

(vi) ASSISTANCE TO TAMIL NADU FOR TACKLING DRAUGHT SITUATION IN THAT STATE

SHRI N. DENNIS (Nagercoil): The acute draught situation prevailing in Tamil Nadu has to be tackled immediately before the deterioration of the situation. Due to deficient rainfall there is acute water scarcity for drinking and crops. The tanks, dams, watercourses and rivers have been dried up. Sowing of crops not done in several places and where there is cultivation, the crops dried up and withered away. As a consequence of it people are driven to unemployment and poverty. There is shortage of foodgrains and fodder for cattle. Water scarcity both for drinking and crops has to be immediately tackled. Food grains have to be distributed quickly and fodder for cattle should also be supplied. Implementation of labour oriented schemes should be accelerated. Relief measures such as remission of land revenue, water cess and local cess and postponement of collection of arrears of land revenue and Government loans have to be done in all affected areas. This situation has to be tackled without isolation, omission and discrimination of any affected area from the southernmost district of the State and nation, Kanyakumari, where the people are severely affected by draught and faced with all these problems. So, the Government may be pleased to take speedy steps to assist the State Government by giving grants and subsidies to tackle the natural calamity facing the State.

(Interruptions)**

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Do not record anything.

(Interruptions)**

14.19 hrs.

Shri Chitta Basu, Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu, Shri Niren Ghosh and some other hon. Members then left the House.

(vii) CRISIS IN HANDLOOM INDUSTRY IN KERALA

SHRI K. KUNHAMBU (Cannanore): Under Rule 377, I am making a statement.

The handloom industry in Kerala, is facing a serious crisis. 5 lakhs families who are wholly dependent on this industry are on the verge of starvation today. Small, medium and big factories which were producing handloom clothes and even the single looms have completely stopped working. This has affected the people in different walks of life in Kerala.

On Friday, the 27th March, there was an all party bandh in Cannanore, the major centre of handloom in Kerala. This bandh was organised to draw the immediate attention of this Government to the burning problems of the handloom sector.

The crisis that has overtaken this sector is mainly due to the unprecedented increase in the cost of production and the steep decline in the sale. In 1979-80 Rs. 350 crores worth of handloom clothes were exported. But by the end of 80-81 we could export only Rs. 250 crores worth of clothes whereas the target was of Rs. 400 crores. On the one hand the sale has come down and on the other hand the cost of production has gone up. Stiff competition from countries like China, Taiwan, Korea has made our position very uncertain in the international market.

The new handloom policy of the Government has not helped this sector. Since most of the factories are in the private sector, the new policy which is intended to benefit only the co-operative sector, has not benefited the handloom sector as a whole. It is alleged that the Apex Society and the Handloom Development Corporation have ignored the private sector. The Corporation could not spend

**Not recorded.

more than Rs. 15 lakhs out of Rs. 85 lakhs which was sanctioned to purchase the accumulated stock.

In view of the serious situation that has arisen in the handloom industry in Kerala, I earnestly request the Government to take the following steps:—

1. Reservation in the manufacturing of handloom clothes.

2. Fix the price of all kinds of yarn used in the manufacture of handloom at least for a specific period, and ensure steady supply of yarn.

3. Introduce a national minimum wage immediately.

4. Make arrangements to purchase the accumulated stock and sell it through Government agency.

5. Prevent the rise in prices of essential chemicals which are used in the manufacture of clothes and set up a colour manufacturing unit at Cannanore.

(viii) NEED TO RESTORE TRAIN SERVICES OF DARJEELING HIMALAYAN SECTION OF N. F. RAILWAY

SHRI ANANDA PATHAK (Darjeeling): Under Rule 377, I am making a statement.

A serious situation has arisen since the unwarranted withdrawal of train services on the Darjeeling Himalayan Section of the N. F. Railway. Suspension of this service would throw a large number of railway employees out of employment and push them with their family members on the verge of starvation. As a consequence of suspension of this service a large number of tourists, who visit Darjeeling are experiencing great inconvenience. This is the tourist season and Darjeeling is one of the most beautiful tourist centres in the world. The economy of this backward hill region depends on tea, tourism

and timber. The tea industry is dwindling and if the flow of tourists is also hampered due to withdrawal of this service, the whole economy of Darjeeling will collapse giving rise to serious economic, social and political problem. The transportation problem of the hills is very acute due to topographical position of the hills. The movement of small train on narrow gauge has contributed to some extent to ease this problem. Besides this, the small trains running on the narrow gauge on Darjeeling Himalayan section are themselves the unique objects of attraction. This is called Toy Train. This beautiful toy train was introduced a century ago by the then British Government. Britishers left India but the engineering genius of British engineers remained as an ornament of the queens of hills. Attempts were made to withdraw this service in the past but the public opinion forced the Government to retain this service. I, therefore, urge upon the Government to restore the train services on Darjeeling Himalayan section of N. F. Railway without any further delay.

14.24 hrs

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS, 1981-82—
Contd.

MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS—
Contd.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: We now take up further discussion and voting on the Demands for Grants under the control of Ministry of Communications, Shri T. S. Negi.

श्री टी. एस. नेगी (टिड्डी गढ़वाल)
उत्पादक मजदूर, टेलीफोन के सम्बन्ध में मुझे यह निवेदन करना है कि आज हमारे पूरे देश के हर एक शहर में जहां जहां टेलीफोन लगे हुए हैं, उनमें से शायद ही कोई ऐसा टेलीफोन होगा, जो चौबीस घंटे काम करता हो। कोई भी माननीय सदस्य यह बता दें कि क्या उसका टेली-