
A.I.T.U.C.,
4, Ashoke Road,
New Delhi.

262

A. I. T. U. C.	
I.R. No. 2094	Date 1.7.61
File No.	Reg. No.

Dear Comrade,

As per decision of the Annual Conference of the Union held a fortnight back, about 5,000 jute workers from the different mills covering an area of about 60 k.m. on both sides of the Ganges, staged a protest demonstration in front of the IJMA office about 3 hours. Because of an order u/s 144, the workers had to wait there and a deputation headed by Com. Indrajit Gupta and consisting of Bhowani Roy Choudhury, Gopal Bose, Provat Mitra & Niren Ghose, Coms. Md. Elias and Provat Kar was ~~also~~ sent to the State Labour Minister. Before the demonstration started from the foot of the Ochterloney Monument a meeting was held and adopted a memorandum which was submitted to the State Labour Minister. Scores of processions from different areas thronged at the Maidan from the forenoon. The most colourful among which was that of the workers of Clive Jute Mills which included more than 100 women workers, some with babies in their arms.

State Labour Minister in course of discussion with the deputationists informed that (1) second instalment of block-closure in the month of July is not final and the matter will be discussed at tripartite conference; (2) the Govt. is eager to implement the recommendations of the Chairman, Special Committee on Jute Industry which was accepted by the State Govt. six months back; (3) the Govt. will see that the benefits for compensation for the block-closure period is extended. The State Labour Minister further opined that a meeting of the Industrial Committee on Jute should be held at an early date.

The copy of the Memorandum is enclosed.

Greetings,

Comradely Yours,
Bhowani Roy Choudhury
(Bhowani Roy Choudhury)
General Secretary.

M. Acc. next
nd.

M E M O R A N D U M

1. The block closure of all Jute Mills under the IJMA in West Bengal has commenced since 26.6.61 with the approval of the Government. Over two lakhs of workers have been thrown into unemployment for one week, while yet another week's closure is threatened next month. Further, the overwhelming majority of these workers(all 'badli' workers plus a section of permanent workers) are to be deprived of even the meagre compensation amounting to 50% of wages payable under Industrial Disputes Act. Thus, mass unemployment and starvation have been imposed on the workers of the country's biggest foreign-exchange earning industry.

2. Jute workers from all mills have come to Calcutta to-day at the call of the Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union (AITUC- affiliated) to record their protest against the IJMA's reactionary policy and its endorsement by the Government, and to mobilise public sympathy for the workers' cause.

3. Block closure on the grounds of raw jute scarcity, as alleged by the IJMA, is totally unwarranted and deliberately meant to mislead uninformed public opinion.

During the past month, raw jute prices have fallen by a about Rs.20/- per amund. This single fact is enough to expose the IJMA's pretensions. If a commodity is in short supply, its price does not fall, but rises. This is elementary economics. The raw jute market is no exception to this rule. The current price decline shows (a) that hoarded stocks are at last being disgorged; (b) that a really bumper raw jute crop is in the offing; (c) that the recent steep rise in prices was not really due to an absolute physical shortage of raw jute but to speculation and price-rigging by racketeers in the "fatka" market.

4. Why should the hapless and helpless jute workers be made a scapegoat for the dubious business practices of millowners, x traders and speculators ?

The present block closure is, in our opinion, nothing but an instrument used by the IJMA to create counter pressure on the market for finished goods and to boost up the falling prices of Hessian and Sacking. By artificially restricting production in the mills, the IJMA wants to pressurize overseas customers into purchasing jute-goods now under threat of a price rise later.

This is an anti-national and suicidal policy. It amounts to gambling with the Jute Industry's future. It means jeopardising our markets abroad by forcing foreign purchasers to take to cheaper substitutes for jute goods. It means scarring away potential customers by creating conditions of permanent instability and sharp fluctuations in the market.

Yet this is the policy endorsed so readily by our Government /

5. The jute workers are not prepared to submit passively to this selfish, profiteering, anti-social and anti-labour policy.

They are convinced that there can be no satisfactory solution of the Jute Industry's ills until it is nationalised and run in the country's larger interests.

