

all these leaders were imprisoned in one room only.

The people of Ahmednagar district have expressed great displeasure in this regard, I reiterate the suggestion made by me earlier that the Ahmednagar Fort may be declared as a 'National Monument'. It may also be developed as tourist centre.

[Translation]

- (ii) Need to provide more financial assistance to the Government of Rajasthan to meet the situation caused by drought in the State

SHRI SHANTI DHARIWAL (Kota) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Central Government had given 5 lakh metric tonnes of wheat for wage payments last year free as a special assistance to combat drought situation in Rajasthan. But this year it has not given free wheat. That is why the State Government is not being able to provide employment to even one person in every family. 50 lakh families have been affected by the drought. The Rajasthan Government is in a position to provide employment only to 10 lakh people, whereas the Gujarat Government is providing employment to 2 persons in each family. The Centre has fixed the daily wages of a worker at Rs. 7 while the State Government is paying Rs. 10.50. The Central Government is not giving assistance for expenditure on other items. The State Government has to provide employment to the families alternatively due to limited employment potential available in the State. Therefore, one family gets employment only for 15 days in a month. According to the recommendations of the Eighth Finance Commission it is the duty of the Central Government to provide entire expenditure on commodities. The Centre has sizably cut down the assistance proposed by the Central study group for the first time. The supply of wheat to the fair price shops is inadequate. Drought affected people are getting 5 kgs wheat per person whereas it should be 10 kgs. per individual. The situation may aggravate in the coming months of April, May and June. Therefore, more financial assistance should be urgently provided for this period by the Central Government.

[English]

- (iii) Need to take steps to check prices of drugs

SHRI MANVENDRA SINGH (Mathura) : Pricing policy announced by the Government recently and exemption which has been granted from price control to SSI units of category II formulations recently has resulted in steep increases in prices varying from 40% to 200% causing misery to the poor. There are increased sales of spurious and substandard drugs induced by the Pricing Policy. There is a hue and cry all around. For instance one injection of Mitomycin (anti-cancer) which was earlier sold for Rs. 49 is now sold at Rs. 230. One bottle of Phosfomin which was earlier available for Rs. 14.40 is now sold for Rs. 26. One bottle of Dilosyn (cough syrup) is sold for Rs. 9.53 while earlier it was sold at Rs. 5.03 and so on. Government have also announced increases in prices merely by adjusting mark up and without verifying the purchase prices of raw materials, dispensing with submission of applications by the producers and following the provisions of paragraph 6 of DPCO, 1987. There appears to be no justification for such sharp increase.

The drug companies have been given free hand under the Pricing Policy to exploit poor consumers.

I, therefore, request the Government to take necessary steps to check prices of drugs to safeguard the interests of consumers.

12.20 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

[Translation]

- (iv) Need to provide adequate facilities and concessions to spastics

*SHRI RANJIT SINGH GAEKWAD (Baroda) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I want to raise through you, a matter of urgent public importance under Rule 377 in the House.

*Translation of the matter originally raised in Gujarati.