

[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