

[SHRI ZAINUAL BASHER in the Chair]

12.44 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

[Translation]

(i) Need to set up a Forest Protection Force equipped with modern communication system

SHRI M.L. JHIKRAM (Mandla) : The illegal felling of trees in the forests in the country is increasing and if Government fail to take stringent measures on priority basis then, certainly the entire land will be denuded by the end of next decade which will have a dangerously adverse effect on the rain fall and the ecology. The gangs involved in the illegal felling of trees have the protection of big people and carry fire arms with them. How can then the small number of forest staff, forest guards, rangers, etc., protect forests in such a situation? They either meekly witness the illegal felling of trees or overlook it or make hay white the sun shines. If anyone dared to prevent them, he did so at the cost of his life. There have been many cases in which the honest forest employees and officers were killed by these gangs, and their families are living like destitutes.

So, I suggest that a separate Forest Protection Force should be created for the protection of forests and be equipped with wireless sets, vehicles and the latest fire arms.

Besides, all the saw mill licences granted during the last three years should be cancelled.

[English]

(ii) Need to take up the works for development of backward areas of Chambal Valley and a portion of river Jamuna

SHRI GANGA RAM (Firozabad) : For the general development of the most

backward area of the Chambal Valley and a portion of river Jamuna, which is prone to serious crimes of dacoity, the Central Government had formulated a plan with a total outlay of more than Rs. 300 crores to change the character and texture of soil of the deep ravines upto certain distances on either sides of the aforesaid rivers by starting soil conservation operations, constructions of bridges and pucca roads, arranging lift irrigation for agricultural operations as also to make available drinking water for the entire area and also for the nearby villages and also establish industrial units so that the people who per force taken to dacoity and other crimes, may earn their livelihood through fair means and lead a peaceful life like law-abiding citizens. I understand that the funding and financing for this huge project were being made by the State Governments of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan and the Central Government in collaboration with the EEC. It is understood that the project has been cleared and initially funds amounting to Rs. 14 crores have been sanctioned for the construction of permanent bridges at Bateshwar and Pinahat of district Agra and overhead bridge on the railway line near Shikohabad junction from where road to Bateshwar emanates. But so far, the construction work has not been taken up. Further, as suggested earlier, the pucca bridge of Shankarpur on river Jamuna in the dacoity-infested area of Tehsil Fatehabad of district Agra has also not been sanctioned as yet. The Central Government is requested to ensure that these works of public importance are taken up immediately as dacoity menace has again shown signs of revival.

[Translation]

(iii) Need to provide special funds for Bundelkhand Development Authority for development of the region and for elimination of dacoits

SHRI DAL CHANDER JAIN (Damoh) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to raise the following matter under rule 377.