Pending nationalisation, which is a matter of top-level Government policy, the workers have demanded that the following urgent interim measures be adopted without delay :

: 2 :

(following urgent, interim measures be adopted without delay):

- (1) State purchasing of raw jute directly from the cultivators at statutorily fixed minimum prices;
- (2) Export trade in jute goods to be taken over in toto by the State Trading Corporation;
- (3) Markets and lines of production to be diversified;
- (4) Illegal "fatka" and forward trading practices to be firmly suppressed;
- (5) No further block closures to be permitted;
- (6) Full wages as compensation for the current block closure to all workers, permanent and budli;
- (7) Immediate implementation of the Government-approved recommendations of the Chairman, Special Committee for Jute Industry, re: fixation of permanent cadre in the mills and other matters.

Dated the
June 27, 1961.

Ludwig Jurek
27/6/61
for B.C.M.U.

BENGAL CHATKAL MAZDOOR UNION

(Regd. No. 289)

249, BEPIN BEHARI GANGULY STREET, CALCUTTA-12

262 / 5th

June 29, 1961.

To
The Secretary,
A.I.T.U.C.
4, Ashoke Road,
~~Kakati~~
New Delhi.

A. I. T. U. C.
I.R. No. 2093. Date: 1.7.61. ...
File No. Br.

Dear Comrade,

Enclosed please find the copies of the resolutions passed at the Annual Conference of the Union held on June 11, 1961 at the Muslim Institute Hall under the Chairmanship of Com. Indrajit Gupta, M.P.

The Conference was inaugurated by Dr. Ranen Sen, M.L.A., Vice President, AITUC and President of the State TUC. From the General Secretary's report it was seen that during the last one year the jute workers have conducted big united struggles both area-wise and industry-wise which culminated in one day's general strike on Feb. 13, 1961. During the year under review, the workers have achieved some notable results of their struggles, of which mention should be made of the sanction of interim relief by the Wage Board. Organisationally, the BOMU has improved its position tremendously. Several new mill committees have been formed in different areas where we had none before.

The membership has increased to 26,295. Several Branches have collected good amount of money and have been able to deposit in the Banks. This is a definite sign of organisational improvement of the Union. The Union elected the following Office-bearers :

President : Com. Bankim Mukherjee, M.L.A.
Working President: Com. Indrajit Gupta, M.P.
General Secretary: Com. Bhawani Roy Choudhury.
Treasurer : Com. Krishnapada Karmakar.

The Conference amongst other things decided to hold a protest demonstration on June 27 at Calcutta against the Govt.'s approval of LMA's decision to have a block-closure of all the jute mills from June 26th for a week.

With greetings,

Yours fraternally,
Bhawan Roy Choudhury
GENERAL SECRETARY.

Pl. see ...
11/11

RESOLUTION ON BLOCK-CLOSURE

This Conference of ~~xxx~~ Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union emphatically protests against the un-warranted block-closure of mills which is proposed to be imposed by the I.J.M.A. from 26.8.1961. It is regrettable that the Government has lent its support to this move at a time when prices of raw jute have fallen sharply and the workers have already suffered drastic cuts in their wages due to reduction in working hours.

This Conference, therefore, urges upon the Government to persuade the IJMA to reconsider its decision and in the event of block closure taking place, to pay all the workers full wages as compensation.

This conference further demands that the recommendations of the Chairman of the Special Committee for Jute regarding fixation of permanent compliment and operation of double looms which have been accepted by the Government of West Bengal, be forthwith implemented in toto by all jute mills.

✓

R E S O L U T I O N

1. This Conference of the Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union is of opinion that the future of the Jute Industry is being gravely jeopardised by the selfish, profiteering and anti-national policies of the mill and speculators who virtually control the entire jute trade and industry from the raw material stage to the finished product.

2. As a result of this monopolist grip over all aspects of the jute business, and also due to the weak and vacillating, pro-capitalist attitude of the Government, both at the Centre and in this State, the industry is being made to pass through one man-made "crisis" after another.

3. Rampant speculative activity ^{/in the forward trading markets} pushed the 1960-61 market prices of raw jute up to fantastic levels of Rs.62/- and more, per maund. Taking advantage of this, the IJMA raised a furore over the alleged scarcity of raw jute supplies and drastically reduced production in their member mills by sealing 10% of their looms, reducing working hours from 48 to 45, and later to 42½, per week, & finally by proposing block closure of all mills for a week at a time in June & July. In all these steps, the Govt. has passively acquiesced despite the damage done to the country's largest foreign exchange earning industry.

