

April, but it seems that there is some truth in the doubts expressed by the employees that the Government is withholding the payment of dearness allowance under pressure from the World Bank, although the Government denies it. However, delay in the payment of Dearness Allowance would tantamount to accepting the illegitimate conditionalities of the World Bank. I would like to submit that the Government should immediately pay the two instalments of D.A. due to the employees along with the interests for the period it has been withheld by the Government. I would like to make only this submission.

SHRI D. VENKATESWARA RAO (Bapatla): I want to draw the attention of the Government to the difficulties being faced by the tobacco growing farmers in the State of Andhra Pradesh. Eighty per cent of the Virginia tobacco is being grown in the State of Andhra Pradesh and the Central Government is getting Rs. 2000 crores by way of excise revenue and also Rs. 250 crores by way of foreign exchange.

But unfortunately the farmers are being denied a remunerative price for the last few years. In December last year the hon. Minister, Shri Chidambaram had visited Guntur and assured the farmers that this year there are new orders for the export to the tune of 145 million kg and that enough remunerative price would be given to the farmers. But compared to last year, while last year Rs. 33 per kg was given this year they are giving only Rs 25 per kg.

On the other hand this year Russian orders for about 25 million kg of tobacco and 3000 million kg of cigarettes have been received. Unfortunately only about 15 million kg order for cigarettes has been given to these traders

Sir, other than this, because of the hike in the prices of diesel, coal, fertilizers and the hike in other wages, the price has been

increased to the tune of about 60 per cent per acre. This time the farmer is supposed to incur Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 12,000. Now the price is being reduced to the tune of about Rs. 10 when compared to the last year's price.

It is being said all over the State of Andhra Pradesh that this time export variety is being given Rs. 10 to Rs. 12 more when compared to the last year's price. About a sum of Rs. 30 crores is being given to five or six traders who are exporting these tobacco. Out of Rs. 30 crores, is being given to five or six traders who are exporting these tobacco. Out of Rs. 30 crores, it is widely discussed in the State of Andhra Pradesh that a sum of Rs. 10 crores is being given to the activities relating to AICC Plenary Session. Sir, it is a very shameful thing. In the State of Andhra Pradesh, when the farmer in working hard and giving Rs. 2,000 crores to the Central Government as well as Rs. 250 crores by way of foreign exchange, these traders are encouraged by the Government and are driving the farmers to this plight.

I request the Commerce Minister and the Government to attend to it; ask the STC to immediately come forward and enter into the market; and also ask the Tobacco Board to enter into the market so that they can procure ten million kgs of the buffer stock and these people are given very good remunerative price.

I would like to say this very unfortunately.

SHRI K.P. RODDAIAH YADV (Machilipatnam): Sir, a horrible and tragic rail accident took place at Tsundur railway station.....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Reddaiah, the Railway Minister has sent me a letter that he wants to make a statement on this.

(Interruptions)