

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to amend the Smugglers and Foreign Exchange Manipulators (Forfeiture of Property) Act, 1976".

The motion was adopted.

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

12.10 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

(i) **WITHDRAWAL OF LEVY BEEDIES**

SHRI E. BALANANDAN (Mukundapuram): I wish to invite the urgent attention of the hon Minister for Industry and Finance, about the serious crisis being faced by the organised bidi industry in the country. Many of these are on the verge of closure. I wish to draw special attention of the Government on the Kerala Dinesh Beedi Industrial Co-operative which provides employment for about 25,000 workers. Sir, this unit is unable to continue production and any day it will be closed.

The Central Government imposed a levy of Rs. 3.60 per 1000 beedies on those manufacturers whose annual output is more than 60 lakh beedies. The result was that many of the private employers manipulated accounts and escaped from the payment of levy. Some others divided their establishment and put different names and kept the production below the levy limits. Some of them who had a good name for their trade mark could not do so and they are facing a crisis since they cannot compete in the market. The net result is that the excise receipts for the government are considerably reduced. Lakhs of workers are thrown out of employment and those who get work are forced to work for nominal wages since they have lost their bargaining power.

Therefore, I request the government to withdraw the levy on beedies and impose a duty on manufactured tobacco so that the government will get more money and the workers will be

saved from the present difficulties.

Till such a step is taken, the Kerala Dinesh Beedi Industrial Co-operative may be exempted from this excise levy. This is the biggest Beedi industrial Co-operative run by the workers in India providing better living conditions and wages. Hence the Government of India must come to its aid forthwith.

(ii) **SHORTAGE OF WATER IN PERIYAR DAM**

SHRI CUMBUM N. NATARAJAN (Perriyakulam): Recently the Kerala State authorities have announced that only 136 feet of water will be stored in the Periyar Dam and the surplus will be diverted to Kerala through a spill-way in the Baby dam.

In this regard I would like to point out that the Central Water and Power Commission has certified the safety of the dam and allowed the storage of 156 feet of water. Therefore, I would like the Minister to give suitable instructions to maintain the storage at 156 feet and stop the move to drain the surplus water through another spill way in Baby dam. A team of engineers from States other than Kerala and Tamil Nadu may be sent to study the safety of the dam. The proposed work in Periyar dam may be stayed till then.

May I request the hon Minister to kindly consider my request and pay immediate attention to this urgent problem and save Tamil Nadu from Famine and drought?

(iii) **REPORTED DILAPIDATED CONDITION OF GANG CANAL IN RAJASTAN**

श्री कुम्भाराम शर्मा : (सीकर) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं नियम 377 के अधीन आपके द्वारा निम्नलिखित महत्वपूर्ण विषय सदन के समक्ष रखना चाहता हूँ।

गंग कैनल (जिला श्री गंगानगर, राजस्थान प्रदेश) अत्यधिक जरजरित हो चुकी है क्योंकि इसे बने बहुत समय हो गया है। कैनल का निर्माण आज से पचास वर्ष पहले हुआ था। आज यह क्षत-विक्षत होने के कारण पूरा पानी भी नहीं दे रही है और वर्षा काल में बिबर सकती है। ऐसा हो जाता है तो गंग कैनल