

[Shri Som Nath Chatterjee]

Prices Commission. Unless the decision is changed—and the Jute Corporation of India or other public bodies do not purchase raw jute, the growers, who are mostly small farmers, will not get the remunerative prices and will be in the clutches and mercy of middle men who work in collusion with the mill owners. To protect the small farmers and prevent the collapse of raw jute prices in West Bengal and other jute growing States by extending arrangements for purchase of jute by Government agencies, it is essential that immediately a decision should be taken so that the minimum price is received by the growers. The reason which is being put forward by the Central Government is that due to lack of adequate storage facilities, the Jute Corporation of India would not be able to make purchase of jute on a larger scale. If the Government provides the necessary funds, the Panchayats in West Bengal can purchase raw jute, as has been suggested by the hon. Finance Minister of the Government of West Bengal.

It is a matter of serious concern that a discriminatory treatment is being meted out so far as the jute growers are concerned, by the Central Government. While the Reserve Bank of India has made a provision of Rs. 280 crores to the Cotton Corporation of India for the purchase of raw cotton, the Jute Corporation of India has been provided with only Rs. 26 crores for purchase of raw jute. While the minimum support price for cotton varies between Rs. 255 and Rs. 265, the purchase made by the Cotton Corporation of India have been always at rates above that price. It appears that because cotton growers have a strong lobby at Delhi, they always manage to get a fair and remunerative price while jute growers being mainly small farmers and having no lobby or pull are being denied even the price fixed by the Agricultural Prices Commission.

I call upon the Government immediately to take necessary action so

that growers of raw jute get the price fixed by the Agricultural Prices Commission and they are not made to suffer although they are helping the country to earn huge amount of foreign exchange. I request that the hon. Minister of Commerce may make a statement on the position at an early date.

(iii) PAYMENT TO WORKERS ENGAGED IN FAMINE RELIEF WORK IN DURGA-PUR AND BANSWARA DISTRICTS OF RAJASTHAN

श्री भीष्म माई (बांसवाडा) राजस्थान के दक्षिणी भाग में डूंगरपुर एव बांसवाडा जिलों के अनुसूचित जनजाति क्षेत्रों में, भील बेल्ट में, जहाँ एक ओर अकाल राहत-कार्य बन्द कर दिये गये हैं, वहाँ दूसरी ओर दो तीन महीनों की मजदूरी का भुगतान नहीं किया गया है। प्रधान मंत्री, श्रीमती इन्दिरा गांधी के 12-सूत्री कार्यक्रम की सर्वथा अवहेलना की गई है और आगे भी की जा रही है। सर्वत्र अकाल, मजदूरों में भूखमरी एव रक्षाघ व्याप्त है। राज्य सरकार को निदेश दिये जाये कि जब तक नई फसल न पके, तब तक राहत-कार्य जारी रखे जाये और अकाल भुगतान करके केन्द्रिय सरकार का सूचित किया जाये।

(iv) REPORTED STATEMENT BY SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF HEALTH ABOUT DECLARING HOSPITALS AS ESSENTIAL SERVICE

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur). The Union Health Ministry's Secretary, in his press conference in Delhi held on 18th July, 1980 had given a threat to declare Hospitals as essential service in view of the strike of the junior Doctors of six Delhi Hospitals.

This declaration was made outside the House when Lok Sabha was in session and when the Minister for Health had clearly stated that there was no proposal to declare hospitals as essential service.

The Union Health Secretary has thus contravened well established convention of the House Instead of making efforts to settle the strike amicably through negotiations, the Government has decided to appoint 500 new doctors in Hospitals in Delhi.