

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Explosives Act, 1884."

The motion was adopted

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: I introduce the Bill.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

(1) PLIGHT OF DANDAKARANYA REFUGEES AT HASNABAD IN WEST BENGAL

MR. SPEAKER: Now 377 statements.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA (Contal): I rise to raise the horrible plight of 45,000 Dandakaranya refugees now at Hasnabad in West Bengal.

[SHRI N. K. HEJWALKAR in the Chair].

Sir, I have recently visited the Hasnabad area in West Bengal where 45,000 Dandakaranya refugees have assembled in search of their economic rehabilitation in Sunderban area. For weeks, these refugees are facing horrible condition of living amidst death, disease and squalor.

95 per cent of these refugees are Harijans or Scheduled Caste migrants from former East Pakistan. Already over 150 of them died of hunger and gastro-conteritis. A few elderly regastro-enteritis. A few elderly re-hanging and others attempted to end their lives because they failed to feed their famished children. They are eating wild vegetables and grassroots and drinking muddy water from ditches and marshy pools. Hundreds of them are suffering from gastro-enteritis and it is feared that cholera may break out at any time as disastrous epidemic.

Tragically, the authorities are denying them any kind of relief whatsoever. The Central Government is

also, it appears, apathetic towards them. They have no food, no shelter, no drinking water, no medical aid and the condition in which they are living can be verily described as nothing but harrowing and hellish.

Two days before, a cyclonic storm destroyed their huts and shattered their polythene sheds leaving them in a horrible condition in the open fields there. The only relief organisation, named, Bharat Sevaram Sangha, was doing some relief work among the refugees but it has not been allowed to move to the other side of the river Ichamati, where about 25,000 refugees have assembled. It appears that the authorities want to starve these refugees to break their morale so that they could be huddled off to Dandakaranya without making necessary arrangement for their re-settlement there.

Sir, I appeal in the name of humanity, in the name of welfare of Harijan and the Scheduled Castes and hapless and homeless minority victims of partition who have been thrown out of their homeland for no fault of theirs that the Government should undertake immediate measures for giving relief to them so that the Hasnabad area in West Bengal may not turn into a graveyard of thousands of the Bengali refugees.

This House had emotive and heated discussions on the problems of Harijans on innumerable occasions. But what about the 40,000 Harijans or Scheduled Caste refugees, the squeezed out minorities from former East Pakistan, who are facing a horrible situation in Hasnabad area in West Bengal? Why the conscience of the House seemed to remain so benumbed? I demand that a time be fixed for discussing the problem of economic and cultural rehabilitation of the Bengali refugees, most of whom are Harijans or Scheduled castes and minorities from former East Pakistan, without any further delay.

[Shri Samar Guha]

I want that the hon. Minister should give an assurance as to when this discussion will be held. Every day, we are getting reports from there. Just a few days before, there was a severe storm and all the huts of 45,000 people, some kind of small polythene sheds, were completely destroyed and shattered. Every day, reports are coming that some people are killing themselves by hanging and thousands of people are starving there. What a horrible scene! There is no relief work, no shelter, no food, nothing. Even the relief organisations are not being rushed to the site to give some relief. Is it not a cruel way of killing the people? Is that the way of Government, either at the Centre or in the State, dealing with such a serious situation? I want to know from the Government. This is a serious matter which demands a discussion in the House. I want an assurance from the Government. I want to know what is the reaction of the Government and whether an assurance will be given for discussing this matter. This is a horrible situation. This is an unbearable situation. Hundreds of people have already died and are dying. Would you, Sir, draw the attention of the Minister concerned to this request of mine for a discussion on this matter?

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have said it quite forcefully. But, as you know, the practice is that the Member should only confine to what he has given in writing. Now, it is for the Minister to make a statement.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: I want to know whether you will draw the attention of the Minister concerned and ask him to make a statement.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A copy will be sent to the Minister.

(ii) REPORTED STRIKE BY MEDICAL COLLEGE STUDENTS IN DELHI

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPA (Cannanore): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of

the House to the serious situation obtaining in the medical colleges in Delhi as a result of the strike of medical students. For the last two or three days, a strike is going on. They came to meet the Health Minister demanding that their demands should be conceded. Their demands are quite just. They demand that their stipend should be enhanced from Rs. 300 to Rs. 500; they want facility for all those students who pass out of the medical colleges to be given the job of House Surgeon in Delhi hospitals. Their another demand is for a higher percentage of students who pass out from the medical colleges in Delhi to go to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences for post-graduate studies. Lastly, they want better hostel facilities and things like that.

I do not think anybody will say that their demands are unjust or unreasonable. But I am surprised to see that the Health Minister, in spite of all his talk about socialism and friendship with the people, refused to meet their deputation. I would request you, Sir, to direct the Minister to make a statement on this matter. I would also request the Minister to intervene in the matter and settle it amicably.

(iii) REPORTED DECISION OF BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY TO TERMINATE SERVICES OF TEMPORARY LECTURERS

श्री हरिकेश बहादुर (गोरखपुर) : मान्यवर, आप की अनुमति से मैं बनारस विश्व विद्यालय के अस्थायी अध्यापकों से संबंधित प्रबलित्वनीय लोक महत्त्व के एक प्रश्न पर यह बक्तव्य देना चाहता हूँ कि बनारस हिन्दू विश्वविद्यालय में बहुत बड़ी संख्या में कुछ प्राध्यापक गत कई वर्षों से अस्थायी तौर पर अध्यापन कार्य कर रहे हैं। इस वर्ष अचानक यह निर्णय लिया गया है कि अस्थायी अध्यापकों की सेवाएँ अपने शिक्षा सत्र से समाप्त कर दी जायें। इससे लगभग चार सौ अस्थायी प्राध्यापकों का