13.1/2 hrs.

[English]

PETITIONS

Inclusion of (i) Pardhi-Pardhan, (ii) Budgajangan, (iii) Vaddera and (iv) Kurma Kumar Golla tribal communities of Andhra Pradesh in the Schedule to the constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 pertaining to the state of Andhra Pradesh

SHRI DATTATRAYA BANDARU (Secounderabad): Sir, I beg to present four petitions signed by Sarvashri S. Kishore Raj, Troop Bazar, Hyderabad; N. Babu Rao, Bharat Nagar, Hyderabad; G. Sathaiah, O.U. Campus, Hyderabad and Y. Birappa, Vikas Nagar, Hyderabad regarding inclusion of (i) Pardhi-Pardhan; (ii) Budgajangam; (iii) Vaddera; and (iv) Kurma/Kurma Golla tribal communities of Andhra Pradesh in the Schedule to the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 pertaining to the State of Andhra Pradesh.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now we shall break for lunch and we will meet once again at 2.10 PM and the Calling Attention will be taken up afterwards.

13.08 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till ten minutes past Fourteen of the clock

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The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at fifteen minutes past Fourteen of the Clock

[MR DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Reported scandal involving crores of rupees in supply of food unfit for human consumption to infants through Anganwadis in the Capital

[Translation]

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES (Muzaffarpur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I call the attention of the hon., Minister of State in the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Youth Affairs and Sports and the Department of Women and Child Development) to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that she may make a statement thereon.

Reported scandal involving crores of rupees in supply of food unfit for human consumption to Infants through Anganwadis in the Capital and the action taken by the Government in that regard.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS AND THE DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE): The ICDS is a centrally sponsored Scheme delivering a package of services for children aged 0-6 years including supplementary nutrition, health check-up, referral services, immunization and pre-school education.It also caters to pregnant and lactating mothers delivering them supplementary nutrition, health check-up, referral services, nutrition and health education. In Delhi there are a total of 26 ICDS Projects. Government of India completely funds all components of ICDS excepting nutrition which is the responsibility of the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations although Government of India renders some assistance by way of centrally sponsored Wheat-based Nutrition Scheme and by routing international food assistance from CARE & WFP. In Delhi, however, the entire Nutrition component is funded and managed by the Union Territories Administration. According to information available with the Govt. of India, consequent upon some complaints the Union Territories Administration of Delhi had recently reviewed the entire position relating to supply of nutrition and have taken

the following steps to improve the quality of nutrition and stremline the supply procedure;

1. The agencies which were supplying reportedly sub-standard supply have been black-listed and their supplies suspended after getting their samples examined by a Govt. Food Laboratory.

2. Supplies of high protein food mix, gantha and sattu have also been discontinued because of irregularities detected in the contracts and because of the unpopularity of some of these foods. As children do not like sattu being supplied by the firm the same has been discounted.

3. In consultation with food experts, Ready to Eat food items supplies to various ICDS centres have been re-selected keeping in view the broad guidelines about nutrition and calorie values. Due consideration have been given to the popularity of acceptance by the beneficiaries.

4. The Purchase Committee which was earlier being presided by the Joint Director have been updated and all the purchases under the ICDS scheme shall be decided by the Purchase Committee presided by the Director/Secretary, Social Welfare.

5. The tenders which were in the pipe line have since been cancelled and new tenders have since been floated.

The Government of India had requested Delhi Administration to ensure the following:-

(a) Fixing of responsibility on Officers for whom such lapses took place;

(b) Replacement of the entire stock of supplies which have been found to be sub-standard : and

(c) Till supply lines are restored, arrangements for decentralised local purchase so that supplementary nutrition is restored and children do not suffer.

The Delhi Administration has since reported that appropriate action for fixing of responsibility is being taken. The administration has also made necessary arrangement for replacement of supplies and covering the gap in nutrition during the intervening period of disruption.

[*Translation*]

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am disappointed by the reply of the hon. Minister. I am disappointed because her reply did not come to our expectation. She has her own style of functioning. For example, wherever, a wrong is done, she opposes it and takes up cudgels. I expected that the Government would make a very open statement in this regard, but I was disappointed when she did no come up to my expectations.

