

not adequate to curb road accidents. What is needed is deterrent laws, with strict punishment, in terms of both fine and imprisonment. Lawyers condemn the law of being outdated, because it was framed at a time when the traffic situation was not like it is today. At that time, there were fewer people and even fewer vehicles. In hit-and-run cases, they say that it is impossible to accuse a person unless there is a witness or circumstantial evidence that he was driving the vehicle at the time of the accident. The police are unable to conduct the investigation properly. There is culpability in such accidents. Therefore, this kind of offence calls for a harsh punishment. The Law Commission has suggested that the relevant law should be amended, by enhancing the punishment from two years to five years of imprisonment, and making the offence non-bailable. It has also suggested that magistrates should be empowered to revoke the licence of the accused who are convicted. Trucks appear on top of the list of defaulting vehicles, followed closely by buses and private cars. The Government of India is, therefore, requested to consider and implement the suggestion of the Law Commission, by amending the Motor Vehicles Act, at the earliest.

Need to protect handmade match industries in Tamil Nadu

SHRI R. KAMARAJ (Tamil Nadu): I wish to bring to the notice of the Government the need to protect handmade match industry in Tamil Nadu. Matchstick making has been traditionally done in small and cottage industries in Virudunagar, Ramanathapuram, Tirunelveli and Sivakasi areas in Tamil Nadu. The match industry employs about 3 lakh persons in the rural areas. Sixty seven percent of the entire match industry is in Tamil Nadu. This industry sustains lakhs of families in the southern districts. But the globalisation has struck a severe blow to the handmade match industry. The technological advantages and sound financial backup of the mechanised match industry has affected the handmade match industry, particularly, in Tamil Nadu.

These small-scale and cottage industries are not able to compete with the mechanised industries. Like the handloom industry, the handmade match industry is also facing a grave situation. Eighty two percent of the match industry comprises of handmade match out of which, sixty seven per cent belong to the small-scale sector and fifteen percent belongs to the cottage sector. The mechanised industry is eating up the handmade match industry. The handmade match industry is labour intensive because, in place

of six workers in the mechanised sector, it employs 22 workers. If this industry is not saved from its collapse, it will throw lakhs of workers out of employment. This can create social tension and other problems. Therefore, I appeal to the Central Government to provide protective tariff, differential excise duty, special concession, etc., and protect the handmade match industry from collapse.

Distress sale of paddy in Orissa

SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA (Orissa): Sir, due to the State Government's inaction and FCI's non-cooperation, distress sale of paddy goes on in Orissa. The State Government and the FCI have failed to procure the paddy directly from farmers. Since the millers are the only procurers of paddy from farmers for supplying the rice quota to the Government; and that gives them a blanket power to fix the price. Paddy of common grade is being sold at Rs.250-270, whereas the minimum price is fixed at Rs.520. There are no takers, because there are no competitors in the paddy market. It has left the poor farmers high and dry as only millers buy their produce at their own pleasure, whereas the State Civil Supply Department, the Regional Marketing Cooperatives and the FCI could also directly procure paddy from farmers which is not happening. This is because of unholy relation of mill owners, with the State Civil Supply Department officers and the FCI officials. When the Government failed to act against the erring paddy procurers, one farmer, Shri Nakul Kishore from Bolangir filed a petition in the hon. High Court of Orissa. The Chief Justice, Shri Balasubramaniam and Justice Shri A.S.Naidu, of the High Court of Orissa, after considering all pros and cons have passed the judgment and gave directions to the State Government and the Central Government to give necessary direction to the mill owners to purchase the paddy at the fixed rate. But the order of the hon. High Court is not being implemented. I once again urge upon the Government of India and the State Government to implement the judgment of the High Court of Orissa and open a Government procurement cell in each block headquarters to purchase paddy from farmers and then the Government may hand it over to the mill owners for milling.

Need to reopen Chakeri Airport and rename it as Swami Atchutanand Airport

श्री हयाम लाल (उत्तर प्रदेश) : मान्यवर, मैं आपके माध्यम से नागर विमानन मंत्रालय का ध्यान कानपुर एयरपोर्ट चकेरी, उत्तर प्रदेश से इण्डियन एयरलाइन्स की विमान सेवा पुनः प्रारम्भ किए जाने की तरफ आकर्षित करना चाहता हूँ ।