

MR. CHAIRMAN : We are getting very near the time.

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH (ADOOR) : We want the Finance Minister to say something on this Issue.

SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN (QUILON) : First of all I would like to ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : His name can also be associated with that.

SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN: Sir, this is a different issue. I would like to raise another issue...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : All right, you had your time. Please sit down.

(Interruptions)

13.27 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till thirty minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

14.39 hrs.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at Thirty-nine minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

(SHRI P.M. SAYEED in the Chair)

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

- (i) **Need to Include Jaitpur and Upleta Tehsils in Rajkot District of Gujarat under Employment Assurance Scheme**

[Translation]

DR. VALLABH BHAI KATHIRIA (RAJKOT) : Employment Assurance Scheme under the IRDP has been implemented in several districts of the country, Though this scheme has been implemented in several tehsils of Rajkot district yet Jaitpur and Upleta tehsils have not been covered under this scheme. In fact, these tehsils of Rajkot districts of Gujarat have been hit by famine three years during the last five years. Even the drinking water is not available in that area. That area is also facing the problem of unemployment. People of this area have to migrate to cities or to South Gujarat to earn their livelihood. Therefore, if these two tehsils are covered under Employment Assurance Scheme under IRDP, the problem of unemployment can be solved to a great extent.

Therefore, I urge the Union Government to cover these two tehsils under Employment Assurance Scheme.

- (ii) **Need to Provide Special Grant to State Government of Rajasthan to Solve the Problem of Seepage in Sri Ganganagar District**

SHRI NIHAL CHAND CHAUHAN (SRI GANGANAGAR): The entire area in Tibbi Rawatsar and Pitibanga of Sri Ganganagar district of Rajasthan is getting ruined due to seepage in the soil. The houses and lands of the farmers have been rendered uncultivable. A special grant should be given by the Union Government to the State Govern-

ment of Rajasthan in order to conserve the land and to protect the farmers of the said area.

- (iii) **Need for testing of Hydrogen Bomb for the Defence of the Country**

SHRI AMAR PAL SINGH (MEERUT) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, a serious threat has been posed to the security of the country due to the presence of atomic weapons in the neighbouring countries and one super power of the world want to disintegrate this country and is aiding and abetting the ISI of Pakistan for the terrorists activities in the entire country. Explosions are taking place at the Railway Stations, metropolitan cities, buses and other places killing innocent people on large scale. Recently, a retired Chief of the Army Staff of our country had said that India should go in for testing of hydrogen bomb for the security of the country. Union Government is, therefore, urged to immediately go in for testing of hydrogen bomb for the defence of the country.

- (iv) **Need to set up a High Power Television Transmitter at Nizamabad, Andhra Pradesh**

[English]

SHRI G.A. CHARAN REDDY (NIZAMABAD) : Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government that presently, there is a low power transmitter operating in Nizamabad that caters to only limited area and a large number of people of the district are deprived of the privilege of witnessing T.V. programmes in the State of Andhra Pradesh. In the past, several times, representations have been made to the Central Government that this low power transmitter should be replaced by a high power transmitter so that a large section of people are in a position to enjoy the television programmes. Television has become one of the important media through which all types of programmes, namely, educational, technical and various other national programmes which have become essential for people living in the backward areas are telecast. Television has also become one of the most effective means of entertainment to keep the people well versed with all the latest developments. In Nizamabad, large sections of people are deprived of all such programmes.

Therefore, I urge the Union Government to instal a high power transmitter at Nizamabad which is my constituency.

- (v) **Need to provide STD Facilities at Amba and Barun in Aurangabad District, Bihar**

(Translation)

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH (AURANGABAD) : Sir, District Aurangabad of Bihar State is the most backward and terrorist effected district. I had requested the Government to implement a comprehensive action plan in all terrorist affected districts of Bihar as has been done in the Kashmir State. All blocks of this districts have not yet been connected with STD facility. Even police stations and police pickets have not been provided with telecome facilities due to which delay is caused in reporting the accidents. The Central Government is, therefore, requested

to provide STD facilities at Amba and Barun in Aurangabad district of Bihar immediately. Telecom Services should also be improved.