4. Restriction of mill output has in turn led to a rise in the prices of manufactured goods, accumulation of stocks, & fall in exports. Now that the next raw jute crop is in sight, the speculation ^{has} artificial boosting of prices has begun to decline. There is now ground to apprehend that a bumper crop in the coming season will lead to catastrophic slump in raw jute prices, bringing ruin and destitution to lakhs of poor cultivators, who will be at the mercy of middlemen and dealers.

5. Meanwhile, the 2 lakh jute workers have been subjected by restrictions on production to heavy losses in their earnings, large scale unemployment of badli-workers, & virtual negation of even the benefit of the modest Interim relief awarded to them recently by Wage Board. During the periods of proposed block-closures, only 50% wages will be paid by the employers and even this paltry compensation will not accrue to tens of thousands of so-called non-permanent hands.

6. Complete anarchy of prices, ^{/unrestricted and} reckless speculation and manipulation on the forward markets, violent fluctuations in prices of raw jute and jute goods, planned restrictions on output, cornering of raw jute supplies by middlemen & hoarders - such is the picture of the Jute trade and industry to-day. Total absence of stable conditions has created an atmosphere of uncertainty and chaos. Not only are the mill workers' and jute cultivators' interests ruthlessly trampled underfoot by the IJMA & the monopoly traders from season to season; our overseas markets are also being seriously affected, customers are reluctant to place forward contracts and the threat of substitutes to jute is being allowed to grow.

7. In these circumstances, this Conference is of considered opinion that drastic measures are called for if the Jute trade and Industry are to be put on a stable footing, anarchy and chaos in prices are to be suppressed, speculation & profiteering to be checked, cultivators assured of a proper return, and workers to be freed of the perpetual nightmare of insecurity of employment and falling wages.

In the national interests, therefore, this Conference demands of the Govt. that the following urgent steps be taken :

- a) Nationalisation of the Jute Industry;
- b) Pending the above, immediate statutory fixation of minimum prices of raw jute before the 1961-62 crop is harvested;
- c) Government to purchase adequate quantities of raw jute directly from the peasants in order to sustain the minimum prices & to build up its own buffer stocks against any possible emergency;
- d) Ruthless measures to control forward markets trading so as to stamp out speculators' grip over the movements of market prices;

e) Maximum prices of jute goods to be laid down & illegal transactions above such maxima to be prohibited;

f) Nationalisation of the entire export trade in jute goods, so as that maximum possible foreign exchange can be earned and markets ~~can~~ can be diversified in a planned manner.

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Proposed by :

Seconded by :

RESOLUTION ON 'ONE MACK' LOOMS

This conference of the Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union views with grave concern the proposed installation of Automatic "ONE MACK" looms in the IJMA mills. These looms, 6 to 8 of which can be operated by a single weaver, would create a huge mass un-employment in the country. Since the Jute Industry has worked below its existing full capacity for several years and is not interested in increasing the total volume of manufactured goods, there is no justification whatsoever for installing Automatic looms at exorbitant capital cost. The sole purpose of the employers can be to carry out large scale retrenchment of weavers, thereby reducing the mills cost of production and increasing their profits.

This conference, therefore, strongly urges upon the Government of India to refuse permission for purchase and installation of "ONE MACK" (or any other automatic type of) looms by the employers as being totally unnecessarily and against the interest of social justice.



RESOLUTION ON PROVIDENT FUND

This Conference of Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union expresses its strong condemnation against the Jute Mill owners' illegal and unfair actions in the matter of management of Provident Fund accumulations of the workmen. On several casrs it has been found that ~~xxxxx~~ violating all rules and regulations, the mill owners spent the money from P.F. accumulations as a result of which the workmen are put in serious difficulties at the time of final payment.

The Conference regrets that elected Trustee Board has not been formed in many places and ever where formed, they are not allowed to function. The Conference notes with disgust and surprise that wherever the exemption is cancelled and the Regional P.F. Commissioner takes charge of the Fund, the employers ~~xxxxx~~ unnecessarily delay in transferring and submittin the necessary papers and accumulations against which, strong steps to bring them to book, forthwith, are not taken.

The Conference, further, noted with regret that functioning in the Office of the Regional Provident Fund Commissioner, West Bengal, is far from satisfactory and for its mismanagement and inefficiency the workmen are made to suffer seriously.

