

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)

SHRI BH. VIJAYAKUMAR RAJU (Narsapur): Sir, let the Minister make a statement..... (Interruptions) I want to say that many accidents are going occur. The Railway Minister is not here..... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: The Railway Minister has sent me a letter asking for the permission to make a statement on this. I have allowed him to make a statement. The time will be communicated to you.

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE (Vijayawada): I would like to speak on the previous issue raised by Shri Rao.....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Rao, is it necessary? It has been beautifully put to me.

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: I would only like to supplement what my colleague Shri Rao has said. It is the Tobacco Board which has encouraged the farmers.....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It becomes diluted unnecessarily when it has already been put in a very good shape.

SHRI SHOBANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: Sir, it is not rice or paddy or wheat. The Tobacco Board itself encouraged the farmers to go in for higher production. Nearly sixty per cent higher production, they had advised the farmers. What I would like to impress upon you is this. Please ask the Commerce Minister to make a statement on this and he should also see that the balance of 15 million kgs. of tobacco is purchased. Sir, the traders and the Ruling Party have joined hands together and they are trying to exploit the farmers by giving lesser prices. They are going to give Rs. 10 crores to the AICC Plenary Session. That is the income of the farmers. It is really very shameful on the part of this Government. They have promised that the price will not be less than the

last year's price. What is that they are doing? Shri Chidambaram came here and promised that the price will in no time be lesser than the last year. Now, 35 per cent lesser price is being given to the farmers. They are exploiting the tobacco growers. Why should this be allowed? Please ask the Minister to make a statement on this and take necessary steps to purchase the tobacco. Please see that the orders are given. You are coming in the way of erstwhile Russian State in not putting the entire order for your own mean ends.

13.00 hrs.

SHRI ANNA JOSHI (Pune): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to bring to your kind notice about the matter of bonded labourers in Maharashtra.

Though the Government seems to be encouraging for the release and rehabilitation of the bonded labourers yet you will be shocked to learn that in one of the nationalised banks - Bank of Maharashtra - this practice is followed there since long. In spite of the repeated requests from the authorised union of the bank employees and local MP, the bank management is dilly-dallying with the subject. More than hundred men and women are employed in this bank since 1973 and they are just getting a meagre fixed pay upto Rs. 150/- per month for the last twenty years. Even the income of the beggars on the street is also more than Rs. 15/- per month. These people of fixed pay are working there for the last twenty years.

I urge upon the Finance Minister to look into the matter very seriously and end this injustice immediately and continue the services of those unfortunate, exploited employees in full-fledged and regular scale and provide all other facilities as given to all other regular employees.

SHRIMATI DIL KUMARI BHANDARI (Sikkim): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to