

year, there is an urgent need for continued relief and rehabilitation in the State. The Central Government has already released Rs.61 crores for relief and aid. I would also like to thank the hon. Finance Minister, who, in this year's Budget Speech, included Himachal Pradesh for infrastructure development. Further development has to be sustainable keeping in mind the fragile ecological state of the mountains.

All the dams of Himachal must have strict regular safety checks. Historic and scientific solutions should be implemented to check muck dumping, dams and roads. Road construction by the NHAI needs to be redesigned, keeping in mind the unique mountain terrain. Hon. Deputy Chairman, Sir, this is a serious matter which requires urgent and continued Government support. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The following hon. Members associated themselves with the matter raised by hon. Member, Shri Harsh Mahajan: Shri M. Mohamed Abdulla (Tamil Nadu), Shri Devendra Pratap Singh (Chhattisgarh), Dr. Fauzia Khan (Maharashtra), Dr. Sasmit Patra (Odisha), Shri P. Wilson (Tamil Nadu) and Shri Dhananjay Bhimrao Mahadik (Maharashtra).

Thank you, Harsh Mahajan ji. Now, Shri B. Parthasaradhi Reddy. Demand for Government intervention to bail out dedicated ethanol plants in India.

#### **Demand for Government intervention to bail-out dedicated Ethanol Plants in India**

SHRI B. PARTHASARADHI REDDY (Telangana): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I wish to draw the attention of this esteemed House towards the burning issue pertaining to the 131 dedicated ethanol plants and the signing of the long-term agreement with the Central Government to set up plants for manufacture and supply of ethanol as a part of the National Policy on Bio-fuels. Sir, it has the investment of about 25,000 crores of rupees, which generated the employment potential to the extent of about 2 lakh people directly and indirectly. Sir, I would like to give a brief background on grain ethanol industry.

Prior to 2018, the Government of India was dependent solely on ethanol derived from molasses to meet the fuel blending needs. Realizing that ethanol supply from sugarcane will not be adequate to meet the ambitious E20 blending target by 2025, in June, 2018, the Government introduced a new bio-fuel policy and encouraged using damaged food grains. Sir, the Government also introduced at the same time a policy to supply surplus rice from FCI at a fixed price to DEPs and linked it to price paid by the oil marketing companies for supply of ethanol.

Government needs around 1,000 crore liters of ethanol to meet the E20 blending target by 2025. Inspired by the Government of India Biofuel policy, in the past four years, nearly about 131 new grain-based DEPs were set up across the country to meet the surging demand for the production of the ethanol, with an investment of about, as I mentioned, Rs. 25,000 crores with the capacity of 600 crore litres meeting the 60 percent of the overall requirement of the country.

In July, 2023, the Government has abruptly stopped supply of surplus rice from FCI to DEPs and encouraged the entire industry to move to maize at the primary feedstock. This has created a shockwave in the DEP industry while another blow was price increase of the broken rice and the damaged rice from 21 rupees to 29 rupees, and, also at the same time, maize price increased from 21 rupees to 29 rupees. Though the Government has taken care of the price hike of maize and broken rice while fixing the ethanol price, it is not proportional to the actual price hike resulting in the industry as unviable. The Government has permitted import of maize under the Tariff Relief Quota (TRF) by another industry, the feed industry but not for use by fuel ethanol units. Sir, shortage of the feedstock is threatening the entire DEP industry, but also adversely impacts the Government's ambitious E20 bio-fuel blending target. I, therefore, urge the Government to (i) restore supply of the broken rice and surplus rice through FCI, which was abruptly stopped, (ii) allow the DEP industry to import maize under the Tariff Relief Quota as applicable for other feed industry, and, (iii) fix the ethanol price in proportion to the prevailing prices of broken rice and maize. ...(*Time-bell rings.*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Time is over. Please take your seat.

The following hon. Members associated themselves with the matter raised by hon. Member, Shri B. Parthasaradhi Reddy: Shri Jawhar Sircar (West Bengal), Shri Sandosh Kumar P (Kerala), Shri M. Mohamed Abdulla (Tamil Nadu), Dr. John Brittas (Kerala), Shri Dhananjay Bhimrao Mahadik (Maharashtra), Dr. Sasmit Patra (Odisha), Shri P. Wilson (Tamil Nadu), Dr. Fauzia Khan (Maharashtra) and Shri Prakash Chik Baraik (West Bengal).

Hon. Member, Shri Samirul Islam. Demand for immediate action to close the existing gaps in the curriculum at IITs and other reputed institutions of the country.

SHRI SAMIRUL ISLAM: Sir, with your permission, I would like to speak in my mother tongue, Bengali.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please.