

Chairman, Sir, I beg to move that "This House urges upon the Central Government to allocate sufficient quantity of gas for gas based power plants for industrial and domestic use in Gujarat."

**18.061/2 hrs.**

**COIR INDUSTRY (AMENDMENT) BILL  
As passed by Rajya Shabha.**

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES) (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : I beg to move :

"That the Bill further to amend the Coir Industry Act, 1953 as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

This Amendment Bill to the Coir Industry Act, 1953 is a simple amendment, Section 19 (1) of the coir Industry act, 1953 provides that the Coir Board shall submit to the Central Government a half-yearly Report and Annual Report on its activities and the working of the Board for the preceding six months and the year respectively. This practice of submitting half-yearly Report and then an annual Report to the Parliament has been considered as duplication of work. The Lok Sabha secretariat while examining laying of half-yearly Report of the Coir Board has shown concern about the duplicity of the work involved. In view of this background, amendment to Section 19 (1) of the Coir Industry Act, 1953 so as to do away with the requirement of submission of half-yrerly Reports is being moved. I hope the House will agree that the presentation of both half-yearly Report and then the Annual Report is a duplication of work. If the half-yearly Report

is discontinued, it will result in saving of stationery, labour and time. The amendment was adopted in Rajya Sabha on 14th December, 1993.

If hon. Members have any other suggestions, they are welcome to come forward with their amendments. I request the House to adopt this amendment unanimously without any debate.

MR. CHAIRMAN : In view of the explanation given by the hon. Minister, is it necessary that discussion should be held on this amendment ?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : No.

SHRI RAMESH CHENITHALA (Kottayam) : This coir industry is one of the traditional industries. It is very rare that we discuss this issue.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Motion moved :

"That the Bill further to amend the Coir Industry Act, 1953, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

SHRI DATTATRAYA BANDARU (Secunderabad) : It is a piecemeal legislation. The Board has already recommended that the whole Act should be amended. This is very old and has become outdated and obsolete. While I welcome the legislation, at the same time, I request the hon. Minister to see that a fullfledged, comprehensive (Amendment) Bill is to be brought forward in this House.

Coir industry is one of the most neglected indigenou enterprises which really enables the weakest of the weaker sections of the society to earn their livelihood in a hard way.

the plight of the coir industry workers, the plight of the cashew industry workers, the plight of the handloom weavers, the plight of the other traditional industries is totally dependent on these industries. The Government should make serious efforts to protect the traditional industry.

There are five lakh families depending on this coir industry. Thirty lakh people are dependent for their livelihood on this industry. They hardly get employment for more than .00 days.

Coir industry has tremendous unexploited potential. It is felt that timely action is needed for the protection of this industry.

It was felt that timely action was needed for the problem. The need of the hour is full exploitation of basic raw material. This is mostly a labour intensive industry. The production over the years has gone up. In 1988-89 it was 14,25,500 hectaers. Now in 1992-93 it has gone upto 16 lakh hectares. The annual production of the nuts has grown from 8,541 million to about 10,000 million. By 2,000 A.D. it is going to be 12,685 million, estimated by the Coir Board. There is an increase of 3 per cent per annum and only 30 per cent of the husk is utilised by the coir industry. This is the most unfortunate thing because the infrastructural facilities like defibering machines are rotting. It is lacking in all these infrastructural facilities like fibre extracting, spinning and manufacturing. In andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu even most of the husk is thrown into garbage. That is the most unfortunate thing.

I appeal to the hon. Minister to consider setting up of cooperative societies in the coconut concentrated areas of Andhra Pradesh, particularly Konaseema and Amalapuram. Where thickly Coconut growing

areas is there. There are lot of coconut growing areas. I appeal once again to the hon. Minister for the setting up of cooperative societies in the coconut producing belts. In Andhra Pradesh, in Ichapuram a big coastal area is there. Lot of coconut husk is thrown into the garbage there.

The Minister has announced in Rajya Sabha for Rs. 44.24 crores coir development projects in Kerala. I hope he will also consider to announce a similar project in Andhra Pradesh because the agro-based industry is very much important and without wasting an inch of the fibre coconut industry can be utilised into the agro-based industry.

