

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Sir, he cannot say anything which is not in the notice given.

MR. SPEAKER: Don't grudge even that.

PROF. DILIP CHAKRAVARTY: I have been interrupted by my Hon. friend....

MR. SPEAKER: It doesn't matter. Let us come to the subject.

PROF. DILIP CHAKRAVARTY: There are casual workers working in the Life Insurance Corporation....

MR. SPEAKER: Professor, you are aware what is in....

PROF. DILIP CHAKRAVARTY: I drafted it; so I know. I won't go beyond that.

Last year there was a hunger strike demanding absorption of casual workers. It was in May, 1977. It was at the intervention of myself and some other MPs that there was an understanding and, following a discussion with the Management, there was a five-point agreement. One of the points was to absorb the casual workers gradually. That has not been done, and the Management informed, on the 24th of this month....

MR. SPEAKER: You know that under Rule 377 you have to confine yourself to the statement.

PROF. DILIP CHAKRAVARTY: I know.

MR. SPEAKER: But you are not. If a Professor can be like that, what can I do? A Professor should set an example to others.

PROF. DILIP CHAKRAVARTY: They said they can absorb the labourers provided the ban is withdrawn by the Central Government. So, from 24th April, 1978 the Employees' Association has restored to an indefinite hunger-strike in Calcutta before the

premises of the Hindustan Building. Immediate steps should be taken to see that the problems of the casual workers are resolved without any further delay.

It is good that the Prime Minister and some other Ministers are also there in the House. I expect something expeditious will be done in this matter so that the problems are resolved.

(ii) REPORTED DECISION OF BENGAL IMMUNITY CO. LTD. TO CLOSE ITS FACTORIES AND SALES OFFICES

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): The Management of the Bengal Immunity Company Limited, Calcutta has decided to close its factories as well as its sales offices throughout the country with effect from 29th April, 1978. The decision will render 2100 workers jobless. These units of this company have been manufacturing many life-saving drugs and the employees have categorically submitted that the company can retain its economic viability and the workers and employees are ready to extend cooperation for increasing production. So the Government should immediately come forward and take all possible steps to save this pioneering pharmaceuticals industry from destruction and also from people becoming jobless.

(iii) REPORTED SMUGGLING OF HASHISH, CHARAS, OPIUM, ETC.

SHRI S. R. DAMANI (Sholapur): Sir, the trafficking or smuggling of drugs like Hashish, Charas, Opium, etc. had declined considerably in the last three years and we did not come across reports of large-scale operations by specialised gangs. Now it appears that these gangs have surfaced again and have resumed their activity nonchallantly. This is a very serious matter. Only three days ago the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence is reported to have seized 400 Kgs. of Hashish which was concealed in trolley tyres to be airfreighted to Montreal in Canada. Yesterday again

they seized 160 Kgs; a foreign national was also arrested with 700 grams of Charas concealed on his person. These are instances of detected cases; we do not know how many cases are going undetected. Government should not ignore them as isolated cases. There are professional gangs behind these operations and this also gives rise to the suspicion that the gangs enjoy the support of officials at all levels in the Customs, Police etc. Firstly, Government should keep strict watch at production centres of such items; secondly, there should be greater vigilance at border check-posts to prevent smuggling of the items into the country from neighbouring countries which is ultimately smuggled out through our international airports. Thirdly, I do not know what punishment the existing laws prescribe for such offenders, but stringent action is necessary against them. I want Government to take note of this.

(iv) REPORTED AIR BROADCASTS ALLEGING TICKETLESS TRAVEL BY SOME CONGRESS (I) WORKERS ON 6-4-78.

SHRI VASANT SATHE (Akola): Recently AIR repeatedly went on broadcasting for three days an item that three Congress workers traveling in the compartment of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, President, Congress (I), on 6th April 1978 by Kalka Mail were found to be travelling without tickets and were caught by the Railway authorities and fined Rs. 100/- each. It is most surprising that the news released by the AIR was not only false but mischievous and part of a programme to denigrate Smt. Indira Gandhi by gross misuse of mass media. The news was allowed to be broadcast even after a denial by the Railway authorities and the Railway

Minister on the Floor of the Rajya Sabha. Although the false propaganda was carried on by AIR for two to three days, it is surprising that the matter has not been investigated and those responsible for this irresponsible and mischievous release of news are not punished. I may point out here that in similar cases, for a slight mistake of showing some item of an earlier time, persons have been transferred and suspended. And here, when a deliberate propaganda is being made, nothing is being done. Such instances are becoming more common and it is high time—I would invite the attention of the Hon. Prime Minister, who has a great standard of moral upkeeping, and would like to know whether he approves of this type of propaganda carried on through this media—It is high time that Government take serious note of such mischievous propaganda and guard against the misuse of mass-media for character assassination.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI (Chirayinkil): May I seek a clarification regarding the Privilege Motion that we have given notice of.

MR. SPEAKER: Unfortunately, you were not here. You can come and meet me; it is not closed. Your other friends discussed the matter with me. It is open for you to come.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: I hope the Government will come up with a statement on the matter I have raised.

MR. SPEAKER: That is my expectation.