

has been a constant power crisis in Kanpur. The common man and the industries are suffering due to erratic power supply. There is need to provide at least 100 crore rupees immediately to improve power supply position in Kanpur city which is not being given because the State is under President's rule. The Union Government is requested to intervene in the matter and make the money available.

Sir, the Government is requested to take immediate steps to ensure the uninterrupted power supply.

(ii) Need to Sanction Schemes forwarded by Government of Madhya Pradesh to Protect Ground Level Water in the State

SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR (Khargone) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the water level in Madhya Pradesh is going down for the last several years due to scanty rainfalls and use of more and more water for agricultural purposes. It is a matter of concern and to deal with the situations it is imperative to maintain the ground water level. The State Government is formulating and implementing ground water schemes for its preservation/augmentation. Many jobs have been completed by the Department and also under the Jawahar Rojgar Yojna. The Department of Public Health Engineering has sent several schemes involving crores of rupees to the Central Government for its approval and providing financial assistance.

The Union Government is therefore requested to approve the schemes and provide adequate financial assistance for the same.

(iii) Need to treat all Telephone Exchanges within 20 kilometres range as local in Chhapra District, Bihar

[English]

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY (Chhapra) : The "Telecommunication Ministry" by implementing the metering based on Short Distance Charging Centre (SDCC) and Short Distance Charging Area (SDCA), concepts has created financial hardship for consumers in rural areas. In Chhapra district, Sonpur, which is a small sub-division located about 30 kilometers from Patna is treated as a local exchange while Marhowrah, which is 20 kilometres from Chhapra is charged on STD basis. Similarly, Marhowrah and Bheldi, which is less than 15 kilometres, is charged on STD rates. Charging rates which physically appear irregular and high due to proximity of exchanges but difference of SDCA and SDCC causes difference in rates. The Ministry should revise the concept and meanwhile direct the TDE Chhapra (Bihar) to do away with the system and treat all exchanges within 20 kilometres as local and rationalise the metering system all over the country.

(iv) Need to develop Sitamarhi in Bihar as a place of Tourist Resort

[Translation]

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI (Sitamarhi) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Sitamarhi district is a historic place in the state of Bihar. Being the birth place of mother Goddess Sita, a

large number of Hindu tourists not only from India but also other parts of the world visit this place. Kanhama of Parihar block and Balsai of Nanpur block in Sitamarhi district is the place of international reputed Madrasa and Sufi saints. Tourists from all over the world visit this place too. Sitamarhi is an important place in Northern Bihar. There has been a constant demand in the House as well as outside to include this area on the National Tourist Map and to provide road, rail, telecommunication and special broadcasting facilities here. Surveys were conducted many times but, survey reports are pending with the various departments of Government of India. The Union Government is, therefore, requested that the Sitamarhi district – of Bihar should be brought on the National tourist Map and it should be developed in the form of 'Janki Circuit'. For its development-Patna-Muzaffarpur-Sitamarhi Sonbarsa and Bhattawore roads should be declared as National Highway and development work should be carried out on this road. In addition to a special Telecommunication centre, D.D. and AIR relay centres must be set up in Sitamarhi.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV : Sir, the Minister is not attentive.

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI : Sir, the Minister is not giving any attention today. May be, he wants to say something.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Your point has gone on record. If Minister wants to say something. I won't stop him.

(v) Need for Construction of a Highway cutting across the Sahyadris connecting Chennai and Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala

[English]

SHRI A. SAMPATH (Chirayinkil) : The road traffic all over India is becoming congested day by day. In all the States, the number of the vehicles registered is on the increase every year. More highways should be constructed to save the time as well as the petroleum products. For long time, there was a pressing demand for the construction of a highway cutting across the Sahyadris connecting Chennai and Thiruvananthapuram through Ambasamudram of Tamil Nadu and Kottoor, Aryanand and Nedumangead of the Chirayinkeezhu Parliamentary Constituency in Thiruvananthapuram District of Kerala. If this highway is constructed, it would reduce the road distance between the two State capitals by more than 100 Kms. I, therefore, urge upon the Union Government to consider this proposal and do the needful at the earliest.

