

[Shri Amar Roy Pradhan]

one lakh seventy seven thousand bales are still in stock in different godowns of JCI in North Bengal. The most important is that the Jute growers are now at the mercy of the private traders, that is, middlemen who are purchasing raw jute at the rate of Rs. 120/- to Rs. 130/- per quintal. Under these circumstances, I would like to request hon. Commerce Minister to make immediate necessary arrangements for godowns, railway wagons for early despatch of jute and necessary legislation so that the mill owners be forced to purchase raw jute from JCI and cooperatives just to save the poor jute growers who are helping to earn huge foreign money.

(v) CONDITIONS OF BEEDI WORKERS IN THE STATE OF KERALA

*SHRI V. S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN (Palghat): Beedi industry in Kerala is facing a crisis due to irrational taxation. As a result of this lakhs of beedi workers and their family members are finding it hard to make both ends meet.

During the Janata rule, instead of imposing the cess on beedi tobacco, the Government levied cess on branded beedi. The companies which manufactured less than 60 lakhs of beedies in a year were exempted from this duty. This led to surreptitious manufacturing of beedies and it has deprived the workers, working in authorised companies of regular work.

Exemption given to unbranded beedies has only led to the beedi manufacturers increasingly resort to corrupt methods. Since there is no control either on the storage or distribution of tobacco, the exemption from excise duty has led to greater tax evasion. To avoid this, less

should be levied on tobacco after it has been purchased by the traders.

Since the wages paid to workers vary from State to State, the beedi manufacturers shift their factory into those State where wages are very low. This results in loss of work to the workers. To put an end to this exploitation, national minimum wages should be enforced.

No State except Kerala and Karnataka has implemented the Central Act, namely, "Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act 1966". Therefore, the traders are shifting their industries to other States which has resulted in the workers losing their jobs. Therefore, necessary steps should be taken to see that this law is implemented in all the States.

Apart from saving the industry from ruin and saving lakhs of families who are wholly dependent on this industry, it is requested that Government should also take steps to raise the housing grant from Rs. 1500/- to Rs 5000/-, provide scholarship to their children and set up the welfare fund advisory committee, as quickly as possibly.

14.55 hrs.

GENERAL BUDGET, 1980-81—
GENERAL DISCUSSION

MR. CHAIRMAN: We now take up General Discussion on the Budget (General) for 1980-81.

श्री चरण सिंह (बागपत): चेंबरमैन महोदय, वैसे तो हमारे कांग्रेस के जितने भी वजीर हैं सभी अच्छे और भले आदमी हैं लेकिन हम ने जिस वक्त मंत्रिमंडल की नियुक्ति हुई तो श्री वेंक्टरमन के सम्बन्ध में तरह-तरह की अच्छी बातें सुनी थी कि बड़े स्ट्रेट फॉवर्ड हैं, बड़े स्कूपूलस हैं। लेकिन वजत को जिस तरीके से उन्होंने पेश किया उससे मालूम होता है कि हमारा पहला अनुमान बिल्कुल निराधार था। मैं यह इसलिए कहता हूँ कि उन्होंने इससे मद्रा