

copy each (in English and Hindi) of the following papers:—

- (i) Annual Report of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, New Delhi for the year 1994-95.
- (ii) Annual Accounts of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, New Delhi for the year 1994-95 and the Audit Report thereon.
- (iii) Statement by Government accepting the above Report.
- (iv) Statement giving reasons for the delay in laying the paper mentioned at (i) and (ii) above [Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 651/96]

Memorandum of Understanding (1996-97) between Govt. of India (Ministry of Power) and National Hydroelectric Power Corporation Limited

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): Madam, I lay on the Table, a copy each (in English and Hindi) of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of India (Ministry of Power) and National Hydroelectric Power Corporation Limited, for the year 1996-97 [Placed in Library See No. L.T. 652/96]

Report and Accounts (1995-96) of the Delhi Urban Art Commission New Delhi

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. U. VENKATESWARLU): Madam, I lay on the Table, under section 19 and sub-section (4) of section 20 of the Delhi Urban Art Commission Act, 1973 a copy

(in English and Hindi) of the following papers:—

- (i) Annual Report of the Delhi Urban Art Commission, New Delhi, for the year 1995-96.
- (ii) Annual Accounts of the Delhi Urban Art Commission, New Delhi for the year 1995-96 and the Audit Report thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT. 653/96]

REPORTS AND MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE WELFARE OF SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES

SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND: (Uttar Pradesh) Madam, I lay on the Table a copy each (in English and Hindi) of the following Reports and Minutes of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes:—

- (i) First Report and Minutes on the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) for Reservation and Employment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in South Eastern Railway.
- (ii) Second Report and Minutes on the Ministry of Rural Area & Employment (Department of Rural Employment & Poverty Alleviation) on Employment and Financial Assistance provided to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes under Jawahar Rojgar Yojna.

RE: TRANSFER OF GENETIC MATE- RIAL TO WEST AND AGREEMENT WITH THE U.S. ON WOLDLIFE EX- CHANGE

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA (West Bengal): Madam, I am raising an issue relating to an invasion, an invasion which is not a military type but partially an economic one. But this is basically a biological invasion. The invasion is on

our biological resources—our plants, species—which are now being plundered to satisfy the needs of food industry, pharmaceutical industry and the agro-processing industry, in general, in the West. This is the issue I am raising today. Although our country is among the twenty poorest countries in the world, in terms of biological resources we are among the richest. In fact, we have, in our country, something like 47,000 main plants, 81,000 species of animals and billions and billions of micro-agro organism. Madam, if you take the tropical forest area of the world, as a whole, 6% to 7% of the land mass is tropical forest but this accounts for half of the species in the world. Now, two or three types of new developments have taken place in the world. There has been a tremendous stride in bio-technology; tremendous stride in the genetic engineering; and the whole food industry has been transformed in various forms. New products are coming. There is a tremendous demand for all these three. In 1992, there was an Earth Summit. You know very well that it talked about bio-diversity. The rich countries in the world are rich in economic terms but they are very poor in terms of bio-diversity; so, they want to come to our country to plunder our biological resources to satisfy the needs of their own industry. Recently, two or three very worrying things have happened. Many foreign companies are coming into our country—mainly agro-processing companies—going around the country, scouting with thousands and thousands of their workers, listing our plants, our animals with the purpose of patenting them. They are taking them out with the purpose of patenting them. I have no objection to their listing, providing they are not patented. This is used for the welfare of mankind.

But they are doing this for business purposes. Recently, Madam ...*(Interruptions)*.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : I think if there is silence in the House, we can listen better. It will also be better if the Prime Minister stays and listens to the Member, since he is also the Minister of Science and Technology. Mr. Prime Minister, the hon. Member is raising a very important scientific matter. Generally, such matters are not raised in the House. Since you are also the minister of Science and Technology, I would like you to hear him.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA : I will ask him to take note of it.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA : Madam, two-three things have happend. *(Interruptions)*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : He is going away. I wanted him to listen. Anyway, some other Minister would take note of it. Perhaps, he has got some appointment. *(Interruptions)* He being the Minister of Science and Technology also, I wanted him to listen to the hon. Member. This is a very important matter. Our germ plasm materials are being stolen and are being patented abroad. This is a matter which is very important. The House was seized of the situation when we discussed GATT. Therefore, I would like every Member to hear this. This is a very serious thing.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA : Recently, Madam, the Wild Life Institute in Dehradun signed an agreement with the Department of Agriculture of United States. In that agreement, they have provided for something like 10 million rupees for research. Ten million rupees is peanuts for the Americans, but it means a lot of money for us. Within this, they have also provided for foreign travel. This is an inducement to our scientists. They have provided about Rs. 3,00,000 for foreign travel. I do not want to say it, but this is a kind of bribe, this is a form of bribe, to our scientists. The Ministry of Fiaance has cleared it. I do not know whether the Ministry of Envrionment has cleared it.

