

14.56^{1/2} hrs

The Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024

माननीय अध्यक्ष : आईटम नंबर 14 ? तटीय पोत परिवहन विधेयक, 2024.

माननीय मंत्री जी ।

THE MINISTER OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS (SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL): Sir, I beg to move:*

?That the Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to regulation of coastal shipping, promote coasting trade and encourage domestic participation therein, to ensure that India is equipped with a coastal fleet, owned and operated by the citizens of India for its national security and commercial needs, and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, be taken into consideration.?

Sir, the Coastal Shipping Bill has significant reforms that seek to unlock the full potential of India's vast and strategic coastline which stretches over 11,098 kilometres across nine coastal States and four Union Territories. At a time, when our logistic sector is looking for low cost, reliable and sustainable alternative to over-burdened road and rail network, this Bill offers the maritime sector a much-needed push with a dedicated legal framework for coastal trade. The provisions of the Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024 are also in line with the broad vision of the National Logistics Policy as dedicated development of the coastal shipping sector is one of the most cost-efficient sources of transport that can play a significant role in lowering the overall cost of logistics for the country.

14.57 hrs

(Shrimati Sandhya Ray *in the Chair*)

Additionally, coastal shipping is also a sustainable mode of transport as the emission level of coastal transport is much less compared to rail and road transport. Therefore, increase in the share of coastal transport in the modern days of the country will lead to reduction in pollution caused by the logistic sector in the country.

Madam, presently, regulation and licensing of coastal shipping is governed by the Part XIV of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 which applies only to mechanised vessel. However, it does not provide a holistic or forward-looking framework suited to today's commercial realities in line with globally prevalent practices.

Part XIV of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 is over-shadowed by its primary focus only on providing licensing of Indian and foreign vessel for trade in India. The result is, there are regulatory gaps and procedural limitation that do not focus on development of coastal shipping sector in the country.

As the current provision under Part XIV of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 have not led to desirable growth in the coastal shipping sector, hence, a need was felt to give due weight to a statutory provision related to the coastal shipping sector for dedicated focus on the growth.

15.00 hrs

It is thus necessary to enact a separate legislation that consolidates, updates, and simplifies the coastal shipping framework in line with the needs of a modern logistic economy and global best practices.

The Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024 is designed to make coastal trade easier, more competitive, and better integrated with India's overall transport vision. This Bill introduces several forward-looking provisions. Chapter I of the Bill consists of two Clauses on commencement and definitions. Chapter II includes five Clauses dealing with licensing and

regulation of foreign vessels participating in coastal trade in India. Chapter III consists of two Clauses providing for the formulation of the National Coastal and Inland Shipping Strategic Plan and the creation of the National Database of Coastal Shipping.

Chapter IV consists of five Clauses regarding licensing and regulation of foreign vessels chartered by Indian entities. Chapter V includes 19 Clauses that consist of penalties and offences for any contraventions of the provisions of the Bill, aligning with the Central Government's goal of decriminalisation of law. Chapter VI consists of nine Clauses regarding the power of DG Shipping to seek information, issue direction, and the Central Government's power to issue direction and provide exemption, among others.

The key provisions of the Bill eliminate the requirement of a general trading licence for Indian ships to engage in coastal trade, significantly reducing compliance burden and promoting ease of doing business for Indian shipping companies, in line with the Government of India's mission. The Bill stipulates that foreign vessels may only participate in India's coastal trade under a licence issued by the Director General of Shipping, with Clause IV allowing the imposition of statutory conditions on such licenses, which may include a growing requirement or stipulation that part of the vessel be built in India.

This supports Indian shipyards, generates employment for Indian seafarers, and protects long-term strategic maritime interests. The Bill mandates the preparation of a National Coastal and Inland Shipping Strategic Plan, to be revised every two years, assessing shipping routes, forecasting future traffic, identifying areas for improvement, and promoting synergy with inland waterways. The Plan is rightly referred to

as a strategic plan because it provides a long-term vision and determines the roadmap to achieve the goals specified in the preamble of the Bill.

