

[English]

(ii) **Drought in Madhya Pradesh**

**KUMARI PUSHPA DEVI (Raigarh) :** The State of Madhya Pradesh is in the grip of a severe drought situation due to the very erratic and uneven spread of rainfall. In addition to the drought prone areas, some more districts in the State have also been experiencing severe drought this year. Many people living in the rural areas are sitting idle at home without work and most of them are leaving their native villages for far off place like Delhi, Haryana and Punjab in quest of jobs. If the present dry spell continues, it will cause a great damage to the summer crops. Unless adequate relief measures are taken and employment opportunity created in the drought hit areas, the people will continue to suffer. There is a shortage of funds with the State Government.

In view of this, I would appeal to the Government of India to release adequate Central assistance to the state of Madhya Pradesh to meet the drought situation. Various relief measures like labour intensive works, feeding programme and installation of additional lift irrigation etc. should be implemented on war-footing.

[Translation]

(iii) **Widening of National Highway No. 15**

**SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN (Barmer) :** Mr. Chairman, Sir, National Highway No. 15 from Pathankot to Kandla passes through a stretch of 367 kms., 860 kms. and 272 kms. in Punjab, Rajasthan and Gujarat, respectively.

This Highway is very important from the strategic point of view, because major part of the Pakistan border adjoins this border area. Therefore, from the security point of view, it is essential to widen this Highway from 12 feet to 24 feet.

This National Highway is 12 feet wide (single lane). A major part of the above Highway falls in the border areas. Therefore, it is mostly used by the Army. In the winter season, the Army comes out for exercises in this area and it becomes difficult for

the civilian traffic and civilian jeeps, trucks and other vehicles to pass through this road and the number of accidents increases.

Due to increase in the population as a result of the commissioning of the Rajasthan Canal upto Jaisalmer, traffic in this area has increased considerably. The movement of goods by trucks has registered a very high increase.

Therefore, I would urge the Central Government to include in the Seventh Five Year Plan the programme for the widening of National Highway No. 15, particularly by giving priority to the stretch falling in border areas, from 12 feet (single lane) to 24 feet (double lane).

[English]

(iv) **Need to exempt marine products from levy of taxes by the Government of Tamil Nadu**

**SHRIMATI VIJAYANTHIMALA BALI (Madras South) :** Mr. Chairman, Sir, exporters of marine products have represented that purchase tax, turn-over tax and surcharge levied by Tamil Nadu Government on Prawns and frog legs is seriously affecting the industry and exports. In my view, the amendment of Tamil Nadu State Government Sales Tax Act on 1.10.1984 is in contravention of the relief given by the Central Government under sub-section 3 of section 5 of the Central Sales Tax Act exempting marine products meant for export, from the levy of tax. In reply to my enquiry on the subject, the Hon. Minister had stated that he had referred the case to the Government of Tamil Nadu and he would be able to know after their reply. Since I did not hear anything from the Ministry for some time. I again wrote two letters on 18th and 22nd March to remind the Hon. Minister as to what had happened. I got a reply on 2nd April, 1985 in which the Minister has stated that the relevant information was being collected from the Government of Tamil Nadu and that the same would be laid on the Table of the House. The Minister added that the information from the Tamil Nadu Government was yet to be received though they had been reminded in this regard.

Sir, four months have passed; the export of sea food has dropped considerably. Lakhs