

[Shri Ismail Hossain Khan]

there is a section of people who always try to create communal tension and harass the innocent people. There is nobody to object to driving Bangladesh Nationals out of Indian soil. But it is seen several times that some innocent Indian citizens are unnecessarily harassed in the name of Bangladesh infiltration in this area. Therefore, I appeal to the hon. Minister to appoint a high powered committee to enquire into the voracity of the news items so that the innocent people are saved from unnecessary harassment and tension. Necessary directions may also be issued to the state government for a permanent solution of the river-erosion problems of the people of Assam, particularly of Barpeta sub-division.

(iii) SHARP SPURT IN MONEY SUPPLY IN CURRENT FINANCIAL YEAR

DR. VASANT KUMAR PANDIT (Rajgarh): Under rule 377 I seek your permission to bring a matter of urgent public importance to the notice of this House. There is a sharp spurt in money supply in the first and second quarters of the current financial year showing an increase of 7.7 per cent. The increase of net R.B.I. credit to the government, the consequent deficit financing and the increase in the foreign exchange arrangements of the banking sector are the major components of this situation. Further huge amount of liquidity in private hands can set in motion a new amount of inflation through speculative buying. The steep rise in demand deposits with banks is a disturbing trend. Shortages in cement, steel, coal and soda ash have led to speculative buying and has further driven up the prices in an unwanted manner. It is, therefore, very essential for the government to review the entire situation and curb traders from disturbing the market trends.

(iv) REPORTED HARDSHIP OF SALT LABOURERS IN SURENDRANAGAR DISTRICT OF GUJARAT DUE TO UNTIMELY RAINS

PROF. R. K. AMIN (Surendranagar): Under rule 377, I want to men-

tion the following matter. A great calamity has befallen on the Salt labourers known as agrias in the Surendranagar District of Gujarat State during the last 10 days due to unexpected, untimely rains amounting to 4 to 6 inches during 12th and 13th November, 1978, in the desert areas of salt production, known as Patri-Khura ghoda Zinzuwada area of Dasada Taluka and Kundra-Halvad area of Dharangadhra Taluka. This calamity was more severe due to floods which brought water from Banas and Rupen rivers which end in the desert of Kutch. This brought good deal of miseries both in terms of hunger, cold and diseases and also financial losses to labourers since the loss in terms of washing away of salt, damage to well and water channels and entire loss of household effects are to be borne by labourers.

Out of 12000 labourers, about 6 to 7 thousand labourers were stranded in the desert, they could not come out, they had to be fed by throwing food packets by helicopter. About 5000 families lost their total households—each having on an average, households worth Rs. 250 to Rs. 300/- and thereby the total damage amounting to about 12 to 15 lakhs of rupees. Moreover, in their salt fields, they lost salt, water channels, salt water well, etc. which loss also may be to the tune of Rs. 80 to 100 lakhs, thereby the total financial loss may be an order of Rs. 110 lakhs. Besides, about 5000 people had to undergo hunger, cold, deprivation etc. for about 10 days because from railway station at Kharadhods, the manufacturers of salt had to be away by about 30 KM due to the parapheri of the radium of 10 miles given to Hindustan Salt Limited, which does not produce salt, nor does it allow others to produce—acting as a dog in the manger policy. This mistake of Government's policy has been pointed out a number of times in the last 30 years and more so, the present Prime Minister, the Minister of Industry both at the Centre and also in the State have realised and accepted this fact of non-