Further, the integration of coastal and inland waterways will promote regional development of riverine and coastal areas in the country. This Bill also gives impetus to the long-term vision of developing coastal and inland waterways transport in States such as Odisha, Karnataka, and Goa. Another major step is the creation of the National Database of Coastal Shipping, containing details of the licenses issued, routes used, vessels involved, and other key information, bringing transparency, enhancing coordination, and enabling data-driven and timely decision-making for regulators, shipping companies, and the broader logistic ecosystem.

The Bill also provides for the licensing of foreign vessels chartered by citizens of India, NRIs, OCIs, LLPs, and any other Indian entity specified by the Central Government, expanding the category of charterers who can charter a foreign vessel in India. A concern is often raised as to whether this Central legislation will undermine the role of the States. I want to assure this House that the Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024 is firmly grounded in the spirit of cooperative federalism.

Far from centralizing powers, the Bill provides for active representation of States and Union Territories in key institutional mechanisms.

Under Clause 8(3), a committee is to be constituted to prepare the National Coastal and Inland Shipping Strategic Plan. This committee will include representatives from every major port, all State Maritime Boards, and other experts. This ensures that the State will not only be consulted, but will actively shape the strategy, route, and regulatory approaches for

coastal shipping. Such an approach will help align national policy with local priorities and unlock region-specific opportunities.

Furthermore, the integration of coastal shipping routes with inland waterways, which often traverse multiple States, calls for collective planning and coordinated execution. By recognizing the role of States in this regard, this Bill ensures that the growth of coastal shipping is inclusive, participative, and aligned with the vision of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas'.

The proposed law is built on the strong foundations laid by this Government over the last decades, including prioritised berthing for coastal vessels, green clearance channels, GST reduction on bunker fuel, and the right of first refusal scheme for Indian-built vessels. The result is visible. This is very significant. The result is visible because of adoption of this kind of initiative. The coastal cargo traffic has grown by 119 per cent over the last 10 years, rising from 74 million metric tons in 2014-15 to over 162 million metric tons in 2023-2024. We now aim to grow this further to 230 million metric tons by 2030.

To support this aspiration, we need legal clarity, regulatory stability, and investment-friendly rules, and that is exactly what this Bill delivers. Internationally, too, countries such as the United States, Australia, and the European Union have adopted dedicated laws for coastal trade. This provision in this Bill reflects the best of those practices adopted to suit Indian conditions.

Madam, this Bill is the outcome of consultations with stakeholders across the maritime sector. In addition to inter-ministerial consultations, inputs were also received from several private stakeholders.

In conclusion, this legislation is timely, necessary, and forward-looking. It will reduce logistic costs. What is the merit of this particular initiative, this particular Bill? It will reduce logistic costs, promote green transport, support Make in India, and create thousands of jobs in shipbuilding, port services, and manning of vessels. The overarching goal of the Bill to develop a coastal fleet owned and operated by Indian entities will lead to reduced dependence on foreign vessels for critical areas relevant to our country's coastal shipping.

Since coastal shipping is highly significant for the movement of critical cargo, including food grains and fertilizer, a greater number of Indian ships handling coastal cargo provides supply chain security and prevents the escapement of revenue forex to foreign owners and enables a burgeoning local economy in terms of jobs, shipbuilding, and the like. These goals are in line with the broad mission of self-reliance as envisaged in creating an Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Further, increasing the number of Indian fleets in coastal shipping and statutory regulation of foreign vessels operating in our coastal waters is critical for ensuring our national and maritime security too. Hence, this Bill has well accounted for the same. It aligns local aspirations with national goals and provides a framework for the next 25 years of coastal economic growth under the ?Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047?.

I urge hon. Members to support this Bill, and help lay a strong modern foundation for India's maritime future. Thank you.

माननीय सभापति: प्रस्ताव प्रस्तुत हुआ:

?कि तटीय पोत परिवहन के विनियमन से संबंधित विधि के समेकन और संशोधन के लिए, तटीय व्यापार की प्रोन्नति के लिए और उसमें घरेलू सहभागिता को बढ़ावा देने के लिए, यह सुनिश्चित करने के लिए कि भारत अपनी राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा और वाणिज्यिक आवश्यकताओं के लिए भारतीय

नागरिकों द्वारा स्वाधिकृत और प्रचालित तटीय बेड़ों से सुसज्जित हो, और उनसे संसक्त और उनके आनुषंगिक विषयों का उपबंध करने वाले विधेयक पर विचार किया जाए ।?

