

it and go in depth into the report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General. If this is done, I am sure, not less than Rs. 2,000 crores of additional revenue can be had through excise duty. Thank you.

Drought situation in Kerala

SHRI P. K. KUNJACHEN (Kerala): Sir, I thank the Chairman for allowing me to make this Special Mention.

Sir, a very serious situation has arisen in various parts of the country, particularly in Kerala. Kerala is facing a drought situation for the third year in succession. As many as 673 villages have been identified as drought-affected villages. Scarcity of drinking water has become a very serious problem. As a result, diseases are spreading, agricultural production has been affected and industrial production also has been affected. A 50 per cent power cut has already been introduced and it is reported in the papers that a 60 per cent power cut is going to be introduced in the next few days. So, this is a very serious situation.

The Government of Kerala has taken up this problem and is doing whatever is possible for it. After taking all these aspects into account, the Kerala Government has submitted a memorandum to the Government of India, asking for Rs. 47.50 crores as help. But, till now, not even a single rupee has been granted by the Centre. Without the Centre's help it is not possible for the Kerala Government alone to tide over the situation. So I wish to draw the attention of the Government of India to this and appeal to them that urgent help must be given to the State of Kerala.

I think the Government of India is taking a very complacent attitude towards this question now. According to a report which appeared on the 5th, in Bengal also more than 12 districts have been affected by

drought. Tamil Nadu is affected, Andhra is affected, a part of Maharashtra is also affected. This being the condition in various parts of the country, the Government is still taking a complacent attitude towards this problem. That attitude should change and the Government should consider the seriousness of the situation and take urgent steps to see that some remedies are found. Calamities may occur in every country, but I am really sorry to state that even after 42 years of Independence serious and permanent steps are not being taken by the Government of India to see that remedies are found for this problem.

So, this should be taken into account and some remedy has to be found. At the same time, immediate help should be rendered to the Government of Kerala for tiding over the situation.

With these words, I conclude.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY (Pondicherry) : Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, it is a fact that in Kerala, except Trivandrum, Cochin and Calicut, all other areas have been affected by drought. The State Government has sent a proposal for the purpose of getting relief from the Central Government.

I can say that the worst affected people are the planters. The agriculturists there have been affected because even the intermittent rain which was there in the previous years, has not continued this time in Kerala. Not only that, but especially the southern States of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, including my State, Pondicherry, have had no rain for the past seven months. All the State Governments have written to the Central Government for the purpose of getting relief. Due to the insufficient rain the persons affected are the agriculturists and also small traders and other people.

[Shri V. Narayana Samy]

Therefore, I would like to urge upon the Central Government, on the basis of the representations received from the State Governments, to send expert teams and find out the actual needs of the State Governments concerned and assist them for the purpose of saving the existing crops and recouping the situation.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI (Tamil Nadu): Sir, as far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, I think, from the Central Government a team is going to Tamil Nadu to assess the problem.

Delay in giving clearance to setting up of Gas-based Turbine Power Stations in Maharashtra

SHRI VISHWASRAO RAM-RAO PATIL (Maharashtra): Sir, the present comfortable power position enjoyed by the Maharashtra State may not last long. In fact, the 13th Annual power survey done by the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) has estimated a shortage of 1*100 MW by the end of the Seventh Plan and the shortage will increase further by the end of the Eighth Plan. Under the circumstances, in view of short generation of the projects based on gas, the Government of Maharashtra has submitted the following proposals for approval of the Government of India:

(1) 8x108 MW Gas Turbine Power Station: As you are aware, Maharashtra has sufficient experience of installing and operating gas turbine power stations following the setting up of such a station at Uran. In June, 1984, the State Government had submitted a feasibility report for setting up of 8 X 108 MW gas turbine power station either in Raigad district close to the ONGC installation or in Dhule district nearer the HBJ gas pipeline.

(2) 1x500 MW Power Station near Dabhol: We have also submitted a report for installing 2 X 500

MW power station at Dabhol, based on gas as the fuel. The gas pipeline can be extended from Nagothane in Raigad district up to the site of the proposed power station.

(3) 2X120 RW Power Station at Thakurli, District Thane: As you are aware, the Central Railway have their power station at Thakurli (Chola) which was generating around 35 MW. This power station has been shut down since December^ 1987 following an accident; Since sufficient infrastructure is available, the same should be fruitfully utilised for installing a 2x210 MW gas based power station. This would not only ensure meeting the requirements of around 200' MW of the Railways during the Eighth plan on a reliable basis, but would also meet partly the growing load in the adjoining area of Thane District;

All the three projects mentioned above are essentially based on gas as the fuel. The total requirement of gas for the three stations put together would be around 13 million cubic metres- per day. Since large quantities of gas have been struck in the Bombay High; South Bassein and Ratnagiri, which is proposed to be transported as far away as Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, it should not be difficult for the Department of Petroleum to commit this small quantum of gas for these three power stations. Since gas is the main fuel, environmental problems also will not arise. Further, in places like Thakurli and Dabhol where coal supply is not possible either due to non-availability of facilities or due to congestion of the railway system, the installation based on gas can be set up without difficulty. Since gas has already been brought near these locations, the gas supply can be made available to these power stations giving a small extension to the existing gas