

I would like to submit to the Central Government that they should take urgent effective steps to solve this serious problem so that there could be some relief during the coming summer season.

(ii) Demand for early clearance to Sidhmukh and Nohar Canal Projects in Rajasthan.

SHRI BIRBAL (Ganganagar) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Sidhmukh Nohar Canal is an important Canal of Rajasthan State, which would irrigate nearly eight lakh acres of land in Bhadra and Nohar Tehsils of District Ganganagar and Rajgarh and Tara Nagar Tehsils of District Churu.

After the survey of both these Canals, papers have been submitted to the Central Water Commission. The Central Water Commission has been engaged in the clearance of the canal projects for quite a long time.

I would, therefore, request the Irrigation Department of the Central Government to grant approval to Sidhmukh and Nohar Canal Projects so that the concerned farmers may get the benefit thereby and remove their backwardness and poverty and also increase the national production.

(iii) Demand for taking urgent steps to meet the shortage of drinking water in the rural and urban areas of Ajmer

SHRI VISHNU MODI (Ajmer) : Under rule 377 I would like to draw the attention of the House towards acute shortage of drinking water in my Parliamentary constituency Ajmer and in the urban and rural areas of Rajasthan.

As is well known, Rajasthan has been facing serious condition of famine for the last many years, but the famine condition this year is so serious that it has created a deep feeling of insecurity of livelihood among the common man of Rajasthan.

In the urban areas in District Ajmer comprising Ajmer city, Kishangarh, Beawar and Vijay Nagar, in which more than 15 lakh people live, water is supplied for a duration of 2 hours only and that too once in two days.

In the rural areas of Ajmer, the condition of drinking water supply is still worse. The villagers of this area are running from pillar to post in search of fodder and water for their livestock and their crops. As no famine relief works have been started and in the absence of any alternative, the villagers are migrating to other States.

The officials say that due to scanty rains this year, the water level in the ponds is very low, which is likely to pose a very serious problem in the coming summer season. Secondly, the sources which supply drinking water are adversely affected due to interruption in power supply which also affects the drinking water supply.

I would, therefore, like to submit to the Hon. Agriculture Minister that keeping in view the acute shortage of drinking water in the urban and rural areas of Ajmer, urgent steps should be taken to solve the problem.

12.22 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

(iv) Demand for retention of the administrative control of Tagore Hospital in Kondagaon District Bastar (M.P.) by the Centre

SHRI MANKURAM SODI (Bastar) : A very large area of Tehsil Kondagaon and Narainpur in District Bastar has been selected for the rehabilitation of refugees from Bangladesh. As the current Plan period is coming to an end, this project is being transferred to the State Government. Under this project, Tagore Hospital has been established in Kondagaon which has become very popular among the tribals. The tribals have benefited by the services provided by this Hospital. This hospital should not be handed over to the State Government. This is the demand of the tribals and they want that this hospital should be run by the Central Government as in the past and it should be a gift to the tribals of the area, who have made a significant contribution by willingly agreeing to allot their land for the rehabilitation of the refugees.

A delegation from Bastar had met the former Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi in Delhi and had requested that this Hospital should be run by the Central Government. The former Prime Minister had

assured that it would be run by the Centre. During the recent visit of the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi to Bastar, a representation was submitted once again that the Central Government should issue immediate orders in this regard. I hope that the Hon. Prime Minister would accept the demand of the tribals of Bastar area and direct the Rehabilitation Department to take appropriate action in this regard keeping in view the fact that the tribals are now shunning the superstitions of magic and ghosts and reposing their faith in the medical treatment.

[English]

- (v) Need to furnish accurate statistics about the Bhopal gas tragedy.

SHRIMATI KISHORI SINHA (Berhampore) : The world's greatest industrial tragedy occurred one year ago at Bhopal killing over 2000 and affecting for life some ten times that number of men, women and children. According to reports children born of affected parents have shown signs of severe malfunctioning of their body metabolism, some have died within a few weeks of birth and over 400 still births took place. Though 12 months have passed by, even now no accurate statistics of deaths, permanent damage to human system and other casualties have been made available, is itself a greater tragedy. There are far too many unfilled gaps in information on this tragedy and rehabilitation work that need to be explained and repaired at least now onwards.

- (vi) Demand for converting the Krishnapatnam minor port in Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh into a major port.

SHRI P. PANCHALLIAH (Nellore) : The Krishnapatnam harbour (port in Krishnapatnam village in Nellore district, Andhra Pradesh) is at the joining point of the river Khandaleru into the sea. The river is wide enough, having enough depth and width at the point at which it enters into the sea, to accommodate ships direct from the sea into the river.

Government of India have in the past developed artificial ports like Madras and Mangalore. Now the Madras port is highly congested. Hence the Krishnapatnam port

can be developed into an alternative major port to ease the congestion at Madras, to boost our foreign trade. It will help in attracting more foreign tourists from South East Asian region.

This port can also serve as the fishing harbour. Many fishermen living in the long coastal line will immensely benefit by the development of this port. It will bring a transformation in the lives of these poor people. It will also provide navigational facilities in the river. Transportation in the region will become cheap.

Hence I request the Government of India to take steps to convert Krishnapatnam minor port into a major port in the best interests of the country.

- (vii) Need to abolish all taxes/duties levied on medicines in the country

DR. A. KALANIDHI (Madras Central) : The taxes levied on medicines are unparallelly high to the tune of 48 per cent i.e. 100 per cent to 140 per cent duty, 13 per cent excise duty, 10 per cent sales tax, 12 per cent surcharge, 4 per cent Central Sales Tax and 1 per cent to 2 per cent octroi; and added to this, there are certain other direct and indirect taxes on bottles, aluminium foils, caps, packaging material etc. In the present Budget, there is 5 per cent increase in auxiliary duty plus applicable C.V.D. The sales tax levied by the State Government differs from State to State, and the very purpose of the Government to keep one uniform price tag is defeated. The irregularity and high cost involved in procuring the canalized items drug intermediates and raw materials through S.T.C. on account of undue profit of 200 per cent to 300 per cent amassed by S. T. C. add to the price of medicines.

The inordinate delay on the part of BICP to fix the cost of bulk drugs and formulations may at times force the manufacturers to take shelter of the court, which creates short supply of life-saving drugs like Methyldopa, Tetracycline, Erythromycin, Chloromiphenical, Vitamins, Pilocarpine etc., making millions of ailing patients to run from pillar to post, feeling anxiety and uncertainty. Government has protected some of the manufacturers in the organized sector of bulk drug Erythromycin, by imposing a duty of