Sir, I would like to place three things before the House. The first is that the hon. Minister pointed out that the distribution of the nutritious food is done through Anganbadis to those infants who do not get proper diet at their homes. According to the Report of the Government, half crore infants, pregnant women and locating mothers who are unable to support their infants all over the country get benefit under this scheme. This help is being given through two lakh centres having three lakh employees. The case of the employees is also there, but I do not want to raise the same here. I would certainly like

[Sh. George Fernandes]

to say here that for last one year., these three lakh or more employees have been exploited. Had the Government paid due to attention to their case and checked their exploitation the infants for whom this programme is being run, would have been provided all facilities. These employees are asked to put 8 hours' duty in a day and they get only Rs. 100 or Rs. 150 as remuneration. They are demanding only Rs. 500 and for this meagre amount they have to take recourse to demonstrations, procession and strikes. They are sometimes lathi-charged by the Police. No Government has so far solved their problem. During the Government of our party also this problem was not solved. I want this problem to be solved definitely.

Foreign funds are also invested for providing nutrient food through Anganvadis. Foreign funds came from the UNICEF and other agencies of the U.N.O. The Government has provided Rs. 439 crore for one and half crore infants and pregnant women all over the country, in the current Budget. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is needless to say that this provision is made for the poorest of the poor who have no way-put and for such infants and women. The expenditure on this account is Rs. 0.95 per child aged two months to 6 years. The expenditure on infants, who get very little food in their families, is Rs. 1.35 per head per day and the expenditure incurred on the pregnant women and lactating mothers is Rs. 1.15 a day. Average expenditure per head works out to about one rupee. The Government has to fulfill the objective or giving them protein and take various measures for the improvement of their health under this programme. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, three lakh children and women are covered under this programme in Delhi which include lactating mothers and pregnant women through 3000 Anganwadis. So far as I know there is a provision of Rs. 20 crores for this purpose in this year's Budget. I have already said that I am quite upset by the hon. Minister's reply, oOne of the reason for the same is that, the hon. Minister has not included the facts in her statement which were made public by Km. Neeta Bali, an officer of the concerned department of Delhi Administration. So, whosoever might have read "The Hindu" newspaper anywhere in India 5-7 days back, he must have known how serious this matter is. But from the statement, which the Minister has read here, it looks as if there is nothing wrong and we are just wasting time of the House and minor lapses have been notice, which are being enquired into. I quote the words of the hon. Minister:

[*English*]

Fixing the responsibility on officers by whom such lapses have taken place.

[*Translation*]

They say that they have asked the Delhi Administration to fix responsibility and the Delhi Administration says:

[*English*]

Appropriate action for fixing the responsibility is being taken.

[*Translation*]

That means there was just a very minor irregularity. They issued orders to set things right if something was wrong. The company or the companies which were supplying substandard items have been black listed and their supply has also been suspended.

Sir, I want to bring the facts to the notice of the House which have been made public. I will read them out. I don't have the whole report, I have been trying hard to get it since yesterday evening but I could not get it.

Finally, I would request the hon. Minister to produce the whole report in the House so that all of us could understand the gravity of the matter. I will not read out the whole report since it is very lengthy but I would like to place the important points before the House. I want that the hon. Minister's statement *vis-a-vis* the facts should be discussed in the House. I do not place them for the sake of making allegations only.

[*English*]

"Ms. Nita Bali, the Director of the Department.." meaning the Social Welfare Department of the Delhi Administration.

"..who has reviewed this UNICEF funded supplementary nutrition programme told

the Hindu today..."

This was published in the newspaper on 25th.

> "that she was shocked to learn about the irregularities in the programme under which about three lakh children upto the age of six years, pregnant women and *lactating* mothers are provided free protein rich food daily through more than three thousand Anganwadis in the capital at a cost of Rs. 20 crores a year. In a report submitted to the Delhi Administration she has pointed out that for almost two years now either the companies given contract by the Department were not supplying the food items, or were supplying them irregularly, supplying sub-standard food items, supplying items which were unacceptable to the beneficiaries or unfit for human consumption. Ms. Bali also discovered.."

because she made this enquiry, this investigation.

> "...that certain firms were supplying items without having entered into an agreement with the Department."

[*Translation*]

Today, the Delhi Administration is run by the Central Government. There is the Lt. Governor, but no elected Government. This issue is raised in the House almost daily.

