

It is totally irrational, illogical and absurd to levy on rice-mill owners. It should either be charged on manufacturers or end-sellers in the market. Rice-mill owners only process the paddy. They do not have right over anything except the service charges.

Government should intervene immediately and send a team of experts to assess the situation and stop harassment of rice-mill owners by the revenue authorities. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (Kottayam): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, thousands of passport applications are pending in Cochin and Calicut Regional Passport Offices. The passport officials are creating unnecessary delay. They are harassing the people. One of the major problems being faced by these two passport offices is lack of staff.

We cannot provide employment to the people in our country. Let these young people go to other countries and seek jobs there. We have to allow them. There is unnecessary delay and red-tapism. Passport applicants are being harassed by these officials. So many times, we have brought this matter to the notice of the Government as well as the Minister. But no action has been taken. This is very urgent. Now that the situation in Kuwait is normal, people are going back to Kuwait. They want to renew their passports and they want to get new passports. Because of the unnecessary delay in the passport Offices, these young people and job-seekers are suffering a lot. Recently, the Minister has also assured that a new Regional passport Office will be opened in Trivandrum. Five months are already over, but no action has been taken till now. My humble request to the Government is that they should take immediate action to expedite issuing of passports. They should also conduct an inquiry into the present affairs of

the Passport Offices at Cochin and Calicut (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Brishin Patel please.

[*Translation*]

SHRI BRISHIN PATEL (Siwan): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, during 1990-91, the Bihar State Sugar Corporations siwan Unit supplied ten thousand bags of sugar to the Department of Delhi Administration responsible sale of sugar last an any my Inspector declared all ten thousand lags of sugar unfit for human consumption. As a result of it, the Food Corporation of India has stopped lifting the quota of sugar, from there. It seems that this Inspector, as he was not entertained properly, has taken this stand which is contrary to the interest of the people and all those ten thousand bags are laying there. As a result the workers are starving. I, therefore, urge the Government to send to Siwan a Senior Officer of Delhi civil Supplies Department to carry uot of fresh test so that the truth may be found out.

SHRI RAMSAGAR (Barabanki) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Government of India and the leader of the House to a political prisoner.

Sir, Shri Vishambhar Singh an M.L.A is kept in Fatehpur jail. He is a patient of cancer and his condition has deteriorated too much. The district Magistrate and the jailor have written to the Uttar Pradesh Government to release him but the Uttar Pradesh Government is adopting a indicative attitude and that is why it is not releasing him. Be it Shri Vishambhar Singh, Madan Bhalya or Shri D.P. Yadav, all these M.L.As. are not being released due o political retribution.

Sir, Shri Jal Prakash Narayan and Gandhiji were also political prisoners and

whenever they fell ill, they were released from jail. But the Uttar Pradesh Government has surpassed even the British rulers because it is not releasing even an M.L.A. suffering from cancer. I would like to know from the Government as to why it is not releasing Shri Madan Baiya, Shri D.P. Yadav and Shri Vishambhar Singh. All the three are S.J.P. M.L.A.s. I would like to request the leader of the House to intervene in the matter and announce its decision for their release. This is our request.

[English]

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, I hold that the submission that I wish to make is potentially embarrassing to the legislature as such and it would be my appeal to both the leader of the House, as also the leader of the Opposition, to jointly apply themselves to this particular problem that I wish to draw their attention to. A writ has been filed in the Supreme Court challenging the legality of sanctioning pensions to Members of Parliament and legislators. The submission that has been made is that salaries and allowances to Members of parliament as admissible if I am not mistaken — under Article 106 does not include pension. Therefore, whatever pensions had been paid in the past or are being paid today either to the former Members of parliament or to legislators are in violation of the Constitution. If the Supreme Court were to hold that writ as valid then the entire legislators would be faced with an embarrassing situation because, I do not know a very eminent barrister is present here whether we can retroactively amend the Constitution.

Therefore, it is my appeal both to the Leader of the House and also to the Leader of the Opposition to apply themselves to this particular aspect to save embarrassment of the legislators as such.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE

(Bolpur): Sir, so far as the question of prices of essential commodities in this country is concerned, concerned, the situation is becoming, is more and more alarming. There is continual spiralling of prices. Essential commodities are becoming out of the reach for the common people and the poor people.

Since the Budget was announced, although all sorts of pious wishes were expressed by the Finance Minister, nothing has happened. There is a continued spiralling of price which is putting greater and greater strain on the common people. This is a matter which must be attended to immediately. I would like to know what is the step taken by the Government. We do not find any attempt being made to contain the spiralling of prices in this country; to control the inflation. We are told that after three years the result of the new Economic Policy, new Industrial Policy and the new Trade policy will be felt. But, what will happen to the people during these three years, nothing has been said. People are losing jobs. No new jobs are being created. On the plea of sickness factories and establishments have been closed. This is a very serious situation which has already arisen and it is becoming more and more difficult for the people.

Over and above that, Sir, There are reports circulated in the National Dailies of this country which are not controverted by the Government which say that the World Bank has recommended radical changes in the Indian Agriculture. The Bank has suggested reduction in food buffer-stock; curtailment of the role of Food Corporation of India, that means affecting the Public Distribution System; Integration of Price Support and Crop Procurement Policy; a new Crop Price Formula linked to International price; disbandment of levy scheme for procurement of rice and sugar and liberalisation of foreign imports. All these are bound to have a cascading effect on our prices.