

DR. AMAR PATNAIK: Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

**Need for release of legacy loan of Rs.2,200 crore as a special package for
Puducherry**

SHRI N. GOKULAKRISHNAN (Puducherry): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Union Budget for 2021-22 has dealt a deadly blow to the expectations of the people of the Union Territory of Puducherry. As compared to the last year grant of Rs.1,703 crores, the grant for the coming year is only Rs.1,729 crores. There is an increase of just 1.5 per cent. I had been repeatedly pleading in this august House that at least a 10 per cent increase should be given each year, considering the rising cost of prices and expenses. Already, there is a grouse in the minds of the people that the Central Government is treating the people of Puducherry with a step-motherly attitude.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no. Don't make allegations; make your suggestions. It has become a fashion.

SHRI N. GOKULAKRISHNAN: The Covid-19 pandemic impacted the finances of the UT very badly. It had to mop up the resources beyond the budgetary estimates. The Centre had to come to the rescue of all the States by arranging loans to manage the Covid-19 situation. That being so, an increase of a very meagre amount of Rs.26 crores over the previous year will not in any way help the Government to tide over the crisis. The demands for writing off the legacy loan of Rs.2,200 crores, a special package for having run the Panchayati Raj Institutions from 2011-16 and the reimbursement of the Pay Commission arrears are already pending with the Centre. In this situation, we expect the Centre to extend a helping hand by providing an instant increase in the allocation of budgetary grant at least by 10 per cent over the previous year grant.

Proposal to privatise the Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited

SHRI KANAKAMEDALA RAVINDRA KUMAR (Andhra Pradesh): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for having given me the opportunity. The foundation for the Visakhapatnam steel plant, that is, the Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd. (RINL), was laid in 1977 by the then Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi, after a prolonged agitation. The plant