

and now even postage stamps to be affixed on them cannot be had at the Post Offices. Only stamps of Rs. 2/- and above are available.

This is causing no small amount of inconvenience to the public and also hampering business transactions as Banks are refusing to accept outstation cheques as they are unwilling to pay Rs. 4/- for a registered letter instead of Rs. 2.65 because of the non-availability of stamps of lower denominations

The situation in Agra is further complicated and aggravated by the fact that Banks have, in the last two or three months, been refusing to accept notes of lower denominations than Rs 100/- or Rs. 50/- in payment or by way of deposits. Non-acceptance of legal tender is an offence. Even so, nobody seems to be bothered about it. This matter was raised in Parliament during the last Session, but still there is no relief. Only vague assurances were given, which remain to be implemented.

These blockages in the free flow of communications and business dealings have very adversely affected both trade and industry, and therefore, I call for immediate remedial action.

(ii) FAMINE CONDITIONS IN MAHARASHTRA DUE TO DELAY IN MONSOONS.

श्री केशवराव शिंदे (नांदेड) : सवर साहब, मैं नियम 377 के द्वारा अत्यन्त महत्वपूर्ण मामला आपकी अनुमति से यहाँ पेश कर रहा हूँ। आज देश में और महाराष्ट्र में अनाच्छिन्न के संकट से वेहाती क्षेत्र में अकाल (फेमिन) की परिस्थितियों का निर्माण हो चुका है। लोगों और जानवरों को पीने के पानी की किल्लत की वजह से मीठ का सामना करना पड़ रहा है। अन्नमयी की मौत हो गई है। बोया हुआ बीज मर चुका है। घास की कमी से जानवर मरने के रास्ते पर हैं। बैकारी और महंगाई के संकट से गरीबों को इस अनाच्छिन्न के कारण जिन्दा रहना मुश्किल हो गया है। लोग अपने घरों से भाग रहे हैं। मानसून की देरी से वेहाती किसान मजदूरों पर स्कास्केन की कसामत बरस रही है। इनकी कौरन मदद करना शासन की जिम्मेदारी है। अगर शासन शांत और मौनीनाथ बन कर निष्क्रिय बना हुआ है। जनता में बहुत

असंतोष बना हुआ है। मैं शासन से गुजारिश करता हूँ कि इस संकट से जनता को बचाने के लिए कौरन सहायता कार्य शुरू करें। जय त्राति।

12.45 hrs.

LOKPAL BILL—Contd.

MR. SPEAKER: Now we come to Legislative Business.

The House will now take up further consideration of the Lokpal Bill, 1977, as reported by the Joint Committee.

Out of the twelve hours allotted by the House itself, for all the stages of the Bill, one hour and twenty-five minutes have already been taken up. If the House agrees, we may have seven hours, including one hour and twenty-five minutes which have already been taken up, for general discussion, four hours for clause-by-clause consideration and one hour for the third reading. I hope this is acceptable to the House.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): Sir, in the last Session we had taken a decision to have a debate on the racist British Government . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Bosu, is there any method for it? We are now on legislative work.

Mr. Durga Chand was speaking; he may continue.

SHRI KANWAR LAL GUPTA (Delhi Sadar): Sir, I want to submit that this is a very important Bill that we are going to discuss but, unfortunately, there is no quorum in the House. When such an important Bill is being discussed, at least the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs should see to it that there is quorum. This is a most important Bill and it has been pending for such a long period.