

12.22 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair.*]

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

- (i) Need for steps to make Gauhati Airport operational during night time also.

SHRI BISHNU PRASAD (Kaliabor): I wish to draw your attention to a matter of public importance which has been agitating the minds of the people of North Eastern Region in general and the people of Assam in particular.

Gauhati is the gateway to North Eastern Region and is also on the map of Indian Airlines, connecting Agartala, Bagdogra, Dimapur, Dibrugarh, Imphal, Jorhat, Lilabari, Tezpur, Barapani, Silchar, Patna, besides Delhi and Calcutta.

At present there are no night landing facilities at Gauhati Airport with the result that all the services operate during day time upto 17.00 hours. Very often it has been our experience that if any flight gets delayed due to some technical snag, it cannot land or take off in the evening and the passengers are stranded causing great inconvenience.

Gauhati being an important town of Assam having its strategic position, it is all the more necessary that it should be made operational during night time which would help strengthen and increase civil and para-military traffic in times of emergency.

I, therefore, earnestly impress upon the Government to take all these factors into consideration and provide necessary facilities to make Gauhati airport operational during night also.

- (ii) Need to supply more imported edible oil to Orissa and to distribute 'dal' through the Public Distribution System there.

SHRI BRAJ MOHAN MOHANTY (Puri): The prices of essential com-

modities are rising high. More particularly, the price of edible oil and 'dal' have gone up so high that it is becoming difficult for people from the poorer strata of society to manage. The edible oil and 'dal' are commodities which form very essential part of poor man's diet in Orissa.

I, therefore, urge upon the Government to supply more imported edible oil to Orissa so that the price of edible oil can be brought down and to take over the distribution of 'dal' through public distribution system so that it can be supplied to the poor people at fair price. This is urgently necessary to relieve the poor man from hardships.

- (iii) Need to lift ban on cotton exports.

PROF. N.G. RANGA (Guntur) Under Rule 377 I wish to make the following statement :

The cotton-growers of Andhra Pradesh producing long staple cotton in particular and producers of cotton all over India in general are very much agitated over the Government ban placed suddenly on cotton exports, thus bringing down cotton prices which stood at Rs. 670 per quintal, by more than Rs. 80 per quintal. While the Managing Director of Cotton Corporation of India was saying that there is very good demand abroad for Indian cotton and neither the Indian textile industry nor the Cotton Corporation complained about the present or anticipated short supply of cotton, it is mystifying why this sudden ban was imposed, thus denying to our cotton growers the benefit of foreign demand, though only 40% of the cotton was available with actual growers now and 60% had been bought up by dealers or some growers-cum-dealers. To deny the advantage of higher prices ruling abroad is to deprive India of additional foreign exchange and higher incentives for growers to produce larger quantities of cotton next year. So I request the Government to reconsider its decision. I also urge the Government to give equal opportuni-