

बनाते हो, उसकी काट बन जाती है और अगर इस प्रकार के यंत्र बन कर टेक्नीफोन में लगने शुरू हो जायें, तो इसके दो परिणाम होंगे। एक तो सरकार का रेवेन्यू कम होता जाएगा और दूसरे ग्राहक पर उसका बिल बढ़ता जाएगा।

इसलिए मैं आपके और सदन के माध्यम से यह पत्र और सारी जागरूकी तो संचार मंत्री को तुरंत दूंगा, लेकिन मैं उनसे मांग करता हूँ कि वह इस जागरूकी को स्पेशल मेंशन को तीन महीने में उत्तर को न मानते हुए तुरंत उत्तर दें और सदन में बयान दें कि इस प्रकार की क्या चीज है। इसके बारे में मैं आपका ध्यान आकर्षित कर रहा हूँ।

डा० बापू कालदास (महाराष्ट्र): सब को एसा यंत्र मिले। पार्लियामेंट के मम्बरों को भी इस यंत्र की जानकारी दीजिये।

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA (West Bengal): Madam, he is suggesting a dangerous thing. The Government should take note of it. (*Interruptions*).

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Minister will take note of it. Let him first give the details.

Proposed privatisation of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant

SHRI SATYANARAYANA DRONAMRAJU (Andhra Pradesh): Madam Deputy Chairman, the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant is the first shore-based integrated plant being set up in India. The location is not only ideal but also advantageous as 20 per cent of its coking coal requirement would have to be met from imports. Exports would also be easier. Being a major producer of quality steel, it would also boost the industrialisation of the Southern region and, thus, contribute to the balanced growth of the different regions of the country. The plant is designed to adopt the most modern technology. The Visakhapatnam Steel Plant was originally designed to produce 3.4 million tonnes of molten steel. A revised project concept envisaging the production of

million tonnes of liquid steel was later adopted for the implementation of the project at a lesser capital cost in order to improve its economic pitality. The phase of construction in Visakhapatnam Steel project has of late picked up its momentum.

It will be interesting to note that it takes over a decade to set up the RS. 7500 crore plant with the introduction of a sophisticated technology for the first time in the country. But the irony of it is that when the plant has gone into production, the owners try their best to farm it out to a private agency, offering a discount of Rs. 1500 crores, besides other tempting concessions, the reason being that the management are hard put to raise the remaining Rs. 1000 crores required for the critical expansion of the plant. But the report indicating a move by the Government to privatise the steel plant has come as a bolt from the blue to the steel and other allied circles. The privatisation plan is being reportedly considered as an alternative to mobilise the additional funds to the tune of Rs. 1,000 crores to Rs. 1,500 crores required by the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant to reach its crucial second phase production target of 3 million tonnes. The reports emanating from the Capital indicate that the plant would either be sold out to a private sector enterprise or converted into a joint sector company or the resourceful Steel Authority of India Ltd. would be brought in.

The main reason for all this being the indifference shown by the Ministry of Finance in raising the required funds to wrap up the expansion programme of the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant by August, 1992 so as to enhance the plant's profitability. The real objective of the Government appears to be to hand over the responsibility of mobilising Rs. 1500 crores to new buyer. In fact the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant which has just completed its first year of production, is snowed under financial problems due to the crushing depreciation burden. Against this background, when the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant desperately needs Rs. 1500 crores to optimise its production capacity, there crops up the privatisation proposal.

[Shri Satyanarayana Dronamraju] It can be well argued that having laboured so hard to bring the plant to this stage, it will be an act of folly to hand it over now to some private agency.

In this context, it will be worthwhile to recall the enormous sacrifices made by the people of Andhra Pradesh for the maintenance of the plant.

In 1967 a tremendous agitation was launched all over Andhra Pradesh for the establishment of this Plant and a number of precious lives were lost at the altar of the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant Land measuring 36,000 acres was acquired for the establishment of this project, and in the process, 14,000 families in 26 villages were rendered homeless. Its foundation was laid by late Shrimati Indira Gandhi in 1971. It is the biggest plant in Asia.

In view of the above, I appeal to the Government that this plant should, on no account, be handed over to the private sector. This would not only be an act of gross injustice to the State of Andhra Pradesh, but it would also deeply injure their Sentiments attached with this gigantic plant—a living monument of the sufferings and sacrifices made by the people of Andhra Pradesh.

Inadequate fertilizer subsidy to small and marginal farmers of Rajasthan

SHRI GAJ SINGHI (Rajasthan); Madam Deputy Chairman, I wish to draw the attention of the House to the fact that justice is not being done to the small and marginal farmers of Rajasthan. Under the recently revised fertilizer policy, the 30 per cent price increase is not being passed on to the poor small and marginal farmers. However, a sum of rupees five crores only has been allocated to the Rajasthan Government to subsidise the fertiliser prices as against the total amount of Rs. 405 crores sanctioned by the Ministry. This is only 1.2 per cent whereas Rajasthan is the second largest State in the country which occupies 10 per cent of the total land mass and even if we calculate Rajasthan's share of the population, it accounts for 4 per cent of the country's population. From this

it is very clear that Rajasthan is receiving a disproportionate share of this subsidy and the main reason for this is that the Ministry of Agriculture has adopted an *ad hoc* criterion for giving relief under this policy on the basis of per-hectare consumption of small and marginal farmers which has been calculated on holdings of two hectares and below. It is not understood why the prescribed norms by the Rural Development Ministry for various Centrally-aided schemes already in existence, namely, IRDP, DPAP and DDP have been totally ignored even though this point was brought to the notice of the Agriculture Ministry in the meetings held on 7th and 9th of August by the representative of the Rajasthan Government.

The area prescribed for determining small and marginal farmers under these schemes has been worked out after considerable thought and study and it is higher than that prescribed by the Agriculture Ministry because it takes into consideration the poor nature and low productivity of Rajasthan's desert areas. In Barmer and Jaisalmer districts the prescribed limit for determining unirrigated small and marginal farms is between 5 and 10 hectares, for the arid regions of Bikaner, Nagore, Jalore, Pali, Churu and Jodhpur districts it is between 3.5 and 7 hectares and for the semi-arid districts of Jhunjhunu, Ajmer, Dungarpur, Udaipur, Banswara, it is up to 3 hectares. On this basis the subsidised area comes to 45 lakh hectares as opposed to 19 lakh hectares adopted by the Agriculture Ministry. From this it is abundantly clear that Rajasthan share would increase by 24 per cent. I am sure the House will appreciate how many small and marginal farmers will be deprived of the benefits of this relief and will be feeling aggrieved and discriminated against if two sets of separate yardsticks are applied by the central Government under various schemes for determining the size of small and marginal farms.

At the best of times dual pricing policies are fraught with difficulties and encourage corruption and favouritism. This discrepancy would further add to the administrative and legal problems of Rajasthan Government and those who really deserve the benefits from this programme will be overlooked. I would, therefore,