

The second thing is about cardamom about which also the hon. Member has asked. In the last two years, Nepal has imported about 48.28 tonnes and 33.9 tonnes of cardamom. This year they have imported about 3,000 tonnes. When this matter came to our notice, immediately our Ministry has alerted the Excise and Customs people. They have immediately taken action. Already they were able to seize about 27.89 tonnes. They are taking active part now. We will also definitely come into the picture and we will protect this industry. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The apprehension of the hon. Members was that the low quality cardamom that was being imported by Nepal from Guatemala was being diverted to India to adulterate the Indian high quality cardamom. Can you give an assurance that you will take action to stop this ?

SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH : The moment it has come to our notice, we have alerted our Excise and Customs people and they were on the job. They were also able to seize 27.89 tonnes. That means, they had immediately taken action on that ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is good. Thank you.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Kurien, I think, we have heard enough of this.

...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Sir, that is the Press report. Nepal does not need 3,000 tonnes. They may need a few hundred tonnes and all the rest of it would be diverted to India by smuggling ...*(Interruptions)*

15.20 hrs.

BILL INTRODUCED

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT APPELLATE AUTHORITY BILL*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the establishment of a National Environment Appellate Authority to hear appeals with respect to restriction of areas in which any industries, operations or processes or class of industries, operations or processes shall not be carried out or shall be carried out subject to certain safeguards under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the establishment of a National Environment

* Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part-II, Section 2 dated 4.3.97.

Appellate Authority to hear appeals with respect to restriction of areas in which any industries, operations or processes or class of industries, operations or processes shall not be carried out or shall be carried out subject to certain safeguards under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto."

The motion was adopted.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : I introduce** the Bill.

15.21 hrs.

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT APPELLATE AUTHORITY
ORDINANCE

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): I beg to lay on the Table an explanatory statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for immediate legislation by the National Environment Appellate Authority Ordinance, 1997

[Placed in Library. See No. LT. 1463/97]

15.22 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

**(i) Need to Develop Kushinagar and Fazilnagar as Places
of National Tourist Centre**

[Translation]

LT. GEN. SHRI PRAKASH MANI TRIPATHI (Deoria) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, Padrauna and Deoria districts are places of vital tourism importance. Followers of Lord Buddha from all over the world visit Kushinagar as they feel reverence for this shrine. Only at a distance of 20 Km from Kushinagar, Pavanagar is located which is presently known as Fazil Nagar. It is the seat of Lord Mahavira. Two great religions of the world were originated from here. Both these places fall in my constituency. But the Department of Tourism has not undertaken development of this area.

Not only this area, but also the area in its vicinity has been the abode of great thinkers and philosophers of Hindu religion. Neither the Indian Railways, nor the Indian Airlines has taken any steps with a view to facilitate easy access to these places for the foreign tourists and to develop tourism here. The followers of Jainism in India would like to visit Pavanagar in large number but there is no air service or rail

** Introduced with the Recommendation of the President.

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