The Conference, therefore, urges upon the Govt. to take such steps so that all illegal actions in the matter of defalcation of Provident Fund money are severely punished; working of the Office RPF, West Bengal, is improved, and cases are disposed off expeditiously; and Loans from the Fund are granted more liberally.

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RESOLUTION ON EMPLOYEES' STATE INSURANCE
CORPORATION (ESIC)

This Conference of Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union strongly condemns the apathetic attitude of the Govt. of W.Bengal in the matter of treatment of the insured persons. The advantage of hospitalisation is generally not available. Money benefits are meagre and that too are discontinued on some plea or other. Costly medicines are/supplied for which the patients are deprived of proper treatment. Even the services of Ambulance are not generally available to many a deserving patients. Cancer treatment is not done under the Scheme as a result of which several persons of Bauria (Howrah) alone have died of Cancer without any treatment.

This Conference, therefore, demands :

- 1) Facilities of Ambulance, supply of costly medicines and more ~~extra~~ beds in the Hospital for T.B.patients be guaranteed
- 2) Rate of monetary benefits be increased and conditions liberalised;
- 3) Treatment of Cancer be under taken under the Scheme;
- 4) Families of the insured persons be included in the Scheme;
- 5) Special hospitals exclusively for the insured persons be started building immediately.

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BENGAL CHATKAL MAZDOOR UNION

(Regd. No. 289)

GARDEN REACH BRANCH

1/1, GARDEN REACH ROAD, CALCUTTA-24

Ref. No..G/CN/61/76

Date...12.7.....1961

(262)

Sri Abdul Sattar,
Minister for Labour,
Govt. of W. Bengal,
Writers' Buildings, Calcutta.

A. I. T. U. C.	
I. R. No. 227)	Date 13 JUL 1961
File No.....	Replied on.....

Re:- Violation of the provisions of
Factories Act by M/S Clive Mills
Co. Ltd.

Sub:- Non-payment of Annual Leave with
wages payable U/S. 79 of the
Factories Act.

Dear Sir,

I wish to bring to your attention on the above
subject for your immediate instruction.

The management of M/S Clive Mills Co. Ltd. con-
sistently flouts the provisions of the Factories Act on
no exception. The Union on every occasion draws the at-
tention of the respective authorities for remedy.

In the instant case, the workmen reported the
matter to the Chief Inspector of Factories and Inspector
concerned of the area but the Factory Directorate did not
take proper action against the Company and the workmen
stand deprived of the benefits. It is strange that the
Factory Directorate did not inform us even as to where
the matter stands.

1. 94 workmen whose services were terminated
due to closer of the Old Mills on 28.12.1957 were re-
employed on and after 17.2.58.

In the year 1959, these workmen applied to the
Company for Annual Leave with wages but they were refused.
The Inspector of the Factory Directorate inform us to
send him the copies of application for leave submitted
to the Factory Manager which we did.....

contin..... 2.

BENGAL CHATKAL MAZDOOR UNION

(Regd. No. 289)

GARDEN REACH BRANCH

1/1, GARDEN REACH ROAD, CALCUTTA-24

Ref. No.....

Date.....196 .

-2-

In the meantime, the Company by a letter addressed to S.R.Chakarvarty, Inspector of Factories (No.G/187 dt. 10.3.1960), a copy of which was sent to us vide his memo No.1252 dt. 15.3.1960, for our information. A copy of the said letter is enclosed and marked "A". Sri Chakarvarty, at this time, was transferred from this area and the matter was not pursued by the Factory Directorate. We, thereafter, applied to the Chief Inspector of Factories explaining him in details of the case vide our letter No. F/60/86 dt. 4.7.60. A copy of the said letter is annexed and marked annexer, "B". Since then a year has passed and despite our repeated representations, the Factory Directorate took no action whatsoever, the reason of which is best known to them.

May it be noted in this connection that the management of the Clive mills Co. Ltd. flouts the provisions of the Factories Act, particularly the Sec.79 consistently since 1954 with some plea other and many a cases were reported both to the Factory Directorate and to the Labour Dept. but without any result whatsoever.

In the circumstances, I would request you to please take up the matter at your earliest so that the workers are not deprived of their due leave wages granted by the statute.

Enclosed: 2.

Yours faithfully

Copy to:-
The Secretary,
All India Trade Union Congress,
4, Ashoka Road, New Delhi.



(Abdul Mannan)
S E C R E T A R Y .

TRUE COPY.

Annux. "A".

CLIVE MILLS.

