

Sir, the best and the largest number of **beedi** manufacturing units of Kerala are located in Connanore and there is therefore a high concentration of beedi workers in this area, next to which are the hundreds of textile workers both handloom and powerloom. There are in all more than a lakh provident fund subscribers in Cannanore and Kasargod districts.

These poor workers are being put to untold difficulties in having to go all the way to the Calicut Provident Office, more than hundred Kms. away from Connanore. At times they have to make several visits before they get their claims cleared.

No doubt the stipulated distance between two Provident Fund Offices is 250 kms. But there is also the stipulation that there should be at least 75,000 subscribers in the area. This latter requirement is amply complied with in Connanore area where the number of subscribers exceed 1,15,000. This more than compensates the shortage in distance.

I also wish to mention here that the Government had under similar circumstances, opened Provident Fund offices at distances less than 150 kms. in some districts in the States of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

A temporary arrangement by holding a Camp of the Provident Fund Officers at Connanore once in three months or even once every months will not enable the thousands of employees to represent their matters before the Provident Fund Authorities. For this a full-fledged office is essential.

I, therefore, urge upon the Government to open a Regional Provident Fund Office at Connanore at the earliest.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Shri Birbal—not present.

Shri Kashiram Rana—not present.

Shri Chinmayanand Swami—Not present.

Shri Sivaji Patnaik.

(iv) Need to Include Saara and Khatla Seats in Orissa in the SC/ST Lists

SHRI SIVAJI PATNAIK (Bhubaneswar) : Sir, the tribal sect of SAARA is not mentioned in the list of Scheduled Tribe in Orissa. It is mentioned as SAHARA whereas there is no such Tribe as Sahara in Orissa. Sometimes SAARA is pronounced as Sahara. SABARA and SAURA which are mentioned as Scheduled Tribe are the same as SAARA. In the Revenue districts of Khurda, Nayagarh and Cuttack the SAARA population is about 2 lakhs but as SAARA is not mentioned in the Scheduled Tribe list they are deprived of the benefits available for Scheduled Tribe people. As a result discontentment and anger is growing amongst them. This should be appropriately corrected so that they can get the benefits they deserve.

Similarly, a Scheduled Caste fishing community known as KHATIA has been recorded as Katia whereas

the Khatia sect of Scheduled Caste fisherman is deprived from the benefits. This also needs to be corrected immediately.

I, urge upon the Union Government to look into the matter.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Dr. S.P. Yadav—Not present.

(v) Need to Re-construct the old Bridge at Kuzhitheral across the Thamparavarani river on the Trivandrum—Kanyakumari National Highway.

SHRI N. DENNIS (Nagercoil) : The Bridge at Kuzhitheral across the Thamparavarani river in the Trivandrum-Kanyakumari National Highway is in a dilapidated condition. It cannot withstand the increasing passenger and vehicular traffic and it may collapse at any moment. It is one of the oldest bridge in the country put up about the year 1969. The deteriorating condition of the bridge is repeatedly brought to the notice of the authorities. The Chief Engineer, Madras who inspected the bridge some years back, realising the dangerous condition of the bridge, provided supporting angular pillars to it. But subsequent heavy rains and floods in the river completely washed away the angular pillars and caused damages to the basement of the original pillars. Moreover, there are leakages through the large number of cracks found in the bridge. The side walls of the bridge are also damaged. It is long overdue to re-construct and widen this very busy and important road connecting the southernmost part of the land. Delay would cause collapse and consequence of the same would be disastrous.

So, I urge upon the Union Government to re-construct and widen this old bridge.

(vi) Need to Connect Ajmer in Rajasthan By Air.

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer) : Ajmer is in the heart of Rajasthan. It has a significant and special position in the map of India from cultural, historical, educational, religious and tourism point of view. Lakhs of visitors flock to this city from other parts of the country and foreign countries to visit Tirathraj Pushkar and the Dargah of Khwaja Sahab. It's distinguished educational institutions attract thousands of students from various parts of the country and the neighbouring countries as well. Nasirabad contonment and Beawar, Kishangarh industrial townships are the other distinguished spots in Ajmer. Thousands of tourists from all parts of the world visit—Ajmer, Pushkar to see prominent historical and religious places here every year. But they are put to a lot of inconvenience in the absence of an aerodrome which is also a big hurdle in the all round development of Ajmer. In spite of several assurances, Ajmer has not been brought in the air map of India. We urge the Union Government to provide an aerodrome in Ajmer at the spot specified by the Airport Authority after carrying out a survey.