

Regarding limited quantity of kerosene to traditional fishermen in Kerala through Public Distribution System माननीय अध्यक्ष : डॉ. शशि थरूर जी ।

DR. SHASHI THAROOR (THIRUVANANTHAPURAM): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker Sir. I wish to draw the attention of the hon. Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas to the woeful situation of traditional fishermen in Kerala who are grappling with the debilitating shortage of kerosene.

The limited quantity of kerosene available through the Public Distribution System has proven vastly detrimental to the operators of thousands of small country boats which do not have onboard motors. They use kerosene as fuel. They say that they are scarcely able to make their both ends meet. The traditional fishermen are compelled to buy kerosene from black marketeers at extraordinary prices.

It is high time that the Union Government took cognisance of the agony of these Indian citizens. Most of them are socially and economically disadvantaged persons.

The Government should augment the quantity of subsidised kerosene made available from the PDS. Moreover, both the availability of kerosene and the volume of their daily catch are in doubt which make numerous fishermen cut short their working day to toil in odd jobs in the hope of earning, at least, some money. The lack of support from the Union Government is worsening their misery. In fact, the allocation by the Union Government of PDS kerosene to Kerala has declined from 55,000 kilo litres during fiscal year 2018-19 to just 15,000 kilo litres last year. I know, the Union Government will say that they want to encourage States to shift to cleaner and safer fuels like LPG, PNG, and so on which is why they are reducing PDS kerosene. I understood, Sir. But, coastal States like Kerala are already amongst India's foremost States in terms of LPG and green energy coverage but the demand for kerosene is only to alleviate the agony of our traditional fishermen who rely on kerosene for fuelling their fishing boats.

If the Union Government truly desires to facilitate the transition to more sustainable fuels, then, it must subsidise an alternative, perhaps, provide other kinds of engines to our fisher people with genuine subsidy. Otherwise, they should provide more kerosene, Speaker Sir.

Thank you very much.