It is high time to improve the quality of the yarn and the fibre for this. We should go in for mechanisation because with manual extraction we cannot compete with other countries which are producing very sophisticated fibre. For that we have to go in for mechanisation. This will help in improving the quality of the fibre and we can get better fibre.

At the moment the fibre is soaked and as a result the colour of the fibre gets deteriorated and it becomes brown. It is not golden as in the case of Sri Lanka fibre. It costs same as the cost of Sri Lanka fibre. That is why our exports have come down. Hence I request the hon. Minister to see that the quality is improved and our exports grow. It should go for modernisation and sophistication.

Lastly, I would like to say that the coir products are exported to almost all European countries. The maximum products from Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh are exported to the African, European the other Asian countries. We are **at present**, exporting to about 57 countries. **But our exports** have now come down.

In 1960, we have exported 75,000 tonnes; in 1961 it has come down to 25,000 tonnes; and in 1986 it has further come down to 23,214 tonnes. That is why I once again appeal to the hon. Minister to see that the quality of the fibre is improved with the introduction of sophisticated synthetic fibre so that our exports grow more. For this, this amending Bill is not enough and a comprehensive bill is needed, to improve the entire coir industry. Thank you, Sir.

**SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA** (Kottayam): I rise to support the Coir Industry (Amendment) Bill introduced by Shri M. Arunachalam. The coir industry is one of the traditional and indigenous industries in our country. This sector is completely neglected and workers who are engaged in this industry are in a very difficult situation. The Central and State Government are not giving adequate relief to the workers. They have not formulated enough projects for the revival of this coir industry.

The Coir Board is the agency which is monitoring the overall development of this industry. Actually speaking, this industry is dying. There is no proper scheme with the Coir Board to revive this traditional industry which has got a lot of potential. As Shri Dattatraya Bandaru rightly pointed out in the case of exports every year our performance is declining. For that we have to strengthen the Coir Board. The Coir Board has a research and development wing. But proper research and development is not taking place. I think money is not earmarked for them to strengthen their developmental activities.

Earlier, there was a strong opposition against mechanisation in this field because thousands of poor people are engaged in this coir industry. But now we see a change in the attitude of the workers also. The workers are also demanding mechanisation in certain

fields and taking that situation into account the Government should come forward to provide more financial support to the Coir Board so that they are able to strengthen the research and development activities and more mechanisation can be done in this field.

Shri Dattatraya Bandaru has rightly pointed out about Sri Lanka. Now Sri Lanka is producing yarn and we cannot compete with the Sri Lankan yarn and other products which they are producing. It is because of the lack of mechanisation and synthetic fibre which is made out of husk is not at all competitive. Therefore, we are losing our traditional markets also. So, the quality should be improved and we have to find out more markets so that we are able to compete with the other countries in this regard.

What is happening is certain countries are procuring coir yarn from India. It is sent to Europe and other countries and the finished products are produced there. Actually, this can be done in our country. But unfortunately the raw material is taken to other countries and the other countries are coming out with the finished products. They are taking advantage of the situation.

Earlier, there was a belief that synthetic yarn is an alternative to coir. But now after a lot of discussion and research the truth has come out. Coir is not at all an alternative to synthetic yarn, because coir absorbs water also. We find what even Government offices are using woolen carpets. But coir carpets are more cheap, durable and they can absorb water also, I suggest that if the government should issue an order to all Government departments and officers that coir carpets should be used instead of woolen carpets, as they are cheap and durable, it will be more helpful to coir industry. Unfortunately, what is happening is, this industry is completely

ignored and the workers are suffering a lot as they are not getting remunerative wages.

There is no welfare scheme for these labourers and the workers, who are toiling. Actually, they are completely neglected. In the coconut growing areas, especially in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, we cannot even properly procure the husk, which is the raw material. This husk is going as a waste. This is a national waste. In major areas, we can say that this husk is being properly preserved. And if we can properly procure the husk and make it into a fibre, then we can be able to boost our exports, we can also come out with different varieties and also we can be able to compete with the world markets. Unfortunately, there is no scheme for procuring the husk in the coconut growing areas and we are not properly processing it. We are not utilising the natural resource, which is available in our country. My request to the hon. Minister is that there should be a special scheme for the collection of this husk and also for proper processing. And the fibre should be given to the cooperative societies and other agencies so that they can come out with new products.

