

[Shrimati Parmila Dandavate]

misery of the residents. In Bombay people are living in death trap due to the dilapidated conditions of the buildings which are collapsing one after the other.

In view of the urgency of the situation, I would request the Government to make adequate funds available to the Maharashtra State Government to undertake structural as well as other repairs to the buildings.

(xi) Need to improve functioning of telephones in West Bengal, particularly in Calcutta

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE (Panskura) : The telephone system in Calcutta as well as in other districts of West Bengal is in a precarious condition. As such it was very bad, but after the heavy rains in June thousands of telephones have gone out of order most of which have not yet been repaired. If anybody tries to contact Panskura or Tamluk of Midinapur district from Calcutta through trunk service, not even one in a thousand calls materialises. Some time back some citizens of Calcutta held a condolence meeting to mark the death of Calcutta telephones, and that was the most symbolic presentation of the state of affairs. While the telephones remain unusable the subscribers are sent regular bills, sometimes totally fictitious, and the subscribers have to pay. The telephones which are supposed to be functioning are also often rendered useless because the numbers intended to be contacted are often not available. Since telephone is not a decoration but an imperative means of communication, I draw the attention of the Minister of Communications to this sad state of affairs and demand urgent and efficient measures to

improve the telephone system of the whole of West Bengal including that of Calcutta.

(xii) Taking over of Birla Mills, Delhi as recommended by Delhi Metropolitan Council.

SHRI SUSHIL BHATTACHARYYA (Burdwan) : I wish to draw the attention the Government to the situation in Birla Mills, Delhi. The management of the mill has illegally shut down the Weaving and related departments of the mill adversely affecting the livelihood of 2,500 workers.

The Delhi Metropolitan Council unanimously passed a resolution earlier this year recommending takeover of the mill. The management has refused to reopen the Weaving department.

The Lt. Governor has also given the Labour Commissioner the necessary sanction to prosecute the management.

However, not only has the management refused to stop its illegal practice it is now refusing work to permanent workers of the other departments also.

There are over 5,000 workers on the muster rolls. To save them and their families from starvation the Central Government should immediately intervene and takeover the mill as recommended by the Metropolitan Council.