CLIVE MILLS CO. LTD.
43-1, Garden Reach.
Calcutta-24.

No.G/187.

10th March, 1960.

To
Sri S.R.Chakraborty,
Inspector of Factories,
1, Hastings Street, 8th floor.
Calcutta-1.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter No.1019 dated 4.3.60.
I am to state as follows :-

1. Leave was refused as the workers did not actually work for 240 days in the relevant year.
2. This was a case for their absence in 1958 and not 1957. They were not granted S.T. Leave for 1958, as they were not entitled to.
3. The workers did not turn up to their work inspite of repeated notices. They were neither laid off for the inability of the Company to give them job nor they attended the specified place each time as required by law. The question of lay-off cropped in as their fault was condoned in order to keep the continuity of their services as per arrangement with the workers. All of them were laid off from 1.1.58 to 15.2.58 accordingly.

Yours faithfully

For and on behalf of
Clive Mills Co. Ltd.

Sd/- Illegible.
Manager

Memo No. 1252

Copy forwarded to the Secretary, Bengal Chatkal
Mazdoor Union. I-1, Garden Reach Road, Calcutta-24, for information
Calcutta.

Sd/- Illegible

The 15th March, 1960.

Inspector of Factories, West Bengal.

BENGAL CHATKAL MAZDOOR U N I O N.

(Regd.No.289)

Garden Reach Branch

I-1, Garden Reach Road, Calcutta-24.

TRUE COPY.

Ref.No E/60/86

Annex. "B".

Date 4th July, 60.

The Chief Inspector of Factories,
West Bengal,
1, Hastings Street,
Calcutta-1.

Re: Non-payment of Annual Leave with wages for 1958 by M/S. Clive Mills Co. Ltd.

Dear Sir,

Please refer to my letter No. dt. addressed to Sri S.R.Chakarvarty, Inspector of Factories, West Bengal on the above subject. I am sorry to let you know that I have not yet received any reply or the steps your directorate has taken into the matter. In the meantime, I learnt that Sri Chakarvarty has been transferred from this area. But I think, for that reason, the workmen should not suffer/the management be allowed to violate the Act with impunity.

May I recall in this connection, that the workmen of the above Factory with some plea or other are deprived of every year the benefits of Annual Leave with wages and that is since 1958. However for your ready reference I am putting before you the present case once again.

কম্পানী ২ জনেরই ক্ষেত্রে পুনর্ব্যবস্থাপনা করে এবং কর্মীদের ক্ষেত্রে ক্ষতিপূরণ প্রদান করা হবে।

The Company by a notice dt. 28.12.57 terminated the services of all the workmen of the Old Mill of Clive Jute Mills. By a subsequent notice dt.15.2.58, a section of the workmen were offered job in the New Mill on and from 17.2.58. Accordingly the majority of the workmen were re-employed in the New Mills on 17.2.58 or on subsequent day. The management granted the intervening period as Lay-off and paid due compensation for the same.

Now for qualifying the Annual Leave wages for 1958 the management are insisting on having 240 days' attendances and the intervening period from 1.1.58 to 17.2.58 (or the subsequent day of joining) is being treated as absence. As a result about 100 workmen have been deprived of benefits of leave-wages.

In the circumstances, I hope, you would please let me know the affected workmen's position and oblige.

Yours faithfully

Secretary.

262
August 16, 1961

To
The Secretary,

S. A. Dange

Dear Friend,

You are aware that a large number of jute mills has drastically curtailed their production resulting unemployment of 10,000 workmen and wage cut of lakhs of workers. Despite Government's disapproval and in spite of the State Labour Minister's repeated requests, the Indian Jute Mills Association (IJMA) refused to hear anything and it proceeded in its own way to carry out the original proposal in defiance of the national interests. The plea for this curtailment of production is shortage of raw jute at a time when the new crop is coming in the market daily in increasing quantity. The object of the mill-owners to create such a "crisis" is two fold - (1) to increase the workload (extension of double-loom etc.) and (2) to lowering down the prices of raw-jute. By thus creating shortage of jute goods artificially, they are trying to beat up the prices of jute goods in foreign markets.

The industry, so vital role it plays in the national economy, is in the grip of a few monopolist both in the sphere of raw jute and also finished goods and for whose speculative activities, it is ever sick with "crisis".

