

12.48 hrs.

[Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

- (i) REPORTED DANGER FROM EXPLOSIVE
DEVICE BURIED AT POKHARAN IN 1974
AFTER NUCLEAR TEST

DR. VASANT KUMAR PANDIT (Rajgarh): On the background of the controversy of setting up a Remote Sensing Nuclear Device on Nanda Devi on Himalayas and the Prime Minister's reply thereupon, several scientists of the BARC have sounded a warning of greater hazard and danger of explosive device buried in 1974 at Pokharan after the nuclear test consisting of 7 kg. of plutonium-239, the secrecy about this device and the dangers arising thereupon and the potential nuclear pollution is causing concern to scientists and technicians in the country and are matters of great public importance.

The Times of India dated 18th April, 1978 'New Delhi Edition' has quoted: "Meanwhile, an atomic energy expert told PTI about the plutonium buried in the Pokharan desert following the 1974 nuclear test is potentially a greater hazard than the one-kg. plutonium powerpack buried atop Nanda Devi. The rocky stones under Pokharan, however, offer better conditions for containment of plutonium than the fragile snow atop Nanda Devi. But while the Nanda Devi powerpack, which uses plutonium-238, is a potential hazard for only a few centuries, the plutonium-239 under Pokharan is a potential hazard for about two hundred thousand years.

In view of this it is clear now that India's involvement in the C.I.A. Capex-device in the Himalayas is without consultation with the BARC and the late Dr. Homi J. Bhabha is not known to have given his consent; nor was he consulted at all on the issue of the nuclear device on Nanda Devi.

In view of the Press criticisms, it is necessary for the Government to take

the Parliament and the people of the country in general, into confidence, with regard to both the nuclear power-packs placed at Nanda Devi, and Pokharan to regenerate confidence that the Government is taking the utmost care of all the resulting pollution dangers and hazards, arising from such devices.

I would, therefore, make a fervent request to the Government to lay on the Table of the House a White Paper on the entire episode of nuclear device, its history, the present position and the future safety measures taken by the Government in this respect.

- (ii) REPORTED INCIDENCE OF 'BRAIN
FEVER' IN A VIRULENT FORM IN
TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT OF TAMIL
NADU

SHRI K. T. KOSALRAM (Tiruchendur): Mr Deputy-Speaker, Sir, under rule 377 I wish to raise this very important matter:—

Sir, there are varying reports of the incidence of an unknown fever in a virulent form, particularly amongst children in Tirunelveli District of Tamil Nadu.

It is reported that though many deaths have taken place during the last three or four months, no diagnosis of the cause of this disease has so far been made.

Sir, unless effective steps are taken to combat this disease on both the preventive and remedial fronts, we will be losing precious human lives. The possibility of this epidemic taking a heavier toll all over India is not also ruled out.

My request is this. The Government of India should immediately get in touch with the Government of Tamil Nadu. They should also send some experts from here to find out what kind of a disease is this.

Sir, if the attack is there, any child feels as if it is the death-bed. For three or four months they cannot move. I request them to look into the matter immediately, to take it up with

the Tamil Nadu Government and also to send experts from here.

(iii) REPORTED HARASSMENT OF IMMIGRANTS AT BOMBAY AIRPORT BY IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT OFFICERS AND THEIR AGENTS

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI (Chirayinkil): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, under Rule 377, I wish to draw the attention of the House and that of the hon. Minister to the following matter of urgent public importance:—

Hundreds of people are emplaning to the Gulf countries every day to accept employment offered to them by these respective States. They are reaching the Airports with the relevant documents with the Air India tickets.

The Air India is expected to issue tickets only after 'P' Form is cleared. Now, the Reserve Bank of India is not expected to issue this 'P' form, without verifying every document. Naturally, the Reserve Bank verifies the documents and issues this 'P' Form after full satisfaction.

Yet, these unfortunate persons are being harassed, humiliated, and rebbed at the Air-ports at the last moment by certain officers of the Immigration Department and their Agents.

It is widely reported and this has come in important newspapers like *Mathrubhoomi*, that a racket is operating in the Bombay Airport to loot the passengers in collaboration with these corrupt officers. These gangs operate in a particular form.

After checking-in at the Airlines counter, the passengers appear before the Immigration Department for verification.

Even though the Passport, Immigration Card, N.O.C. and other documents are with them, yet, the officers cross-examine the passengers and delay their departure. They put all sorts

of questions and harass them. It creates panic among the passengers and they become helpless. The immigration officials try to find out even small errors and hang on them to harass them. At this moment, some agents will appear and put some words in the ears of the passengers, and offer to settle it. The panic-stricken passenger is ready to settle it at any cost. The whole issue will be settled after the intervention of the agents whom the passenger paid well.

This last minute harassment by the Immigration Department is creating a problem for Air India as they have to suffer heavy losses due to the cancellation of definite bookings. So, it is necessary that the tickets should be issued only after proper verification.

The Immigration Department also evoked certain unwanted restrictions on the employees going to Muscat. These restrictions are primarily on the basis of salary and endorsements on the Passport. At the time many people are being smuggled out by paying heavy amount to certain gangsters operating in Bombay. As a whole, the introduction of new rules of immigrants and restrictions imposed on them have helped increase in this corrupt practice in the Department. It creates more hardships to the poor people who are seeking employment abroad.

So, it is necessary that Government must take a serious view of this corrupt practice prevailing in the Immigration Department and the big rackets operating to loot the passengers at the airports. It is also necessary to relax the new rules imposed on the immigrants to Muscat.

May I appeal to the Government to make a complete overall review of the rules framed to control the immigrants going abroad and accepting jobs and make it more accessible for the poor people who are not able to find way to make both ends meet?