

see that proper check is maintained on the grant released by the Centre for its proper utilisation in the State.

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY (Karnataka): I fully support my colleague and friend who has espoused the cause of Karnataka and I would like the Government to sanction, not Rs. 50 crores, but at least Rs. 100 crores to begin with. Rs. 15 crore assistance is a peanut. Therefore, I request the Government to make an immediate announcement and give Rs. 100 crores and later on it may be followed by further assistance.

Pressure on Government of India to sign Paris Convention of Patents Law

SHRI CHITTA BASU (West Bengal): It is a matter of great concern for the country to know that the United States of America and multinational corporations are putting pressure on the Government of India to sign Paris Convention and change the existing Patents Law of our country. It is learnt that President Reagan has sent a letter to our Prime Minister requesting him to join the Paris Convention. We have our Patents Law passed by Parliament in 1970, having considered all aspects of it. In a nutshell, it provides for product patents only in a few areas, and that too for 7 to 14 years while allowing only processed patents in the foods, drugs and chemicals field. This means that an Indian drug company, for instance, by changing the process slightly, can escape the foreign patent on the product. The MNCs, that is, multinational corporations, are now putting pressure on the Government of India to change the present law. If India buckles to United States pressure, the entire third-world countries will suffer grievously and Indian science and technology will also suffer. We urge upon the Prime Minister to make a statement in the House assuring the countrymen that India will continue to refuse to join the Paris

Convention and also shall not change the present Patents Law in the interest of the country and the third-world countries. Thank you.

Need for the Reorganisation of Coir Board

SHRI E. BALANANDAN (Kerala): Madam Deputy Chairman, I rise to raise a very important problem created by the Government in the appointment of the Coir Board. Coir Board has been recently appointed by the Government with 24 members, of which only seven are from Kerala, and out of these seven, four have nothing to do with coir industry. Madam, you know, coir industry in Kerala employs five lakh workers. Ninety per cent of coir industry is in Kerala. The number of registered coir factories is 4,136. Out of this, 3,884 are located in Kerala. The lion's share of the total 25,000 tonnes of coir and coir products exported is from Kerala. Ninety-two per cent of the total production of 1,22,000 tonnes of coir yarn and ninety per cent of the total production of 5,000 tonnes of coir products is from Kerala.

Now, Madam, in this Board, seven people are from Kerala. The principle is that representation should be given to the trade unions, the coir industry, coir cooperatives, public sector husk producers, manufacturers of coir and coir products, internal and export trade, Government and Members of Parliament. This is how the Coir Board was being reconstituted hitherto. But this time, as I pointed out, the Industry Ministry decided that only seven people from Kerala will be appointed. Out of this, as I said, four people have nothing to do with the coir industry. I do not understand why this kind of step was taken by the hon. Minister. This is total injustice. The Coir Board is intended to promote the interests of the workers and the industry. Kerala accounts for ninety per cent of the production. Hitherto, majority of the representa-

tion was given to the Kerala State and various interests representing the coir industry were included. This time, there is no representation to the trade unions, the co-operatives, the industry people and the public sector engaged in this field.

Therefore, madam, through you, I would request the Government that they should revise their decision and the Board must be reconstituted properly in order to do justice. This industry brings in a lot of foreign exchange to the country. Therefore, I would request that the Government should consider the following demands.

Firstly, the present Coir Board should be immediately reconstituted giving due representation to the Kerala State, trade unions, public sector and the co-operative sector. Secondly, legislation should be brought forward to give protection to 'white fibre' and products of white fibre and to set up a research centre to design and develop new, sophisticated, items with white fibre. Thirdly, since the coir industry which is the main livelihood of five lakh workers and thousands of small-scale producers is a village industry, 35 per cent rebate may be allowed for co-operative and public sectors throughout the year as in the case of the khadi industry. Fourthly, legislation should be brought forward to set up a coir board exclusively for Kerala to sustain and develop this traditional industry of Kerala. This is the request made by the workers and the industry as a whole. Therefore, the Government should immediately consider these suggestions and take steps to reconstitute the Coir Board in the manner suggested.

SHRI N. E. BALARAM (Kerala): Madam, with your permission, I would like to associate myself with the Special Mention made by my colleague, Mr. Balanandan. I would like to say only one word. As he said, out of the

co-operative societies and the State Government. But the Government can do one thing. There is one seat vacant. There are two unwanted people there. They know it very well. They can immediately reconstitute the Board. It would not create any difficulty for them. (Interruptions) of course, they can co-opt. But as I said, there is one vacancy and there are two people who are thoroughly unwanted. I do not want to mention their names. They should be replaced and the Board should be reconstituted giving representation to the trade unions etc.

Epidemic affecting fish in North-Eastern States

श्री हरिसिंह (उत्तर प्रदेश): महोदया, हमारे देश के वेस्ट बंगाल राज्य में आज एक गंभीर संकट की स्थिति पैदा हो गई है जिसकी ओर मैं आपके माध्यम से मंत्री जी का ध्यान आकर्षित करना चाहता हूँ।

महोदया, वहाँ पर मछलियों में एक अजीब किस्म की बीमारी लग गई है जिसकी वजह से उन मछलियों को खाकर वहाँ के लोगों के पेट में फोड़े बन गए हैं और पेट की बीमारियों से अनेक लोग पीड़ित हैं, यह बीमारी तीन महीने से वहाँ पर चल रही है। इस बीमारी का कारण यह बताया जाता है कि वहाँ पर जो बाढ़ आई थी उसके कारण पानी में कैमिकल्स वगैरह मिल गए और उनका पानी जब हमारे तालाबों में गया तो वहाँ की मछलियों को वह बीमारी लग गई। इसका नतीजा यह हुआ कि वहाँ के लोगों के खाने का जो स्टेपल फूड होता है, वह कम होता जा रहा है और वहाँ के लोगों को खाने में प्रोटीन नहीं मिल पा रहा है। लिहाजा बच्चे भी बीमार होते जा रहे हैं। लोगों को बैलेंस डाइट नहीं मिल रही है।

महोदया, सबसे बड़े दुख की बात यह है कि...