(vi) Need to enact a Legislation to preserve rich Bio-diversity of the Country

DR. PRABIN CHANDRA SARMA (Guwahati) : There is an urgent need to enact a Central legislation to preserve the country's rich biodiversity as large scale biopiracy is taking place all over the country, especially in the North-East, which is one of the most ecologically important spots of the world. The precious wealth of India's forests and fields, its rich biological and ecological resources are being plundered by foreign companies and their agents, causing loss of revenue

worth crores of rupees to the country. India's biological wealth is being taken out of the country to earn money for companies in European and American countries. Whether it is the seed of special varieties of rice and wheat which are going to American seed companies or the orchids of the North-East out of which European floriculture companies are earning millions. Valuable medicinal plants found in our country are being smuggled out and patented by foreign companies. New Indian companies cannot produce medicines out of many Indian plants based on our knowledge of Ayurveda, Unani and Siddha because some American or European companies have already taken a patent on Haldi, Tulsi, Amla or Neem etc. The North-East region which is rich in biodiversity has become a target of biopiracy. Last year, a Japanese was caught, trying to smuggle out several rare species of butterflies at Delhi Airport; but he had to be set free as there is no legislation in our country to check such biopiracy.

Other countries have already formulated national legislations establishing their ownership over their biological resources. It is high time, the Government of India also rise to the occasion by formulating adequate legislation in this regard.

(vii) Need to ensure that Bisra Dolomite Stone and Lime Stone Mines at Birmitrapur, Orissa are not closed

KUMARI FRIDA TOPNO (Sundergarh) : I draw the attention of the House to the future of thousands of workers and their family members, 95 per cent of them belonging to the tribals who are going to be without work in the event of the closure of the Bisra Dolomite Stone and Lime Stone Mines at Birmitrapur and Dolomite stone mines at Purnapani.

Sir, BSL at Birmitrapur is the oldest mine in the country and once there were seven thousand workers. Now there are some 3000 workers out of which 95 per cent are tribals. The mines supply Dolomite stone to Rourkela Steel Plant and the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant. But due to managerial defects the mine is going to be closed. I would request the Government that this should be taken over by the Steel Authority of India.

Sir, so also Purnapani Mine under RMD supplies Dolomite stone to the Rourkela Steel Plant. The RMD have served notice to the workers that they are going to close the mines throwing another 3000 tribal workers out of work.

Sir, in Birmitrapur Assembly segment which stands on the border of Orissa and Bihar, the closure of these mines will create a lot of law and order problems. I request the Union Government to take immediate steps so that these mines are not closed.

(viii) Need for Expedient Implementation of the Recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission

SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA (Kolar) : After a long wait of more than three years the Fifth Pay Commission has at last submitted its report.

The Government of India has implemented the

recommendations of the Fourth Pay Commission, 11 years ago. Since then the steep rise in the inflation and skyrocketing prices of essential commodities have made the life of Central Government employees miserable. The purchasing capacity of these employees has been affected adversely, particularly of those belonging to Class III and IV. This situation has created a gloomy future for these employees. The Income-tax is slowly but steadily engulfing the Class II employees also. The Income-tax ceiling had not been raised last year despite repeated demands by almost all parties and public in general. There are a number of criticisms about the recommendations. A Grievances Cell can be set-up by the Government for this purpose. Many employees' associations have already threatened to go on an indefinite strike if the recommendations are not implemented at the earliest.

I, therefore, urge upon the hon. Finance Minister to implement the recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission without any further delay.

(ix) Need to set up the Proposed Bottling Plant of ONGC near Jharsuguda, Orissa

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI (Deogarh) : Considering all factors it was proposed to set up a bottling plant by the Indian Oil Corporation in the undivided Sambalpur district near Jharsuguda in Orissa in order to meet the increasing demand of LPG cylinders in the country in particular. But it is a matter of concern that the proposal has not materialised so far. It is learnt that there is a move to shelve the proposal to locate the same somewhere else in the State about 250 kms. away. This is causing discontentment among the people in the area.

I request the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas to intervene so as to ensure the setting up of the proposed Bottling Plant near Jharsuguda, Orissa.

14.25 hrs.

MOTION OF THANKS ON THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS—Contd.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Now we shall take up item No. 18—Further consideration of the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR (Khargone) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to oppose the Motion of Thanks on President's Address. I oppose it because this Government can not follow the tradition established by the President. Only a few days back the President invited the largest political party, the BJP to form the Government. This Government has not been able to follow the tradition which the President has established. I want to draw the attention of this