In the interest of the industry, which is the foremost foreign exchange earner and to protect the vital rights of the workers and jute-growers, we have proposed a joint conference of jute-workers and jute-growers to be held on August 27, 1961 from 3 p.m. at Muslim Institute Hall.

The proposed conference will raise the following demand :

- 1) No curtailment of production either by sealing of looms or by reducing working hours;
- 2) No increase of workload by further extension of double-loom operation;
- 3) Immediate fixation of permanent cadres at 3 per loom as recommended by the Chairman, Special Committee on Jute (which has been accepted by the Government);
- 4) Immediate fixation of floor prices of raw jute at Rs.45/- per md. for this year;
- 5) In the event of fall in raw-jute prices, Government should enter the market for purchase;
- 6) Nationalisation of jute business.

WE take this opportunity to invite you in the conference and help us in our deliberation. We earnestly request you to extend your support for the success of this conference.

In case it is not possible for you to attend the conference, please send a message.

Greetings,

BENGAL CHATKAL MAZDOOR UNION.
W. BENGAL PROVINCIAL KISHAN SABHA.

Yours Sincerely,

Jt. Convenors.

R. P. Roy
H. Kumar

56-1-8

SANKRAIL CHATKAL MAZDOOR UNION

REGD. NO. 2283

P. O. SANKRAIL : DIST. HOWRAH

President :

SHYAMA PRASARNA BHATTACHARYA, M.L.A.

Gen. Secretary :

GOBIN KARAR

Ref. No.

A. I. T. U. C.
I. R. No. 3319 Date 2.5.61
File No. Replied on

262
Dated, the 21st. Sept. 1951.

To
The Minister of Commerce and Industries,
Govt. of India,
New Delhi.

Re:- Apprehension of closure of Belvedere Jute Mills Ltd., Sankrail P.O., Howrah Dist., W. Bengal.

Dear sir,

You are perhaps aware that the management of Belvedere Jute Mills Ltd., Sankrail, Howrah, has decided to close this mill and to consolidate it with the adjacent Delta Jute Mills Ltd. We represent the case before Minister of Labour, Govt. of India and also before Govt. of West Bengal.

Sri G. L. Nanda, the hon'ble Labour Minister, in a letter to Secretary, A.I.T.U.C. dtated 14.8.61, informed that the matter had been taken up with your ministry.

We are always pointing out that out of closure of this mill not only three thousand workers would be affected but also the trades, commerce of this locality will collapse for which hundreds of people would be severely affected.

Under such circumstances, we are ~~XXXXX~~ repeatedly demanding not to close the mill and to repair the ~~Turbine~~ turbine or to install ~~the~~ new one Turbine in order to save the people of this locality.

We would request you to take our demand seriously.

Awaiting for your ~~re~~ early reply.

Thanking you,

Copy to:
Chief Minister, West Bengal,
Secretary, A.I.T.U.C., New Delhi.

Yours faithfully,
Go bin Karar
Gen. Secretary.

SANKRAIL CHATKAL MAZDOOR UNION

REGD. NO. 2283

P. O. SANKRAIL : DIST. HOWRAH.

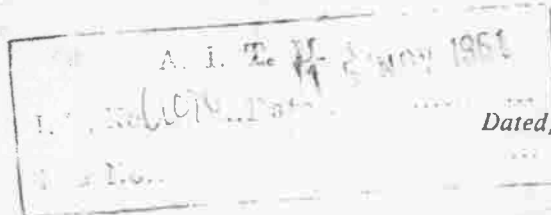
President :

SHYAMA PRASANNA BHATTACHARYA, M.L.A.

Gen. Secretary :

GOBIN KARAR

Ref. No.



Dated, the 13th Nov. 61.

To
The Minister of Labour & Employment,
Govt. of India,
New Delhi.

Re:- Seeking for an interview on the notice of permanent closure of Belvedere Jute Mills Ltd., Sankrail, Howrah Dist. on and from 2.12.61.

Dear Sir,

With reference to the above, I do hereby express my regret that as per your letter dated 14.8.61 to AITUC, I and AITUC sent letter to the Minister of Commerce but with no effect. On the other hand, the management of the Belvedere Jute Mills Ltd. issued notice (not to the Union) that the mill would be closed on and from 2.12.61 permanently.

