

[Sh. B.N. Reddy]

commercial crops in Andhra Pradesh. Our country is earning more than Rs. 100 crores worth foreign exchange by export of tobacco. We are also earning Rs. 1500 crores in the form of excise duty on it, but such an important valuable crop is not finding remunerative prices in the market.

There is spurt in the prices of coal, fuel and pesticides resulting in escalation in the cost of cultivation. Government announced support prices which are not remunerative and have no relation to export prices.

The maximum price in the market for tobacco for F-1 grade was Rs. 2400 for 100 kg in the beginning and after a few days, it fell down to Rs. 1800 and to Rs. 1700. This resulted in heavy loss amounting to more than Rs. 20 crores for cultivators. This affected very production of tobacco going down to 75 million kgs. instead of 80 million kgs. So, in order to save this crop, buy at least 10 million kilos of high grade tobacco through Tobacco Board at the prices agreed to on 8th March this year and the Union Government should also explore all avenues abroad for exporting the F-1 and F-2 varieties of tobacco.

(vii) Demand for steps to check the recurring floods in Assam

SHRI BHADRESWAR TANTI (Kaliabor): Sir, floods cause havoc in Assam during June to October every year. All rivers of the north-eastern region come down to river Brahmaputra and carry through its course of earth from the hill tracks, mud and coal from the coal fields of Margherita and Ledu, thereby all the river beds by silting go up and on a small downpour the river water spreads over the plain areas of Brahmaputra and Borak valley. The devastating floods that take place every year have swallowed the entire economy of Assam. Every year many people lose their precious lives, standing crops are damaged, dwelling houses are washed away and cattle, bridges and roads are also washed away or badly damaged.

The Union Government should come up with some positive solution to control the flow of excess water of river Brahmaputra and its tributaries. The problem of floods should be taken up as a national problem and not as the problem of Assam alone. Assam is the granary of all resources of the country which is building the nation. If the granary is lost, then everything is lost. Hence, I request that this matter may be taken up seriously and ways and means may be found to solve this burning problem permanently.

(viii) Demand for a T.V. Relay centre at Chalisgaon in Jalgaon district of Maharashtra

SHRI VIJAYN. PATIL (Erandol): There is an urgent need for establishing a television relay centre at Chalisgaon in Jalgaon district of Maharashtra. It is understood that the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has clubbed Chalisgaon with the expansion of relay centre at Aurangabad. But even if power of television relay centre at Aurangabad is increased people from chalisgaon area will not be benefitted because large hills separate Chalisgaon from Aurangabad.

The population of Chalisgaon and its nearby areas is about 21 lakhs. Hence, if a television relay centre is installed at Chalisgaon about three lakh people in the surrounding areas will be benefitted. Hence, I urge upon the Minister of Information and Broadcasting to sanction and install a television relay centre at Chalisgaon.

(ix) Demand for proper growth and development of Calcutta Port, labely working at half of its capacity

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE (Jadavpur): Sir, Calcutta port has been losing its importance day by day. The one time glory of country, Calcutta port has been paling into insignificance. This is largely due to neglect and absence of well-defined policy in relations to the economic development of the north eastern States. Its navigability has been affected due to diversion of the