SHRI B. MANICKAM TAGORE (VIRUDHUNAGAR): Hon. Chairperson, Madam, respected colleagues, and friends, I rise today from Virudhunagar, a town far from the sea's call, yet I speak with the heartbeat of India's fishermen pulsing through me. From Tamil Nadu's Palk Bay to Gujarat's Kutch, from Kerala's shores to Odisha's deltas, their voices unite us.

As a Member of the Indian National Congress, a party born out of freedom's fire, I open this debate not just on the Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024, but on a legacy that stretches back a thousand years ? to the Cholas, whose ships ruled the seas, to V.O.C Pillai, who defied empires and the East India Company, and to the fishermen today, betrayed by neglect and corporate greed. This Bill promises a maritime revival ? Indian vessels in our waters, trade unleashed, and ports reborn. From Madurai's bustling markets, I see its spark ? goods flowing to Chennai's docks and prosperity weaving inland to shore. But where is the fisherman in this tale ? the man whose boat braves the dawn, whose net feeds our homes? Our history whispers their worth.

A millennium ago, the Cholas, masters of Tamil Nadu, built a naval empire that sailed from Tamil Nadu to Southeast Asia. Rajendra Chola I, in 1025, sent fleets of wooden ships ? some say hundreds strong ? to conquer Srivijaya, now Indonesia. Their shipyards in Nagapattinam crafted vessels of teak and skill, their mariners mapped the Bay of Bengal, and their trade spanned from China to Arabia. The Cholas did not just fish, they commanded the seas, a legacy etched in our blood. Centuries later, V.O. Chidambaram Pillai, the Kappalottiya Thamizhan

revived that spirit. Born in 1872, he launched the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company in 1906, India's first indigenous shipping line, with ships like SS Gallia and SS Lavo plying from Tuticorin to Colombo. Against British might, he raised funds from every corner, vowing, "I will return with ships or perish in the sea." They jailed him, broke him on an oil press, but his dream endured. Today, this Bill could echo the Cholas and VOC, lifting our fishermen, honouring our maritime soul. But instead, it drifts past them, mute on their safety, their stake, their future.

Let me widen this canvas, Madam. The fishermen's fight is India's fight. In Tamil Nadu, 843 fishermen have fallen to Sri Lankan guns or have been jailed in the past years. Their boats have been seized and families have been shattered. In Gujarat, Pakistan looms; in Odisha, cyclones rage; and in Andhra Pradesh, pollution poisons. Over a million fishermen, 70,000 households in Tamil Nadu alone, scrape by on less than Rs. 24,000 a year. Now, a new tide rises. There is the Prime Minister's favourite port company in Vizhinjam, Kerala. There is a fishermen blockade. The Adani Port's Rs. 7,525-crore project has displaced 600 people, beaches have been lost, and fishes have been vanished as groynes and dredging choke the coast. In Dighi, Maharashtra, and Gangavaram, Andhra Pradesh, the same company's expansions turn fishermen into strikers and labourers, and their seas sold. This Bill's vast powers from the Director-General to this Government would favour such giants over our fishermen.

The Congress Party demands justice, as the Cholas ruled with strength and V.O.C fought with courage. First, safety: modern boats, weather alerts, life vests for every fisherman from Kanyakumari to Puri, not words, but law. Second, livelihood: certify their boats for trade under this Bill; train them as the Cholas trained their navy; and scrap the 30 per cent wage tax foreign crews escape. Third, diplomacy: end Sri Lankan

and Pakistani assaults; free our boats; and show Chola bravery, not cowardice.

Fourthly, regarding environment, they should curb pollution and climate change, and probe the Prime Minister's favourite ports to see whether they are eroding our coasts and starving our fishes. We need independent studies, not corporate tales.

The Cholas built empires on the sea, VOC built defiance. Yet today, this Government props up Adani while fishermen sink. Vizhinjam's delays due to cyclones, granite shortages have cost Kerala crores, yet the company thrives.

