

Fifty-sixth Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 5th March, 1984".

The Motion was adopted.

14.17 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

(i) Steps to check leprosy in Delhi

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA (Balasore) : Delhi, once considered to be a low incidence of Leprosy Zone, is gradually becoming endemic with large scale influx of disease-afflicted persons into the capital. The migration of patients to Delhi from other endemic areas, has been continuing at an increased rate, exposing the people in congested areas to the great risk of contacting the disease. Unless immediate steps are taken for the early detection, treatment and rehabilitation of leprosy patients, the situation will be very critical in the Union Territory of Delhi. I request the hon. Minister of Health and Family Welfare to make efforts to detect the leprosy patients. New leprosy centres should be set up, where adequate treatment can be given. The leprosy patients leading the lives of beggars should be rounded up and taken to the leprosy centres. After the patients are cured from this dreaded disease, they should be provided immediate rehabilitation. Finally, the Centrally sponsored scheme should be implemented in full swing, to put an end to this disease and further influx of such patients should be stopped forthwith.

(ii) Minimum fair price to potato growers

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE (Panskura) : The potato crop of this year has started to come in the market. Now is the time for the peasants to sell. While the lowest market price for the consumers is Rs. 100 per quintal or Rs. 1.00 a kilo, and that too is often exceeded, the peasants are being forced to sell at a much lesser price, such as Rs. 22 to Rs. 24 per quintal. In interior areas it is even less. In certain areas of West Bengal it was even sold at Rs. 15 per quintal a

week back.

Since potato crop this year is promising, the possibility of peasants being forced to sell at an unremunerative price is very real and it may continue to be so for quite some time. Therefore, the Ministry of Agriculture must take measures and take it up also with all the State Governments of potato growing areas so that they are in a position to take measures for protecting the peasants from being forced to sell at unremunerative prices. Sale price for the peasants should be fixed at Rs. 100 a quintal and the Government agencies must come forward to buy.

(iii) Rat menace in Delhi

SHRI KAMAL NATH (Chhindwara) : I bring to your notice the grave situation arising from a virtual explosion in the capital's rat population. Over the past few years, the rodent menace has spread from the rural fringes of the Union Territory and its underdeveloped areas and now engulfs, new colonies, Government offices and private offices.

You can expect them in all variety of shapes and sizes—the heavy and complacent sewer rat, the lean and hungry house mouse, the pugnacious country rat, the noisy kitchen rat and the fearless street rat. Being voracious eaters, they must be consuming about tonnes of food, including files and records in offices, not to speak of stealing six to seven percent of foodgrains stocked in godowns. At this rate they are poised to chew up every record in the Government—classified and non-classified—some day.

Deployment of an army of cats may be a suitable antidote for rats. But I am amazed to find the Capital's cats lacking in the predatory zeal, and settling for stolen milk instead of hunted rat-meat. It seems that rats and cats have entered into an unprincipled coalition in their undeclared war on the people. I urge the Government to swing into action forthwith and take suitable steps.

Sir, most of what I wanted to say has not been allowed, it has been edited.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Whatever has been approved will go on record.