

Forest clearance is essential for development of agriculture in this region which is a backward region. I request the Government to clear the project at an early date.

- (iii) Need to amend the Coffee Act to prevent the Karnataka Government from imposing Purchase Tax on Coffee in order to help Coffee growers

SHRIMATI D.K. THARA DEVI SIDDHARTHA (Chikmagalur) : The Government of Karnataka imposed Purchase Tax on the Coffee delivered to the Coffee Board by the growers, for the periods 1975-76 to 1980-81.

The Coffee Board went to court against the levy. The case was lost in the High Court. The Supreme Court upheld the High Court judgement and ordered on 11-5-1988 recovery of Purchase tax with retrospective effect up 1983—a total amount of Rs. 59,44,33,687.82.

The Coffee growers are facing enormous problems. The Coffee price in the International Market is stagnant. The Government is yet to waive export duty on coffee.

At this juncture when coffee growers are undergoing hardship and economic pressure, it is impossible for them to cope up the enormous amount of Rs. 100 crores towards purchase tax.

I request the Ministry of Commerce to the rescue of the coffee growers and the Coffee Board by making necessary amendments to the Coffee Act to prevent the State Government from imposing Purchase Tax on coffee.

- (iv) Need to take steps to check the sea erosion of northern Coast line of Orissa to Save Paradip Port

SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK (Cuttack) : Tidal onslaughts from the Bay of Bengal are fast eroding Orissa's Northern coast-line and posing a grave threat to the Paradip Port. The northern part of the port area where the Nehru Guest House and the residential flats are located, and the islet of Hukitola, 10 km north of the port are facing the greatest danger.

Recent findings by the Orissa Remote Sensing Application Centre through satellite pictures reveal that the tidal bores started devouring the coastline about three decades ago, following fast changes in the Bay of Bengal's geographical situation. The alarming rate of destruction wrought by the sea is evidenced by the fact that Hukitola islet which measured 15.83 sq. in 1929 has been reduced to 2.35 sq. km. The area around the Mahanadi river mouth has been deprived of the sand it needs to prevent the tidal batterings.

The break waters built to protect the port on its southern side has affected the movement of sea waters. As a result sand and other material carried by the sea currents are deposited in the southern area of the break waters and not carried northward where the tidal bores continue to wreck the shore.

Unless some scientific methods are adopted the tidal bores will continue to pose a threat to the port. Therefore, I urge upon the Government to draw a 100 per cent Centrally aided time-bound programme to check erosion of northern coast line and also to desilt Mahandi river bed near the Mouth so that the Paradip Port is saved from any threat.

- (v) Need to restrict the Shankaracharya of Puri from glorifying Sati and untouchability

SHRI BRAJAMOHAN MOHANTY (Puri) : The practice of Sati has been banned since long. Such practice is against the sacred scriptures of Hindus. But Shankaracharya of Gobardhan Math, Puri has now started campaign for glorification of Sati custom. He asserts that women who have become widows have no other way but to commit Sati or remain as widows. It is perverse and irreligious. By such expressions, he has involved himself in a very serious offence of abetting the murder of widows.

He has also now started campaign against entry of Harijans into the Hindu temples. The practice of untouchability and the customary restriction of Harijan entry in Hindu temples has been eliminated

since ages. It has been statutorily banned. He has revived again a dead issue with an ulterior motive to establish a Hindu fundamentalist order. His attempt to disrupt the unity and integrity of the Hindu society is deplorable. More so, he has issued several statements glorifying Sati custom and untouchability while occupying an important office of head of Gobardhan Math of Puri, which is significant and may create confusion in Hindu society.

I, therefore, urge upon the Government to take appropriate action against him for indulging in activities which are not secular and democratic.

[*Translation*]

- (vi) Need to accelerate the work of setting up the water treatment plant at Jajmau (Kanpur)

SHRI JAGDISH AWASTHI (Bilhaur) : Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, in 1985, when this Government came to power under the leadership of our Hon. Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi he had announced to undertake the important and the sacred programme of cleansing the Ganga. Under that programme, it was decided to set up a water treatment plant in Kanpur also like other places. So the Government decided to set up that plant at Jajmau and work has also started on the plant, but progress of the work is very slow and pollution of Ganga in Kanpur, is very acute.

So, I will request the Government to accelerate the work in progress at the water treatment plant in Jajmau. In addition to this, penal action should be taken against the factories which are polluting the Ganga.

[*English*]

- (vii) Need to reconstitute the Central Haj Committee

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ (Baramulla) : The Central Haj Committee has failed to offer facilities to the Haj pilgrims to make their pilgrimage pleasant. It is a failure of the Haj Committee that about 500 pilgrims could not board the flights to

Jeddah on time and missed the Haj-e-Akbar.

The Ministry of External Affairs must conduct an enquiry into the mismanagement of the Central Haj Committee and assume total responsibility of the matters connected with Haj pilgrimage.

As of now, the Haj Cell in the Ministry of External Affairs does not accept any responsibility for any mishaps as it feels that it merely coordinates the affairs concerning Haj and that too on a limited scale.

I urge upon the Central Government to disband this Committee and take up the entire process of Haj pilgrimages for the future.

In any case, if the Central Government feels that there is a need of a Committee like this, then the present Committee should be reconstituted and made broadbased. The Committee should have its headquarters at Delhi instead of Bombay as Haj flights are now operated directly from Delhi, Hyderabad, etc.

The Jammu and Kashmir State should have proper representation on the proposed reconstituted Committee as a Muslim-majority State.

- (viii) Need to start work on Darbhanga-Samastipur broad gauge conversion project

DR. G. S. RAJHANS (Jhanjharpur) : A raw deal has been given to Bihar as regards railways. A few years ago, work had started for the conversion of Darbhanga-Samastipur metre-gauge into broad-gauge. But due to unknown reasons the railway tracks were dismantled and the whole project was shifted to a neighbouring State :

It is requested that the above project be restarted at an early date and completed expeditiously.

At the same time, efforts be made to lay railway tracks in Santhal Pargana and Chotanagpur on a massive scale so that there may be economic growth of these regions.