

It will not be out of place to mention that during 1981, our tobacco exports to China were to the tune of 28,000 metric tonnes. However, due to malpractices of our exporters, by exporting substandard stuff, we lost the Chinese market once and for all. Two officials connected with these export deals were hanged to death in China. But their counterparts in our country are rewarded with political and trade favours by our Government. Since the claims from the Chinese importers have not been settled so far, we could not reopen our exports to China.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) : Please conclude.

DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI : The Standing Advisory Committee attached to the Ministry of Commerce, in their report, advised the Government to settle their claims so that we may revive our exports to China. But precious little has been done in this regard. Unless some corrective steps are taken, I am very much afraid, we may lose the Russian markets once and for all as was the case with the Chinese exports. The same traders that were responsible for our losing the Chinese market are interestingly the main players in the present malpractices in the Russian exports also. This is indirectly harming the interests of the tobacco growers in Andhra Pradesh. Therefore, I request the Government to pay special attention to this serious problem.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM (Andhra Pradesh) : Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I would like to associate myself with what Dr. Sivaji has said. I would like to add just one sentence, if you permit me.

As far as the export of tobacco is concerned, last year, the Government—I do not know what the reasons were; the Commerce Ministry could not explain the reasons were; the Commerce Ministry could not explain the reasons suddenly removed the minimum guarantee price for export. Because of the removal of this minimum guarantee price, all sorts of malpractices have taken place.

Therefore, Sir, I would like to request the Government, through you, that they should restore back this minimum guarantee price for export of tobacco. Only then the export of tobacco would become more orderly. Only then good quality tobacco could be exported. This was the point I wanted to make.

SHRI MOTURU HANUMANTHA RAO (Andhra Pradesh) : Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I would also like to associate myself with the demand put forward by my friend, Dr. Sivaji.

The point is, the Central Government has always been promising. They have been repeatedly promising, but nothing is being done. The problem remains as it is, unresolved. Therefore, please see that the Central Government moves in the matter immediately to help the growers.

THE COIR INDUSTRY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1993

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPTT OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES) (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) :

Sir, I beg to move :

"That the Bill further to amend the Coir Industry Act, 1953, be taken into consideration."

Sir, this amendment to the Coir Industry Act, 1953, is a minor amendment. Section 19(1) of the Coir Industry Act, 1953, provides that the Coir Board shall submit to the Central Government a half-yearly report and an annual report on its activities and working for the preceding six months and the preceding year respectively.

This practice of submitting a half yearly report and then an annual report to parliament was considered as a duplication of work. The Lok Sabha Secretariat, while examining the laying of half-yearly report of the Coir Board, had observed that there was a duplication of work involved in this.

In the light of this, this amendment to section 19(1) is being moved to do away with the requirement of submission of half-yearly reports. I hope the House will agree that the presentation of both the half-yearly report and the annual report is a duplication of work. Submission of half-yearly report is being discontinued which will result in the saving of stationery labour and time.

Sir, if the honourable Members have any other suggestions to make, they are welcome to come forward with their suggestions and comments. I now request the House to adopt this amendment Bill unanimously without any debate. Thank you, Sir.

The question was proposed.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) : It is a small Bill. If the Members want to speak, they can. Mrs. Mira Das. Not here. Yes, Mr. M. A. Baby.

SHRI M. A. BABY (Kerala) : Thank you very much, Sir. I agree with the honourable Minister that the scope of the Bill is very limited. In order to avoid duplication of work, the periodicity of presentation of the report is sought to be amended to one year. Earlier half yearly report plus annual reports used to be presented. I do not have any disagreement with this amendment. But, taking this opportunity, and with your kind permission, I would like to mention briefly the problems faced by the coir workers in Kerala.

Sir, it goes without saying that Kerala being the southern-most State and with all its logistical limitations, the problems of the Keralites are not taken into account with sufficient seriousness on most of the occasions. If you look at the plight of the coir workers, the plight of the cashew workers, the plight of the handloom weavers and the plight of the workers connected with other traditional industries, this point would immediately be understood, with a lack of substantial investment in important

industrial sectors, unless and until the Government makes serious efforts to protect these traditional industries like coir, cashew, etc., it would be very difficult so far as the plight of the workers is concerned who are totally dependent on them. There are about five lakh families depending on coir industry which means that nearly thirty lakh people are dependent on this. They hardly get employment for more than a hundred days. Half of the employees are dependent on the co-operative sector and the co-operative sector is also faced with many problems.

