

[12 July, 2004]

RAJYA SABHA

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA (Rajasthan): Sir, I associate myself with what Shrimati Prema Cariappa has said.

SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, I associate myself with what Shrimati Prema Cariappa has said.

श्रीमती चन्द्रकला पांडे (पश्चिम बंगाल) : उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय , मैं इससे अपने आपको संबद्ध करती हूँ ।

श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी (पश्चिम बंगाल) : उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय , मैं इससे अपने आपको संबद्ध करती हूँ ।

Shocking deaths of infants at Safdarjung Hospital, Delhi

SHRI ANAND SHARMA (Himachal Pradesh): Sir, through this Special Mention, I would like to draw the attention of this House to the shocking deaths of innocents at the Safdarjung Hospital, Delhi. The reports of deaths of 34 infants in one week, including 12 in a single day, that is, on July 3, 2004, ranging from the age of one month to two years at the Safdarjung Hospital has shocked the society. The causes of death include septicaemia, anaemia, sepsis and intestinal obstruction. Apparently, most of these lives were lost for want of adequate medical treatment in this prestigious hospital in the nation's capital. The doctors, treating these little patients, have blamed shortage of essential medicines, IV fluids and non-availability of ventilators as primary causes of these deaths.

Doctors have gone on record to state that there were major shortages of important antibiotics: Monosafe, Magnamycine and Fortum. Parents in distress were asked to purchase the same from the market causing critical delays. The fact, that the hospital had given a requirement of three ventilators in each ward but only six were sanctioned last year and no purchases have yet been made, is a stinging indictments of the health system. No paediatric ICU and portable x-ray machines are available for the children's ward. That these machines have not been functional for the last one year, speaks volumes of the criminal neglect on the part of the concerned authorities. In the 21 st century India, which is scaling great heights in science and technology, the tragic loss of these infants' life is a shameful stigma and unpardonable crime on the part of the concerned authorities. The Health Ministry must ensure accountability through an impartial probe and punish the callous officials. All medicines and attendant facilities must be made available to avoid repetition of such deaths.

SHRI N. JOTHI (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I appeal to the Government to kindly look into the matter. {Interruptions}

SHRI BALBIR K. PUNJ (Uttar Pradesh): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I rise to associate myself with the issue that Shri Anand Sharma has raised. There is an interesting detail, while the doctors have been saying that there are shortage of medicines, at the same time, the hospital authorities had last year returned rupees eight crore thirty-seven lakh as unutilised money to the Government. So, there is a total mismatch. *(Interruptions)*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BALAWANT alias BAL APTE): You can only associate. *(Interruptions)* Only associate. *(Interruptions)* Only associate. *(Interruptions)*

Demand for Release of Cauvery River Water to Tamil Nadu

SHRI R. KAMARAJ (Tamil Nadu): Sir, my Special Mention is regarding release of Cauvery water to save the crops of Cauvery Delta in Tamil Nadu. The cultivation of Kuruvai paddy crops of the entire Cauvery Delta in Tamil Nadu is being highly affected because of serious water crisis due to non-release of water by Karnataka. The Cauvery Delta, comprising of Thanjavur, Thiruvavur and Nagapattinam districts, known as 'Granary of Tamil Nadu', is facing the danger of missing the Kuruvai cultivation, both now as well as in the coming years, due to the continuous refusal of Karnataka Government to release Cauvery water. The hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has demanded immediate action by the Centre to save the farmers of this area. But even the release of surplus water from Kabini has been stopped. There have been good rains in Kauda catchment area. As Krishnaraja Sagar and Kabini were crossing the danger level, Karnataka drained out some water from Kabini during the later half of June. That has also been completely stopped now. Kabini dam is receiving 19,498 cusecs of water and Krishnaraja Sagar is receiving 1929 cusecs of water. Yet the due share of Tamil Nadu is not being released. It is the duty of the Centre to protect the interest of the lower riparian State. If water is not released in Cauvery immediately, the Kuruvai cultivation, on lakhs of acres, will become impossible and would push the farmers to a state of misery forever. The crop loss will be a huge national loss, which will have an adverse impact on our food production target too. In view of the gravity of the situation, I appeal to the Central Government to direct Karnataka Government to release the due share of Cauvery water to Tamil Nadu without delay.

SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I associate myself with what Shri R. Kamaraj has said.