

august House to the problem of cashew workers in the country. More than 1.5 million workers, mostly women, are employed in the cashew factories in our country. The weekly payment made to them varies from Rs. 12 to Rs. 45 only. They are made to work for 12 hours daily. Due to excessive work and under-nourishment, they often break down and fall ill. They work all the seven days of the week. As they do not have a day for rest, their hands become easily strained and disfigured as they are not often provided with gloves while at work. They are simply left to use mud and water to clean their hands and are not provided soap to wash their hands. The conditions prevailing in cashew factories are not at all hygienic and safe to work.

Cashew factories are the only means of earning a bare living available to many poor women in backward rural areas. The cashew workers have not formed trade unions to air their grievances and fight for their rights.

As such, I urge the Union Government to advise the State to fix minimum wages for the cashew workers, at par with other plantation workers.

(iii) **Need to allow lapsing of provisions of Essential Commodities (Special provisions) Act, 1981**

[*Translation*]

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA (Jaipur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, under Special Commodities Act, 1955 the Central Government enacted the Essential Commodities (Social Provisions) Act 1981 for 5 years in the first instance. Later its duration was extended upto August, 1992. Although nothing in the interest of consumers or farmers has been provided under the new provisions, yet the following provisions are very stiff for the traders:

1. Giving Judgement by special Court after a brief hearing
2. Making a provision of a minimum of three months and maximum of two

years imprisonment.

3. Confiscating the whole stock and selling it at lower a price than the price prevailing at fair price shops.
4. Declaring all offences under the Act as non-bailable.
5. Arresting the trader then and there and putting him under police custody.
6. Putting restrictions on making appeals in higher Courts for such offence.

Due to these provisions there is a great resentment among all the traders of the country. They held a demonstration in the Boat Club on 28.7.1992 in its protest. They have planned to show their protest in each and every State from the 7th August, because instead of withdrawing these special provisions the Government wants to extend them from another 5 years from August 1992. Therefore, I would like to make demand from the Central Government not to extend the duration of these provisions and repeal them.

(iv) **Need to give clearance and financial assistance for Bisalpur Scheme.**

SHRI RAM NARAYAN BERWA (Tonk): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the population of Tonk district is nearly 12 lakh. Cultivation is the mainstay of the people. This area is backward in all respects i.e. from economic, social, industrial point of view. Though the Banas river provides drinking water to Ajmer district, yet even after 44 years of independence the Government has not been able to provide irrigation facility in this area. Due to untiring efforts of the people of this area the work on Bisalpur scheme has been started last few years. Though this scheme is meant for providing drinking water in Ajmer and Jaipur districts, yet the poor and hopeless farmers of Tonk district are still deprived of means of irrigation.

Thereof, through you I strongly make an appeal to the Central Government to give clearance and financial assistance to Bisalpur Project as an irrigation project so that the farmers of Tonk district could achieve prosperity and combat continuous famine.

(v) **Need to grant licence for setting up sugar mill at Aurai Block in Muzaffarpur District, Bihar.**

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI: (Sitamarahi): Due to lack of sufficient number of sugar mills in Bihar the existing sugar mills are able to crush only one-third of total sugarcane produced by farmers. As a result of this, the Government suffers losses instead of earning huge revenues. Two thirds of total sugarcane produced by farmers are either destroyed or dry up in fields as there cannot be crushed in time. Thereafter the crop is burnt in fields as a result of which the farmers are unable to get remunerative price. If the sugar mills can crush all the sugarcane produced by the farmers, the Government will earn crores of rupees as tax.

Due to lack of sufficient number of sugar-mills the production of sugar is very low in the State even though we produce sufficient quantity of sugarcane. As two-thirds of sugarcane produced by farmers are sent to expellers, and crushers, the State Government has to suffer losses to the tune of crores of rupees every year. Moreover farmers get less money towards the cost of sugarcane. production of sugarcane in Muzaffarpur and Sitamatri districts is very high. The people grow sugarcane here in a large scale. A survey had also been conducted by the Central Government in 1990 to set up a sugar mill in Aurai block of Muzaffarpur district. But no sugar mill has so far been set up there. If a sugar mill is set up there, it will benefit farmers of Aurai, Minapur, Katra, Runni, Saidpur, Pipradhi, Belkhand, Tariyarn blocks.

I would, therefore like to request the Central Government to grant licence immediately for setting up* a sugar mill at

Aurai Block and fulfill the aspirations of the local people.

(vi) **Need to formulate suitable schemes to check erosion caused by the river Ganga in Nabadwip west Bengal.**

DR. ASIM BALA (Nabadwip): Large areas along the embankment of the river Ganga are getting eroded., Thousands of acres of the cultivable land has been eroded by the river in my Constituency which is spread over from Nabadwip to Sanyalchar, Chakadeh, to Kalayani. It is a serious problem. People of these areas have been rendered homeless due to this serious erosion and there is no arrangement for their rehabilitation. It is not only that the cultivable land has been destroyed but also a large number of school buildings and other institutions have been destroyed. It is surprising that Government has not shown any response to this problem.

therefore request the Central Government to look into the matter and formulate suitable schemes.

(viii) **Need to improve the functioning of Passport Office at Calicut, Kerala**

*SHRI V.S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN (Palghat): The Passport Office at Calicut in Kerala receives the largest number of applications for passport in the country., But the condition of this Office is deplorable as compared to other passport offices. in 1991, the number of pending applications in this Office was 2.5 lakhs. There is one Passport Officer and five Superintendent who have to deal with such a large number of applications.

As a result, it takes more than two months for large number of applications to be sent for police verification. Many young men in Kerala have been denied jobs in foreign countries on the ground of non-issuance of passport, although they had secured visas.'

It is said that an Immigration Office

*Translation of the speech originally delivered in Malayalam.