

[Shrimati Usha Choudhary]

Maharashtra is a leading State in the country in the matter of producing cotton. The life of the farmers there, specially of the farmers of the Vidarbha region, is dependent on the cotton yarn. In Maharashtra, cotton monopoly scheme has been considered as a welfare scheme for the farmers. Under that scheme, farmers' cotton is to be purchased through Marketing Federation. This year, on the one hand, production of cotton has increased and on the other hand due to higher prices of cotton there in comparison to other States, certain quantity of cotton was brought there for sale from other States also. In the absence of cotton monopoly scheme in the surrounding cotton producing States, this thing has always been happening. With the result that such a good scheme is not properly implemented. This year the Federation had to purchase more cotton and as such it was short of funds to make payments to the farmers. The cash-credit obtained by the Federation from the Reserve Bank should have been more this year due to larger procurement of cotton so that the Federation could get more loan from the Cooperative Banks and other institutions.

The National Textile Corporation is to pay Rs. 20 crores to the Maharashtra farmers as arrears. If this amount is given to the Federation, then the poor farmers who have not been able to get payment of their crops even after 3 to 4 months of selling their cotton, will be able to get their payment immediately. The Maharashtra Government have also appealed to the Centre to this effect.

If the Central Government do not take this matter seriously and do not provide financial help to the Maharashtra Cotton Federation and also do not provide justice by paying full attention to their work, then the possibility of sowing cotton by the Maharashtra farmers, specially by the farmers of Vidarbha, is bleak.

In conclusion, I demand that for immediate payment to the farmers of Maharashtra for their cotton crops, the Cotton Federation should be provided financial help in same way.

- (iii) Need to ensure adequate and early payment to the farmers for their produce purchased by F.C.I. through its various agencies.

SHRI HAFIZ MOHD. SIDDIQ (Moradabad) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Food Corporation of India procures foodgrains itself as well as through several agencies. For purchases made by the Food Corporation of India, the payment is made promptly to the farmers, though in the matter of prices the farmers have to face some losses and difficulties; but in the matter of purchases made through P.C.F. and the Cooperatives, the farmers neither get fair prices nor timely payment. The Cooperatives make baseless excuses while purchasing foodgrains and in this way compel the farmers to go to the touts who purchase the agricultural produce at lower prices by saying that prompt payment therefor would be made. These touts pay very meagre prices to the farmers on the excuse of the wheat being of inferior quality. One of the reason for this is the payment of illegal money to the Food Corporation for getting the grade of the foodgrains passed. Thus the farmers are doubly exploited. PCF makes payment to the Cooperatives after receipt of the commodities. Therefore, the Cooperatives are able to make payment usually after 5 days. The farmers need money immediately. Therefore, they are compelled to sell their foodgrains to the touts. Later on, the Purchase Centres purchase the same foodgrains on increased prices from the touts and the difference in the prices is shared by both.

The process of wheat procurement is going to start soon. I, therefore, demand from the Government to pay immediate attention to this aspect and save the farmers from exploitation.

- (iv) Need to declare Raval Jaunpur areas of Uttarkashi and Tehri districts of Uttar Pradesh as tribal areas.

SHRI BRAHMA DUTT (Tehri Garhwal) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Ravalta scheduled tribe has been living in six development blocks of Uttarkashi and Tehri districts in the Yamuna valley. This area

is on the left bank of river Yamuna. On the Southern bank is the Jaunsar 'babar' area which includes two development blocks of the Dehradun district. The social, economic & geographical conditions of the areas of both the sides are almost similar.

It has been demanded since long that this area should be declared a tribal area. Jaunsar Babar has been declared as tribal area, but Jaunpur area of Uttarkashi and Tehri has not been declared as such. The U. P. Government had in this connection made a request to the Central Government on 22.4.1984 and since then the representatives of the people have been trying continuously to get the areas of the six development blocks of Tehri and Uttarkashi, where majority of the people belong to Ravalta tribe, declared as tribal area. But the matter is still under consideration. In the meantime there have been agitations and hunger strikes on this issue. Now the local population have decided to start a movement from 1st of May, and the Pradhans and Block chairmen have been asked to resign from their offices.

So I want to draw the attention of the Ministry of Home Affairs to this issue and request that it should be settled as soon as possible on the basis of the recommendations of the U. P. government.

- (v) Need to stop eviction of tribals settled in the forest land of Bastar district of Madhya Pradesh.

SHRI MANKURAM SODI (Bastar): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in most of the rural areas of Bastar district, the forest land has been grabbed. The people have been representing their case to the local representatives and the Ministers continuously and they have been pleading that they have made this land fit for agricultural purposes over a period of ten to fifteen years and that they have been maintaining their families with this source of agriculture only. Because of their not getting the lease of the same land, the employees of the Forest Department are evicting those people from that land and have been misbehaving with them. At most of the places, the grabbers claim the land to be of their ancestors and try to

establish relations with the local deities. Being illegal grabbing, in the course of eviction the homes etc. of the tribals are burnt down. This leads to tense atmosphere and creates a bad image of the Government in the minds of tribals.

I would, therefore, like to request the Central Government to direct the State Government to conduct enquiry within a limited period and to grant lease of the land to the eligible persons. At present some selfish elements are provoking the tribals to grab the land and provoking them against the Government. In future this type of activities should be checked strictly.

- (vi) Need to shift the headquarters of Damodar Valley Corporation to Malthan in Bihar.

SHRI SARFARAJ AHMAD (Giridih) Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the intention of the Government in establishing the Damodar Valley Corporation was to supply electricity to Bihar and West Bengal and provide employment to the people of the backward areas of Chota Nagpur and Santhal Pargana of Bihar and West Bengal. With the same objective, Bokaro Thermal Power Station, Chanderpura Power Station, Durgapur Power Station and some other power stations had been set up earlier. The most of the working area of Damodar Valley Corporation, is in the State of Bihar, but its headquarters are situated in Calcutta and due to this reason West Bengal has controlling power over the project and in the matter of recruitment and promotion, the people of Bihar have been neglected. As a result, there is resentment and dissatisfaction among the people of the backward areas of Chota Nagpur and Santhal Pargana in Bihar. It is also the policy of the Government that the headquarters of a project should be situated in the project area.

I, therefore, request the Government that the headquarters of Damodar Valley Corporation should be shifted to Malthan and a solution should be found to provide suitable share in employment and promotions to the people of the backward areas