

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

was commissioned in 1992. The Vizag Steel Plant was built on people's demand and sacrifice after "Visakha ukku-Andhrula hakku" agitation. To my knowledge, hon. Chairman also participated in that agitation. Around 64 villages sacrificed their lands, which was about 22,000 acres, and properties. Approximately, 16,000 people got displaced to build this plant. The present value of the plant is more than two lakh crores. The rationale and justification given for privatizing the Steel Plant is the losses that it has been reporting over the last few years. Firstly, Visakhapatnam Steel Plant does not have any captive mines and therefore it is forced to buy the raw material. The second reason is, it is a professional PSU which reports operational profits. The company only started reporting losses in the last four years when it had to pay the huge interest to service debts. Thirdly, the entire industry is facing high iron ore costs, high freight costs, etc. Finally, sound economic principles suggest the hasty disinvestment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

SHRI KANAKAMEDALA RAVINDRA KUMAR: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has given its in-principle approval for disinvestment of the steel plant. The steel plant may run by a corporate entity. Even if the plant is handed over to a private company, the private company has to depend on National Mineral Development Corporation. Instead of privatization, it may be directed to supply iron to Vishaka Steel Plant.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right. Thank you. Shrimati Vandana Chavan. ...(*Interruptions*)... No, no, Mr. Ravindra Kumar. You have to confine to time. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI KANAKAMEDALA RAVINDRA KUMAR: The people of Andhra Pradesh are demanding the Centre to withdraw its decision to disinvest the Government share in VSP. The people are agitating for the last ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shrimati Priyanka Chaturvedi. ...(*Interruptions*)...

DR. AMAR PATNAIK: Sir, I would like to associate myself with the Zero Hour mention made by the hon. Member.

DR. SASMIT PATRA: Sir, I would also like to associate myself with the Zero Hour mention made by the hon. Member.

श्री सभापति: श्रीमती प्रियंका चतुर्वेदी।

श्रीमती प्रियंका चतुर्वेदी (महाराष्ट्र): सभापति जी, आपका बहुत-बहुत आभार। मैं लोक सभा से...

श्री सभापति: मैंने देखा। प्रियंका जी, मेरा सुझाव यह होगा कि आप बैठकर बोलिए।

Need for safe return of Indian sailors stranded in China

श्रीमती प्रियंका चतुर्वेदी (महाराष्ट्र): जी सर। मैं आपके समक्ष एक बहुत गंभीर और urgent विषय को लाना चाहती हूँ। मैंने 31 दिसम्बर को माननीय एक्सटर्नल अफेयर्स मिनिस्टर को भी इस बारे में लिखा था। MV Jag Anand और MV Anastasia पर हमारे इंडियन सेलर्स चाइना सी में फंसे हुए थे और उनको किसी तरीके की मदद नहीं मिल रही थी। MV Jag Anand में जो इंडियन सेलर्स थे, वे वापस देश आ चुके हैं, परन्तु जो MV Anastasia में हैं, वे अभी भी चाइना सी में हैं और वहां से उनको वापस लाना, मैं मानती हूँ कि हमारी प्राथमिकता होनी चाहिए। मैंने इस मुद्दे को हर पटल पर उठाया है और अब मैं आपके सामने इस मुद्दे को ला रही हूँ। मैं एक्सटर्नल अफेयर्स मिनिस्टर से रिक्वेस्ट करूंगी कि जो लोग जुलाई, 2020 से वहां पर फंसे हुए हैं, उनको जल्द से जल्द देश वापस लाया जाए।

श्री सभापति: प्रियंका जी, अच्छा है। यह मुद्दा महत्वपूर्ण है। श्रीमती वंदना चव्हाण।

पत्तन, पोत परिवहन और जलमार्ग मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री ; तथा रसायन और उर्वरक मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री मनसुख मांडविया): सर,...

श्री सभापति: हां माननीय मंत्री जी, आप संक्षेप में respond करिए।

श्री मनसुख मांडविया: सभापति महोदय, माननीय सदस्या ने जो issue सदन में उठाया है, उसके संदर्भ में मेरी Ports, Shipping and Waterways Ministry और External Affairs Ministry लगातार चाइना के एम्बेसडर के साथ सम्पर्क में है। एक शिप के कू वापस आ गए हैं और short time में issue resolve हो जाएंगे और हमारे जो सीफेअरर्स बाकी हैं, वे भी इंडिया में वापस आ जाएंगे।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Very Good.

DR. AMAR PATNAIK: Sir, I would like to associate myself with the Zero Hour mention made by the hon. Member.