

उपसभाध्यक्ष: (श्री सतीश अग्रवाल): ठीक है।

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर (उत्तर प्रदेश): मैं भी अपने दिल को इससे संबद्ध करता हूँ और इसका समर्थन करता हूँ। यह मजदूरों का सवाल है इसको पूरी तरह देखकर के कारखाने चलाये जाने चाहिए।

Need to Stop Sanctioning of Licences for Import of Cardamom and Granting of Permission for Forward Trade of Coconut

SHRI JOY NADUKKARA (Kerala): Sir, the agriculture community of Kerala at large is facing a serious problem due to the fall in prices of agricultural commodities. I am taking this opportunity to bring to the notice of this House and the Government the difficulties the coconut and cardamom growers of this country are facing at present. The coconut cultivation in Kerala is so widespread that there is not even a single agricultural family without owning at least a coconut tree. Ninety per cent people are owing coconut trees. People having only two or three cents of property also have coconuts in their small bit of property. I brought this to the notice of the House only to show how much the coconut tree is intertwined with the life of the people of Kerala and how the fluctuation in the price of coconut affects the family budget of the agricultural people in Kerala. Last year, the floor price of coconut oil was fixed at 2,600 per quintal by the Centre. This year, naturally the agricultural community of Kerala expected a rise in the prices.

Likewise, the State Government has demanded a rise in the floor price fixed by the Central Government. But unfortunately, the demand of the State Government was not considered by the Centre. Instead of increasing the floor price, the price for this year has been fixed at the same level as last year, i.e. at Rs. 2,600 odd itself.

Sir, considering the rise in the cost of cultivation, the rise in the price of fertilis-

ers and pesticides, the increase in the labour charges and, on the top of it, the rise in the price of the land where coconut used to be cultivated; considering all these things, there ought to have been an increase in the price. But unfortunately for the cultivators, the floor price was not raised. This forced the cultivators to revolt. The State Government has again requested the Centre to refix the floor price. The cultivators are hoping that the floor price would be refixed.

I would like to further submit that an increase in the floor price alone is not sufficient in the present situation. Some other steps must also be taken to help the cultivators. In this connection, I would like to point out that earlier, in the seventies, forward trading was allowed in coconut oil, groundnut oil, mustard oil, potato, etc. Forward trading was being allowed earlier in these commodities. Later on, it was stopped by the Centre on the ground that the prices of essential commodities like oil and other were very high. However, after some time, in relation to groundnut oil, mustard oil, potato, etc., forward trading was reintroduced; forward trading was restored in respect of these commodities, whereas, in the case of coconut, it was not allowed. If forward trading is allowed, naturally, there would be an increase in the price of coconut oil and this would help the agricultural community. Therefore, I demand that the Central Government must take steps to reintroduce forward trading in respect of coconut oil.

Another thing is, coconut is included in the list of oilseeds, but the facilities and benefits which are allowed to the cultivators of the other oil-seeds are denied to the coconut cultivators. It is, therefore, necessary that these benefits and facilities must be given to the coconut cultivators also so that there can be an improvement in the price of coconut.

Just as coconut, Mr. Vice-Chairman, the price of cardamom is also very low. The cardamom cultivators are facing serious difficulties. In reply to my question earlier, the hon. Minister of Commerce had stated, on 4th December, 1995, that there was a decline in the price of cardamom in the recent past. The Minister had accepted it. At the same time, he stated that there was an import of cardamom to the tune of 2,186 tonnes during 1994-95, and another 265 tonnes during April-May, 1995. When the price is declining, when the cultivators are finding it difficult to meet the cost of cultivation, I do not know why this import was allowed. This is a very serious matter. This is a very grave matter. If the import is stopped, if the import is completely stopped, the price would rise and this, in turn, would help the agricultural community. Therefore, the Government must put a full-stop to the import of cardamom so as to help the agricultural community in getting a reasonable and remunerative price.

Thank you, Sir.

Indefinite Curfew in Imphal and Deteriorating Law and Order Situation in Manipur

SHRI W. KULABIDHU SINGH (Manipur): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I rise to raise a matter of great public importance. This is in regard to the clamping down of curfew in Imphal since yesterday. This is the culmination of the deteriorating law and order situation in Manipur.

I have not been able to get the most accurate information as yet. But so far as I learn, two supposedly militant youth were killed by police commandos in the Novrem Leikai area of Imphal yesterday. Reportedly, the youth started firing at the police commandos.

The commandoes chased them and shot them dead. The insurgent youth or

the militants sometimes ambush and kill the security people. But that cannot be taken as an excuse and in revenge kill them. If they were arrested and brought before the court of law, it would have been very nice. This is the first incident.

In the second incident, a student of the Saint Johns Higher Secondary School was shot dead by the commandoes. That was the version. I don't know how far this version is correct. I am subject to correction. According to the information I received, he was shot dead. He was not arrested and kept under judicial custody. We, as responsible citizens of this country, should not encourage such incidents. We should condemn such incidents. I feel those people should have been arrested and brought to book in accordance with law. The imposition of curfew reflects the deteriorating law and order situation in Manipur. The hon. Prime Minister, the hon. Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Prof. Kamson and the hon. Minister, Syed Sibtey Razi, have all claimed that the law and order situation in the North-East is improving. Even in the President's Address, it is claimed like that.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): Improving, since when!

SHRI W. KULABIDHU SINGH: That is the version of the hon. Ministers. Even the President in this Address stated like that. But I differ with those claims. According to me, the law and order situation in Manipur is deteriorating day by day.

On 10th February, there was a peace rally organised by the Kukis. I don't like to mention about the Kuki-Naga ethnic tension and all that. But there was a peace rally on 10th February undertaken by the Kukis of Manipur. Several thousands of Kukis, even though they are a minority community, paraded in the