

service despite the fact that an airport is located at this place.

Therefore I urge upon the Government to treat Kushinagar and Fazil Nagar as tourist centres and evolve a package for this area and give it priority with a view to bring the Padrauna-Deoria area on the tourism Map so that tourists from all over the world could find an easy access to this area.

(ii) Need to clear the proposals of Karnataka Government for Upgrading State Highways into National Highways

[English]

SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR (Mangalore) : Sir, the traffic density on National Highway 17, Kanyakumari-Bombay via Mangalore and on National Highway 48, Bangalore-Mangalore roads has increased manifold during the last ten years. A number of motor accidents which occurred on these roads recently has resulted in loss of many lives. The road condition is also very bad. There is an urgent need for converting these roads into four lane roads specially on National Highway 17 between Shiroor and Talapady and on National Highway 48 between Mangalore and Gundya.

There has been a consistent demand for converting the Buntwal-Mysore State Highway into a National Highway. The traffic density on this road is also very heavy. Therefore, there is a need for upgrading the State Highway into National Highway. Incidentally, the proposals made by the Government of Karnataka for upgrading a number of State Highways into National Highways have been pending consideration of the Central Government for the last 15 years.

I urge upon the Government to fulfill the above demands.

(iii) Need to prevent use of Propane for any other purpose other than Cooking

SHRI ANADI CHARAN SAHU (Cuttack) : Sir, the honourable Supreme Court in its order dated 1.2.1994 had directed the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) to explore the possibility of using propane as a possible alternative fuel in the industrial sector.

During the course of hearing a public interest litigation, the honourable Supreme Court on 9.12.96 had directed the Central Government to conduct an experiment through a private company for use of propane in the automobile industry.

Propane is one of the components of LPG. LPG is in short supply in the domestic sector. If any experiment is

undertaken and propane is used in industrial and automobile sectors and more number of users take to propane in these sectors, then there will be acute shortage of LPG for domestic consumption.

I urge upon the Central Government to file a special leave petition or a review petition, as the case may be, in the Supreme Court to prevent any experiment of propane for any other purpose other than cooking. In addition, its use in the industrial and automobile sectors may be banned till the LPG supply eases.

(iv) Need to declare Special Package Programme for naxalite affected districts particularly Aurangabad District in Bihar

[Translation]

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH (Aurangabad) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, incidences of terrorism have been on the rise in Aurangabad, Jahanabad, Navada, Gaya, Chatra, Hazaribagh and Palamu districts of Central Bihar and South Bihar. Incidents of mass killings, looting and kidnapping have been increasing there day by day. People there feel scared. Even the people's representative cannot visit that area in night. The Union Government have to take some initiative in order to find some permanent solution to this problem.

The Government should implement some comprehensive action plan on the lines of one introduced in Kashmir so that the problems of poverty, starvation and unemployment could be solved on permanent basis in all these terrorism infested districts.

I, therefore, urge upon the Central Government to announce a special package programme for all the terrorism infested districts of Bihar particularly for the most backward district Aurangabad.

(v) Need to review the decision to withdraw the Rebate on Sale of Handloom Cloth during Festival Season

[English]

SHRI V.P. SHANMUGA SUNDARAM (Gobichettipalayam) : Sir, the handloom weavers of Tamil Nadu were traditionally getting a rebate on the textiles sold during the festival season and other important functions from both the Central Government and the State Government. Recently, this rebate has been withdrawn by the Central Government. In this context, attention is drawn to the fact that handloom weaving is being done by lakhs of weavers and is perhaps the second largest employment avenue in the State. By withdrawing the rebate, the Government has affected the lives of these poor people and in fact inadvertently discouraged an

important self-employment scheme. I am given to understand that this move of the Government was basically aimed at curbing bogus societies of handloom weavers. It is not fair to discourage genuine societies just to curb some bogus ones. Such a move is likely to be self-defeating in the future.

I urge upon the hon. Minister for Textiles to take necessary steps to bring back the rebate scheme so as to benefit the lakhs of handloom weavers of Tamil Nadu.

(vi) Need to allow Government of Maharashtra to purchase Wheat directly from Punjab and Haryana

SHRI MADHUKAR SARPOTDAR (Mumbai North-West): Sir, on 18th September, 1996, the Food Corporation of India informed the Government of Maharashtra about the revision of price structure of wheat.

This revision caused injustice to the public and the Government of Maharashtra. The revised price has been enhanced by Rs. 200 approximately.

Previously, the FCI used to supply wheat to its godowns. And from such godowns, the Government of Maharashtra used to collect wheat for public distribution system and for open market at reasonable rates fixed by the State Government.

Since these revised rates are exorbitant, the Government of Maharashtra requested the Central Government to allow them to purchase wheat directly from the godowns of the FCI in Punjab and Haryana at the rate of Rs. 4,900 per metric tonne fixed by the Government of India. The transportation charges introduced by the FCI are exorbitant.

The private traders are allowed to purchase wheat directly from Punjab and Haryana. However, the Government of Maharashtra has been denied this facility. It is, therefore, requested that this matter may be looked into at the earliest and the Government of Maharashtra be allowed to use their own transport for purchase of wheat from the godowns of the FCI in Punjab and Haryana as per the quantity allotted by the Government of India to that State.

(vii) Need to provide sufficient irrigation facilities to Deoria, U.P.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIVANSH SAHAI (Salempur) : Salempur Tehsil in district Deoria of Uttar Pradesh is adjoining the Bihar State. The land of three tehsils of Salempur, Rudrapur and Deoria under the Deoria district falls between two rivers Gandak and Ghaghra and is very fertile. Wheat, rice and sugarcane are the main crops of this area in addition to

cultivation of oil seeds and pulses. But the farmers of this area have to depend upon nature to earn their livelihood. Prosperity of farmers of this area depends on rains but if nature does not favour them, they have to face starvation mainly due to inadequate irrigation facilities there. There is no canal and tube wells are there just for name sake. Population wise Deoria is the largest district of U.P. and in it Tehsil Salempur has the largest population. But so far no irrigation facilities have been provided to the farmers of this area. The land between Gandak and Ghaghra river is plain and very fertile but in want of irrigation facility, the farmers of this area are forced to live in poverty.

If a network of tubewells is provided in this area, the farmers can match the performance of the farmers of Haryana and Punjab in respect of wheat production and solve their own problems beside providing large quantity of foodgrain to the country. The land can be highly beneficial to the farmers if tubewells are provided there in adequate number.

I, therefore, urge upon the Central Government to take necessary action in this regard.

15.32 hrs.

STATUTORY RESOLUTION

Re : Disapproval of the Special Court (Trial of Offences Relating to Transactions in Securities) (Amendment) Ordinance, 1997 and Special Court (Trial of Offences Relating to Transactions in Securities) Amendment Bill

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, the House will take up Statutory Resolution.

Shri Annasahib M.K. Patil — not present

Shri Pramod Mahajan — not present

Shri Ram Naik — not present

Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargava

Now, the time allotted for this item and consideration and passing of the Special Court (Trial of Offences Relating to Transactions in Securities) Amendment Bill, to be moved by Shri P. Chidambaram is one hour. So, kindly be brief.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): Sir, it would take only a few minutes.