

[श्री विनायक प्रसाद यादव]

377 के अधीन निम्नलिखित अविलम्बनीय लोक महत्व के विषय का उल्लेख करता हूँ :

“राष्ट्र के महान स्वतंत्रता सेनानी एवं आधुनिक भारतीय राजनीति के भीष्म-पितामह श्री आचार्य बी० कृपालानी विगत कई महीनों से अस्वस्थ हो कर लगभग रोग शय्या पर थे। हाल में उनकी स्थिति बिगड़ कर चिन्ताजनक स्थिति में पहुँच गई है और विगत 28-3-79 को उन्हें अहमदाबाद के एक सिविल अस्पताल में भर्ती किया गया है जहाँ उनकी स्थिति चिन्ताजनक है। समूचे राष्ट्र का उद्विग्न मन अपने प्रतीक की ओर चला गया है और उनकी नजर अहमदाबाद के अस्पताल पर लगी है।

अतः मैं सरकार का ध्यान इस ओर दिलाते हुए उनके स्वास्थ्य की अद्यतन स्थिति से सदन को अवगत कराने की मांग करता हूँ तथा सरकार से आग्रह करता हूँ कि अविलम्ब बादा को दिल्ली के आल इंडिया इंस्टीट्यूट या बम्बई के अस्पताल में दाखिल करें तथा उनके इलाज की व्यवस्था राष्ट्रीय कोष से करने का ऐलात करें।

(v) OBSERVANCE OF HOLIDAY ON BIRTHDAY OF DR. B. R. AMBEDKAR

SHRI S. S. LAL (Bayana): Sir, under Rule 377 I want to raise a matter of urgent public importance. That a holiday be declared on the 14th of April every year since it is the birthday of Baba Sahib Ambedkar ji. What he has done for the down-trodden in the country and how he is adorned by these people need no emphasis. Holidays on the birthdays of all great people and saints but Baba Sahib, have been declared and is a practice with the Government of India. Baba Sahib has a following no less than any other great man of his time and stature.

(vi) REPORTED SCARCITY OF FURNACE OIL BOMBAY REGION

SHRI S. R. DAMANI (Sholapur): Sir, under Rule 377 I want to raise a

matter of urgent public importance. I would like to draw the attention of the Minister and the House towards the acute scarcity of the furnace oil for the last three weeks. Most of the industries in various parts of the country, particularly Bombay region are using furnace oil as fuel. Some of the major industries like textiles, fertiliser, chemicals, etc. are having stocks just sufficient for hand-to-mouth. They have been waiting daily at the offices of the stockists anxiously for their supplies. The present position is such even one day delay in the supplies may cause the stoppage of the wheels of the industries. Thus there will be a heavy loss of production, besides shortages, layoffs, interrupted employment, etc. I hope the hon'ble Minister might be aware of this critical situation. Therefore, Sir, I request the hon'ble Minister to clarify the position.

SHRI VASANT SATHE (Akola): Sir, for how many days still I have to wait for the reply.

MR. SPEAKER: He has sent the reply. A copy has been sent to me.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: Let me see the copy. (Interruptions)

SHRI PURNANARAYAN SINHA (Tezpur): Sir, I have given notice under Rules 377 and 193 in respect of Assam. There is shortage of wheat, rice, coal and cement. Trains are not moving. I shall start satyagraha from 12 noon tomorrow if my matter is not allowed to be moved. (Interruptions)

SHRI RAJ KRISHNA DAWN (Burdwan): Sir, I have also given notice under Rule 377 in respect of West Bengal plunged into complete darkness for want of electricity, kerosene, oil and coal resulting in great resentment in the minds of the people of West Bengal.

MR. SPEAKER: I will give you permission tomorrow.

(Interruptions)

SHRI PURNANARAYAN SINHA:
I have given notice several times.

MR. SPEAKER: There are large number of notices which are being given by hon. Members. Assam is also one of them.

Now, Shri Kundu,

12.16 hrs.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS, 1979-80—
contd.

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS—contd.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SAMARENDRA KUNDU): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the other day I was speaking about foreign publicity and I said that there is a great scope for further revamping of our foreign publicity and in this job we are already in.

Now, coming to another aspect, namely passport, I would like to give certain information to the hon. House. Since the new Government came into being, demand has been made frequently that we must liberalise the procedure of issuing passports. We immediately jumped into this work and I am glad to say that due to the liberal policy that we have introduced in regard to this, the issue of passports have increased from 3.33 lakhs in 1974 to 12.13 lakhs in 1978. And during these years—and practically within last and this year—we have opened five new passport offices in Bangalore, Kozhikode, Jaipur, Bhopal, and Bhubaneswar. We will also open shortly another 5 passport offices at Patna, Gauhati, Jullunder, Srinagar and Simla. Sir, hon. Members also desired that the certification of the passport should also be done by MLAs and MLCs. They demanded that the procedure should be streamlined and MLAs and MLCs should be authorised to do certification. We have also extended that power to MLAs and MLCs, i.e. to certify the passports

and also to the Members of the Metropolitan Council. We are also still thinking what further we can do to improve the various procedures in regard to passports. One of them is in regard to bringing out passport application forms in the regional languages. We have decided to bring out passport forms in 11 regional languages in addition to Hindi and English.

Sir, we committed ourselves in this House that we will try to open one passport office in each State to the extent possible. We are trying our best to see how far we can reach that target.

Having said that about passports now I will take the hon. Members to the Arabian countries. Now, this voyage will not be to enjoy the stories of exploits of Sindbad the Sailor or the episode of Alibaba and the Forty Thieves, but to tell hon. Members, how much we are trying our best to fulfill the desires of the Muslims of this country to make Haj pilgrimage to Jeddah in Saudi Arabia. Since the new Government came into being, we have introduced various reforms. We have done our best to streamline this procedure of selection of Haj pilgrimage. As a matter of fact last year we granted 20,000 people foreign exchange which is definitely a much better number than what was done earlier. And in this year also we are trying to give the concession which has been given to them last time. We had decided that pilgrims by Moghul line ships may be charged Rs. 1900 as returnfare. Bill the Moghul lines wanted much more but we are giving a subsidy of about Rs. 1 crore to the Moghul Lines so that one of the noblest desires of the Muslims, particularly the poorer Muslims, would be fulfilled. In 1977, the pilgrims had to pay an amount of Rs. 4552 as return fare for the charter flights; in 1978 we reduced this to Rs. 3830. This has given a big relief for the Muslims who want to do Haj pilgrimage by chartered flights. This year, we have been trying to have the same provision, but unfortunately,