

MR. SPEAKER: The leave is granted. The Members will be informed accordingly.

The House stands adjourned till 14.00 hours. We will then take up statements to be made under Rule 377.

13.02 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha reassembled after
till Fourteen of the Clock*

*The Lok Sabha reassembled after
Lunch at five minutes past Fourteen
of the Clock*

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

(1) REPORTED EXODUS OF EAST PAKISTAN REFUGEES FROM DANDAKARANYA PROJECT

MR. SPEAKER: Matters under Rule 377. Mr. Chitta Basu.

SHRI CHITTA BASU (Barasat): I rise to raise an important matter under rule 377. The House is aware that there was a mass exodus of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) refugees from camps in the Dandakaranya Projects in March this year.

The exodus reached the staggering figure of 1.3 lakh and this heavy influx into West Bengal posed a serious problem for the state of West Bengal.

Top-level teams of officials including Ministers and MLAs and MPs visited Dandakaranya to find out the causes behind this unprecedented exodus. It came to the notice of the visiting teams that the refugees were selling of their personal belongings at throw away prices and leaving for West Bengal, where they believe there was adequate land in Sunderbans which could accommodate all 130,000 of them.

At a certain stage, the West Bengal Government requested the South

Eastern Railway not to allow the deserters to travel by the trains, the Railway authorities pleaded their inability to stop them from travelling by trains, as all of them were travelling with valid tickets. The question arose as to who was financing the exodus.

The Chief Minister of West Bengal is reported to have said on more than one occasions that some vested interests were financing this exodus in order to malign the left front Government.

The West Bengal Government sent a team of IB to investigate the issue, which, have reportedly submitted a report.

The Sunday, an English Weekly, on its issue dated July 30, 1978 writes: "The findings of the SIB team were shocking, to say the least. According to the report, the District Magistrate of Raipur has provided around Rs. two lakhs for distribution among the refugees. The money had come from Government funds. This money was distributed by an employee of the DM's office along with a handful of 'dalals'. The money was utilized by the deserters for buying rail tickets and hiring trucks. The SIB report also states that the dalals enraged the modesty of some refugee women."

The West Bengal Government have sent a strong protest note to the Government.

It is necessary that the Government makes a statement. A thorough enquiry is called for in order to find out who are behind this anti-national conspiracy.

(ii) REPORTED DELAY IN CLEARING OF IRRIGATION AND POWER PROJECTS OF MADHYA PRADESH

DR. VASANT KUMAR PANDIT (Rajgarh): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am permitted under Rule 377 to raise the following important and urgent matter of public importance and I request the Minister to make a statement thereon.