[*English*]

> "They were firms which were supplying items without having entered into an agreement with the Department. The space on the contract document which carries the signatures of the authorities have been left blank".

She also found that some companies were supplying items that were not produced by them. Consequently, she has blacklisted one company, that is Delhi based Ambitious Food Private Limited and cancelled three contracts and told some companies not to supply food items assigned to them as the contract did not exist.

In the case of the black-listed company, a report on the test of its product, dated September 30, 1991, submitted by the Government Laboratory, Krishi Bhavan, the headquarters of the Union Food Ministry, to the Department says and it is quoted here:

> "All three items namely rusks, biscuits —sweet and salted, were not fit for human consumption".

It was reported that,

> "The biscuits were hard in texture, not wholesome in appearance; hard to chew, and unpleasant to taste".

This is the report received from the

[Sh. George Fernandes]

Government Laboratory. Ms. Bali said that in view of this report, she had initiated action to file criminal charges against the companies. I again quote her own words here:

> "It was a heinous crime to supply such food items to infant and small children".

In reply to a question she said that the Department was not aware if any death had been caused by the food unfit for human consumption, and then I quote:

> "Possibly, such a thing never happened because either the supplies were on paper or irregular; such items were thrown away by the beneficieries as they were not good to look at or to taste it also".

[*Translation*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, this is a fact, I came before the House on the basis of this fact. The Minister has not given all this information to the House. What can we say? We are holding this discussion on the poor and the helpless and everything has been made clear here. The officers who were entrusted with the works of running this programme have tried to snatch food from the poorest of the poor children who are aged six years and their mothers in the country Embezzlement done by then has been exposed by this loya! officer.

It is very clear and the Government says that:

[*English*]

> "We have asked them to take action. We have blacklisted some of them and we are fixing the responsibility on officers". There is nothing to fix responsibility on the officers. Officers stand exposed.

[*Translation*]

How does the question of fixing a new the responsibility arises when the entire report is before you as to which officer was giving contract, who was opening tenders, who was not signing the contract but was receiving the articles and which companies were being paid without delivering goods? What did you do then? But money was not given to companies because the companies did not give any articles, Bills were submitted and the money was divided between the two officers. It is a very clear thing. Therefore, the officers, who are involved in it, - -

[*English*]

There is no question of fixing the responsibility now. These men must be arrested; they are criminals. I do not care if they are Government officers. They are criminals.

[*Translation*]

You take action against them and get them arrested. These people should not at all be allowed to sit in office of the Central Government or Delhi Administration. If we allow such people to continue in office we can't do any bigger injustice to the children of the country than this. These officers have left these poor people, to live in dire poverty till today. We get very little foreign aid. I don't know what the UNICEF, the U.N.O., will think about it. They will think that there are such officers in Delhi Administration who could snatch food from poor children and build their home. Please arrest them. They are criminals. They are not officers. Don't talk about section 311 of the Constitution. Please arrest them. Then only we will admit that the Government has done something in this matter. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the

companies which are involved in the conspiracy in this way should not be let off just after making them black-listed. There is the Criminal Procedure Code and Indian Penal Code. Please use them. We had enacted the Preventation of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 in 1954. The points which the hon. Minister has said in her statement and the points which have been made public by Km. Bali should be dealt with by the Criminal Procedure Code. Everything is a crime under it. Adulteration is a crime which has been defined under the law under section 16(A). The Government is empowered to set up special courts for the purpose. I don't know whether the special court has already been set up or not. When there are provisions for it in the law, then my suggestion is that the Hon. Minister should immediately send this whole matter for summary trial.

[*English*]

because these are special courts which have the powers for summary trial under section 16-A of the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954.

[*Translation*]

Summary trial should be held in the whole matter i.e. for supplying sub-standard items to the department of the Delhi Administration and to Anganwadis. Trial should also be held against the traders or the companies which produced these items which are not fit for human consumption or for animal even consumption. These food items are being given to children and the women. This type of factories are being run in Delhi. These officers of Delhi Administration and the traders have joined hands with each other in this matter. They are looting the Government. Besides, looting they also snatch food from children's mouth. So, you whould assure the House that action under Prevention of Food Adulteration Act will be taken against them and the officers will be arrested. At least, a beginning should be made so that the people may realise that it was enough now, We won't let the Government run like this. At least, the people must know all this about.