Traditionally, the coir which is known as white fibre being made in Kerala used to be the main coir export item from our country. But, however, some other States, through mechanisation, are producing brown fibre also. The qualitative advantages of the white fibre, I do not want to elaborate further here because I would be doing so at the risk of being depicted as a parochialist. I can speak at length about the qualitative advantages of this white fibre. But, in the recent past, we have been faced with competition from the European countries which have perfected the art of making synthetic coir. In this situation, it is the task of the Government to see that various scientific methods are resorted to for the modernisation of the coir industry without affecting job opportunities. We are not against mechanisation. We need technological upgradation which is necessary without which we may not be in a position to sustain ourselves in the international market. But, at the same time, there should be efforts made to see that the technology that is being introduced would be less injurious to the sustenance of employees. If at all some inevitable displacement of workers is resorted to, then there should be efforts to rehabilitate them. This is my concrete suggestion with regard to the problems of the coir industry workers.

There was a Rs. 44-crore project for integrated coir development in Kerala. I would like to know how far this project, which is being envisaged as part of the Eight plan, has progressed. There have been efforts to mobilise resources for this project. What is the concrete result after

having such a plan being envisaged ? What is the progress being made ? By when the Central Government proposes to complete this project ? These are the queries which I would like to raise on this. In general, I support the very innocuous amendment that is being moved. Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) : Now, there are three more speakers. I think, the Bill can be finished if the hon. Members are very brief in their speeches.

SHRI ASHOK SEN (West Bengal) : it is already 1.30 instead of hurrying through, we can discuss it after the lunch.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) : I agree with you. But it is a very formal amendment. If the hon. Members can make their points in brief, we can finish it now, Shri I. S. Raju.

SHRI J. S. RAJU (Tamil Nadu) : Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, as the Minister puts it, this Amendment intends to scrap the necessity of laying a half-yearly report. I feel that Amendment has not taken into consideration the spirit behind the necessity of submitting two reports in a year. The intention was to get the report of the Coir Board after every six months so that prompt action could be taken on the observations made in the report. Since the coir industry had tremendous unexploited potential, it was felt that timely action was necessary for the promotion of this industry. Hence, the Act provided for half-yearly reports. Therefore, the right thing would have been to amend the Act so as to provide for submitting two half-yearly reports each year. Since I do not understand the reason behind this amendment to provide just one annual report, I request the hon. Minister to explain the position of the Government on this matter and to say what necessitated him to go in for this option.

Sir, now I would like to make certain points regarding the problems faced by the coir industry. The coir industry which had its roots in Kerala has speed in a signifi-

cant way to the neighbouring States like Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa. Since coconut husk is the basic raw material for this industry, it is worthwhile to look at the coconut production, over the years. While coconut was grown only in 14,25,500 hectares in the year 1988-89, coconut is now being grown nearly in 16 lakh hectares. And the annual production of nuts has gone from 8,541 million to about 10,000 million. The Coconut Development Board has estimated the production to reach 12,685 million by 2,000 AD. But, according to Smt. Minnie Mathew, who was Secretary, Coir Board, in 1992, only 30 per cent of the husk is utilised by the coir industry. This is said to be because of the high costs of collection, transportation and distribution of the husk. I know it is not possible to make use of the coconut husk 100 per cent at the moment. But it is a fact that in many parts of Tamil Nadu, only coconut growing has gone up. The infrastructure necessary for coir industry like defibring machines, treadable ratts, dying machines could not be built. In most of the areas in Tamil Nadu, coconut husk is thrown into garbage. This is really a pathetic situation in a country where there is acute unemployment problem and poverty.

Sir, I appeal to the hon. Minister to consider setting up of co-operative societies in concentrated areas in Tamil Nadu so as to train people in spinning and to provide necessary machineries. The Minister has announced a Rs. 44.24 crore coir development project for Kerala in April this year. I think, he will be considerate to announce similar projects for Tamil Nadu also. The study reveals that if husk is collected and transported beyond 100 KMs, coir processing and manufacture become uneconomic. Therefore, a society could be set up comprising a couple of coconut rich villages in order to make coir production viable and profitable. This will in the long run change the face of rural areas. Besides providing employment, many such projects would add to the growth of villages and increase the living standards of people. Yet again, Tamil Nadu happens to be a principal producer of brown fibre which finds applica-

tion in high-value-added products that fetch good foreign exchange through export. The need of the hour is full exploitation of the basic raw material, i.e. coconut husk, for which the Government have to take necessary steps. This industry is labour-intensive and Tamil Nadu has enough labour force for various activities connected with coir production like collection of husk, retting, fibre extraction, spinning and manufacturing.