We have been astonished that every one of the Govt. authority is giving up their responsibility regarding this matter. West Bengal Govt. has not paid heed to our representation- so like Commerce Minister of India. You are also avoiding. But here we find that not more than 20% of 3 thousand workmen are going to be absorbed in the adjacent Delta Jute Mills and the entire locality which is a trade-centre, is going to be liquidated.

Under such circumstances, I, on behalf of the workmen of this Jute Mills, seek for an interview along with Md. Elias, M.P., Indrajit Gupta, M.P., Secy., AITUC at your Delhi Office on the 20th or 21st November, '61 to discuss on the matter so that difficulties and problems may be removed.

Hope, I shall not be disappointed.

Yours faithfully,

Copy forwarded to:
Secretary, AITUC,
Md. Elias, M.P.

Govin Karar
Gen. Secretary.

SANKRAIL CHATKAL MAZDOOR UNION

REGD. NO. 2283

P. O. SANKRAIL : DIST. HOWRAH.

President :

SHYAMA PRASANNA BHATTACHARYA, M.L.A.

Gen. Secretary :

GOBIN KARAR

Ref. No.

Dated, the ² 21st. Nov. 1956.

To
The Minister of labour & Employment,
Govt. of India,
New Dwlhi.

Re: Notice of permanent closure of Belvedere
Jute Mills Ltd., Sankrail, Howrah, on
and from 2.12.61.

Sir,

You are perhaps aware that we have been representing the above matter before your honour since April, '61. Sri G.L. Nanda, the hon'ble Minister of Labour, in his letter No.7/30/61 -LRIV, dated 14.8.61 informed us that the matter concerned with the Union Ministry of ~~Labour~~ Commerce and with the Govt. of W. Bengal. Accordingly AITUC wrote a letter to the Minister of Commerce on 28.9.61 for intervention and Sankrail Chatkal Mazdoor Union wrote several letters to the Chief Minister and the Minister of Labour, Govt. of West Bengal. But none have responded to.

By this time, the management of the said mill issued a Notice on 13. 10.61 declaring that the mill would be closed permanently on and from 2.12.61.

We are of the opinion that there is no reason at all of closing this mill which would not only adversely affect 3000 workmen, but also the local people and the big trade-centre of this locality. Not more than 20% of the total workers of this mill would be absorbed in the adjacent Delta Jute Mills Ltd. whose permanency is also under question because it is situated on the dangerous bank of the river Hoogly.

So we do extremely feel that the future of development and maintenance of Commerce and Industries in this locality is at stake by the whims of the said employer.

In view of the above, we do feel that your prompt intervention is essential and the notice of the permanent closure should immediately be withdrawn for a thorough of the ~~matter~~ matter.

Hope, your honour would take it seriously.

Yours faithfully,

Govin Karar
Gen Secretary.

Copy to Secy., AITUC .

252

Statement laid down by the Minister of Commerce (Shri Nityanand Kanungo) in the Lok Sabha on the 16th August, 1961, in response to a Calling-Attention Notice by Sarvashri Phani Gopal Sen, S.M. Banerjee and Indrajit Gupta, M.Ps., regarding the block closure observed by the Indian Jute Mills Association, owing to scarcity of raw jute.

-:0:-

The member mills of the Indian Jute Mills Association observed two block closures, each lasting seven days, the first from the 26th June, 1961, and the second from the 24th July, 1961. The proposal to observe these block closures had been put before the Government of India and the Government of West Bengal earlier, and it was with the approval of both the Governments that the Association decided on this step. This decision was taken to tide over a period of difficulty caused by acute shortage of raw jute and was designed to result in further economy in the use of raw jute and adjustment of consumption of raw jute with available supplies, pending the arrival of new jute crop. The position was subject to review after the first block closure.

2. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Ministry of Labour and Employment, as well as the West Bengal Government, had considered the various aspects of the proposed block closure before agreeing to the proposal.

3. The total number of workers affected by the block closure is estimated at 1,85,000 inclusive of 72,000 'budli' workers, not entitled to lay off compensation. It was open to the permanent workers to count the period of closure against leave entitlement; the rest could get statutory lay-off compensation in terms of the Indian Industrial Disputes Act.

