

[Sh. Hari Kewal Prasad]

pectively in black market and they are still a scarce commodity. Fair price shops supply one Kg. sugar per unit and 10 litres kerosene on every card in urban areas, whereas 130 grams of sugar per unit and 2 litres of kerosene are being supplied in rural areas. It has been causing widespread resentment among the rural consumers.

Just half of the required quota of kerosene is being supplied to the people in my constituency Salempur (Deoria) due to which a large number of ration card holders are unable to get kerosene. Shortage of commodities and price rise have been causing great resentment among the people.

I apprise the House of the serious situation prevailing there and urge upon the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Food and Civil Supplies to take effective measures in this regard and quota of kerosene oil should also be increased.

(vi) Need to take steps to encourage use of fruit and fruit juices

SHRI MAHESHWAR SINGH (Mandī): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, with your kind permission, I have stood up to raise the following matter under rule 377.

India produces 75 million tonnes of fruits and vegetables, out of which 30 per cent gets perished, before reaching the consumers. If this produce is made available to the consumers in adequate quantity, it would solve the serious problem of malnutrition, which the country is facing today. This would also help in providing remunerative prices to the fruit producers. In this context, I urge upon the Government to make it mandatory for soft drink manufacturers to have a twenty per cent fruit juice content in their produce; to do away with excise duty on fruit juice and its packing material; to supply fruit juice as soft

drink in Government sponsored meetings and conferences; to provide a thirty per cent subsidy at the initial stages to the cooperatives marketing fresh fruit juice and also to give wide publicity to the need for using fruit juice in order to remain healthy.

(vii) Demand for not issuing environmental clearance and Industrial Licence to NOCIL, Bombay

[English]

SHRI VIDYADHAR GOKHLE (Bombay North Central): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, on 16-11-1989, the Ministry of Industry issued letters of intent to NOCIL for expansion-cum-new establishment of huge petrochemical complex in New Bombay creating a precedent and opening floodgates for expansion of numerous chemical industries in the area, which is dangerous for environment and millions of human settlements in and around New Bombay.

NOCIL has been exempted from vital locational restrictions in licensing policy by the Ministry superseding its earlier rejection in December, 1987. The NOCIL proposal had been rejected at various levels in the past.

More than half a dozen expert committees appointed by the Central and State Governments have repeatedly opposed, any further location or expansion of industries in Bombay Metropolitan Region.

Public including various environmental organisations like "Thane Area Environment and Human Life protection Committee" have already warned the Government of mass agitation. I too have brought the seriousness of the situation to the notice of the respective Ministries.

I urge upon the Government not to issue the environmental clearance and industrial licence to NOCIL. In

this vital public interest matter, I feel, judicial enquiry is the must.

(viii) Need to recognise betel leaves as one of the exportable agricultural produce

SHRI CHITTA BASU (Barasat). Sir, Betel leaves (Pan) are primarily an agricultural produce. Its cultivation provides employment for a large segment of rural population. West Bengal happens to be its major producer.

This year's production of betel leaves has been very good. But the growers have been badly hit because of the steep fall of the price. Last year's ruling price of 1000 betel leaves was Rs. 400 to Rs. 500. This year, it has fallen to only Rs. 40/- to Rs. 50/-. This is primarily due to the decline in Railway booking of this article from all the stations of the South Eastern Railway, which passes through the pan growing areas.

Another reason is its non-inclusion in the list of exportable agricultural produces by the Government of India, although the Government of West Bengal considers it as an exportable agricultural produce.

India produces betel leaves worth Rs. 800 crores a year and West Bengal's share is about Rs. 500 crores. India earns foreign exchange of about Rs. one crore on this account.

I, therefore, urge upon the Ministry of Agriculture to recognise betel leaves as an exportable agricultural produce and advise the NAFED and STC to undertake the procurement as well as export of this commodity,

which has markets in many foreign countries.

I also urge upon the Railway Minister to issue special instructions to the South Eastern Railway to arrange for the regular booking of increased volume of this commodity to save the growers.

(ix) Need to look into the irregularities in National Consumers Federation

[Translation]

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA (Mandsaur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, loss of crores of rupees and irregularities on large scale were the basis on which the Board of Directors of the National Consumers Federation was dissolved. Allegations of negligence and rampant corruption were also levelled against the Federation. On the basis of these allegations the entire Board of Directors was dissolved but it is learnt that moves are afoot to hold elections for the Board of Directors. However, the former Members of the dissolved Board have not been disqualified from contesting the elections. Since the dissolution of the Board of Directors, the losses have gone up and the sales have come down considerably. As per the Audit Report, it is improper to take a decision to hold elections, unless the persons who are alleged to be responsible for mismanagement, financial irregularities and heavy loss, are removed from their offices and disqualified from contesting elections.

Therefore keeping in mind the gravity and importance of this matter, it is necessary to initiate action against officials involved in such irregularities.