Gangavaram's coal stalls over fishermen strikes, but who hears? In 2021, fishers rejected the Marine Fisheries Bill for its fines and neglect. Now, they distrust this Bill seeing Adani's hand where Chola and VOC should be. The Congress Party, which freed this nation, says to consult them and form a Committee with MPs from every coastal State to rewrite this Bill with the vision of our ancestors. It should be a shield for fishers, not a sword for tycoons.

From Virudhunagar, I see their thread in my weave as fish from Nagapattinam feeds my people. We fought for firework labourers when their lives were attacked. Now, we fight for fishers when ports and policies threaten. This Government must act not with slogans, but with solutions. They should fund Sagarmala fully not faintly. They should build boats as the Cholas did, not burden them. They should free our fishers, and not foreign fleets or Modi ji's favourite company's ambitions. Let this Bill be a tide that lifts all, a tribute to the Cholas' ships, VOC's sacrifice, and the fisherman's sweat.

I stand here with a challenge, that is to make this House the fisherman's voice, the Cholas' echo, VOC's cry that from inland to ocean we are one. The sea is vast, but our resolve, forged by history's giants, must be vaster. Let us begin.

Thank you, Madam.

श्री अरुण गोविल (मेरठ) : धन्यवाद सभापति महोदया, जय श्री राम । कोस्टल शिपिंग बिल, 2024 लोक सभा में 2 दिसंबर 2024 को पेश किया गया था । इस बिल का मकसद भारत के कोस्टल ट्रेड को बढ़ाना तथा भारतीय ध्वजवाहक समुद्री जहाजों को बिना किसी बड़ी formality या लाइसेंस के coastal trade की permission देना है । अभी कोस्टल शिपिंग में विदेशियों का वर्चस्व है । वर्ष 2005 में यूपीए सरकार ने जब देश के पूर्वी तट व पश्चिमी तट के बीच व्यापार के लिए रास्ता छोटा करना चाहा, राम सेतु को तोड़ने की साजिश की, तब पूरे देश का ध्यान कोस्टल शिपिंग तथा यूपीए सरकार द्वारा भगवान श्री राम को काल्पनिक बताने की ओर गया था । तत्कालीन संस्कृति मंत्री श्रीमती अंबिका सोनी द्वारा भगवान राम को काल्पनिक बताने का एफिडेविट देने पर पूरे देश में यूपीए सरकार की घोर निंदा हुई थी और उन्हें वह एफिडेविट वापस लेना पड़ा । भारी जन विरोध के कारण तत्कालीन यूपीए सरकार रामसेतु को तोड़ नहीं पाई । आदरणीय प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेंद्र मोदी जी के नेतृत्व में भारत सरकार ने वर्ष 2014 में राम सेतु तोड़ने की परियोजना को पूरी तरह से खारिज कर दिया । प्रधानमंत्री जी के इस आश्वासन पर पूरे देश की धर्म-परायण जनता ने चैन की सांस ली ।

सभापति महोदया, वास्तव में केंद्र सरकार की तेज निगाह से तटीय व्यापार भी छूटा नहीं है । प्रधानमंत्री जी ने ग्लोबल मैरिटाइम समिट 2023 का मुंबई में उद्घाटन करने के साथ, समुद्री क्षेत्र में इंटरनेशनल व नेशनल भागीदारी के लिए 23,000 करोड़ रुपये से अधिक के प्रोजेक्टों का उद्घाटन करके देश को समर्पित किया तथा वर्ष 2047 तक भारत के समुद्री बुनियादी ढांचे में सुधार के लिए 80 लाख करोड़ रुपये का निवेश करने की घोषणा की । जनवरी, 2024 में आदरणीय प्रधानमंत्री जी ने कोच्चि में भाषण देते हुए कहा कि जब भारत समृद्ध था, तब भारत की असली ताकत उसके बंदरगाह व पोर्ट सिटी ही थे । आज भारत वैश्विक व्यापार का बड़ा केंद्र बनने जा रहा है और हम समुद्री ताकत बढ़ाने पर पूरा-पूरा ध्यान दे रहे हैं ।