Of course, there are disturbing reports on the fall of coir products export in recent years partly because of the entry of synthetic floor coverings and cheaper substitutes like Chinese grass mats and machine-made door mats from countries like Sri Lanka. This international competition needs to be given immediate attention. Rubberised coir industry should be provided all the necessary advanced techniques so that our coir products rule better in the global market.

Certain general complaints about our coir products like unvarying sameness, lack of sophistication, poor colour fastness, near-total absence of product innovation and product development would have to be looked into with concern and care to improve our export proects.

I hope the hon. Minister would inform me as to what he proposes to do on the points I have raised. Thank you.

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES (Goa) : Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I support this amending Bill.

I, being the only Member from this House represented on the Coir Board, would have said much on this, but as we do not have much time, I would be very brief.

I think this amending Bill was not necessary at the moment. It is a piecemeal legislation. The Coir Board had already recommended that the whole Act should be amended. This Act is very old and it has become outdated and obsolete. This Act was passed by Parliament in 1953. As you know, a new economic policy announced

by the Government is in operation since 1991. In the light of this, I think we need to change this Act.

I do not know what was the reason for the sinister to come in with this small araendment which seeks to change just one clause, namely (1) of section 19. It has been stated that this amendment has been brought forward because of the recommen-daion made by the public Accounts Committee of the Lok Sabha that there was duplicaion of work in this.

I do not know what was the intention of the farmers of this Act at that time. This was the only statutory Board which was supposed to submit reports biannually, i.e. twice a year. As I said, I welcome this legislotion. At the same time. I would request the hon. Minister to see that a full-fledged, comprehensive, amending Bill is brought forward so that it is in tune with the modern times and in tune with new industrial policy.

Having said this, I have a few suggestions to make now. First of all, the coir industry, as has been mentioned by my friend, Mr. Baby, is very primitive in Kerala. It is a major cois-producing State. One million people—ten lakhs—are dependent on this industry for their livelihood. The method of making coir fibre is very primitive. It is made in soaked fields. That is why it gives rise to diseases. People there are living in sub-human conditions. This leads to pollution of water also. The water become brackish. As a result of this, fish also do not survive. The process of soaking is very toxic. There are many reports in this regard.

Some political parties in that State, the left parties, are exploiting the people. They are against mechanisation. As a result of this, India is not able to compete in the international market. Sri Lanka is the main competitor. I do not blame that country. They have gone in for mechanisation. Therefore, it is high time to improve the quality of the yarn, the quality of the fibre. For this, we should go in for mechanisation. This would help us in improving the

quality of the fibre. We can get better fibre, white fibre. At the moment, the fibre is soaked and that is why the colour deteriorates and becomes brown. It is not golden as in the case of the Sri Lankan coir fibre.

Sir, there is a very great demand for coir products in the Western countries. They have a green movement there. People are very much conscious of environment. They are against plastics. They are against synthetic products. Coir is a product which is biodegradable. Earlier, the Coir Board was being given about Rs. 50 lakhs per year for the purpose of publicity abroad to promote the sale of coir products. The Ministry has cut down this amount. They do not have much foreign exchange for this. In this connection, I would suggest that the economic wings in our missions abroad should be used to promote the sale of coir products. I think that is the only way we can compete with other countries.

With these submissions, I hope the hon. Minister will come forward very soon with a comprehensive Bill.

SHRI N. E. BALARAM (Kerala) : Sir, I do not want to make a speech. I am only making three suggestions. Firstly, as my friend was saying, there is the need for a comprehensive legislation for this industry. Coir Board has already given a report expressing the need for a new legislation. I hope the Minister will go through it and come forward with a new legislation very soon.

Secondly, the hon. Member was saying that left parties are opposed to the idea. It is not correct. I want to correct him. There was an agreement between the trade unions and the Government and the trade unions have already agreed to set up new machinery for husking, but they are not able to bring the new machinery. That is the difficulty. They do not have the money. So, I want to dispel certain doubts which the hon. Member has got. The only question is, the Central Government should spare some money. I think they have got a scheme. If they implement it, it will help a large number of workers.

The third point is, it is felt in several parts of the Country that cheap and bad quality of coir is being imported. That creates certain difficulties. If cheap and bad quality coir is used for production of mats, etc., our export will suffer. The Government should see to it and stop this unwanted import of coir.

