

[Shri Vasant Kumar Pandit]

A ban on the supply of common salt to the goitre areas cannot be imposed because, there is not enough iodised salt due to administrative bottlenecks.

The monumental apathy of the Government to goitre control can be guessed from the fact that some years ago, when the number of iodisation plants was even less than 12, two iodisation plants gifted by UNICEF rotted in the godowns for several years just because they were not installed.

Goitre is caused by deficiency of iodine in the diet. It is characterised by the enlargement of the thyroid gland and swelling of the front and the sides of the neck. It is prevented by and controlled by ensuring regular use of iodised salt by the goitre-affected and goitre-risk people.

The developed countries where goitre was a problem eradicated it several decades ago.

The goitre belt in India stretches along Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana (one district), Bihar (nine districts), U.P. (14 districts), West Bengal (five districts), Sikkim, Assam, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Tripura, Manipur, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh.

Goitre has also been identified in the Aurangabad district of Maharashtra and Shahdol and Siddhi districts of Madhya Pradesh.

The prevalence of goitre in this belt ranges from 3 per cent to 60 per cent with an average prevalence of 30 per cent.

Dr. C. Gopalan nutrition expert, says the failure of the national goitre control programme highlights how health programmes are implemented in the country.

Nutrition Foundation of India refers to the unsatisfactory manner in

which the prevention of nutritional blindness (vitamin A deficiency) programme was being implemented and says: "Goitre and similar health and nutritional problems are disease of the poor and underprivileged and, therefore, apparently looked upon as 'their' problems, not 'ours'.

What is needed is a qualitative change in the approach to these problems. There must be a greater awareness of the importance and urgency of these problems and high priority must be given to their control and prevention.

In the Sixth Plan Rs. 86 lakhs have been allocated for goitre control. Fifteen more iodisation plants gifted by UNICEF are also proposed to be installed during 1980-85.

I, therefore, call upon the Government to give serious attention to this basic health problem of the poor. A lot of awareness has to be created at the grass-root level. A total apathy of both the Central and State Governments is due to unaccountability and complacency. I hope that the Government will come forward with a comprehensive scheme to tackle this national health programme.

(v) PROTEST RALLY BY WORKERS AT BOAT CLUBS, NEW DELHI

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY (Calcutta South): Sir, lakhs of workers, employees, peasants, agricultural labourers and other sections of the toiling people coming from different parts of the country have rallied today in the lawn of the Boat Club, outside Parliament to register their protest against high prices of essential commodities, anti-labour policies of the Government and anti-democratic repressive measures like Essential Services Maintenance Act, National Security Act, etc. and to press for the following demands:

1. Sale of all essential commodities such as foodgrains, edible oil,

cloth sugar, etc. at subsidised prices through a net-work of shops in public distribution system by ensuring adequate and uninterrupted supply of these commodities.

2. Remunerative price to peasants and higher wage to agricultural workers.

3. Stringent measures against black-marketeers, hoarders, smugglers, speculators and officials protecting them.

4. Repeal of Essential Services Maintenance Act, National Security Act and other repressive measures.

5. Need-based minimum wages on the basis of norms laid down by the 15th Labour Conference.

6. Full neutralisation of the rise in cost of living. Removal of ceiling of Rs. 1.30 per point rise in price index (1960) base arbitrarily fixed by the B.P.E.

7. Amendment of payment of Bonus Act providing bonus for all workers without ceiling and pre-condition.

8. Ban on retrenchment and closures; introduction of unemployment allowance to the unemployed.

9. Withdrawal of all victimisation measures against workers and TU activists.

10. Rectification of fraudulent cost of living indices.

11. Recognition of TU's strength through secret ballot.

12. Full guarantee of collective bargaining and TU rights without any discrimination.

The acceptance of all these just and legitimate demands of the workers and the toiling masses requires radical changes of pro-monopoly, anti-people and anti-democratic policies of

the Government. Instead of pursuing the path of all-out confrontation and brutal repression at the dictates of national and foreign monopolies including IMF and World Bank, the Government should draw appropriate lesson from this massive united protest and reverse its present policies to accept the demands put forward jointly by all the Central Trade Unions and the National Federations through this massive rally. In case the Government refuses to respond, there will be a bigger protest through all India strike action. The Government will be fully responsible for this development.

(VI) Need for taking over of Roorkee Engineering University by Union Government.

श्री रशीद मसूद (सहारनपुर) :

रुड़की की इंजीनियरिंग यूनिवर्सिटी हिन्दुस्तान की उन चन्द यूनिवर्सिटियों में से एक है, जिसने इंजीनियरिंग के मैदान में न सिर्फ हिन्दुस्तान में बल्कि दुनिया में नाम पैदा किया है। मगर वक्त के साथ-साथ उसकी वह पुरानी साख खत्म होती जाती है। इसलिए आज इस बात की जरूरत है कि इस यूनिवर्सिटी को हुकूमते हिन्द अपने इंतजाम में ले और इसको भी वही दर्जा दिया जाए जो हिन्दुस्तान में आई० आई० टी० को दिया गया है। सरकार के इस कदम से न सिर्फ यह कि रुड़की यूनिवर्सिटी और पेपर इंस्टीट्यूट सहारनपुर मुल्क की तरक्की में बेहतर किरदार अदा कर सकेगा, बल्कि आई० आई० टी० से कंपीटीशन होने की जितना पर रिमर्क के मामलात में भी सुधार आया। यूनिवर्सिटी के स्टाफ और स्टूडेंट्स की भी यही इबाहिश है कि इसको हिन्द सरकार अपने अधिकार में ले ले।