

[English]

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE : He has raised a very important issue. I also intended to raise that issue but being Friday, I did not raise it. I propose that there should be a Government Resolution on Monday to protest against this behaviour of the American Government. I request the Government to accept this proposal. This is an affront against the Parliament of our country. Therefore, we should have an official Resolution in the House.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : The Minister should make a statement on this.

[Translation]

SHRI HARADHAN ROY (Asansol) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, prior to the nationalisation of coal mines in my constituency, a notice was served by D.G.M.S. that the 22 mauja which was an area of substantial fire is dangerous and hence it should be evacuated. By 1994, the said area was gradually extended and area of 39 mauja was declared to be dangerous. Right now area of approximately 70 mauja is being deemed dangerous and the residents are being asked to evacuate the area. Except approximately 70 square kilometer area, all the villages are facing the danger. The Government was reminded time and again that the agreement signed with the Government of West Bengal in 1990 is not being abided by and the residents are not being rehabilitated. Their source of employment and crops are ruined and their lives are in danger. My submission is that on one hand, the Government is not abiding by the agreement and on the other hand, it is closing down the mine and proposes to import coal from foreign countries. Even when coal is available in abundant measure; we are resorting to import of coal. Coal is being burnt causing heavy losses to the nation. I would urge upon the Central Government to pay attention to this matter and abide by the agreement reached with the Coal India. The mines closed down earlier should be re-opened for mining.

Besides, the Government should make arrangements to provide employment and rehabilitation of the affected persons from the protected area.

SHRI NIHAL CHAND CHAUHAN (Sri Ganganagar) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, through you. I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards the problem of those farmers who live near the Indo-Pak border. The border area was fenced with barbed wires about ten years ago during Shri Rajiv Gandhi's regime. An area of one to two acres of land belonging to farmers was acquired for this purpose. But so far no compensation has been paid to them. These farmers are not allowed to cultivate on this land or do anything on it. I request the Government that

either these farmers should be given compensation or allot land at some other alternative place.

[English]

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Sir, I would like to bring to the notice of this Government a very grave issue regarding farmers who are growing rubber. I have given notices on two issues.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : You have to take up the first item only.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Sir, I have given notices on both the issues.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : You can take up only one issue.

[English]

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Sir, there are two issues. The farmers' issue is very grave. It is because the price of natural rubber has gone down.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Then you raise farmers' issue only.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Last year, the price of natural rubber was Rs. 55 per kg. Now, it has crashed down to Rs. 38 per kg. The farmers who are growing rubber are earning a lot for the country, and the country is also saving a lot. There are seven or eight lakhs of small and marginal farmers who are growing rubber. They are, now, put under great stress. Nobody is coming forward to safeguard them. No Government has come forward to safeguard them. In fact, this issue was taken up in Parliament by way of a Calling Attention Motion. We got a reply that something would be done immediately. An assurance was given that assistance would be given to the tune of Rs. 100 crore for procuring some rubber. Unless some rubber is procured at this stage, there is no way through which these seven or eight lakh farmers can be saved.

The economy of India largely depends, especially, on this type of agriculture, Rubber is an item which is used very extensively everywhere. The raw material is being supplied by the small farmers to the whole world. But when they are in distress, there is nobody to help them. We seek the indulgence of this House as well as of this Government to give, at least, Rs. 100 crore for them. If the Central Government is ready to give them Rs. 100 crore for the procurement of rubber, I do not know whether the State Government is interested in it. It is unfortunate. Earlier we used to say 'fortunate' but now we would say, it is 'unfortunate'.

The major chunk, that is, 90 per cent of the rubber