सभापति महोदया, इस बिल से भारत की सुरक्षा और व्यापारिक आवश्यकताओं को देखते हुए भारतीय नागरिकों के मालिकाना अधिकार वाले शिप कोस्टल शिपिंग में हेल्प करेंगे । भारत सरकार के पोर्ट, शिपिंग और वॉटरवेज मिनिस्टर श्री सर्वानंद सोनोवाल जी ने कोस्टल शिपिंग के लिए इस युगांतरकारी बिल को लोकसभा में पेश किया । इस बिल में भारत की जल सीमा में Indian ownership के जहाजों को छोड़कर, बिना लाइसेंस Shipping करने वाले दूसरे ships को रोकने का प्रावधान है ।

इस बिल के जरिए भारतीय जहाजों को कुछ नियमों के साथ व्यापार की अनुमति दी जा रही है । शिपिंग के डायरेक्टर जनरल किसी भी शिप को भारतीय समुद्री सीमा में काम करने की अनुमति तभी देंगे, जब वे उस शिप पर काम करने वाले लोगों की नागरिकता सुनिश्चित कर लेंगे या फिर वह जहाज भारत में बना हुआ होना चाहिए । इस प्रकार इस क्षेत्र में भारतीय लोगों के लिए नौकरी की बड़ी संभावनाएं पैदा होंगी और भारत में शिप बिल्डिंग को भी प्रोत्साहन मिलेगा । इस बिल के जरिए कोस्टल शिपिंग के विकास एवं वृद्धि के लिए नेशनल कोस्टल एंड इनलैंड शिपिंग स्ट्रैटेजिक प्लान तैयार करने की भी योजना है । इस बिल को इसलिए भी न्याय संगत कहा जा सकता है, क्योंकि इस बिल के अनुसार किसी भी लाइसेंस को सस्पेंड, कैंसिल अथवा संशोधित तब तक नहीं किया जाएगा, जब तक दूसरी पार्टी को अपना पक्ष रखने का पूरा अवसर न दिया जाए ।

भारत में कोस्टल शिपिंग की अपार संभावनाएं हैं, क्योंकि भारत की जो कोस्टल लाइन है, वह लगभग 7,500 किलोमीटर की है और यह कोस्ट लाइन दुनिया के प्रमुख अंतर्राष्ट्रीय समुद्री जलमार्गों के नजदीक है । हमारी कोस्ट लाइन से जहां एक ओर मॉरिशस, अरब देश, अफ्रीका, यूरोप इत्यादि देशों में व्यापार किया जा सकता है, वहीं अगर पूर्व की ओर देखें तो सिंगापुर, मलेशिया, इंडोनेशिया, ऑस्ट्रेलिया और पूरे दक्षिण पूर्व एशिया के देशों के साथ व्यापार किया जा सकता है ।

भारत को अपनी लंबी कोस्ट लाइन का एक बड़ा लाभ यह भी है कि कोस्टल शिपिंग के जरिए व्यापार करना, व्यापार के दूसरे साधनों के मुकाबले बहुत सस्ता पड़ता है । इतनी बड़ी कोस्ट लाइन के कारण अगर पश्चिम बंगाल से केरल तक माल ले जाना है तो कोस्टल शिपिंग उसमें बहुत अधिक सहायक है । इसी तरह यदि केरल से गुजरात तक माल पहुंचाना है तो उसके लिए शिपिंग सबसे सस्ता जरिया है ।

वास्तव में, कोस्टल शिपिंग भारी कार्गो को एक समुद्री तट से दूसरे समुद्री तट तक ले जाने में बेहद सहायक है और एक कोस्ट लाइन से 20 नॉटिकल मील तक कोस्टल शिपिंग मानी जाती है । कोस्टल शिपिंग देश के प्रमुख बंदरगाहों के बीच जहां व्यापार में सहायक है, वहीं कोस्टल शिपिंग के जरिए कंटेनर, बड़े साइज के कार्गो, ट्रक, सेमी ट्रेलर, कार, ट्रेलर, अनाज, फर्टिलाइजर, स्टील, कोयला, नमक, पत्थर, स्कैप, मिनरल्स आदि को भी कम दाम में परिवहन किया जाता है ।

