

attention of the Government to the serious drought situation in the State of Kerala. The State is faced with an unprecedented situation of drought and shortage of drinking water. The drought has affected all fields of economy in the state. The agriculture sector is the worst affected. The cash crops which earn foreign exchange for us are on the brink of a collapse. The rural population is faced with unemployment and poverty. The coastal belt also is seriously affected with fisherman thrown out of jobs.

I would request the Government to take immediate steps in this regard.

[*Translation*]

SHRI SURYA NARAYAN YADAV (Saharsa): Mr. Chairman, Sir, at present the Bihar Government is negotiating with Nepal for construction of a high dam on river Kosi but the Government of India is not likely to take any action on it now. Due to this, the Bihar Government is finding it difficult to negotiate with the Government of Nepal.

Every year there is loss of life, property and crops due to floods in North Bihar and both the Central and the State Governments spend billions and billions of rupees as relief and grants. I would like to demand from the Government of India that it should immediately take up these important questions. Besides this, it is clear from the survey conducted by the Government of Bihar that half of our country can be supplied electricity if this high dam is constructed with the consent of Nepal Government.

Therefore, I would like to demand that immediate arrangements should be made for the construction of high dam on river Kosi.

[*English*]

SHRI DWARAKA NATH DAS (Karimganj): In Hailakandi district of Assam there is only one L.P.G distributorship and as a result there is maximum demand for cooking gas but this single agency cannot cope up with the huge demand. On the other hand fuel wood is not at all sufficiently available

due to heavy deforestation through illegal felling of trees and because of drawing of plants and bamboos as raw materials by the Hindustan Paper Corporation Ltd., Panehgram.

So, I urge upon the Government to allow another L.P.G. distributorship at an early date in Hailakandi district to meet the demand of the large number of consumers so that they are relieved of their anxiety of having gas cylinder.

SHRI B.N.REDDY (Miryalguda): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Central Government towards deteriorating condition of Handloom Weavers in Andhra Pradesh. The Government's callous attitude caused an inordinate delay in meeting their genuine demands. In response to the reported starvation deaths of more than 100 handloom weavers, some Ministers and officials had visited the State during the last quarter of 1951. The purpose of such visits was, I think, merely to show lip sympathies to the families of the unfortunate victims. This is because none of the promises made to the people during the visits was fulfilled so far. For instance, while the Union Textiles Minister, Shri Ashok Gehlot, promised all help to tide over the crisis in the handloom industry, the Commerce Minister, Shri P. Chidambaram has gone to the extent of assuring to supply 4000 bales of yarn to Andhra Pradesh every month by the South Indian Mills Association.

But to our disappointment, nothing has been done. Not a single bale was received by the weavers. Neither the Central nor the State Government has paid any attention that it deserve in this regard. Further, it is a matter of serious concern, as no compensation was provided to the bereaved families so far.

Now, coming to the crisis in the handloom industry, I think, it was due to the unprecedented increase in the price of yarn and dyes and lack of work. As a result, the Primary Cooperative Societies, the APCO and the State Textile Development Corporation have failed to provide work to the weav-

ers. Whereas, the master-weavers, not only reduced the off-load but also the wages to compensate the price increase of yarn. In fact, the State Textile Development Corporation which opened its branch in November, 1988 at Chirala (Guntur District) is still not in a position to provide continuous work due to severe financial crunch. For instance, out of 1200 members registered with it, only 400 to 500 are being employed, that too, not continuously

Finally, what I would like to bring to your kind notice is that though the Andhra weaver is second to none in skill and efficiency, he or she is not getting enough work to do. And of course, handloom industry is the second largest employment source, next only to Agriculture, in the State.

It is, in this backdrop, I request the concerned Ministers to treat the matter on war-footing so as to provide relief to the people by supplying yarn, the other materials at cheap rates and providing the daily work. This is essential as recurrence of such deaths can be prevented in future.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): I hope the Ministers are listening to this important issue. I think they are not even listening to this important issue.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAGINA MISHRA (Padrauna): Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you, I would like to draw Government's attention towards the plight of crores of sugarcane growers in Uttar Pradesh. A very critical situation has arisen in Uttar Pradesh. Uttar Pradesh has a total population of 12 crores and sugarcane is the main source of livelihood to majority of the populace. There are 105 sugarmills in U.P. Most of them are obsolete and in a dilapidated condition and they have a crushing capacity of 800 to 1200 tonnes only. They have been running in losses to the tune of crores of rupees. Today the mill owners owe crores of rupees to sugarcane growers. At present, the recoveries, both Governmental and non-Govern-

mental are made from the farmers. As a result, the property of farmers are being attached and arrest warrants are being issued against them. The farmers are not getting their due payment, despite being in possession of slips received from sugar mills. Through you, I would like to submit to the Union Government that there are only two ways to keep the sugarcane growers of U.P. alive. The first remedy is to provide necessary machinery for the expansion of 800-1200 tonne capacity sugar mills into 2500 tonne capacity units. Secondly, it would be difficult to crush the entire sugarcane produce in the absence of new Sugar mills. I would also like to mention here that there are two rates for sugarcane in U.P. viz. Rs. 45/- paid by sugar factories and Rs. 30/- to Rs. 35/- paid by crushers. I would also like to submit here that arrears to the tune of billions of rupees are pending against sugar mill owners. Earlier, the Union Government has waived loans of Rs. 1200 crore to provide relief to the farmers. I request the Central Government to direct the banks to accept the slips from sugarcane growers as mortgaged property and make the payment thereof in order to clear their arrears and enable them to sustain themselves. I feel that this is a practical suggestion and the Government should pay its attention towards it(Interruptions)

SHRI CHANDRA JEET YADAV (Azamgarh): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the problem faced by the sugarcane growers of Uttar Pradesh is indeed a serious one. The farmers are not getting their payment and they won't grow sugarcane in the coming year—
— (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am not allowing you. Shri Ramashray Prasad Singh.

(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMASHRAY PRASAD (Jahanabad): Sir, Shri Saryu Prasad, the brave young driver of the Masaudi city branch of the State Bank of India, located in the