

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.

[Shri R. K. Mhalgi]

Standing crops in about 30,000 hectares were damaged. According to official information the damage is to the tune of 150 lakhs. About 1200 houses had been damaged and 1300 villages are affected. The Government of Maharashtra have started providing relief to the affected farmers and villagers. The Union Government also must come forth for immediate financial assistance to the people affected by natural calamity.

(iii) KERALA GOVERNMENT'S REQUEST FOR RESCINDING OF NOTIFICATION WHICH DECLARED COCONUT HUSK AND COIR FIBRE AS ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES.

SHRI K. A. RAJAN (Trichur): I should like to make a statement under rule 377. Coir industry is one of the traditional industries of Kerala providing employment to lakhs of people in the State. The Government of Kerala have been implementing a programme for self-employment of coir workers through cooperatives with special assistance from the Government of India. The main objective of these programmes is to ensure steady employment and reasonable wages to the coir workers. Availability of raw materials at reasonable price is a *sine qua non* for the success of the scheme. Since Certain regulations are highly essential for ensuring adequate supply of coconut husk and coir fibre at fair prices, the Government of India issued the Coconut Husk Control Order of 1973, under the provision of the Essential Commodities Act of 1955. The State Government had also issued orders under D.I.R. in 1977 regulating the price, movement, sale and export of coir fibre. Consequent on the withdrawal of the Emergency, these orders ceased to be in force. The Government of Kerala have requested the Government of India on 15th December, 1978 to issue necessary orders rescinding their notification by which coconut husk and coir fibre have been declared as essential commodities so as to enable the Kerala Government to declare them as essential articles

under the Kerala Essential Articles Control (Temporary Provision) Act.

I request the Central Government to issue necessary orders.

(iv) NEED FOR PROPER PLANNING TO CONTROL FLOODS TO OBVIATE PEOPLES SUFFERINGS.

श्रीमती चन्नावती (भिबानी) : जनाबेधाली, मैं दफा 377 के अधीन निम्न वक्तव्य देना चाहूंगी—“यह कि देश में जो हर मौसम में बाढ़ आने लगी है, वह प्रशासन की अनियोजित व भ्रष्टाचारिक तरीके से है। जंगल काट लिये गये हैं और बरसात के पानी के प्राकृतिक बहाव जो नदियों में मिलता था, उस में रुकावट डाल दी गई है। क्योंकि ज्यादातर बड़े शहर नदियों के किनारे बसे हुए हैं और शहरों के बचाव के लिये प्राकृतिक बहाव पर रोक लगा दी व जंगल काट दिये, जिस से आए साल करोड़ों रुपये की फसलों की हानि होती है व करोड़ों आदमी दुख उठाते हैं।

(v) REPORTED CLOSURE OF BERAR OIL INDUSTRY AT AKOLA FOR WANT OF COAL.

SHRI VASANT SATHE (Akola): It is reported that Berar Oil industry, a leading vegetable ghee unit at Akola had to be closed down since 10-2-1979 for want of coal affecting more than 650 workers and many other related economic activities. There are also reports that many other industrial units have been closed down and large number are likely to be closed as a result of acute scarcity of coal in Vidarbha region of Maharashtra State affecting thousands of workers. It is also reported that stock position of coal in different power stations in Maharashtra has been affected badly and stands as below as on 20th February, 1979: Nasik—nil, Perli—1 day's stock, Paras—3 days' stock, Bhusaval—3 days' stock, Koradi—6 days' stock, Balharshah—7 days' stock, Khaparkheda—10 days' stock. Daily requirement for all 7 power stations together is 15,000 tonnes, i.e., about 682 wagons (4-wheeler) per day. During recent period, this amount has never been supplied and gradually the stock at each power station has been slowly consumed. Assurance has been given in the past by the Minister of Energy that there is no shortage of coal. The Minister of Railway has given assurance that there is no problem of movement. Yet, the thermal stations are