

12.33 hrs.

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

MR. SPEAKER: The Committee on Absence of Members from the Sittings of the House in their Eleventh Report have recommended that leave of absence be granted to the following Members for the periods indicated against each:—

(1) Shri K. Gopal

23rd July to 5th September, 1973  
(Eighth Session).

(2) Shri Brijraj Singh

23rd July to 9th August, 1973  
(Eighth Session).

(3) Shri A. K. Gopalan

23rd July to 5th September, 1973  
(Eighth Session).

(4) Shri M. Kathamuthu

23rd July to 5th September, 1973  
(Eighth Session).

I take it that the House agrees with the recommendations of the Committee.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: The Members will be informed accordingly.

12.34 hrs.

### MATTER UNDER RULE 377

#### NON-AVAILABILITY OF POTASSIUM CHLORATE TO MATCH FACTORIES OF TAMIL NADU

\*SHRI S. A. MURUGANANTHAM (Tirunelveli): Hon. Mr. Speaker, Sir, under Rule 377 I raise the following matter.

In Sivakasi and Sathur towns of West Ramanathapuram and in Koilpatti, Kalugumalai, Ettayapuram of Tirunelveli District of Tamil Nadu, there are more than 300 small match-manufacturing factories, in which there are 1.5 lakhs of workers and on whom are dependent 5 lakhs of family members. These 300 and odd small match-manufacturing factories are facing extinction and the 1.5 lakh of workers and 5 lakhs of their dependent family members are on the threshold of starvation. The main reason for this unprecedented and critical situation is that the basic raw material for match manufacturing, i.e., potassium chlorate, is not available to them even in minimum quantities to meet their requirement.

The three main producers of potassium chlorate are the Western India Match Co., Ltd., in Bombay, the Travancore Chemicals and Manufacturing Ltd., in Alwaye and the Mettur Chemicals Industrials Corporation, Mettur Dam. They have drastically cut their supplies of potassium chlorate to these 300 and odd small match-manufacturing units by nearly 80 per cent and in consequence all these small factories in the cottage industries sector are working only three days in a week. You can very well imagine the tragic plight of the 1.5 lakhs of workers and their 5 lakhs of dependent family members if the factories are to work only three days in a week.

The controlled rate of potassium chlorate per ton is Rs.3000/-, but it is sold at Rs. 30,000 per ton in black market, 10 times more than the fixed price. Sir, the WIMCO is a monopoly concern with foreign capital producing matches with the help of gigantic automatic machinery. They not only want to capture the entire Indian market for their product but also are keen to get back their lost market due to the strike in their

\*The original speech was delivered in Tamil.

[Shri S. A. Muruganantham]

factory. That is why they have virtually stopped the supply of potassium chlorate to these small units numbering more than 300.

These small units have got export orders to the value of Rs. 3 crores. While the indigenous production of potassium chlorate is in itself inadequate to meet the requirement, only less than 25 per cent of the requirement of these 300 and odd small units is being supplied now. To tide over the present crisis in this cottage industry, the Government may have to take immediate steps for importing at least 750 tonnes of potassium chlorate. Besides, the Government of India must issue a directive to these three major producers of potassium chlorate that they must restore the supply of potassium chlorate to these 300 and odd small factories manufacturing matches to the level of supply they were making before last May otherwise it will be impossible to retrieve the worsening crisis in this cottage industry.

12.36 hrs.

#### RE. STRIKE BY DOCTORS IN BOMBAY

MR. SPEAKER: I allowed only one item under rule 377 and that is already over. Now, Mr. Mody wanted to say something.

SHRI PILOO MODY (Godhra): Mr. Speaker, Sir, a most terrible, shocking thing has been happening in Bombay regarding the 2,600 doctors who have been on strike for the last 11 days—

MR. SPEAKER: Prof. Dandavate met me this morning and I wanted to satisfy myself as to how it is a matter coming within the jurisdiction of Parliament.

SHRI PILOO MODY: As you know, Mr. Khadiolkar himself has gone down to Bombay to meet them, to discuss with them and arrive at a decision—*(Interruptions)*.

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister's going does not make it a Central subject.

SHRI PILOO MODY: The entire socio-economic values of this country at stake when you say it is not a Central subject. You realise the condition of the doctors, the way they are paid. I have got here items in which they have reached a labour settlement with private companies, in which peons are given Rs. 500 to Rs. 650 and clerks from Rs. 700 to Rs. 1,000. But here are medical people who work for 90 hours a week which is almost double of what every body else works, and get half the pay.

MR. SPEAKER: How can you raise it in Parliament?

SHRI PILOO MODY: If the whole of India does not take note of something as serious as that, then the entire—*(Interruptions)*.

MR. SPEAKER: Parliament cannot take note of State subjects.

SHRI PILOO MODY: This is too important a problem for the Parliament of India to disregard. It is likely to spread all over the country; it is going to spread here before long. We read about engineers and doctors getting together. The whole country is being paralysed in this way. You say that the Parliament of India should not take charge of it. Why did the Central Minister go there if it was not such an important problem?

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur): I am trying to raise the central