

MR. CHAIRMAN : You see Kanwarjee, you have put forth your view, now let him speak. Azmijee, your notice is for L.P.G. Agency. You speak on that.

SHRI ILIYAS AZMI : Minister of Petroleum has given a statement that in every town of 20 thousand population, gas agency has been opened. I have an objection to it. This is a grossly wrong statement. Any minister should not give wrong statement publicly. In my constituency two towns of Mohammad and Tihani have more than 20 thousand population. For both of these towns two years back, Hindustan Petroleum has given an advertisement for opening of L.P.G. Agencies. Since two years, thousands of applications are lying, but nothing has happened. I want to now that by what time they would be opened ?.....(Interruptions)

Mr. Chairman Sir, oath should have been taken in Urdu but the responsibility of administering oath rests with the speaker and not with the government.(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Nothing will go on record.

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH (Vidisha) : Honourable Chairman, Sir, yesterday, again a rail-accident took place. Shekhawati Express near Mahendragarh derailed. In it 13 people were injured. In this accident three rib-bones of United Front's Minister Shri Sheesh Ram Ola's were broken. Narrating his horrowing experience, he told us that nobody reached there till two and a half hours. After two and a half hours S.D.M. arrived but he did not bring any Medical team with him. And neither any arrangement was made for providing any relief to the victims. For three hours, the Minister kept shouting. No relief work had begun. On his own, the Minister got admitted himself in Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital. When a Minister faces this type of situation, you can very well imagine the plight of other injured people. Not one but many train accidents are taking place. Nobody expresses wonder at these accidents but wonders the day on which no accident takes place. Near my constituency of Bhopal, Vidisha Karnataka, Andhra, Malwa Express was derailed. Railway Minister announces about the probe but he does not attempt to stop these accidents. We do not expect from our Rail Minister that like Shashtrijee he should resign after one accident but in the name of cleanliness he should not play the drama of cleanliness. This will not improve rail-arrangements. Either the Minister should take stern measures to curb the train accidentms or should resign. People today sit in the Train chanting Hanuman Chalisa.....(Interruptions) Mr. Chairman Sir, Railway Minister is sitting silently. He should express his reactions on it(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is not fair. Please go and meet him.

.....(Interruptions)

* Not recorded.

* SHRI HARADHAN ROY (Asansol) : Mr. Chairman. Sir. I have given notice to speak in Bengali. The problem of unemployment is a burning issue today. Unemployment prevailing in our country has assumed serious dimensions in recent years. It is rampant both in rural and urban areas as well as among the industrial labour and educated people. Sir, the number of job seekers on the live register of employment exchange of the country as on 31.12.96 is 37429.6. Besides lakhs of people who have not registered themselves in employment exchange do not have any regular job. So they also come under the category of unemployment. The labour force in India is 339.2 million. i.e. , 37.4% of the total population.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please try to finish soon.

SHRI HARADHAN ROY : Yes Sir, I won't take much time. The labour force comprising 37.4% of the total population does not get any job regularly. Some of them get job regularly, some get for a period only and some do not get any employment. So there is dissatisfaction, frustration among these people(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Haradhan Babu, please do not speak for long.

SHRI HARADHAN ROY : Yes Sir, I should conclude soon. Sir, 80% of the workers are living in rural areas of which 63% is engaged in agriculture. 85% of the workers is self employed or are employed on casual wages, only 15% of the work force have regular salaried job. So, the casual workers because of irregular job do not have fixed income. This also gives rise to unemployment. Besides, so many PSUs, industries have either become sick or are being closed resulting in large number of unemployment. Due to frustration and dissatisfaction these youths are drawn towards all kinds of illegal activities and anti social elements. They are being used by the vested interests also. The trend towards violence, separatism, secession and divisive forces are the result of morbid picture of unemployment. So, I urge upon the Government to make the sick industries viable and not to close the factories and also to make employment generated schemes for the job seekers.(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : You will get chance not today but tomorrow

.....(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM SAGAR (Barabanki) : Mr. Chairman Sir, we want to raise the matter of Uttar Pradesh.(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : You meet the Hon'ble Speaker. If you have any problem you should meet the Hon'ble Speaker.