The price fixation is the most important thing. The price fixation is being done by the Government on the basis of the recommendations of the Coir Board. In this case, the labour component should be given more importance because the workers, who are engaged in this industry, as Shri Dattaraya has pointed out, are all poor people. These labourers, who are engaged in this industry, should get remunerative wages. They are not getting enough wages. When compared to other traditional and indigenous industries, which are existing in this country, the workers in the coir industry are not at all getting remunerative wages. So, while fixing the price, the Government should take into account the labour component. And even

the suggestion of the Coir Board is not being accepted by the Government when it is finalising the price. My request to the hon. Minister is that the Government should take into account the labour component while fixing the price so that the or and the downtrodden people, who are engaged in this industry, can get at least remunerative wages. This is most important.

There should be a special scheme. The Minister has already mentioned in the Rajya Sabha that a sum of Rs. 46 crore was given for a special project, through Coir Board, which is implementing it in the State of Kerala. The Government should give more importance to this sector. The Government should take enough care so that we would be able to improve our exports and catch more markets, which will benefit our economy and help our workers.

Streamlining of the Coir Board is needed. I do not want to go into the details. But total streamlining of the the Coir Board is necessary. Also strengthening of the Coir Board is necessary. The Coir workers should get a feeling that the Coir Board is not only taking care of the big exporters and those who are monopolising in this sector but also taking care of the problems of the coir workers. The Coir Board should give a signal to the workers and to the small people, who are engaged in this field, that Coir Board is taking care of their problems also. But, unfortunately what is happening now is that the Coir Board is only concentrating on the big exporters and those who are monopolising this field. They should take care of the tiny and small units. They should take ample care about the cooperative societies. They should take ample care about the poor workers, who are engaged in this field. I do not want to go into the details now.

I think, the Minister, in his reply, will give

a categorial assurance to this House that the Government will come forward with a comprehensive legislation without any further delay in order to strengthen the Coir Board and also to implement more projects in this field, which will benefit the poor and the downtrodden people, who are engaged in this industry.

SHRI G.M.C. BALAYOGI (Amalapuram) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, after the Kerala Stae, Andhra Pradesh is the highest coconut producing State in the country. But, unfortunately, either from the State Government or from the Central Government, the coconut workers are not getting any support. In Andhra Pradesh, Coconut and Coir Boards are far away from the coconut farmers and the coconut workers because the entire crop is raised in the coastal areas of Andhra Pradesh where these offices are situated in the State headquarters of Hyderabad nearer to ariport. I wish to point out that no help is provided from these offices either to the farmers or to the coconut workers. So, I request the hon. Minister to change those Boards to the coastal area immediately.

Andhra Pradesh is exporting more than Rs. 2000/- crore worth of coconut every year. In my Constituency, that is, Amalapuram, we are exporting nearly Rs. 1000 crore worth of coconut every year.

In this background I would like to bring to your kind notice that several lakhs of laboures are working in coconut sector. They harvest the coconuts from the trees, remove the outer jute and other related activities. Sometime these poor labourers who climb the trees to cut and bring down the coconuts fall and die. As things stand today, Accident insurance scheme does not cover these labourers, while the Todi Taper are covered under that scheme. The Government was good enough to introduce accident Insurance

Scheme for the benefits to Todi Taper who die or receive serious injuries while they climb the trees. There is every justification for introduction or a similar scheme fro the benefits of the conconut labourers. We wish to draw your immediate attention to the fact that India stands in the third place in the area under coconut cultivation as well as production of nuts. Coconuts are grown in 1.5 million hectares producing 11.3 thousand million nuts. Our country is able to produce 17.3 per cent of cocunuts in the whole world. Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh are important States from the point of view of coconut cultivation. In Andhra Pradesh coconut plantations are grown in 65 thousand hectares. The labourers working in the coconut sector are requesting the Government to introduce accident insurance scheme to help them and specially those who die or receive injuries while climbing the trees. We request you to immediately examine this important issue and take necessary steps in this regard.