(vi) Need for early Construction of an Over-Bridge at Durgapur Railway Crossing in West Bengal

[English]

SHRI SUNIL KHAN (DURGAPUR) : I would like to draw the attention of the House as well as the hon. Railway Minister towards a railway crossing at Durgapur in West Bengal on Bankura-Sagarbhangra Muchipara Road.

The main road which is coming from Midnapur, Purulla and Bankura districts of West Bengal goes through the G.T. Road and connect Burdwan and Birbhum districts of West Bengal through that road but due to frequent closure of railway crossing, the people are not able to reach their destination in time resulting in inconvenience to those people as also wastage of petrol and diesel worth crores of rupees.

Therefore, I request the Central Government to construct an over-bridge on the railway crossing as early as possible.

(vii) Need to Improve the Condition of Approach Roads to Bandra Railway Terminus for the Safety of Passengers

SHRI MADHUKAR SARPOTDAR (MUMBAI NORTH-WEST) : Sir, the railway terminus has been established at Bandra East Mumbai for the last few years. However, the infrastructure required for free movement of the passengers to and fro the railway station have not been sufficiently provided. The approach roads to the said railway station are very narrow. A number of hawkers encroach upon these roads. The encroachment of the hutment dwellers on the railway land has caused obstacles to the traffic. The surrounding area of the railway station is unhygienic and dirty. The commuters find it difficult to reach railway station even on their feet. This has been brought to the notice of Western Railways on a number of occasions, but no corrective action has been taken so far.

I request the Union Government to look into this burning problem and clear all the approach roads, provide security and improve unhygienic conditions on war footing in the interest of railway passengers.

14.48 hrs.

FINANCE BILL, 1997 - CONTD.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Before we start discussion on the Finance Bill, I must caution the hon. Members that five hours were allotted for the general discussion. We have already taken three hours and thirty-five minutes and two-and-a-half hours are hardly left.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Why do you presume that I am going to scuttle the Members' right. We will have to finish it. All the discussion should finish today itself. Therefore, I only seek cooperation of all the hon. Members. I have got a very long list of names. I will try to give the maximum time. At the same time, I seek sincere cooperation from the hon. Members. Let us take some ten minutes. The senior Members, who have already prepared, are there. They are waiting. They will get some more time. Now, I will call Shri C. Narayana Swamy. He has already taken ten minutes. And he will have to conclude with a couple of sentences.

SHRI C. NARAYANA SWAMY (BANGALORE NORTH): Mr. Chairman, Sir, yesterday our hon. Minister of Finance had come out with certain proposals relating to withdrawal of levies proposed earlier. These included withdrawal in respect of increased tax on tread rubber and also concessions amounting to more than Rs. 100 crore. One important aspect to be noted here is the thrust given by the Government, especially the hon. Minister of Finance, for improving the basic infrastructural facility, especially the increased subsidy on the power sector of an amount of nearly Rs. 900 crore mainly for hydel power generation.

Now, most of the basic minimum services to be provided to the people, especially in the rural areas, will, under the present set-up, be implemented through the Panchayati Raj institutions. The Constitution provides for the establishment of local bodies which should function as autonomous and self-governing institutions. There is a stipulation and also a provision for devolution of powers and functions to these bodies.

Unfortunately, even after the Constitutional amendment, in many States of the country, with a few exceptions, the States have not devolved, through respective State enactments, sufficient powers and functions to these bodies. In many States requisite administrative powers are not given to these local bodies so that they could implement these very programmes. Even though they have the powers of planning, the States have not established Planning Committees at the district level which are mandatory under the Constitution.

I would like to call upon the Government to see that this anomaly is set right in consultation with the State Governments and that these representative bodies of people, the people at the grassroot level, are allowed to implement the programmes entrusted to them efficiently without giving any room for any anomaly.

Similarly, financial allocation and the provision for implementing various programmes relating to poverty alleviation and self-employment implies the cooperation of financial institutions including commercial banks, regional rural banks and the cooperative institutions involved in this field. There was a proposal for establishment of a national cooperative bank at the national level and that entailed some amendments to the relevant statute and the matter was pending before the Government. I would like to urge upon the Government, especially the hon. Finance Minister, to see that this issue is sorted out without any delay and also enable the cooperatives to function in a democratic