

[Shri Amar Pal Singh]

Sir, through you and through this House, I would like to request that so long as Pakistan does not stop instigating terrorist activities in Kashmir, the Government of India should not hold any talks with Pakistan. This is a matter concerning pride of our nation.

SHRI RAM NAGINA MISHRA (Padrauna) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have also given a motion regarding a very important issue. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : I am calling out the names as per the list.

SHRIMATI BHAVNA KARDAM DAVE (Surendra Nagar) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the consumption, storage or otherwise use of ordinary salt has been legally banned with effect from May 28, 1998 a fine of Rs. 1000 or an imprisonment of six months has been announced for those violating the law. I would like to submit in the House that if we turn to history, we will see that when the British Government imposed the tax on salt, the father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi had started salt satyagraha. Hence I make an humble submission that this law should be reviewed because iodized salt is not required by the people throughout the country. A slight deficiency of iodine is detected only in the people living in the hilly area such as Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Assam etc. Symptoms of disease of goitre due to deficiency of iodine has been detected in only three lakh people. It is indeed essential to pay attention towards it to check this disease but it is not right to impose a law on hundred crore people of the country due to these three lakh people.

I would like to say to Hon'ble Minister that it has been mentioned in the bulletin of UNICEF that iodine evaporates in the air and the process speeds up if it is kept in open. If the iodised salt is tested in a laboratory, we will get different reports and this will give rise to corruption. Hence, through you, I would like to say that the ordinary salt costs only fifty paise per kg., whereas the iodized salt will be available at Rs. 5-7 per kg. Is this not injustice to the poor and the common man? I would also like to point out that potassium iodine required for iodization has to be imported from abroad. 70 per cent of the salt is produced in my state, Gujarat. This law has widespread impact there. I would like to make an humble appeal in this House to Hon'ble Minister to pay attention in this regard and review the law. This is my request.

SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT 'BACHDA' (Almora) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, several acres of agricultural land has been eroded and crops of fruits and vegetables have been destroyed due to heavy rains and hailstorms in Uttaranchal and especially in four districts of my constituency, Almora, Champaran, Pithoragarh and Bageshwar in Uttar Pradesh on 7.5.1998. The farmers have lost their crops and a loss of more than twenty crore rupees has been incurred as the metalled road

and the bridge have been destroyed. Through you, I would like to submit to the Union Government that the contribution provided by the State Government in form of immediate assistance is very low, hence the Central Government should release at least twenty crore rupees as special assistance in order to compensate for the loss suffered due to heavy rains and hailstorm on 7.5.1998 so that relief may be provided to the common man and the road and the bridge washed away due to rains may be reconstructed.

SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE (Bilaspur) : Hon'ble Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to submit that an agitation has been going on for quite a long time for setting up a new railway zone at Bilaspur Headquarters. A loss of crores of rupees has been incurred since 15.1.1996 when the agitation turned violent. After months of relay hunger strike, discontinuance of coal loading, closure of division, the workers of Chhatra Yuva Jana Sangharsh Samiti are sitting on a fast unto death at Jantar-Mantar in Delhi since 30th May. Their condition is critical.

On 30th January 1996, the then leader of opposition in the 11th Lok Sabha and the present Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee had made a demand for setting up a Railway zone at Bilaspur Division which has been one of the highest profit earning division for the Railways.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to ask the Union Government to make an announcement regarding setting up a Railway zone at Bilaspur Headquarters without further delay so that Chhatra Yuva Jana Sangharsh Samiti may end its agitation.

SHRI GAURI SHANKER CHATURBHUI BISEN (Balaghat) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Madhya Pradesh is in the grip of severe drought this year. All the District Collectors have sent the relevant data to the State Government. The Kharif as well as Rabi crops have been destroyed. The yield has been only 50 per cent in 1251 out of 1252 villages under my constituency District Balaghat. The State Government is not providing any relief. The Congress Government has not put its case properly before the Union Government and the matter has not been discussed with the MPs either.

Madhya Pradesh is not getting any relief as it failed to present its case effectively. People are dying of starvation. No relief works have started. Only for Balaghat district Rs. 50 lakh have been granted. There are 4 lakh labourers in Balaghat. So this amount will not suffice to provide work even to 10% of the labourers.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I request the Union Agriculture Minister through you to invite the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh and arrange a special sitting of all MPs of Madhya Pradesh so that some effective steps would be taken to tackle this grave situation prevailing in the State.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, this matter does not concern only to my constituency but Madhya Pradesh as a whole.