

Highways Authority of India. This project is envisaged as the Port Connectivity Programme under NHDP. This project is proposed for free movement of commercial traffic from Chennai Port to outside Chennai. This elevated express way starts at Chennai Port near War memorial and ends at Maduravayal NH4. This project runs along the banks of river Cooum for the entire length. I would like to point out that on the vast stretch of land along the Cooum river, there are 2,500 shops and small commercial establishments such as lathe machine shops, spare-parts, iron scrap shops, etc., are available for a length of 2,400 metres at Chindadripet and Pudupet. Sir, these shop vendors have been there for more than four decades doing petty business. No solution was found during the negotiation between the committee of the State Government officials and the affected business people. The State Government is prepared to offer a small compensation on the basis of the structural value of the shop which is not accepted by the shop owners. The shops are the only source of their bread. They demand that the Government to provide alternative place to continue their business. There is an apprehension among the 2,400 small business people that they may be left stranded by the authorities. Therefore, I appeal to the Government to come to the rescue of the poor shop owners and save them from the present crisis.

Demand to give the benefits of Debt Waiver Scheme to all farmers

SHRI P.R. RAJAN (Kerala): Sir, the relief of Debt Waiver and Debt Relief Scheme, 2008 envisaged by the Government is available only to those farmers whose loans were outstanding on 29.02.08. There are several farmers in Kerala who have repaid the dues before this date and the scheme obviously discriminates them *vis-a-vis* farmers who got the waiver. The Kerala Government has already taken up this case with the Union Government to include the farmers who have settled their dues before 29.02.08 within the purview of the scheme.

As per the scheme, the loans issued by lending institutions from 1.04.97 to 31.03.07, and overdue as on 31.12.07 which remained unpaid as on 29.02.08 is the eligible amount for relief. Before the announcement of the scheme in February 2008, the Kerala Government had ordered to implement a special collection drive programme. The farmers, in spite of their financial difficulties, responded to the call and settled their dues during the period. The poor farmers who have settled their dues during the special drive period are eligible for the benefits of the Debt Waiver Scheme announced and being implemented by the Government of India for the reasons that they settled the dues inbetween 1.02.08 and 29.02.08.

I, therefore, request the Government for sympathetic consideration of the matter and early orders. Thank you.

Demand to commemorate Bicentenary of Baba Banda Singh Bahadur

SARDAR TARLOCHAN SINGH (Haryana): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, India has a great tradition of honouring the national heroes and is always proud of paying homage to their memory especially on

historic days. It is a known fact that during the long foreign rule over India, it was great hero Shivaji Maharaj who established a sovereign rule over a territory in Maharashtra in 1660 AD. We have so much respect for his deeds and have his statues all over the country. After him, the second person who had the honour of overthrowing the Mughal Rule in Punjab is Baba Banda Singh Bahadur who started his journey of victory from Nanded in Maharashtra and entered Punjab in 1709 AD. He was blessed by his master Guru Gobind Singhji in Nanded and was bestowed with armour of the Guru.

Baba Banda Singh Bahadur defeated the Mughal Governor of Sirhind on 12th May, 1710 and was declared a sovereign ruler of Punjab. He established his capital near Nahan, now in Himachal Pradesh, and built a fort named Lohgarh. At that time, the entire agriculture land was owned by the Mughal Emperor and the tillers were treated as *Muzares*. It was to the credit of Baba Banda Bahadur that he in a proclamation on 27th May, 1710 AD made all the tillers of the land as owners of the land. This historic order changed the whole economy of Punjab and brought jubilation to the entire farming community.

I request that the Government of India should decide to commemorate the historic victory of Banda Bahadur, 200 years ago, by forming a national committee to honour the memory of great warrior and set up suitable memorials at historic places in India and also produce literature on his life and deeds. He died later on as a martyr and the details of that are written by the British travellers who were witness to that gruesome torture. Thank you.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA (Jharkhand): Sir, I associate myself with this issue. I would just like to mention that Banda Bairagi, who was a Bairagi on the banks of Godavari, was blessed by Guru Gobind Singhji and was baptised. Ultimately, Guru Gobind Singhji gave him spiritual and marshal power. He invaded Punjab to take revenge of shahidee of four Sahebjadas and of Guru Teg Bahadur. Ultimately, he became a good administrator and a reformist. When he got this land transferred from Zamindars and Mughal Emperors in favour of farmers, that was a big revolution. In these days, even in a democracy, it is very difficult to go for land reforms in our country. In those days, he had done that with power, might, sword and with conviction. Thank you.

SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS (Chhattisgarh): Sir, I associate myself with this issue.

SHRI AVTAR SINGH KARIMPURI (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, I also associate myself with this issue.

Demand to assess the credibility of Electronic Voting Machines in the country

श्री श्रीगोपाल व्यास (छत्तीसगढ़) : महोदय, अब तक केवल राजनेता ही इलेक्ट्रॉनिक वोटिंग मशीनों की विश्वसनीयता पर उंगली उठाते रहे हैं, पर अब विशेषज्ञ भी उसमें गड़बड़ी की सम्भावनाओं को सिद्ध कर रहे हैं। विदेशी विश्वविद्यालयों के अध्ययन के आधार पर यह भी कहा जा रहा है कि यदि मशीन का सोर्स कोड ज्ञात हो