

It is a matter of great concern as far as more than seven lakh small growers of rubber are concerned. These rubber farmers usually face one difficulty. The manufacturers, who are mainly tyre manufacturers, join together and keep away from the market so that the price goes down. This phenomenon takes place every time whenever enough stuff is available. Unless the Government comes to the rescue, as they have been doing always, the farmers will be finding a great difficulty.

Now it has been reported in the papers that the Government has taken a decision to keep away from the scheme of making a buffer stock of rubber. That means the Government will not further take rubber from the market when the industrialists are keeping away and trying to put pressure on the Government to import this stuff.

So, I earnestly pray and urge upon the Government, on behalf of lakhs and lakhs of farmers as well as agricultural workers not only in Kerala but also in the eight States where rubber is now being grown and the produce is going to ripe by the end of this year, that Government should take a very serious note of this and review the steps, if any, it has taken and that the Government will not enter into the market and enter into the question of keeping the price stability.

If the Government does not come forward to declare the support price of rubber off and on at least once in a year I would submit that the whole farming community will be finding it very difficult.

I once again urge upon the Finance Minister as well as the Government to take a serious note of this.

MR. SPEAKER : Let us take up the other matters tomorrow. Half an hour is over. Now papers to be laid on the Table.

1231 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

ANNUAL REPORT OF DELHI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, NEW DELHI FOR 1992-93 AND STATEMENT FOR DELAY IN LAYING THESE PAPERS

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SHEELA KAUL) : I beg to lay on the-Table —

(1) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Delhi Development Authority, New Delhi, for the year 1992-93, under section 26 of the Delhi Development Act, 1957.

(2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT - 5838/94]

12.32 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Thirty-first Report

[*English*]

SHRI S. MALLIKARJUNAIAH (Tumkur) : I beg to present the Thirty-

[Sh. Mallikarjunaiah]

first Report (Hindi and English Versions) of the Committee on Private members' Bills and Resolutions.

12.33 hrs

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

(i) NEED TO PROVIDE ELECTRICITY TO VISWESWARIAH IRON AND STEEL PLANT AT CONCESSIONAL RATE AND ALSO EXEMPT IT FROM PAYMENT OF ARREARS IN RESPECT OF ELECTRICITY BILLS

[English]

SHRI K.G. SHIVAPPA (Shimoga) : The Visweswariah Iron and Steel Plant in Karnataka was taken over in 1989 by the Steel Authority of India. Consequent upon this takeover there were signs of best improvements in the Plant for the last four years. Now, unfortunately it is not in a position to pay the electricity charges. It is true that the production capacity has increased considerably. The financial transaction has increased from 82 to 220 crores of rupees but at the same time the use of electricity has increased. Due to increasing rates of electricity the payment of electricity bills has become a big burden.

It was agreed that the Plant would be supplied electricity at a concessional rate. Accordingly, it was to pay Rs. 119-28 crore to the Electricity Board. But the Board has said that the plant has to pay this year a total of Rs. 211 crore including Rs. 20 crore as by way of interest. The Centre has to rescue the Plant from this crisis.

I, therefore, urge upon the Government to exempt the Plant from payment

of arrears and for another five years, it should get electricity at a concessional rate. A comprehensive plan should be prepared and implemented immediately to make the plant stand on its own legs.

(ii) NEED TO CONVERT NARROW GAUGE RAILWAY LINE FROM NAUPADA TO GUNUPUR IN ORRISA INTO A BROAD GAUGE AND EXTEND IT UPTO RAYAGADA

SHRI GOPI NATH GAJAPATHI (Berhampur) : The conversion of the narrow gauge railway line between Naupada-Parlakhemundi-Gunupur to broad gauge and extension upto Rayagada on the Vizianagaram Raipur line is a long cherished dream of the local inhabitants, comprising tribals, Harijans and the backward classes of that underdeveloped areas of both Orissa and Andhra Pradesh. Last year, a categorical assurance from the Railway Ministry was given that initially, survey work will be taken up. After completion of the survey work, the gauge conversion would be considered. A similar assurance was given by the Planning Commission also. However, no official action has been taken on the same as yet.

This narrow gauge line of 91 kms. distance, was laid by the First Premier of Orissa State, late Shri Krushna Chandra Gajapathi of Parlakhemundi. The local inhabitants have been greatly handicapped with this existing outmoded means of travel and have resorted to peaceful agitations several times in the past, to express their genuine grievances. Apart from much higher passenger fare income, the sizeable freight from the spurt in goods traffic on this shortened route by almost 250 kms. from Nalco, etc., in Western Orissa to Gopalpur and