

of the system of carrying nightsoil on one's head. He should first abolish it in his own department where this system is still in practice...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : That is enough. Please sit down.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards my Constituency, Patna. Not a single Central University has been set up in Bihar so far. Patna University fulfils all the conditions for being declared a Central University and for the last 20 years, there has been a demand that if there is any institution which can be accorded the status of Central University, it is the Patna University but the Government has not taken any action in this regard so far.

Through you, I would like to urge upon the Government that a Central University should be set up without further delay in Bihar which is the second most populated state after Uttar Pradesh. Besides, Patna University has on its rolls students not only from Bihar but also from the border areas of Bihar. I demand that necessary action should be taken by the Government to accord the status of Central University to Patna University so that the students from Bihar as well as the students from the neighbouring areas are benefited.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards a very vital issue. For a long time now, the rumour regarding the hike in price of Petroleum products has been in the air. I would like to make a demand that prices of Petroleum products should not be hiked at all. The Hon'ble Finance Minister is present in the House. Recently he has spoken about the possibility of hike in the prices of Petroleum products during an interview with a private T.V. channel which is, in a way, contempt of the House because these days Parliament is in session. At such a time the issuance of a policy statement outside the House tantamounts to contempt of the House. This would encourage the tendency of black-marketing and hoarding of Petroleum products and as a result the prices of commodities of daily use would also flare up. The Government has hiked the prices of diesel, petrol and LPG only recently and further revision of the prices would put more burden on consumers, push up the inflation and exhaust the bearing capacity of the people.

There has been loss of revenue because of adulteration in diesel and petrol. The poor people in the village do not get kerosene at all. The Government was supposed to impose restrictions on the consumption of petrol but it has failed to do so. As the Government has not taken any strict measures and has also not been able to gather courage in this matter, it is conspiring to hike the prices of Petroleum products.

Recently, the Petroleum Minister has given an indication to this effect in the conference of Economic

experts. The people of this country would never tolerate hike in prices of Petroleum products, if it is resorted to in order to cover up the inefficiency and weak economic policies of the Government. Hence, through you, I would like to request the Government not to increase the prices of Petroleum products as the common man is already overburdened because of inflation. He should be saved from bearing additional burden...*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI : I would like to know from the hon. Finance Minister whether there is any proposal to increase the prices of petroleum products ...*(Interruptions)*

*[English]*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Let him speak. Please allow him to speak.

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH (Adoor) : I would like to draw the attention of the hon. House to a serious liquor tragedy occurred in my constituency on the eve of Deepavali. On that day, some State workers of my constituency fell ill after drinking the spurious liquor. Three workers died and more than 40 workers became serious after consuming liquor. They are very poor State workers. This liquor tragedy has shocked the entire State of Kerala.

The workers are still admitted in the hospital and their health has not been improving despite medical attention.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, since April 1996, when Shri A.K. Antony was the Chief Minister of Kerala, he has totally banned arrack. At that time, more than 10,000 arrack shops were closed. The police and excise officers were very much alerted and all the arrack shops were closed.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please be brief. It is a State subject, but still I have allowed it.

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH : After the general elections, the LDF came into power, but they are not taking effective steps to ensure the implementation of the ban on arrack. So, the policy of banning arrack manufacturing in our State collapsed totally, and spurious arrack is being manufactured in the entire Kerala now. All the arrack is coming from other States and the police and excise officials are not taking any effective steps to check this. The Government of Kerala is not interested in continuing the ban on arrack. Under these circumstances, many more tragedies may occur in Kerala in future.

Therefore, the Government of India must intervene urgently to avoid the occurrence of liquor tragedies again and again. The Government of India should seek a detailed report from the Kerala Government on this