कोस्टल शिपिंग का एक और बहुत बड़ा लाभ यह है कि जहाँ सड़क परिवहन से प्रदूषण फैलता है, वहां कोस्टल शिपिंग एनवायरनमेंट फ्रेंडली है । इस बिल के पास होने से परिस्थितियां भारतीय शिपिंग कंपनियों के पक्ष में बदलेंगी, रेड टेपिज्म कम होगा तथा स्थानीय व विदेशी व्यापार में भारतीय शिपिंग कंपनियों की भागीदारी भी बढ़ेगी । सबसे महत्वपूर्ण बात यह है कि भारतीय ध्वजवाहक शिपिंग कंपनियों को कोस्टल शिपिंग में लाइसेंस की जरूरत नहीं रहेगी । इस बिल का उद्देश्य घरेलू शिपिंग कंपनियों की नौ परिवहन में भागीदारी व रोजगार बढ़ाना है । यह एक राष्ट्र हित उद्देश्य है । अतः मैं इस बिल का पूर्ण रूप से समर्थन करता हूँ ।

श्री नरेश चंद्र उत्तम पटेल (फतेहपुर) : माननीय सभापति महोदया, मैं इस तटीय पोत परिवहन विधेयक, 2024? पर अपने विचार रखने के लिए खड़ा हुआ हूँ । यह विधेयक अच्छे इरादों की बात करता है, लेकिन इसमें कई खामियाँ हैं, जो हमारे देश के हितों को नजरअंदाज करती हैं । मैं पाँच मुख्य बिंदुओं पर अपनी बात रखना चाहता हूँ ।

यह विधेयक सारी शक्ति केंद्र के हाथों में देता है । शिपिंग महानिदेशक को लाइसेंस और नियम बनाने का अधिकार देना राज्यों की भूमिका को कम करता है । तमिलनाडु, गुजरात और बंगाल जैसे तटीय राज्य इस विधेयक में अपनी आवाज़ खो रहे हैं । क्या यह संघवाद का सम्मान है? हम माँग करते हैं कि राज्यों को निर्णय प्रक्रिया में शामिल किया जाए । सरकार कहती है कि यह विधेयक रोजगार बढ़ाएगा, लेकिन यह बड़े कारपोरेट्स को फायदा पहुँचाने वाला है । यह मछुआरों और छोटे जहाज मालिकों को फायदा नहीं पहुँचाएगा ।

सभापति महोदया, वर्ष 2001 में सिर्फ एक बड़े बंदरगाह, मुंद्रा से अडानी समूह आज सबसे बड़ा निजी ऑपरेटर बन गया है, जिसके पास 14 बंदरगाह और टर्मिनल्स हैं, जो देश के बंदरगाहों से गुजरने वाले सभी कार्गो का एक चौथाई हिस्सा संभालते हैं ।

औसतन हर 500 किमी तट पर एक अडानी बंदरगाह है । पिछले 10 सालों में जो अभूतपूर्व विस्तार हुआ है और जिसका ज्यादातर हिस्सा अधिग्रहणों के ज़रिए हुआ है, वह एक चिंता का विषय है ।

उसके बाद एक बंदरगाह खरीदने की अनुमति क्यों दी जा रही है? कुछ मामलों में तो पिछले मालिकों पर छापे के बाद और इसके गंभीर सुरक्षा निहितार्थों के बारे में विचार किए बिना सितंबर 2021 में गुजरात के मुंद्रा पोर्ट पर 3,000 किलोग्राम ड्रग्स जब्त की गई । यह एक गंभीर चिंता का विषय है ।

माननीय सभापति महोदया, अगर विदेशी कंपनियों को अधिक अधिकार मिलते हैं तो असमानता बढ़ेगी । क्या गरीब तटीय समुदायों के लिए कोई ठोस योजना है? हमें समावेशी विकास चाहिए न कि चुनिंदा लाभ । वर्ष 2001 में सिर्फ एक बड़े बंदरगाह मुंद्रा में अडानी समूह आज सबसे बड़ा निजी ऑपरेटर बन गया है, जिसके पास 14 बंदरगाह और टर्मिनल्स हैं, जो देश के बंदरगाहों से गुजरने वाले सभी कार्गो का एक चौथाई हिस्सा है । हमारी तट रेखा सुंदरवन से लेकर पश्चिमी तट तक संवेदनशील है, लेकिन यह विधेयक प्रदूषण रोकने के लिए सख्त नियम नहीं लाता है । जहाजों से होने वाले उत्सर्जन और कचरे पर निगरानी का कोई प्रावधान नहीं है ।

