

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?