

[English]

DR. K.P. RAMALINGAM (Tiruchengode) : Sir, I want to raise a very important issue in this august House.

The biggest sandalwood godown is situated in Thirupattur of Tamil Nadu. In that Depot, yesterday, there was a major fire accident due to which Rs. 100 crore worth of sandalwood was damaged.

The Central Government banned the sandalwood exports from 1992 onwards. Due to the ban on the export of sandalwood and chips, the buyers have not lifted the stocks, and the stocks have been accumulating in the Depot.

Now, apart from Thirupattur Depot, Salem Depot, Sathiamangalam Depot and other Depots in Tamil Nadu have stocks of more than Rs. 600 crore worth sandalwood. Regarding the lifting of ban on the export of sandalwood, our Tamil Nadu Government has written several letters to the Central Government. Due to enormous delay by the Central Government, the Tamil Nadu Government is incurring heavy losses on the stocks held in these Depots. So, the Central Government must lift the ban on the export of sandalwood immediately.

Another important issue is that in Periyar District of Tamil Nadu, which comes under my constituency, the coconut trees in thousands of hectares are affected by an unidentified disease.

Due to that, coconut trees spread over lakhs of acres are damaged. The disease will be spread over to Kerala also through Pollachi. So, that disease must be identified. One expert team of scientists must be sent to Tamil Nadu. Then, relief fund must be given to the farmers. I demand that per acre, about Rs. 15,000 relief fund must be sanctioned by the Government.

Sir, this is a matter of highest urgency. The Government must see to it that necessary action is taken in this regard... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

PROF. RITA VERMA : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have given a notice of privilege regarding Bihar ... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : There is nothing about it. You please sit down. Don't waste the time of other members. Mr. Handique please speak.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Your notice has not come to me. Please sit down. It might be with the Speaker. He must be examining it. You please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : You are also raising the same issue. You are on the panel. Please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

SHRI LAL MUNI CHAUBEY (Buxor) : A train dacoity has taken place and a number of people have been killed in it... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Let him complete, then I will listen to you. Let him complete. Please sit down. It is of no use to keep on standing.

(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE (Jorhat) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Tocklai Experimental Station in Assam, a Tea Research Institute established in 1911, the first of its kind in the whole world, is paralysed by a three-month long strike arising out of mismanagement and is on the brink of collapse. Only a couple of such Institutes exist in the world today.

Sir, the decline of this world famous Institute began in 1989 when it was withdrawn from the management of CSIR and was transferred to the Tea Research Association, a cooperative set up and funded by the Tea Board to the extent of 50 per cent of its budget allocation. In addition to the resource crunch, bad management and lack of purpose and a sense of direction have frustrated the employees and scientists.

In a written reply to my question on the subject, the hon. Commerce Minister chose in his wisdom to leave the matter to the Tea Research Association interpreting the matter as a private sector dispute. The Government cannot wash its hands off like that. Till 1989, it was under the CSIR and Government cannot afford to remain a dumb witness to the drifting of this world famous Institute into purposelessness and to the undoing of research and development of tea, which is one of the biggest foreign exchange earners.

During the last visit of the hon. Speaker in the month of February, all the employees and scientists met him and drew his kind attention to the problems of the Institute. I, therefore, urge upon the Commerce Minister to depute a senior officer of the Ministry to visit the place and to meet both the management and the employees and scientists and amicably settle the matter. Only, Governmental intervention can save the Tocklai Experimental Station. It will be a colossal national loss if this Institute is closed down.

The hon. Members of Parliament of the North-Eastern Region have already submitted a memorandum to the hon. Minister seeking his immediate intervention. So, I request the Government to do the needful in this regard... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAIK (Mumbai North) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, my submission is that when the matter of Bihar was raised here on Saturday. I was total that I would be allowed to speak on Monday... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : You are talking about the Motion of Privilege. It is still under consideration. So, you please, sit down.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Chaubeyji is also saying the same thing.

SHRI RAM NAIK : I am not talking about the Motion of Privilege...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : You are talking about the Motion of Privilege. It is still under consideration. So, you please, sit down.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Chaubeyji is also saying the same thing.

SHRI RAM NAIK : I am not talking about the Motion of Privilege...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : There is no need to display documents. Is it provided in the rules? You are on the panel.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Uma Bharti ji, you also sit down. You have not been given the floor. Please speak on your turn. You are required to give a notice. Everybody will get a chance on his turn.

(Interruptions)

SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH (Motihari) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you I would like to draw the attention of the Ministry of Railways and return the Government of India towards the vast region of North Bihar. The people of Muzaffarpur, Sitamarhi, Champaran region of North Bihar have been facing the havoc of floods of Bagmati river since independence to this day. No transport facility are available for the population of about 50 lakhs covering 15 blocks and 2000 villages of the four districts of Sitamarhi, Seohar, Muzaffarpur and Champaran. I would like to point out Hon'ble Minister of Railways that District Head quarter of Seohar and the Divisional Head quarter of Pakaridayal have so far not been linked with the rail lines. Through you, I demand that Motihari, Pakaridayal, Seohar and Sitamarhi in Bihar may kindly be linked with the rail network. There is also a need for providing a rail link between Birganiya and Muzaffarpur via Seohar and thereby connecting the densely populated areas Bairganiya, Muzaffarpur, Sitamarhi Motihari. It will provide train services for people of 2000 villages and towns of this regions. Sir, the difficulty being faced in operating train services in Champaran (Motihari) under Samastipur Railway Division may kindly be removed. I would also like to urge upon the Ministry of Railways to create a new Railway Division in Champaran.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN (Mumbai-North East) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, previous Government distributed Gas agencies and Petrol pumps very liberally. When this

matter was brought before the Supreme Court they opposed it and cancelled those allotments. Not only that but Supreme Court also gave historical judgement and imposed a fine of Rs. 50 lakhs on a former Minister. Consequentially the United Front Government decided to do away with the descretionary quota of M.Ps. was also discontinued. But now a news item has appeared in the Press that Ministry of law have submitted a note to the Central Cabinet seeking regularisation of Gas agencies and Petrol pumps allotted by previous Government. and that Ministry has requested to that effect to the Cabinet...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHATRUGHAN PRASAD SINGH (Ballia-Bihar): It has been opposed in the Central Cabinet that the wrong practice of distributing petrol pumps started in congress region will not continue any more ...*(Interruptions)*

12.13 hrs.

[Mr SPEAKER in the Chair]

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN : I am not standing for your reply. It means that the Law Ministry intends to regularise the allotments, which were liberally made by the previous Government to sons, daughters-in-law, Brothers-sister, mother-son and mother-father-of the politicians and the administrative officers. In case these allotments are regularised naturally, it will be contempt of the Supreme Court and disrespect of public.

Therefore, Sir, I urge upon the Government to ask Ministers to make a statement in this regard making their intention clear...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. RITA VERMA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have a question of privilege...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bakura) : Sir, the Government should clarify its position...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : I am fully aware of your notice, Shri. Reddy.

[Translation]

SHRI SHATRUGHAN PRASAD SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, a news item appeared in the Economic Times that the Cabinet has opposed the instructions of the Supreme Court regarding the allotments made by the previous Government...*(Interruptions)* It has been opposed...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN : Did you attend the meeting...*(Interruptions)*

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI (Kota) : You are not a minister....*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I will come to you, Achariaji.

(Interruptions)