माननीय सभापति महोदया, क्या हम व्यापार के लिए अपनी प्रकृति को दांव पर लगाएंगे? पर्यावरण सुरक्षा को प्राथमिकता देनी होगी । शिपिंग महानिदेशक को इतनी शक्ति देना नौकरशाही को बढ़ावा देता है । राष्ट्रीय डेटाबेस की बात तो हो रही है, लेकिन डाटा गोपनीयता का क्या? यह विधेयक पारदर्शिता के बजाय अस्पष्टता लाता है । हम संसदीय निगरानी और जन परामर्श की मांग करते हैं, ताकि जनता की आवाज सुनी जाए । अंत, मैं यह विधेयक बुनियादी ढांचे की कमियों को नजरअंदाज करता है । बंदरगाहों में सुविधाएं नहीं हैं, अंतर्देशी संपर्क कमजोर हैं । गंगा नदी पर राष्ट्रीय जलमार्ग की हालत देखिए । गाद, कम गहराई और टर्मिनलों की कमी इसे बेकार बनती है । गंगा जैसे जलमार्गों को बिना ठीक किए तटीय नौवहन से जोड़े, यह विधेयक सिर्फ कागजी वादा है । सरकार को निवेश करना होगा न कि सिर्फ कानून बनाना ।

माननीय सभापति महोदया, मेरा जिला फतेहपुर गंगा-यमुना के बीच में स्थित है । मेरे गृह जनपद में बहुत जिले हैं । अखनई जैसी झील है, जो अंतिम सांस ले रही है । इस झील की परिधि सात किलोमीटर है, जो नैनीताल झील से भी अधिक है । इस झील से

ससुर खदेरी नदी निकलती है, जो यमुना की सहायक नदी है और यमुना अंततः गंगा की सहायक नदी है । फतेहपुर में इसके अतिरिक्त कई अन्य जिले हैं, जिनके पुनरुद्धार की तत्काल आवश्यकता है । मेरी सरकार से मांग है कि इन झीलों के पुनरुद्धार हेतु ? नमामि गंगे योजना? के तहत विशेष परियोजना लागू की जाए ।

माननीय सभापति महोदया, अभी सदन में मछुआरों की दैनिक स्थिति पर चर्चा हो रही थी । मान्यवर मेरे जिले में गंगा यमुना के किनारे मछुआरे बहुत बड़ी तादाद में रहते हैं, लेकिन डबल इंजन की सरकार में उन मछुआरों की जीविका पर पूरा कुठाराघात किया गया है । माननीय अखिलेश यादव जी की सरकार में मछुआरों को आवास दिए गए । माननीय अखिलेश यादव जी की सरकार में उनको तालाब के पट्टे दिए गए, उनको गंगा-यमुना के किनारे मछली मारने के लिए ठेके दिए गए, लेकिन आज उस डबल इंजन की सरकार में, मेरे जनपद में माफिया हावी है । वह खनन से लेकर मछली के ठेके, सब इकट्ठा ले लेते हैं, जो लगातार मछुआरों के पेट पर लात मार रहे हैं । यह विधेयक केंद्रीकृत, कॉर्पोरेट हितैषी और अधूरा है । हम संशोधन चाहते हैं । राज्यों की भागीदारी, पर्यावरण सुरक्षा और छोटे ऑपरेटरों के लिए समर्थन सुनिश्चित किया जाए, ये देश के भविष्य हैं, इन्हें हल्के में न लिया जाए ।

माननीय सभापति महोदया, मेरी कुछ मांगें हैं । मैं आपके माध्यम से सरकार के सामने वे बातें कहना चाहता हूं कि भारतीय शिपिंग कंपनियों को प्राथमिकता दी जाए, विदेशी कंपनियों को सीमित छूट मिले ताकि राज्यों को इस विधेयक के निर्माण में परामर्श और भागीदारी का अधिकार मिले, भारतीय मछुआरों और समुद्री श्रमिकों की सुरक्षा के लिए ठोस प्रावधान जोड़े जाएं, राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा को ध्यान में रखते हुए विदेशी जहाजों के प्रवेश और गतिविधियों पर कड़ी निगरानी रखी जाए । पर्यावरण सुरक्षा को ध्यान में रखते हुए इस विधेयक में सख्त प्रावधान जोड़े जाएं ।