Sir, I do not want to take a lot of time, But the farmers are facing a lot of problems particularly in the case of price fixation to the coconuts. Sometimes the price is increased to Rs. 4000/- per hundred nuts and sometimes it is coming down to Rs. 1500/- to Rs. 2,000/- per hundred nuts. So, I request the hon. Minister that there should be a supporting price to the coconut farmers.

Lastly, I would like to request the hon. Minister to make a fresh legislation for the benefit to coconut farmers and the workers.

With these few words, I thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to speak.

[Translation]

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA (Mandsaur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is a very

simple Bill. It should be amended to provide that the Board should submit its report within a year and not within 6 months. I would like to say two or three things in this regard. The main places of this industry are in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Kamataka. It is an indigenous industry in which lakhs of people are engaged in different places and they earn their livelihood there. The Board has suggested that in place of this Bill a comprehensive (Amendment) Bill should be brought. The hon. Minister should consider it and introduce a comprehensive Bill as suggested by the Board. The people working in this industry are not getting their wages properly. This industry should be equipped with new techniques the technologies and make it more effective.

At present it has neither financial resources nor infrastructure. Therefore, it has not become effective so far. Therefore, the people engaged in this industry do not full wages and therefore, there has been continuous sliding trend in its export. The Government should think over it. Earlier we used to to export goods worth Rs. 40 crore. But there is continuous fall in it. The Government should see as to what are the reasons behind it. It should seen whether our industry does not have proper infrastructure, subsidy and techniques and whether we are not manufacturing goods according to the foreign countries, demands. The Government should flourish this industry so that the people engaged in this industry may earn their bread and butter, and this industry also progresses. Our goods are exported to France, European and African countries. These goods prove our identity. Therefore, the Government should make efforts to increase export and recruit workers in larger number and pay remunerative wages to them.

I would like to request the hon. Minister

to introduce a comprehensive Bill for providing all this and to protect people engaged in this industry and remove the hindrance in export.

SHRI RAM PRASAD SINGH (Bikramganj) : Mr. Charirman, Sir, this industry is related to villages. Especially the poor people are engaged in this industry. While enforcing this Act in 1953 it appeared that this will be very helpful in exports of the country. The poor people from Kamataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh to earn their livelihood in this factory. It was expected that these poor people will get some support here. It progressed very well during the last some years. But it has been deteriorating continuously for some time. As Shri Pandeya suggested that it is a one line amendment Bill which envisages to change the time from six months to one year. It must be done. But it is general opinion that it must be equipped with latest techniques. We have adequate raw materials of coconut and coir. But we do not have new technologies and equipments to utilise the raw materials properly. For this sake we have to depend on foreign countries. Therefore, the workers do not get remunerative wages. They are obliged to leave the industry out of despair, and despondency. There is no provision for their life insurance and good salary. This is the reason for the continuous decline in export. I would like to submit to the Government that it is a good industry and provides employment for the Southern and eastern border people. If it progresses, the crores of people can get employment. Today employment is the greatest problem of the country. Therefore I want that this Bill should be passed. But the main issue is as to what is the Government going to do for the workers ? I do not want that the owners of the industry should not get profit. But the Government should pay more attention to the workers also. These poor people and their children suffer a great deal. Special provision should

be made for labourers in it. A master plan should be chalked out to encourage the labourers being retrenched from this industry and their interest should be cultivated. More over this industry should be indigenous one and research should be conducted. The raw materials are very costly. Industries should be set up there and they should be promoted so that it may enhance its production and export which has been decling. I believe that the export will prove profitable.

With these words I conclude.

[English]

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank the hon. Members who have participated in the discussion and for their valuable suggestions.

As you know—as a Member of the Coir Board—this industry is one of the important traditional industries, widely spread in the east and west coast of the country. Historically the industry has been concentrated in your State and now it has spread to Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, West Bengal and Assam.

Coming to the points raised by most of the hon. Members, they have asked for a comprehensive legislation of this industry. Sir, as a member of the Coir Board you are aware that the Coir Board has already sent the proposal for amendment of the Act. We are seeking the views of the State Governments of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh and other States, We are expecting the views from the State Governments. As soon as we get the views from the State Governments we will be going for a comprehensive legislation of this industry.

