

14.35 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

- (i) Need to ban plying of cycle rickshaws on New Delhi roads and to provide bank loans to the cycle rickshaw pullers to purchase auto rickshaw ?

SHRI BISHNU PRASAD (Kaliabor) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, unlike other metropolitan cities, New Delhi being the Capital of the largest democracy in the world, enjoys an enviable position.

New Delhi is sparsely populated covering vast expanse of land which could be traversed only by fast moving vehicles. This has resulted in manifold increase in the number of motor vehicles running in all directions on New Delhi roads. Under such a situation plying of cycle-rickshaw beyond the walled city of Delhi frequently poses traffic hazards, often resulting in traffic jams and fatal road accidents. It is, therefore, high time that plying of cycle-rickshaws on New Delhi roads should be totally banned.

Sir, a man pulling a cycle rickshaw, sweating profusely in rags under the scorching sun, presents a pitiable sight. Foreign tourists looking at the emaciated figure of a rickshaw puller from a poor image of our living standard. It is also a great health-hazard.

It is, therefore, high time that plying of cycle rickshaws on New Delhi roads is banned on humanitarian grounds. An important point worth taking note of is that the majority of rickshaw-puller are not the owners of the vehicles but they ply on hire basis. They, should, therefore, be provided with soft loans from the nationalised banks to purchase auto-rickshaws.

It would confer on them the ownership of the vehicles, and introduce fast traffic on New Delhi roads thereby minimising traffic jams. This measure would also increase their income and living standard, which would be a step towards economic uplift of weaker sections of our society, enumerated in the 20-point programme of our Prime Minister.

- (ii) Need to reject the proposal for shifting Regional Reference standard Laboratory from Khandagiri near Bhubaneswar to Gauhati.

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA (Balasore) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Regional Refe-

rence Standard Laboratory set up by the Union Food and Civil Supplies Ministry at Khandagiri near Bhubaneswar has been functioning for the last many years. The purpose of setting up this laboratory is to make adequate research on the food and agriculture development in this region. But it is regrettable that efforts are being initiated by a group of officials for the shifting of this regional laboratory to Gauhati. The news of shifting of this laboratory to Gauhati has created a great discontentment among the people of Orissa. Government of India has remarked a sum of Rs. 20 lakhs for the construction of a permanent building for the above regional reference standard laboratory at Khandagiri. A number of schemes have been formulated to undertake full-fledged research work through this laboratory. When the matter has advanced to such an extent the shifting of this laboratory to a far away place like Gauhati will not at all serve the purpose of the people of Orissa.

In view of the above circumstances, I would like to request the Minister of Food and Civil Supplies to reject the proposal for the shifting of this laboratory to Gauhati in order to protect the interests of the agriculturists in Orissa.

- (iii) Need for directing the Bihar government to restore the earlier 'Old Age Pension Scheme in the State.

SHRI R.P. YADAV (Madhepura) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Government of Bihar keeping in view the object poverty of the people and also the rapid increase in the number of the citizens below the poverty line, embarked on an 'old-age pension scheme', in conformity with the Prime Minister's 20-point programme.

In the scheme, it was provided that the poverty-stricken people, who had already attained the age of 60 would be entitled to draw pension at Rs. 30/- per mensem.

Subsequently the 'scheme' was converted into 'social Security Pension scheme' which included within its purview the hapless widows and the indigent.

An order has been issued recently to the effect that the social security pension would not exceed 2% in any Block. This has created an ambiguous and an anomalous situation.