

of the plant is disturbed and the work of power generation also suffers which causes a power crisis in the area. If the coal is supplied through a pipeline in the shape of slurry, it will reach there in time and it will also save the expenditure. Sir, through you, I would like to request the Government of India to lay there pipelines for the supply of coal.

SHRIMATI SUBHAWATI DEVI (BANSGAON) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to raise a serious issue pertaining to UP. My parliamentary constituency falls on the bank of Saryu river. River is causing extensive soil erosion in the villages Chappriya, Mujwana, Derwa, Singhegdan etc. UP Government is not paying attention towards this problem. Therefore, through you, I would like to urge the Union Government to make arrangements for checking soil erosion being caused by Saryu river immediately.

[English]

PROF. P.J. KURIEN (MAVELIKARA) : Sir, I am raising a problem of thousands of marginal rubber growers in Kerala who produce rubber latex. There is no market for rubber latex...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (KOTTAYAM) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I also want to speak on the same issue.

MR. CHAIRMAN : No, only one can speak.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Sir, it is a very vital issue...(*Interruptions*)

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Sir, there is no market for the rubber latex ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Ramesh Chennithala's name is also associated with the same thing. So, Prof. Kurien is speaking on behalf of both of them.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : No, Sir. How can it be ? I also want to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN : He has made his point very adequately in the Finance Bill.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Sir, he has not started it. After him, give me an opportunity to make my point. I want just two minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN : All right.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Sir, on this issue, every MP from Kerala is concerned because it is a matter concerning 10 lakh rubber growers in Kerala, especially the marginal rubber growers who produce rubber milk of which the rubber latex is made. They cannot sell the product made of the rubber latex in the market because the Government, over the year, have reduced the import duty on foreign materials which compete with the products which our farmers produce. The import duty on such materials, e.g., synthetics has been reduced from 85 per cent to 30 per cent over the last five years. This year also, it has been reduced whereas not even a single paisa of reduction in excise duty is there.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Prof. Kurien, you will have to cut it short.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Sir, I will finish it in one minute.

Not a single paisa of reduction in excise duty is there for the products which our natural rubber growers are producing. Therefore, they are not able to sell their rubber in the market. It is a very serious problem.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am requesting you on behalf of all rubber growers of Kerala and outside Kerala also, to please direct the Government to reduce the excise duty on rubber foams which are produced by small-scale industries. I am not asking for the reduction of the import duty. Our rubber farmers are in trouble.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Ramesh Chennithala, you have raised the same matter on the 7th of May. So, the only thing, I want to say is that now, Shri P.C. Thomas can speak, for two minutes.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Sir, I will take only one minute.

This is a very serious issue which is agitating the minds of thousands of rubber farmers in our country...(*Interruptions*) On the artificial chemical, polyurethane, the import duty has been reduced. That is why, the farmers are facing this problem. So, I request the hon. Minister to look into this matter and help the rubber growers by, at least, imposing some kind of a duty on the artificial kind of things so that the interests of our rubber growers can be saved.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (MUVATTUPUZHA) : EXIM, Export-Import policy, is something which we are not discussing. There is also a very serious problem with regard to the Duties which are being imposed and the exemptions which are being granted. These are two aspects which are inter-linked.

As far as the issue which has been raised by my learned friend Prof. Kurien is concerned, I have also given notice on the same matter. The problem that the natural rubber is being produced in India by eight lakh small growers. These small growers are contributing a lot to the economy of our nation. Now the latex which is being produced by rubber is being used for production of foam mattresses and the same thing can also be produced by polyurethane or other imported stuff. What is being done is, for import of polyurethane the Duty is reduced and for what we are making out of our domestic produce the Excise Duty is being increased. This is double standard. This cannot be done and I would request hon. Minister Shri Chidambaram....

MR. CHAIRMAN : All right, please sit down. On the question of the rubber price a number of hon. Members from Kerala are agitated. Therefore, I would request the Government to take note of it.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA : Will all support this issue about the rubber.