Coming to the export front, as you know,

we exporting to about sixty countries in the world. Coir exports have been increasing year by year. I want to give some figures. In 1991-92 the exports were to the tune of Rs. 74.11 crore. In 1992-93 the exports increased to Rs. 95.95 crore. In 1993-94 we have exceeded our target, and have exported worth Rs. 127 crore. Therefore, there is no question of the industry going down or backward.

About the welfare schemes, the Government of Kerala has constituted a welfare fund. The Government of India is contributing its share. Last year we have given Rs. 25 lakh towards that labour welfare fund. This year also, so far, we have released Rs. 60 lakh towards that fund.

Coming to the Research and Development, as you know, we have two national research institutions in the country— one at Alleppey and one at Bangalore. Both are doing research and development works. So far they have developed technology to reduce the period of retting reduce the cost of bleaching of coir technology to develop composite coir pith as organic manure. In this way the Research and Development centres are doing extremely well.

Shri Ramesh Chennithala and others have raised other points. They have mentioned about coir pith. As you know, disposal of coir pith it is an environmental problem. The Research and Development wing of our coir industry is doing something towards making use of this waste as organic manure. Therefore, there is no question of not doing anything in this direction.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : What about streamlining of the Coir Board's activities ? (*Interruptions*) Hon. Chairman was the Minister of Industries there. He is well aware of the problem .

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM : As it is there is no problem in the Coir Board. If there is anything, please bring it to my notice. We will streamline it. There is no problem.

With these few words, I request the house to pass the Bill.

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : Mr. Chairman I would like to seek a clarification. Is it a fact that in order to give publicity in foreign countries to the goods manufactured by the Coir Industry, the Government pay Rs. 50 lakh a year ? If so, does this practice continue even today ? Secondly, I would like to submit that the new economic policy is on anvil and our economy is going to be liberalised. Rs. 44 crore has been provided in the Eighth Five Year Plan for developing new technology to convert coir to husk rating and fibre extraction spinning manufacturing and then again defibring. What is this technology and how will the amount be spent ?

[English]

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM : Sir, recently we have developed technologies for the development of poly coir and have made progress in the sphere of automatic coir spinning machines. This is the extend of our progress in the field of research and development. We are not lagging behind.

SHRIG.M.C. BALAYOGI (Amalapuram) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, some insurance should be given to the coconut workers.

MR. CHAIRMAN : That does not come under this Bill. Please take your seat.

Now, the question is :

"That the Bill further to amend the Coir Industry Act, 1953, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

*The Motion was Adopted*

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House will now take up Clause - by Clause consideration of the Bill.

The Question is :

"That Clause 2 stand part of the Bill."

*The Motion was adopted*

*Clause 2 was added to the Bill.*

### Clause 1 Short Title

AMENDMENT MADE :

Page 1, line 3,—

for "1993" substitute "1994" (2)

(SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That Clause 1, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was adopted.*

*Clause 1, as amended, was added to the Bill.*

### Enacting Formula

AMENDMENT MADE :

Page 1, line 1, —



*For "Forty-Fourth" Substitute  
"Forty-Fifth" (1)*

(SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That the Enacting formula, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was Adopted.*

*The Enacting formula, as amended, was added to the Bill.*

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That the Long title stand part of the Bill."

*The Motion was Adopted.*

*The Long Title was added to the Bill.*

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM : Sir, I beg to move :

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is:

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

*The Motion was adopted.*

18.44 hrs.

INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY  
(AMENDMENT) BILL

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : We have some

more time. Actually the time allotted to this Bill is one hour, but we have taken only 40 minutes. So, if the House agrees, we can take up the Bill under item no. 21. In fact, this is a Bill passed by the Rajya Sabha.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Minister may now move the Bill.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE) (KUMARI SELJA) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Institutes of Technology Act, 1961, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

This Bill was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on 9-5-1994 and has been considered and passed on 1-5-1994. This is a very simple Bill. I request the House to pass it. I.I.T., Guwahati is an institution of national importance.

I request that this may be passed.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Motion moved :

"That the Bill further to amend the Institutes of Technology Act, 1961, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The whole House is satisfied with your explanation.

[Translation]

DR. L. MINARAYAN PANDEYA