

[Shrimati Sangogita Rana]

uneconomic operations. Thousands of workers have been rendered jobless these units because of the closure of these units. The mass closure is the result of introduction of a Central Government scheme of total excise exemption to small scale dyestuff units having turnover upto Rs 5 lakhs. The total excise exemption for small scale sector was raised upto a turnover of Rs 7.5 lakhs in the 1981-82 Budget with the result that many dyestuff units sprang up to take advantage of the excise exemption by limiting their production and sales below 7.5 lakhs. These units have captured a lion's share of the market by selling their products 40 to 50 per cent cheaper than the organised sector. The growth of dyestuff units has hit the large scale sector hard and the progressive units whose turnover is more than Rs. 15 lakhs. There is a steady decrease in the capacity utilisation of large scale sector which is bound to affect their prospects.

I urge the Government to rationalise the excise concessions by providing excise exemption to all small-scale units upto a turnover of Rs. 7.5 lakhs and levying 50% excise duty to units whose turnover exceeds that limit in order to save this industry from the present crisis. That would protect the large scale manufacturing units.

(v) ALLEGED SHIFTING OF MATERIAL MEANT FOR CONVERSION OF MANNED MUDKHED RAILWAY LINE

SHRI UTTAM RATHOD (Hingoli): Sir, I read the following statement under Rule 377:

Some years back, it was assured by Government that the conversion of Manmad-Mudkhed section will be taken up. Accordingly, this section was surveyed and the work was also started some years back. But due to meagre provision

in the Budget, the work could not be completed soon. This was also raised on the floor of both the Houses on several occasions but the Government did not take any action to complete this conversion work from metre gauge to broad gauge.

Now, it is reliably learnt that the offices which were looking after the conversion work are shifted and the material that was to be utilised for this purpose has also been shifted to other places. All these actions of the Railway Board have irritated the people of Marathwada region. Now they are thinking of having an agitation from 16th of this month which may turn violent as this area feels neglected in every walk of life. The promise of Government has also not been fulfilled by the Railway Board which has upset all the sections of the people.

The Government is requested to stay the shifting of offices and material meant for conversion of this railway line immediately and start the work in full swing so that the work may be completed early and proposed agitation in Marathwada region be averted.

(vi) DEMAND FOR WITHDRAWAL OF ORDERS REGARDING COLLECTION OF SECURITY DEPOSITS TOWARDS TELEPHONE BILL ARREARS IN RATNAGIRI DISTT.

SHRI BAPUSAHEB PARULKAR (Ratnagiri): Under Rule 377, I would like to mention the following:

The telecommunication wing of the Communication Ministry has issued notices to many customers owning telephones to deposit Rs. 500 as security deposit towards the telephone bills. These notices *inter-alia* mention that if the paying habit of the customer is improved, the deposit amount will be [refunded after three years or on