KUMARI MAMTA BANERJEE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to congratulate Shri George Fernandes that he has raised a good issue at proper time and it has been highlighted too. Honourable senior member has said that I had fought against several industries but now I have given up that fighting spirit'. I want to bring it on record in the House that we must continue to fight against industries, and I am still fighting. But as you said that they were not satisfied with my reply. I have given the reply. I was waiting to listen to your question because later on I had to answer it. I agree with the points you raised. ICDS project is the largest project of our Government. This project is for the children. When this project was started there were only 33 projects and now 2393 projects are operational under it. But the Government tried that there should be 2596 projects. You know about the scandle in Delhi, which has also appeared in the newspapers. There are 3 lakhs people below poverty line in Delhi. But we are providing help to 3 lakh 26 thousand children and mothers. We are providing them facilities of Health check-up, immunization and referal service. 3072 workers and helpers are also involved in it. We given them salary from the department. It is the responsibility of State Governments and Union Territories to implement the supply of food, part of it. We ordered an inquiry soon after a report published in the newspapers. The Ministry is ready to take action against those who are involved in it. For that purpose we are making a high level departmental investigation. Immediate action will be taken after getting its report. Joint Secretary of the department is making this inquiry. Delhi Administration, State Government and Union Territory should ensure that proper food is given or not. It should not be the responsi-

[Kumari Mamta Banerjee]

bility of one person but of all. I do not support any particular person. It was said that it was going two years but we had not received any complaint about it. This has appeared in the newspapers only. Food Laboratory of Delhi Administration and the Government of India checked the sample. After detecting impurity its order was cancelled. That will not continue. It is not necessary to give a chance for fresh tender. Necessary action will be taken after receiving report of the Inquiry Committee constituted under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act. I have no differences. It is necessary to provide adequate help. No individual interest will be allowed to put pressure. When this project was started we were not in power. You said that the money provided by UNICEF is sufficient. It is not sufficient, it provides training. Rs. 7 crore and Rs. 3 crore 70 lakh is provided by Delhi Administration and the Central Government respectively. Money of Delhi Administration and Central Government is also invested in it. Training and equipments of UNICEF is also involved in it. 100 persons are involved in it. I assure the House that we shall take action after receiving the report of high level investigation. We have many projects and I.C.D.S is one of them. We will take action if we find any irregularity after sample survey. If there is any complaint please send it to us. We whould have information before any sort of arrangement is made. We provide necessary help for children and mothers from our department. You should also help them.

14.45 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

(I) Need to set up a Copper Smelting Plant in Balaghat District, Madhya Pradesh.

[*Translation*]

SHRI VISHWESHWAR BHAGAT (Balaghat): Copper Ore is found in abundance in Balaghat district. At present copper ore is supplied to Khatri (Rajasthan) from Majakhand mines, which involves heavy transportation expenditure and as a result of which production costs of copper goes up. Balaghat district is a no industry district and is predominantly inhabited by Adivasi, Harijans and backward classes. Presently Government has surveyed different places for establishing smelting plant. Balghat is the best place from land, electricity, water and pollution points of view. Therefore, my submission is that Government should take immediate action to establish smelting plant in Balaghat so that country's copper requirement can be met.

[*English*]

(II) Need to sanction the Acquisition of land and Distrubution of Compenaion under second phase of Construction of N.H. 17 Byepass Road, Calicut, Kerala

SHRI K. MURALEE DHARAN (Calicut): The alignment of Calicut Bypass from Vengalam to Ramanatukara in Kerala was approved by Government of India. The total length of the Bypass is 28.124 Kilometres and the construction work of the bypass is proposed to be taken in four phases. First is Pentheerankave to Ramanatukara, second Vengalam to Malaparambu, third is Kottooli to Pantheerankave and the last one is Malaparambu to Kottooli. It is now learnt that sanction for the land acquisition for the first phase was granted and payments have been made to concerned land owners recently. Sanction has been accorded to acquire land for the third and fourth phases. Under the areas covered by the second phase, there are about 1500 land and building owners who are yet to get the value of their land under acquisition, eventhough some of the land owners approached the High Court for the same. High Court gave a verdict to the effect that they have the liberty to alienate