* Translation of the speech originally delivered in Bengali.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, we shall take up Matters under Rule 377.

Prof. Om Pal Singh 'Nidar'.

.....(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Nothing will go on record except what Prof. Om Pal Singh 'Nidar' says.

.....(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

If you have any special problem, you see the Hon'ble Speaker.

.....(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : You sit down. How can I call you to speak? I donot know even the matter? You meet the Hon'ble Speaker and tell him about your problems. He has not given me any instruction?

.....(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : You meet him tomorrow.

13.34 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

- (i) **Need to increase Import Duty on Newsprint to save indigenous paper mills from closure**

[Translation]

PROF. OMPAL SINGH 'NIDAR' (Jalesar) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, many indigenous paper mills have closed down as imported newsprint is purposely being sold at cheaper rates in the country. Indian newsprint is available at the rate of Rs. 22.23 per Kg., whereas the same type of newsprint is available in foreign countries at Rs. 30 per Kg. But the foreign capitalists are intentionally selling their newsprint at the rate of Rs. 15-16 per Kg. Government mills such as Nepa Nagar Paper Mills, Khandwa and some private paper mills have closed down as a result thereof.

Therefore, I urge upon the Government to increase the import duty on foreign newsprint so as to enable our industry to face the competition of foreign newsprint industry and all mills including Nepa Mill could be revived and the labourers could be paid their wages without delay.

- (ii) **Need to take steps for Protection of Medicinal Herbs in Gumala District of Bihar**

SHRI LALIT ORAON (Lohardaga) : Mr. Charirman, Sir, the medicinal herbs and plants are on the verge of extinction

* Not recorded.

because of indiscriminate felling of trees and unscrupulous smugglers have eye on them in the districts which have been identified as the most backward districts of Bihar. The local citizens are much concerned over the extinction of these herbs which have been traditionally used for treatment of various diseases. The forest department has neither initiated any positive action to preserve these plants nor is concerned about it. You should know that in this forest covered district many types of herbs like Janglisafed Haldi, Arjun, Ghoravach, Shatawar, Gorakhmundi, Nagarmotha, Harjora, Meda, Karher, Inderjo, Kapoorni, are found in abundance. These herbs have the property to cure fever, jaundice, orthopaedic gynaecological, paediatric diseases and diabetes easily and successfully in traditional manner. The situation has assumed serious proportion due to felling of trees, non implementation of various schemes, increasing population and growing activities of smugglers and as a result thereof it has become quite difficult even to find the general herbs such as 'Aola', 'Harra', 'Bahera' etc. Even after smuggling of hundreds of trucks of 'Meda Chhal' no proper action has been taken against the smugglers active in Jaldega, Palkot, Kolibara, Simdega, Bano, Basia, Bharno, Sisai or Kamdara areas during the last two or three years.

The Central Government is, therefore, requested to take some concrete measures for protection of about 100 species of these medicinal herbs which are on the verge of extinction in the said area.

- (iii) **Need to entrust maintenance work of National Highway No. 52 between Balipara and Jonai in the North Bank of Assam to the Directorate General of Border Roads**

[English]

SHRI ISWAR PRASANNA HAZARIKA (Tezpur) : The National Highway No. 52 running through four border districts of Assam's North Bank providing access to Arunchal and Chinese borders is of vital strategic importance to the country. Presently the highway is in a virtually dilapidated state, partly because of inundation and erosion during rains and floods and partly because little or no maintenance was undertaken by the State PWD during the last couple of years. A few bridges on NH 52, like Solengi near Gohpur have remained perpetually under incomplete construction.

In view of the above and considering the utmost importance of NH 52 close to strategic borders it would be in the best interest of all concerned to transfer the responsibility of maintenance of the highway to the Directorate General Border Roads. The DGBR is already mobilised and working successfully in the vicinity for the last three decades and it would be well within its capability to undertake this additional responsibility.

The Shukla Committee to suggest measures to bridge the infrastructure gaps in the North East appointed by the Prime Minister has recommended only recently that the maintenance of NH 52 between Balipara to Jonai should be entrusted to DGBR, a view subsequently endorsed by the Standing Committee on Home Affairs of this Parliament.