

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The question is :

"That this House do recommend to Rajya Sabha that Rajya Sabha do elect two members of Rajya Sabha according to the principle of proportional representation by means of the Single transferable vote, to the Joint Committee on Offices of Profit in the vacancies caused by the retirements of Shrimati Monika Das and Shri B. Krishna Mohan from Rajya Sabha and do communicate to this House the names of the members so appointed by Rajya Sabha to the Joint Committee,"

*The Motion was adopted*

12.15 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

[English]

(i) Need to declare Waterway from Trivandrum to Cochin a National waterway

SHRI A. CHARLES (Trivandrum) : The need for developing inland waterways in this country cannot be over emphasised. Fortunately, Kerala has been blessed with a very long natural waterway connected with a number of rivers, lakes, back waters, estuaries and artificial canals. The total length of navigable route in Kerala is about 1900 kilometres, which accounts for 20 per cent of the total inland water route in this country. But, due to various reasons, there has been a decline in the use of inland waterways in Kerala after independence.

In view of the inherent advantages available in Kerala the Gokhale Committee in 1957 and the Bhagawathy Committee in 1967, have recommended the overall improvement of this canal. The National Transport Policy Committee has also recommended the development of the West Coast Canal as a National Waterway. In

view of the great need for the development of inland waterway in the State, I request that urgent action may kindly be taken to declare at least the waterway from Trivandrum to Cochin as a National waterway and the work for its development started in the Seventh Plan.

[Translation]

(ii) Demand for a 'Dhalai Nagar' in Aligarh U.P. on the lines of 'Tala Nagar' already provided there

SHRIMATI USHA RANI TOMAR (Aligarh) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Approximately 7000 workers are working in about 260 furnaces in district Aligarh. These workers include artisans, firemen and soil mixers. Members of their families are facing starvation due to financial exploitation by the industrialists. These workers have been forced to carry on moulding and casting work in their homes due to which most of the families have been afflicted by dangerous diseases like T.B. and Asthama. Due to faulty assessment by Labour Department, these workers have been deprived of the free medical facilities available in ESI hospitals. I would like to request that with a view to improve their condition, a 'Dhalai Nagar' should be set up at Aligarh on the pattern of 'Tala Nagar'.

[English]

(iii) Need for proper running of Ahmedpur-Katwa and Bardhaman Katwa railway lines, conversion thereof to broad gauge and nationalisation of A. K. (N. G.) Railway Co. Ltd.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur) : Sir, a large number of Railway passengers in the districts of Birbhum, Bardhaman and Murshidabad in the State of West Bengal are seriously concerned about the proposed move of Railway Ministry for the closure of the narrow gauge railway service from Ahmedpur to Katwa and Bardhaman to Katwa within the Eastern Railway. Recently a big demonstration has been held protesting