

[Shri K. A. Rajan]

in the best interest of the Port of Cochin.

(iii) REPORTED CLOSURE OF GURU NANAK THERMAL PLANT AT BHATINDA

SHRI BHAGAT RAM (Phillaur): Sir, under rule 377, I wish to raise the following matter:

It is reported in "The Tribune" dated 23-3-1979 that Guru Nanak Dev thermal plant, Bhatinda (Punjab) was closed on 21-3-79 for want of coal. The plant has an installed capacity of 440 MW. The closure of the plant will create many more problems for the people of Punjab. It will badly affect the industrial and agricultural production of the State. In turn, the working class and peasantry of the State will suffer due to ill-planning and lack of far-sightedness of the Ministry of Energy and Railways. Besides this, the Government of Punjab will suffer a huge loss.

It is also reported in the same newspaper of 24th March that Dhariwal Woollen Mills, Dhariwal in district Gurdaspur, has retrenched 3500 workers due to uneven supply of coal. It is said the mill is not receiving required quota fixed by the Government and they have to purchase the coal from open market. Similar position is prevailing in other parts of the State. A serious coal scarcity is in Yamuna Nagar and in other towns or Haryana.

It is now reported in the newspaper of yesterday that Punjab is facing a serious coal crisis and threatened closure of the industries.

Out of 104 trains cancelled in the country, 79 trains were cancelled in the north zone due to coal shortages. Most of them are in Punjab.

MR. SPEAKER: You have added so many things without my permission.

SHRI BHAGAT RAM: Only two sentences.

MR. SPEAKER: No, no; that should not be done.

SHRI BHAGAT RAM: The Janata train from Amritsar to Delhi, the most important train for the people of Punjab could not be started inspite of repeated public assurances from the Railway Minister. I request the government to compensate the loss due to the closure of the plant and assure coal immediately to restart it. I also request the government to restart the cancelled trains immediately and assure the supply of adequate coal to meet the needs of the state.

(iv) REPORTED SHORTAGE OF DIESEL AND PETROL IN CANNANORE DISTRICT OF KERALA.

SHRI RAMACHANDRAN KADANAPALLI (Kasaragod): I should like to raise the following matter of urgent public importance which created an acute crisis in the day to day life of the people of Malabar, especially in Cannanore district of Kerala. On account of the shortage of the supply of diesel and petrol, one third of the buses either stopped totally or partially suspended. It would be a pathetic sight of long queue in front of petrol pumps. To avoid untoward incidents police security has been made before

the petrol pumps. In spite of spending hours, only 5 or 10 litres will be available for each vehicle. The net result of this is that auto-rickshaws, buses and cars do not operate resulting in hardship to the common man coming from far off distances. Since oil is scarce in rural areas, irrigation for crops has almost stopped. Moreover, the available vegetables are not reaching the cities since lorries could not transport them to the markets, and thereby it is causing shortage in the markets. This has further escalated the prices of vegetables and other commodities coming from interior places. Added to this, the fishing vessels cannot operate for want of oil which again created an alarming situation in the employment front of fishermen apart from non-availability of fish in the market.

Sir, you may not perhaps be aware that a large portion of my district comes under hill region. The people of the region predominantly depend on their transport on jeeps. This acute shortage of petrol supply has created a deep crisis in their day to day life. They cannot have access to the centres of their buying and selling, apart from meeting the ordinary needs of life.

I appeal to the government through you, Sir, to rush immediately diesel and petrol to these districts without any further lapse of time.

12.27 hrs.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS, 1979-80—
contd.

MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY—contd.

MR. SPEAKER: We shall now take up further discussion on the Demands
587 LS—9.

for Grants of the Industry Ministry. How much time will the hon. Minister need?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY
(SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): About an hour.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER (Durgapur): This is the most important ministry because it relates to industrial development and it creates employment opportunities also. If militant speeches made by the Minister of Industry now and then all over the country are indication of the janata government policy for practical implementation, the big business houses would have by this time met their doom. However, this did not happen as all of us know very well and big business also understand that militant speeches are made only for public consumption. They go on merrily with their super profits while the Minister of industry goes hammer and tongs against them. There seems to be peaceful co-existence between the speeches of the Minister of Industry and the super profits of the monopoly houses.

The multi-nationals are having the best of their times, particularly the West Germans. The spate of collaboration agreements signed during the last two years are a clear indication of this. The Coca Cola was nationalised but many others have entered India to earn fabulous profits. Many of these collaboration agreements are in sectors where we are already having developed technology. Out of 273 foreign col-