

13.11 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377**(i) Need to Take Expeditious Action for setting up of Electronic Telephone Exchange at Korba Town in Madhya Pradesh***[Translation]*

Shri Bhawani Lal Verma (Janjgir) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the population of Korba town in Madhya Pradesh is about 3.5 Lakh. The offices of 14 coal mines, the office of the General Manager of South-Eastern Coal Fields, BALCO projects, Units of National Power Corporations, Madhya Pradesh Electricity Board and other ancillary industries are functioning there. It is the second largest industrial centre of Madhya Pradesh. People from every part of the country and big industrialists and traders live here. The officers of district administration also live here. Therefore, there is a great demand of telephone connections in this town.

Only 1200 connections have been provided against the demand for a large number of telephone connections. Complete preparations have been made for installing a 2,000 line electronic exchange in the town. The building has already been constructed. It is really sad that equipment for installing the proposed electronic exchange had already reached there but it was shifted elsewhere later. Consequently, there is great resentment among the people of this area which is turning into an agitation.

The Central Government is requested to take immediate action on it and send necessary equipment for setting up the proposed 2,000 line electronic exchange in the town.

(ii) Need to Provide Financial Assistance to State Government of Himachal Pradesh for Repairs and Maintenance of Roads Connecting National Highways and Rail Tracks Affected by Floods in Himachal Pradesh and to Pay Compensation to the Flood Affected Persons

Shri Krishan Dutt Sultanpuri (Shimla) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, due to excessive rains in Himachal Pradesh the National Highway and the railway lines have been blocked. Vegetables and fruits worth crores of rupees could not reach Shimla and other markets. Kalka-Shimla road has been re-opened for traffic after untiring efforts but the road from Kumarhatti to Dehradun Via Nahan Pounta is still lying closed and a number of vehicles are still stranded. Land worth crores of rupees have been destructed due to soil erosion and the crops have been ruined. Alongwith it a number of persons and cattle have perished. Several people are getting treatment in hospitals. All the approach roads to villages are closed. At several places houses and water mills have been washed away. People are in a difficult situation. Crores of rupees are required for repairing the railway tracks and roads connecting the National Highway from Kalka to Indo-Tibet border and also to make good the loss suffered in places like Mandi, Chamba, Hamirpur, Kangra and Kullu etc.

I, therefore, urge upon the Government that a sum of Rs. 20 crore may be sanctioned to the State Government for repairing the approach roads and additional funds may be

provided to pay compensation to the people for the loss to crops and houses after taking stock of the situation. Immediate action should be taken on it.

(iii) Need to Ensure Benefit of Pension to the Employees of Cooperative Sugar Mills in Tamil Nadu*[English]*

Shri P. P. Kallaperumal (Cuddalore) : Sir, there are 240 sugar mills in the Cooperative Sector. Their Contribution to the production of sugar is considerable. Lakhs and lakhs of men and women are being employed in these sugar mills. Their sweat and toil sweeten the life of the Indian humanity. But surprisingly these employees are not provided with the retiral benefit—the retirement pension.

The basic framework of our Socialistic Republic is to provide a decant standard of life to the working people and to provide security from cradle to grave. The State is obliged to provide assured, decent living standard in old age of the retired employees ensuring economic security. The employees deserve help to desist destitution in their old age. Pension is not merely compensation for loyal service of the employees rendered in the past when they were physically and mentally alert, it is also a measure of socio-economic justice which stipulates economic security in the fall of life.

Hence, pension is not an *ex gratia* payment. It is a social welfare measure to render socio-economic justice to those employees who, in the hey day of their life, ceaselessly toiled for the employer. Hence, pension is a right of a retired employee.

Hence, I urge upon the government of India to direct the Managements of Cooperative Sugar Mills in Tamil Nadu to introduce pension scheme for the employees of Cooperative Sugar Mills so as to render them social justice in their old age.

(iv) Need to Declare Bateshwar and Sairipuri Near Agra as Places of Tourist Resorts and Provide Adequate Funds for Their Development*[Translation]*

Shri Prabhu Dayal Katheria (Firozabad) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to raise an issue under the Rule 377. Bateshwar situated at a distance of 45 kms from Agra is a famous place of pilgrimage. Besides, there is also a religious place of Jains at a distance of one kilometre from Bateshwar and it falls under my Parliamentary constituency, Firozabad. Ancient and rare idols are there at this place. Lakhs of pilgrims from foreign countries and also from different parts of the country visit these places but proper facilities have not been provided to these tourists by the Government. This is a beautiful tourist spot. As this place is near Agra, foreign tourists of different religions also visit it.

I would therefore, request the Government that in view of the demand of the public, Bateshwar and Sairipuri should be declared as tourist resorts and adequate funds should be provided for their development.