

Need for retaining ICRISAT Headquarters at Hyderabad

SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO (Andhra Pradesh): Madam, India is considered as the most representative of the semi-arid tropics, and Hyderabad is the most convenient and strategic venue to locate ICRISAT (International Crop Research Institute of Semi-Arid Tropics), kindling the hopes of progress and prosperity among the poor dry land farmers of the 48 developing countries across SAT. The ICRISAT is a gift not only to Andhra Pradesh, but also to the country. The Government of Andhra Pradesh has provided 1,400 acres of prime land to the ICRISAT. Apart from this, the Government of India and the Government of Andhra Pradesh have also extended UN status to ICRISAT and tax benefits, in addition to highly technical human resource. People of Andhra Pradesh are shocked on knowing recommendation of the EPR Panel on ICRISAT. The panel has appreciated the performance of the Institute, but we have not been able to understand the reason behind its recommendation to transfer this Institute to Sub-Saharan Africa. The Institute has not accomplished its task and has a lot to contribute to SAT. So, it is needless to say that the result and contributions of the ICRISAT have reached not only the Member-countries, but also Sub-Saharan Africa. The pace of transfer and feedback can be expected to further improve looking at the IT revolution in Andhra Pradesh. The ICRISAT has also formed a consortium with State Agriculture Universities and Government Institutions to manage watersheds effectively. Therefore, any move to shift the headquarters would be detrimental to the development of agriculture, not only in India, but also in Asia. Hence, I request the Government to take immediate steps to stop transferring the ICRISAT from Hyderabad. Thank You, Madam.

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): Madam, I associate myself with the Special Mention made by Shri K. Rama Mohana Rao.

Need to take appropriate steps to implement the Paradeep Oil Refinery Project in Orissa

SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA (Orissa): Madam, my Special Mention is regarding the protest against the decision of the Central Government for non-implementation of the Oil Refinery Project in Paradeep.

As per the reply of the hon. Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas on 2.12.2003 in Rajya Sabha, the Paradeep Oil Refinery Project has an estimated cost of Rs. 7,500 crores, with the completion scheduled in the later half of the Eleventh Five Year Plan. Originally, the Paradeep Oil Refinery Project was scheduled to be completed within 48 months from the date of Government's approval, that is, from 14.7.1999. Again, as per the statement of the hon. Minister, the subsequent withdrawal of tax incentives granted originally by the State Government and change in demand and supply position on all India basis, the Indian Oil Corporation has shifted the implementation of the Paradeep Oil Refinery Project to the later half of the Eleventh Five Year Plan, that is, 2011-2012. There are 17 public sector refineries and one private sector refinery in India, and the total investment in the 17 public sector refineries is approximately Rs. 34,715.31 crores. At present, the refineries situated at Beena in Madhya Pradesh and at Bhatinda in Punjab are also being implemented, whereas, the implementation of the Orissa Paradeep Oil Refinery has been deferred. The hon. Prime Minister laid the foundation stone of this project on 24th May, 2000, and this year, while laying the foundation stone of the AIIMS branch in Orissa, the hon. Prime Minister indicated that the Government would do the needful if the State Government cooperates, which means, if the State Government gives 100 per cent sales tax concession. On 1.12.2003, the Government of Orissa has decided to give 100 per cent concession. It is said that the Indian Oil Corporation has already spent about Rs. 585 crores and has the commitment to spend Rs. 1050 crores. But there are three projects in Paradeep. One is the Royal Refinery. The second one is the SPM system with pipeline and the third one is the Crude Oil Terminal at Paradeep. I would like to know whether the Government could categorically say what the total budget estimated for these three projects separately is and also the funds released for the same till today. Since the State Government has already given 100 per cent sales tax concession, the Government of India should take appropriate steps for the implementation of the Paradeep Oil Refinery Project within the Tenth Five Year Plan.

Need to maintain cleanliness at places of pilgrimage in India

डा० प्रभा ठाकुर (राजस्थान): उपसभापति महोदया, भारत में अधिकांश तीर्थ क्षेत्र प्राकृतिक दृष्टि से सुंदर और रमणीक स्थानों पर बने हुये हैं जहां प्रतिवर्ष लाखों श्रद्धालु, दर्शनार्थी इन