

(iii) AFFORESTATION PROGRAMME FOR PREVENTION OF DROUGHT IN SOUTH.

SHRI K. ARJUNAN (Dharmapuri): One of the main reasons for the current drought situation in the South is lack of planning for a coordinated afforestation programme in the region. An eminent environmentalist has recently warned that a Thar-type desert is likely to develop in South India unless urgent measures are taken to stop the massive deforestation taking place there. The intensity of drought in the Southern States especially in Kerala and Tamil Nadu would increase year after year if the States do not go in for an immediate afforestation programme. The lush tropical forests are being gradually wiped out in the quest for more agricultural land and also land for industrial units. It may also be recalled that Brazil also had a similar problem because of deforestation in the Amazon tropical forests. South India will soon go the same way as the Thar region if the deforestation and reckless using of water go at the present rate.

It is worthwhile noting here that vested interests with political influence at the State level are hand in glove with the forest officials in depleting the forest resources for an immediate personal gain.

Because of heavy felling of trees in recent years in the year, it has resulted in climatic imbalances and shortage of rainfall and thereby Cauvery has become dry.

Hence the situation calls for a coordinated programme from the Centre for a well planned afforestation and ecological protection programme involving the concerned States.

(iv) NEED FOR COMPLETION OF MICROWAVE SYSTEM IN AMRELI CITY FOR ITS PROPER DEVELOPMENT.

SHRI NAVIN RAVANI (Amreli): Amreli has developed very fast into a growth centre. It is the biggest groundnut oil industries centre in Gujarat.

Many more small scale and medium industries are in the offing at this centre. Geographically speaking, it is situated in the centre of Saurashtra. For all practical purposes this city has become a very important and integral part of the State of Gujarat.

This work for setting up microwave system in this city was started 2-3 years back, but has not completed till now and the progress is very slow. The then hon. Minister for Communication has also assured that the work for setting up microwave system will be completed before 1982. Hence television, telecommunication, etc. cannot be developed in this city without microwave system. Only microwave system can link this city with other important cities like Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, etc. Unless this link is established the growth and development of Amreli city would be hampered. In this city industry, trade, education and communication would suffer in the absence of microwave system.

Therefore, I would earnestly request the hon. Minister for Communications to look in to this urgent matter and complete the work of microwave system in Amreli city immediately enabling the city to join the main stream of the nation for the proper development.

(v) NEED FOR SETTING UP EAST CAMPUS OF DELHI UNIVERSITY AND OPENING TWO MORE COLLEGES IN TRANS-YAMUNA AREA.

SHRI RATAN SINH RAJDA (Bombay South): Sir, I beg to make the following statement of public importance under Rule 377:

East Delhi-trans Yamuna areas have a population of fifteen lakhs i.e. about one-fourth of the population of Delhi. Most of the people are of low and middle income groups. But this area has only two colleges. This has been causing great inconvenience to a large number of students both girls and boys, because they have to go to the distant colleges daily for study.