

श्री प्रभात झा : महोदय, मेरी यह मांग है कि लोगों की जिंदगी के साथ इस तरह का मजाक बंद हो और सरकार इस पर तत्काल ध्यान दे। धन्यवाद।

DR. BHARATKUMAR RAUT (Maharashtra) : Sir, I associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI ANIL DESAI (Maharashtra) : Sir, I associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

Sexual abuse of girls at Kids' shelter

SHRIMATI JHARNADAS BAIDYA (Tripura) : Thank you, Sir, for giving me a chance to speak on the subject. The subject of my Zero Hour mention is Sexual Abuse of Girls at Kids' Shelter.

Sir, I want to tell you about the children living at a shelter home run by an NGO, namely, Apna Ghar, where they were sexually abused, beaten, molested and made to work as labourers on farms and construction sites. The shelter home which is run by an NGO, namely, Apna Ghar, had won a Haryana State award for women's empowerment in March this year. Around 12 girls, in their teens, alleged that they were exploited by the owner to earn money. One of them said that she was forced to sleep with a man. They were molested by various people. If any girl protested, she would be paraded naked and beaten. The girls had, in fact, been shifted to the Rohtak home from an orphanage in Gurgaon following allegations of sexual abuse there. Although they have been arrested for exploiting children and booked for sexual harassment and molestation of the inmates, the Government should take stringent action against the culprit in accordance with the existing rules and regulations and issue immediate directions to ensure that these crimes are properly investigated and the criminals are apprehended. Thank you.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY (West Bengal) : Sir, I associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN (West Bengal) : Sir, I associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member. How can they be awarded by the State Government? This should be enquired into, Sir. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI K.N. BALAGOPAL (Kerala) : Sir, I associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member. This is a very serious issue, Sir.

SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN (Kerala) : Sir, I associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

श्री मंगल किसन (ओडिशा) : महोदय, मैं स्वयं को इस विषय से संबद्ध करता हूँ।

SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI (Gujarat) : Sir, I associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN) : Okay, I agree with you. I hope the Government will take note of it.

Sufferings of travellers due to cancellation of Air India Flights

SHRIMATI VASANTHI STANLEY (Tamil Nadu) : Thank you, Sir. My Zero Hour mention today is on the important subject of 'sufferings of the travelling public due to cancellation of Air India flights'. The Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi ji, said the customer is our God. But the Government, without any notice to the travelling public, has cancelled all the international flights. This has resulted in lots and lots of sufferings to the travelling public.

Great inconvenience has been caused to passengers. Passengers wait for hours but nobody gives them any information. Neither food facility nor accommodation facility is given to them. Air India failed to make any alternate arrangements for passengers. Air India flies to Europe, the US and Canada. All the flights have been cancelled. Over 50 flights were cancelled since the pilots suddenly reported sick. The airline operates 16 international flights a day with large, wide-body aircraft to the US, Europe, the Far East and South-East Asia. All the sectors are affected by the agitation of a section of pilots. Flights to London, Paris, Frankfurt, New York, Toronto, Shanghai and cities in the Gulf region were also affected.

On Sunday, it was reported that the Mumbai Airport's International Terminal had passengers waiting to be accommodated on other flights or waiting to hear about the status of their flights. Angry passengers tried to block the road outside the Mumbai Airport because they were frustrated with the lack of information given to them by Air India officials. Some of them were waiting for three-four hours without proper information. There was another testimony of a passenger in tears, whose last date of joining duty had lapsed. He exhausted all the money that he had brought for his day-to-day expenses while waiting at the airport. The expenditure includes cost of a bottle of water which is being sold at more than Rs.50 there. This happens after the merger of Air India and Indian Airlines! There is a disparity in giving promotion to the employees of these airlines. No employee should be placed at a disadvantage at any stage and no unilateral decision relating to service matters be forced upon the employees. The IPG is aware of its responsibility towards the travelling public. They have worked for more than four months without salary. It is surprising that though the pilots were ready for talks, the management was not prepared for it. It sacked them without any notice. It preferred sacking without giving them any notice. Considering the just demands of the pilots and considering the sufferings of the travelling public, I hope the Ministry will rise to the occasion and see to it that all the problems are solved. Thank you, Sir.