One of the provisions is very appalling. I am really disgusted by this provision. Clause 12 of the agreement says : "a worldwide, nonexclusive, irrevocable, royalty-free license to use the patent for the U.S. Government purpose." Look at it, Madam. Our Institute is having a project with the U.S. Department of Agriculture so that the fruits of research can be taken to the U.S., to be patented for use by the American Government.

Another clause—clause 15 — in that agreement says : "Upon request the guarantee will provide the US Department of Agriculture with seeds, plants, vaccines or any other such research material discovered or developed during the life of the agreement." This means, the things which have been given to us by nature are being taken away from the country and they are being patented. When they come back to us in the patented form, we have to pay for it.

There are two-three points which I would like to raise here. one is : germ plasm should be considered as the property of mankind as a whole. There should not be any patent regime in regard to germ plasm. In fact, Madam this is not only my view. The Food and Agriculture Organisation, in one of their initiatives, have taken this decision that germ plasm should be treated as the property of mankind as a whole. They have said that it should be used for the welfare of mankind.

In fact, even in the GATT Agreement, with all our opposition to various things, there is one good provision. Under this, it is possible for our country to impose trade controls if it is necessary to protect animal, plant, human life and health; even if it is necessary for diagnostic and other purposes.

The point is : all these plants, all these biological materials, in our country, are the product of our history. Our indigenous communities have been preserving them. We know as to how many of our tribals have preserved the various mate-

rials, how they have developed conventions and customs to preserve and protect these materials. All these things are being thrown to the wind. They would now be taken away. Moreover the communities which have worked for thousands of years to protect these materials are being denied their share. The money would go to the rich countries. These communities would be denied their share.

But the main problem is that while all this is happening, there is no legislation in our country. We must have a comprehensive legislation to safeguard our genetic materials.

There is now a National Bureau for Plant Genetic Resources. This National Bureau has entered into an agreement with the United States. There is an Indo-US Project on that. Whenever there is such a project, it is not an equal relationship. It is an unequal relationship; between a country with superior knowledge, superior technology, and a country like ours. In the bargain, our things go out. We do not get anything out of it. Our people do not get anything out of it.

What I would like to suggest here is that in order to protect our genetic materials, the Government should give an assurance, a categorical assurance. The must be a comprehensive legislation.

There are other poor countries in Africa and Latin America—certainly six countries—which have legislated about the rights of the breeders and rights of the farmers and all that. We do not have such a comprehensive legislation in our country. So I request our Government to respond to this concern I am expressing by coming out with a comprehensive legislation very fast, before our genetic material is taken out of the country and is patented and before the damage is done so that we do not face an irreversible change when we cannot do something to protect our own heritage, our own genetic material. This is a request I would pass on to the Government through you, Madam.

Thank you very much.

SHRI S.S. SURJEWALA (Haryana) : Madam, I would not only support this request but I would also like to tell you that this is so important and comprehensive a subject that no justice can be done to it through a Zero Hour mention. Already we have opened a National Gene Bank in Delhi to protect all our plants and animals, our heritage. So it is very, very essential that this matter should be thoroughly discussed, maybe for one day, maybe for half a day, and the Government should come fully prepared for that. A direction should go from the Chair; otherwise this issue will remain totally unnoticed. Thank you, Madam.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Thank you. I will discuss it with the hon. Chairman and try to find some time in consultation with the Government as to how we should discuss this. It is a serious matter, which will have repercussions in the future.

