

12.08 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

- (ii) Demand for investigating into delay in returning by National Museum Authority Sculptures hired from Museum in Orissa for exhibition in Festival of India in the USSR.

SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK (Cuttack) : Five sculptures from the Konark site museum and four Budha images from the Ratnagiri site museum were taken for exhibition in the Festival of India in the Soviet Union. It is a matter of great regret that two of the sculptures sent abroad have not yet been returned to museums in Orissa. These sculptures were hired by the National Museum Authority.

I urge upon the Government of India to investigate into the matter and take necessary steps to ensure return of these sculptures to the concerned Orissa Museum without any further delay.

[*Translation*]

- (iii) Demand for starting production in Ashoka Paper Mill in Samastipur Bihar

SHRI RAM BAHADUR SINGH (Chapra) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Ashoka Paper Mills in Samastipur, Bihar was set up by Darbhanga Raj in 1957. In 1970, the Governments of Bihar and Assam and IDBI decided to run the mill jointly in the joint sector. It was managed by a Board of directors consisting of the representative of Assam and Bihar Governments and the IDBI. Production started in 1975, but unfortunately the mill suffered a loss of Rs. 26 crores due to inefficient management. In 1982, the production in the mill came to a dead halt and also the payment of wages to the labourers was also not made. Though the Mills has not been closed legally and there has been a constant demand that the mill should be restarted and payment of the wages be made to the labourers but till todate nothing has been done in this reg-

ard. It may be recalled that under the Assam Accord it was decided that this mill will be treated at par with the Assam units. Accordingly the Central Government has provided all the facilities to the units working in Assam and as a result of that, the workers of those units are getting their wages and production work has also been resumed. But nothing has been done for this unit. When Shri Umadhar Singh, an MLA from Bihar went on fast unto death, the Union Minister of Industries said that the matter was pending with the VIFR and anything could be done only after the decision of the VIFR. But whenever a date is fixed by the VIFR for the disposal of the matter, the Central Government seeks an extension.

So I would urge upon the Government to get the production in Ashoka Paper Mill restarted without any further delay, and to get the wages paid to the workers alongwith the settlement of the issue of its ownership, so that 1200 workers working in the Ashoka Paper Mills, may be saved from starvation and the economic development of Bihar may be undertaken.

- (iv) Demand for providing more halts to recently converted fast/superfast trains in Gujarat

DR. A. K. PATEL (Mehsana) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you I want to present a matter of urgent public importance under Rule 377 in the House.

Recently, all the trains passing through Gujarat, Saurashtra and the adjoining areas have been converted into fast, mail & express trains. Speed of all the passenger trains has been increased and thus these trains have been converted into fast trains. It has created a problem for the poor people, generally the farmers, workers, common man and particularly the service class people who used to go by train to their places of work from their small villages or towns. Their only means of transport was the trains of which they have now been deprived. As all the trains have been converted into fast trains, these trains do not halt at the small railway stations depriving them of the train