4. The second block closure from the 24th July, 1961, had been given effect to, in view of the continuing difficult position of raw jute. The total raw jute stock available at the end of June 1961 was reported to be 4.5 lakh bales. The arrivals of old/new jute crop during July and August was reported to be 4.75 lakh bales. The consumption for July, allowing for the block closure, would be 3.6 lakh bales, and the consumption in August, on the basis of full working, would be 4.5 lakh bales. This would reduce the stock at the end of August to 0.85 lakh bales which was not even sufficient for two weeks. It is also important that the quality-wise distribution of raw jute is adequate. In order to restrict the consumption of jute so that the mills could work with a margin of stocks, the I.J.M.A. suggested that its member mills should be allowed to observe another period of block closure in August 1961, or in the alternative, that about 18% additional looms should be sealed for a month. This proposal was discussed by the representatives of the I.J.M.A. with the West Bengal Government also. The latter did not agree to the proposal. They took the view that the individual jute mills should be left to adjust their production in accordance with the stock of raw jute available with them. It is reported that a few mills have stopped working intermittently for two or three days at a time for want of raw jute; but no mill has so far been closed for longer periods of more than a week.

5. The current forecast in the case of jute crop for 1961-62 seems to be favourable. But the actual extent of crop could be estimated only when the new jute crop starts

coming, at the end of this month. It was reported that the arrival of the new jute crop was delayed for want of rain which was very much necessary for retting operations. Since the rural areas of West Bengal have had adequate rains during the last week, there are favourable chances of the new jute coming into the market shortly, and this should ease the situation to a considerable extent. The latest reports in this regard are encouraging.

563
FRESH ROUND OF CLOSURES AND LOOM-SEALING
IN JUTE INDUSTRY.

(202)
As a result of incessant & united pressure by the workers & their Unions, the Government of India & the West Bengal State Government were compelled to withhold approval of the Indian Jute Mills Association's proposal for yet another block closure of mills in August. Earlier, in the months of June & July, the jute mills had been closed down for a week at a time on the plea of scarcity of raw jute. This meant yet another wage-cut for about 1,20,000 permanent workers who received only lay-off compensation, & utter starvation for the 80,000 so-called "badli" workers who received nothing.

The IJMA pressed for yet another block closure in August. When this was not permitted, they came forward with an "alternative" proposal of sealing an additional 18% of the looms & keeping them sealed till the raw jute position improved. As 12% of the industry's loomage is already sealed, the IJMA's proposal would have meant a shut-down of 30% of the total capacity, & unemployment for about 30,000 workers for an indefinite period.

The AITUC, INTUC, HHS, & UTUC unions all opposed this move, & made several representations to Government backed up by a series of meetings & demonstrations. They pointed out that the IJMA's real motive was to push up the prices of manufactured jute goods by creating an artificial shortage in the market, & also to depress to their advantage the prices of the new raw jute crop which has already begun to flow on to the market. This would mean disaster to lakhs of

peasant families in the absence of any Government action to fix minimum prices & build up * buffer stocks. These proved to be weighty arguments.

The ITMA intensified its pressure but, eventually, the Government stood firm for once & refused to approve any plan for ^{lock} closure or loom-sealing. A loophole was, however, left open by stating that individual mills might take necessary measures to conserve their limited supplies of raw jute.

Latest reports indicate that this loophole is now being fully exploited by the employers. As on 7.8.61 the position was that several mills had begun to take unilateral action.

The Alliance mill declared closure, affecting 3,500 workers. Anglo-India, Kankinara, and Kamarhati closed down either one whole shift or a large number of looms (between 350 to 400 each), affecting about 1,000 workers in each of these units. Prabartak (a non-ITMA mill) closed down from 5.8.61, Lansdowne from 8.8.61 (3,300 workers affected), & Maheswari Devi (Kampur) from 7.8.61. Some other mills which have sealed a number of looms, ranging from 40 to 350, are Baranagore, Howrah, Bengal, Fort William, and Gourapore. Besides this, lock-outs were in force already at the Calcutta, Cheviot, & Caledonian mills over the issue of making badli workers permanent, & forcible increase in the weavers' workload.

A serious situation has thus been created again by the ITMA's deliberate flouting of the spirit of the Government's recommendation against closures & loom-sealing. The workers are resisting as best they can & preparing for a bigger, industry-wide struggle. A joint convention of jute workers' & jute-growing peasants' representatives is *

to be held in Calcutta on 27.8.61. Coms. Indrajit Gupta & S.H. Banerji, N.P.S., have tabled a "calling Attention" notice in the Lok Sabha earlier this week to discuss the crisis of closures & unemployment, but so far it has not been admitted.