RE : RISE IN PRICES OF WHEAT AND OTHER ESSENTIAL COM- MODITIES

श्री रामदास अग्रवाल (राजस्थान) : उपसभापति महोदया, मैं सदन का और सरकार का ध्यान उपभोक्ताओं की तरफ से आकर्षित करना चाहता हूँ। वैसे तो आम उपभोक्ता के काम में आने वाली प्रत्येक वस्तुओं के दाम पिछली सरकारों और वर्तमान सरकार की कृपा से लगातार बढ़ रहे हैं और हमारा इन्फ्लेशन रेट लगातार गिरता जा रहा है। अब इसमें सरकार की तरफ से कितनी मेनिपुलेशन होती है। मैं नहीं जानता। क्योंकि मैं उतना आर्थिक जगत का, आर्थिक क्षेत्र का ज्ञाता नहीं हूँ। लेकिन इससे उपभोक्ता की तरफ से मैं इतना कह सकता हूँ कि जितने चीजें साधारणतया एक आदमी के काम में आती हैं उन सबकी कीमतों में लगातार बढ़ोतरी होती जा रही है। इस समय मैं आपके सामने खड़ा हुआ हूँ विशेष रूप से इस बात का ध्यान आकर्षित करने के लिए कि गेहूँ के दाम पिछले 15 दिनों में इतने बढ़े हैं महोदया, जिनकी कल्पना करना मुश्किल है इस देश के अंदर। हमारे यहां राजस्थान में और बाकी के प्रांतों में भी मुझे जानकारी मिली है कि गेहूँ का भाव लगभग 800 रुपया से 900 रुपए प्रति क्विंटल हो गया है। दिल्ली में

तथा अन्य बड़े शहरों में तो यह भाव और भी ज्यादा है। मैं इस सरकार से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि आखिर यह जो ओपनस ऑफ इकोनोमी है, यह जो उदारीकरण आर्थिक जगत में आपने किया है या खुलापन आपने किया है क्या इसका अर्थ यह है कि उपभोक्ता वस्तुओं के दाम बिना रोक-टोक के चले जाएंगे और सरकार किसी पर भी किसी भी स्थिति में इसको रोकने के लिए तैयार नहीं है। आखिर तो भी 415 रुपया प्रति क्विंटल के हिसाब से सरकार ने किसानों को पैसा देने का तय किया। मैं सरकार से दो-तीन बातें जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या सरकार ने प्रोक्योरमेंट का जितना टारगेट तय किया था क्या उनको उतना स्टॉक मिल गया है — पहली बात सरकार से मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ? दूसरी बात यह है कि सरकार के पास अगर 415 रुपए पर आवश्यक स्टॉक जमा हो गया है और एफ०सी० आई० के पास में जैसा हमें अखबारों के जरिए पता चलता रहा कि उसके पास गेहूँ का पर्याप्त स्टॉक है तो फिर सरकार क्यों नहीं मूल नियंत्रण के लिए उन स्टॉक को बाजार में बेचने का काम शुरू करती है, ताकि अनावश्यक रूप से जो भाव बढ़ते चले जा रहे हैं तथा यह जो बिचौलिए और मिडिलमैन है, जो प्रोफिट काम रहे हैं, उसमें उपभोक्ताओं का शोषण हो रहा है, इसके ऊपर नियंत्रण रखा जा सके।

मैं सरकार से एक और निवेदन करना चाहता हूँ और मुझे जानकारी मिली है कि राजस्थान में एफ० सी० आई० से लगभग 6 लाख गेहूँ के बोरे प्री मार्केट के अंदर बेच दिया है और वह गेहूँ हिन्दुस्तान से बाहर निर्यात कर दिया गया है। मैं सरकार से जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या राजस्थान में या अन्य राज्यों में गेहूँ का एक हजार रुपया प्रति क्विंटल का भाव हो जाने के बावजूद भी हम गेहूँ का निर्यात जारी रखेंगे या उसको रोकना चाहते हैं? आखिर इस देश के लोगों को भोजन पहले मिले, उनको खाना पहले मिले, उसके बाद विदेशी मुद्रा का सवाल हो तो ठीक है, लेकिन देश के उपभोक्ताओं को भूखे पेट रखकर इतना मंहगा अनाज देकर एक्सपोर्ट करने का क्या तुक है? यह मेरी समझ में नहीं आता है। मैं सरकार से मांग करता हूँ कि आप एफसीआई के अन्दर जो स्टॉक रखा हुआ है, पर्याप्त स्टॉक है जैसा कि आप दावा करते हैं तो फिर खुले बाजार में आपको उसे बेचना चाहिए और भाव गिरने चाहिए, दूसरे, आपने अगर निर्यात के लिए कोई कमिटमेंट किया हुआ है तो उसके ऊपर पुनर्विचार किया जाना चाहिए। पहले उपभोक्ताओं को गेहूँ मिले इस बात का ध्यान इस सरकार को रखना पड़ेगा अन्यथा इस देश के अन्दर फिर से उपभोक्ता