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM : Sir, I thank the hon. Members who have given valuable suggestions. Mr. Baby mentioned about the plight of the coir workers in his State. For coir workers the Kerala Government has constituted a welfare fund. The Central Government is contributing its share and last year we have given about Rs. 25 lakhs towards this coir workers fund. The Government is also enforcing minimum wages for the coir workers.

Hon. Member Shri Balaram- has mentioned about modernisation. Of course, in the initial stage there was some resistance from the Marxist side. They had the apprehension that workers would be rendered jobless. After the recommendation of the Task Force of the State Government I think the modernisation programme is being implemented in the State in a phased manner. That will definitely improve the quality of the coir products.

Mr. Raju mentioned about brown fibre. It is picking up in other parts of the country also, that is, in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. We are also encouraging brown fibre. I request the hon. Member Mr. Raju to influence the State Government to come forward with some proposal and coordinate with the Coir Board.

Mr. Fernandes suggested many things, including repeal of the Act. If they have any concrete proposal to repeal the Act, definitely we will look into it.

With these words once again I thank the hon. Members for giving these suggestions.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) : Now I will put the motion.

The question is:

"That the BHI further to amend the Coir Industry Act, 1953, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY) : We shall now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

Clause 2 was added to the Bill

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM : Sir, I beg to move :

"That the Bill be passed."

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): The House is adjourned for lunch for one hour.

The House then adjourned for lunch at forty-six minutes past one of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at fifty one minutes past two of the clock. [THE VICE CHAIRMAN (SYED SIBTEY RAZI) in the Chair.]

**I STATUTORY RESOLUTION
SEEKING DISAPPROVAL OF THE
STATE BANK OF INDIA
(AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE, 1993
PROMULGATED BY THE
PRESIDENT ON 15TH OCTOBER,
1993**

**II THE STATE BANK OF INDIA
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 1993.**

श्री सत्य प्रकाश नारायण : (उत्तर प्रदेश) :
मैं प्रस्ताव करता हूँ कि :

**"यह सभा राष्ट्रपति द्वारा 15 अक्टूबर
1993 को प्रख्यापित भारतीय स्टेट**

**बैंक (संशोधन) अध्यादेश, 1993
(1993 का संख्या 33) का निरास्तुमोदन
करती है।"**

मान्यवर, 15 अक्टूबर 1993 को अध्यादेश जारी करके भारतीय स्टेट बैंक संशोधन विधेयक राष्ट्रपति जी को अनुमति से पास किया गया था और उसके उद्देश्यों और कारणों में बतलाया गया है कि वित्तीय प्रणाली संबंधी समिति यानी नरसिंहम समिति ने कुछ सिफारिशों की थीं और उस पर भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक ने कुछ कार्यवाही की है। इस विधेयक के गुण और अवगुणों में तो मैं नहीं जानना चाहता लेकिन जो संशोधन किया गया अध्यादेश के जरिए, उसका मैं विरोध करता हूँ।

जहां तक मुझे स्मरण है नरसिंहम कमेटी की रिपोर्ट 18 महीने पूर्व सरकार के पास गैज दी गई थी और संसद का सत्र उसके करीब 2 महीने पूर्व समाप्त हुआ था और दिसम्बर माह में फिर सत्र प्रारम्भ होने वाला था। तो सरकार को अदत पड़ गई है कि आवश्यकता हो या न हो, परिस्थितियां हों या न हों, अध्यादेश के जरिए कानून बनाने की अदत उसे पड़ गई है। यह कोई अच्छी परिपाटी नहीं है। उस समय संसद का सत्र तो नहीं चल रहा था लेकिन ऐसी कौन-कौन सी स्थितियां थीं, परिस्थितियां थीं, उनके सम्बन्ध में मैं भूखी जी से जानकारी प्राप्त करना चाहूंगा जिसके कारण बाध्य होकर वर्तमान सरकार को अध्यादेश के जरिए संशोधन करना पड़ा।

अध्यादेश जारी करने के लिए केवल यही पर्याप्त नहीं है कि उस समय संसद का अधिवेशन न चल रहा हो बल्कि दूसरी अनिवार्य शर्त यह है कि ऐसी परिस्थितियां विद्यमान हों जिनके चलते यह आवश्यक हो जाए कि किसी कानून के अध्यादेश के जरिए संशोधन करना पड़े।