

(iv) Need to overcome the power crisis in Kerala by supplying Power from Kalpakkam Neyveli and Ramagundam Power Stations and from central quota

SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN (Cannanore) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the State of Kerala was well known for its torrential rainfall and luxuriant rain forests. Until recently Kerala had an abundance of power from its many hydel power stations. Unfortunately, Kerala is now faced with unprecedented drought and acute shortage of electricity. The vagaries of monsoon deceived the people of Kerala and the power crisis has become a new threat to the overall development of the State.

Industrial economy of Kerala was worst affected when the State Electricity Board imposed a hundred per cent power cut on high-tension and extra high-tension consumers. According to estimates the State has incurred a production loss of Rs. 100 crores and the workers have lost Rs. 10 crores in wages alone.

Meteorologists are of the opinion that during the last eighty six years monsoon in Kerala has never been as lean as in this year. Hence the hydel power stations alone cannot provide sufficient power to meet our industrial and domestic requirements. Kerala's exclusive dependence on hydel power should, therefore, be backed up by alternate source of power

The immediate solution lies in importing power from neighbouring States of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. Here the intervention of the Central Government is essential not only to meet the present crisis by securing supply from Kalpakkam, Neyveli and Ramagundam power stations, but to make provision for supply from Central quota every time such crisis recurs due to failure of monsoon in Kerala until a permanent solution is found by installing thermal power stations there.

[*Translation*]

(v) Need to adopt necessary measures to improve telephone services in Madhya Pradesh

SHRI PRATAP BHANU SHARMA (Vidisha) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the telephone services in Bhopal, the capital city of Madhya Pradesh, are in shambles. Hundreds of telephones have been lying out of order for the past one month. What to speak of connecting trunk calls, one cannot get even the local numbers and even if some number is connected, the same gets cross-connected or telephones are held up.

During the last three months, subscribers have made thousands of complaints but no effective measure has been adopted by the senior officers to improve the telephone services resulting in widespread resentment among the people. Lethargy and corruption are rampant in the Tele-communication Department, Bhopal, and the Government is suffering losses to the tune of lakhs of rupees every day.

Similarly, functioning of the Telephone Exchanges in the surrounding cities of Bhopal is also faulty. 90 per cent exchanges and rural PCOs, particularly, in Vidisha, Raisen, Sehore, Hoshangabad and Rajgarh districts remain out of order because of which also urban and rural subscribers are feeling harassed. The Minister of Communications is, therefore, requested to see that adequate improvement is made in the communication system of Madhya Pradesh and strict action is taken against the guilty officers.

(vi) Need to construct an overbridge over Rani Bazar Railway crossing in Bikaner, Rajasthan

SHRI MANPHOOL SINGH CHAUDHARY (Bikaner) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the railway line passes through the middle of Bikaner. There are five railway crossings on it in the city area. On an average these railway crossings are closed 48 times per day. How much time is consumed in closing and opening these crossing 48 times a day can very well be imagined by the Department of Railway itself.

Bikaner is a city with 5 lakh population. It is evenly divided on each side of the railway line. These five railway crossings in the middle of the city have caused an acute

problem to the people of the city.

If an overbridge is constructed on one of the railway crossings, it will be quite helpful in alleviating the problem for the present. This can be constructed on Rani Bazar railway crossing. This crossing is near the hospital and half of the population of the city goes to the hospital through this crossing. Many patients have died at this very railway crossing. Therefore, keeping in view the human aspect, it has become imperative to construct this overbridge. The people of Bikaner city are being incited on account of this problem. Therefore, this problem has to be solved immediately.

[English]

- (vii) Need to provide financial assistance to the flood affected people of Punjab particularly Faridkot District

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOO-WALIA (Sangrur) : Sir, as in the previous year, a sizeable part of the country has been badly affected by drought and floods. A delegation of some MLAs from Assam has recently been to Delhi in connection with the floods in Brahmaputra river and discussed with central leaders the grave situation arising out of this. To my satisfaction, the central Government have given them the fullest cooperation to tide over the problem. In my State, Punjab, lakhs of people are in great trouble due to floods. In Faridkot District alone, people in 200 villages have been affected by Floods. Crops in 80,000 acres worth Rs. 28 crores have been completely ruined. 5,747 houses collapsed due to incessant rains. In Muktesar Sub Division, cotton crops with a value of Rs. 20 crores have been destroyed. The farmers of this area are not in any way, in a position to bear this heavy loss. Now-a-days, agriculture has ceased to be a profitable profession. In such worst circumstances, this heavy loss will hit the very backbone of the poor farmers. So I appeal to the government to render immediate financial assistance to the extent of Rs. 25 crores to the affected farmers, so that they may have a sign of relief.

- (viii) Need to adopt necessary measures to improve the living conditions of Beedi workers in Andhra Pradesh particularly in Tirupati.

DR. CHINTA MOHAN (Tirupati) : The living conditions of the Beedi workers of Andhra Pradesh, specially in Tirupati Parliamentary constituency, which cover Kawetinagaram, Satyavedu, Sri Kalahasi, Sullunpet, Vengatagir Nagaram continue to be rather distressing and sad. The wages are very low for men and even lower for women and children. Long hours of working, occupational health hazards, lack of schooling, lack of health care, lack of housing have brought near havoc in the lives of the beedi workers and their families. In keeping with the liberal policies or programmes of the Government, immediate steps are called for to ensure some concrete improvements in the quality of life of these unfortunate victims of our society.

14.48 hrs.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CESS BILL

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : We will now take up Item No. 12 in the Agenda.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE (SHRI B.K. GADHVI) : On behalf of Shri Vishwanatha Pratap Singh, I beg to move :

“That the Bill to provide for the levy and collection of a cess on all payments made for the import of technology for the purposes of encouraging the commercial application of indigenously developed technology and for adapting imported technology to wider domestic application and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, be taken into consideration.”