

salaries of all classes of workers in the public sector undertakings have gone up and now even the class IV staff have come under the Income-Tax Act. This is a genuine demand and the Government must enhance the income-tax exemption limit to Rs. 60,000/-.

At present, the Government is giving 12 per cent interest on the amount accumulated in the provident fund of the employees and this interest rate was fixed some decades earlier. Over the years, the value of money has come down. Since the contribution to provident fund by the employees is their only savings after retirement, I request the Government to enhance the interest rate on the provident fund amount from 12 per cent to at least 15 per cent.

Most of the public sector undertakings have been talking about modernisation of their projects plants. I am sure that the employees and the trade unions are not against the modernisation. But the trade unions are demanding that proper rehabilitation of the employees should be made before launching modernisation drive. Modernisation can go in a big way in the interest of the country but it should not be at the cost of the workers. Therefore, I urge upon the Government to direct the Central Public sector undertakings to rehabilitate its employees before taking up modernisation of the plants.

ALLEGED MORE TO SHIFT THE SRI KRISHNA TEMPLE IN MINICOY ISLAND OF LAKSHADWEEP

SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL (Madhya Pradesh): Madam Deputy Chairperson, I would like to invite the attention of this hon. House, through you, to a situation in Lakshadweep Islands. There is one island called Minicoy and I would like to place before the House a special problem faced by the minority community there. Several armed forces personnel of Madhya Pradesh are located there. They are about 250 in number along with their families. There is only

one temple, Sri Krishna Temple. That is the only temple available in the whole island. In the name of locating some other office or Navodaya Vidyalaya, the residents are afraid that this temple is going to be removed and located in a far-off place making it practically impossible for the people to go to the temple. This apprehension is there among the members of the minority community. They have made a representation to me and I would draw the attention of the Government to this apprehension in the minds of the minority community in Minicoy. I would like to have some assurance from the Government that such a shifting will not take place and the minority community will be allowed to have free worship in Sri Krishna Temple in Minicoy Island. Thank You.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Minister is here and he will take note of it.

NEED TO REDUCE THE PRESCRIBED LIMIT OF 500 GRAMS OF GOLD UNDER THE GOLD BOND SCHEME TO 100 GRAMS (FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE MIDDLE-INCOME GROUP PEOPLE:

SHRI JOHN. F. FERNANDES (Goa): I want to congratulate the Government, specially the Finance Minister, for floating Gold Bonds which came into force on Monday the 15th of March. The President issued an Ordinance and the Bill is before this House for a discussion. As the Gold Bond Scheme has already come into force, I would like to say that the intention of the Government is to unearth 7000 tonnes of gold. The impression given to the general public is that the intention of the Government is also to regularise Rs. 5000 crores swindled by various people in the securities scam.

Madam, the minimum ceiling to deposit gold against the Gold Bond is 500 grams, and the value of this gold will be about Rs. 2 lakhs. But this scheme is not going to benefit the people

[Shri John F. Fernandes]

at large, the people in general, the common people who will not be able to avail of this facility.

Therefore I suggest to the Finance Minister that the ceiling of 500 grams should be reduced to 100 grams so that people in the middle income group can also avail of this facility and can benefit from this scheme. Thank you.

SHRI JOHN P. FERNANDES: Madam What about the Home Minister's statement?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will find out and inform. As the Home Minister has said, it all depends on the return of Mr. Rajesh Pilot. Let there be proper information, let there be much more information, from the Government. I will find out and inform the House accordingly. We will announce it on the television monitor.

The House is now adjourned for lunch, till 2.30 p.m.

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

The House reassembled after lunch at thirty three minutes past two of the clock.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI MD. SALIM) in the Chair.

Re demand for Statement on Bob-blast in Calcutta —contd.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI (Gujarat): Sir, I have a point of order.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI MD. SALIM): When there is no business, what is the point of order?

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: At 12.15 the Chair had directed the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs that within

one hour he should give an indication as to at what time the Home Minister would make a statement on Calcutta.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI MD. SALIM): When the House adjourned for lunch, the direction from the Chair was that as soon as they got the information, it will be shown on the monitor. Anyway, is there any information?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENARY AFFAIRS DR. ABRAR AHMED: No.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI MD. SALIM): The moment they got the information, it will be announced.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): At 12.15 if I heard correctly, the Chair had directed that within one hour at least they must give an indication of the timing. I think within one hour she did give an indication that as soon as the State Home Minister comes from Calcutta it will be flashed on the monitor and the House will be informed of the timing when the statement will be made.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI MD. SALIM): Now we go to special mentions. Mr. Viren Shah.

SPECIAL MENTIONS—Contd.

Outbreak of Jaundice in villages on the Banks of River Krishna in Western Maharashtra

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH (Maharashtra): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I want to make a special mention about the health hazards that prevail in the rural areas of Western Maharashtra, particularly in a place called 'Karad'. There has been a major outbreak of jaundice in Karad. I am referring to a report which appeared in the 'Indian Express' of 3rd