

children. This is the International Year of the Child.

My third and last point is about the Anti-Defection Bill which Government had promised that it would bring in. I have read that the Government has dropped the whole idea of bringing in this type of a Bill. I would like to know the mind of the Government on this matter.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now Mr. Zulfiqarullah.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: The Minister should reply.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: No. Now, Mr. Zulfiqarullah.

14.08 hrs.

CHIT FUNDS BILL*

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ZULFIQARULLAH): On behalf of Shri Charan Singh, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the regulation of chit funds and for matters connected therewith.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the regulation of chit funds and for matters connected therewith."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI ZULFIQARULLAH: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

14.09 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE, 377

- (i) CALLING OFF OF JUTE WORKERS' STRIKE IN WEST BENGAL.

SHRI SAUGATA ROY (Barrackpore): Sir, under rule 377, I wish to raise the following matter:

About 2½ lakhs of jute workers in 62 jute mills of West Bengal have been on strike for the last 50 days in support of their economic demands. The prolonged negotiations by the State Government have failed to resolve the strike and the management continued to take an adamant attitude. In reply to a notice under rule 377 raised by me on 30-11-78, the Minister of Industries had written back to me saying that the Central Government would intervene in the strike when necessary, but they had failed to do so. The strike has caused a production loss of Rs. 1.80 crores per day, most of it in foreign exchange earnings.

The Union Government should have immediately intervened in the matter. The West Bengal Assembly has already passed a resolution demanding the take-over of all the jute mills in West Bengal. This is, in fact, the only way to save the jute industry and also the workers from cruel exploitation.

I am happy to note that the strike had been called off after an honourable settlement. In fact it could have been resolved much earlier if the Central Government had intervened.

- (ii) FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS OF CERTAIN DISTRICTS OF MAHARASHTRA.

SHRI R. K. MHALGI (Thana): With the permission of the Chair, I would like to mention a matter of urgent public importance.

Unseasonal heavy rains and hailstorms in all the eight districts of Vidarbha (Maharashtra) during the last three weeks have caused heavy damage to wheat, gram, cotton, cotton crops and vegetables. Storms and rains claimed in all seven lives and six hundred cattle in Nagpur and around. A near tornado with a speed of 110 km an hour, hit the area uprooting the trees and twisting more than 100 hoarding boards. The damage to orange orchards is very heavy.