Request for repatriation of fishermen arrested from Gujarat and returning boats etc. captured by Pakistan authorities

SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI (Gujarat): Sir, the Arabian Sea is the fruitful fishing zone for fishermen of Western India. Most of the fishermen from West and North come to coastal areas of Gujarat for their fishing business. Pakistan Marine Security Agency so far has captured 361 fishermen and 265 boats from this area in 2005. Most of them belong to Gujarat. This is a continuous activity of the PSMA, Gujarat Government and NGO's from Gujarat and also M.P.'s have repeatedly requested the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Agriculture for repatriation of these fishermen along with their boats and other appliances. This problem has been taken up by External Affairs Ministry with Pakistan authorities and there was some kind of settlement. Yet, Pakistan authorities are arresting the fishermen of Gujarat and capturing their boats. Sometimes at intervals some of them are repatriated but boats and vessels are not returned. Hence they lose their livelihood. Hence, the Government of India is requested to have the matter looked into personally with the Pakistan Government and their concerned Agencies to repatriate these fishermen with their boats as soon as possible. The Government of Inda should urge Pakistan Government to treat this issue mutually on the lines of our agreement with Sri Lanka Government so that fishermen may get some relief and security.

SHRI AJAY MAROO (Jharkhand): Sir, I associate myself with the Special Mention made by Shri Lekhraj Bachani.

SHRI RUDRANARAYAN PANY (Orissa): Sir, I also associate myself with the Special Mention made by Shri Lekhraj Bachani.

Demand to give financial assistance to the drought affected State of Uttaranchal along with other relief measures

श्री हरीश रावत(उत्तरांचल)ः महोदय,मौसम चक्र में आए हुए भारी बदलाव के कारण देश के कई राज्य, जिनमें उत्तरांचल भी सम्मिलित हैं, भयंकर सूखे की चपेट में आ चुके हैं। उत्तराचंल में पिछले वर्ष अगस्त, 2006से अभी तक अधिकांश क्षेत्रों में वर्षा नहीं हुई हैं, महज कुछ स्थानों पर ही नाममात्र की वर्षा हुई है । इस समय वर्षा के अभाव में उत्तराचंल सर्वाधिक सूखा पीड़ित राज्य है और यहां पर लगातार तीसरे वर्ष से सूखा पड़ रहा हैं। राज्य के असिचिंत खेती वाले क्षेत्रों में रबी की फसल पूर्णतः नष्ट हो चुकी है। फल और सब्जियों के पौध और फूल भी नष्ट हो गए है । जंगलों में जाड़ों में ही आग लगने से पशुओ के लिए चारे की गंभीर समस्या खड़ी हो गई है।

राज्य के भांवर व तराई भूभाग में भूगर्भ का जलस्तर घटने और नदियों में पानी की मात्रा घटने से सिंचित खेती भी कुप्रभावित हो रही है। नदियों के जलस्तर में आई भारी गिरावट से राज्य की जल विद्युत योजनाओं में क्षमता से बहुत कम बिजली पैदा हो रही है। राज्य के अधिकांश गांव और कस्बे घोर पेयजल संकट से ग्रस्त होते जा रहे हैं।

मेरा केन्द्र सरकार से आग्रह है कि राज्य सरकार को सूखे की स्थिति का सामना करने के लिए पर्याप्त आर्थिक मदद की जाए। सहकारी बैंकों सहित समस्त बैंकों द्वारा कृषि ऋणों पर ब्याज की राशि माफ की जाए तथा ऋण अदा करने में असमर्थ किसानों के ऋण की वसूली स्थगित की जाए। इसके अतिरिक्त राज्य को केन्द्रीय पूल से अतिरिक्त बिजली की उपलब्ध करवाई जाए।

डा.एम0एस0गिल(पजांब)**:** महोदय,मैं इनके द्वारा उल्लिखित स्पैशल मैंन्शन का समर्थन करता हूं।

डा0फागुनी राम(बिहार)**:** महोदय,मैं इनके द्वारा किए गए विशेष उल्लेख का समर्थन करता हूं।

श्री मोती लाल वोरा(छत्तीसगढ़)**:** सर, मैं भी इनका समर्थन करता हूं।

श्री जय प्रकाश अग्रवाल (राष्ट्रीय राजधानी क्षेत्र, दिल्ली)**:** महोदय,मैं इनके द्वारा रखे गए विशेष उल्लेख का समर्थन करता हूं।

Request for exemption of excise duty to wood-based industry in North-Eastern region

SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHERJEE (Assam): Sir, before 1996 about 2.5 lakh persons directly and indirectly were employed in wood-based industry in North Eastern Region. Industry had a set back when Supreme Court imposed ban on tree felling in 1996; hence such industries had to stop their activities. Now, barely 10,000 workers are engaged in industries for some ancillary work. Factories could not be closed as remuneration had to be paid to workers without work as per Supreme Court orders. Later, High Power Committee set up by the Supreme Court allowed import of timber from Myanmar to carry on activities in industries which identified factories in North East for shifting to designated industrial estate on the advice of the State Government and the Supreme court finally allowed to re-start of production of such factories from 1 st May, 2000. However, crunch as the expenditure on workers' salary and maintenance was a continuous process without production. Realizing the pathetic condition of the industry, the Governments of Assam and Arunchal Pradesh requested the Central Government for extending benefits of various exemptions under the North-Eastern Industry Policy, 1997, to this industry. A Notification of additional