माननीय सभापति महोदया, यह विधेयक भारत के समुद्री क्षेत्र के लिए महत्वपूर्ण है लेकिन इसे बिना जरूरी सुधारों के लागू करना आत्मघाती साबित होगा । हमारी मांग है कि सरकार इस विधेयक पर पुनर्विचार करें और इसमें भारतीय हितों को प्राथमिकता दी जाए, अन्यथा यह विधेयक भारत के तटीय व्यापार और सुरक्षा के लिए एक गंभीर खतरा बनेगा । इन शब्दों के साथ आपने मुझे बोलने का समय दिया है, इसके लिए मैं आपका धन्यवाद करता हूं ।

PROF. SOUGATA RAY (DUM DUM): Madam, I rise to speak on the Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024, brought forward by the hon. Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal.

Coastal shipping is a huge area. It covers 7,500 kilometres of our coast. The problem with our coast is that we have a long coastline, but it is not indented. If you compare it with the Scandinavian coast, there is indentation, so that ships can go straight into the harbour. We do not have that facility, but we have to make do with what we have.

Now, the main thing is that coastal shipping is cheaper. Madam, you are from Madhya Pradesh, you would not realise the problems we have in Kolkata. From Kolkata to Chennai, we can carry coal very easily. It is easier than a train or a truck. This is very prevalent. The hon. Minister wants to improve that. But, at present, waterways account for only 6.4 per cent of our transport mix. It is much lower than countries like China, Japan and the EU. The Bill seeks to increase the share to 7.5 per cent by 2030, and 12 per cent by 2047, thereby reducing congestion on roads and railways.

The hon. Minister has done some work on improving inland river connectivity. Mainly, our national waterways are there like Ganga, Brahmaputra and other places. Madam, you would be surprised to know that from Kolkata port, there are ships going to Cachar. How do they go? They go down Ganges to the sea. Then from Bangladesh, they go up Brahmaputra to reach Cachar. There is a regular trip to Karimganj from Kolkata. Now, these are great advantages. There is no traffic jam on waterways and the cost is less. But there is one thing. If we improve our coastal shipping, it will enhance India's marine competitiveness. Though 100 per cent FDI is allowed in the shipping sector, complex regulations have hindered foreign investment so far. We must not allow regulations

to hamper investment. This Bill introduces uniformity and transparency, encouraging more ships to register in India and boosting maritime trade.

Madam, you possibly know that there are mechanized vessels and non-mechanized vessels. For instance, if you take a huge barge going by the Ganges or going into Bangladesh, it is a non-mechanized vessel. If you look at the huge oil platforms through which we raise oil from Bombay high, they are also non-mechanized.

The mechanised vessels are those which use an engine. The engine may be a petrol engine. But it is better to have a CNG engine. That will improve our marine competitiveness. This is one suggestion that we have. We should have a provision in Clause 3 requiring at least 50 per cent of India's domestic cargo to be transported by Indian-flagged vessels. In this House, a few days ago, I mentioned that we have not given attention to the shipping sector. Mr. Sonowal, as a Minister, is giving attention to the shipping sector. He is trying to improve both inland, coastal and high seas ship transportation. That is a big way of improving our situation.

The Bill mandates the creation of a National Coastal and Inland Shipping Strategic Plan within two years of the commencement of the Act. But one requirement is that we must not depend wholly on the Director-General of Shipping. The Director-General of Shipping is the biggest bureaucrat in the Shipping Ministry after the Secretary. We must create an independent body to look after shipping matters, instead of giving it to a single Director-General of Shipping.

There is a big problem of Indian seafarers or sailors finding jobs. The Government should mandate a minimum quota of Indian seafarers in Indian-flagged vessels. We should give more encouragement to the shipping companies that employ Indian seafarers through tax rebates.

Lastly, the new National Coastal and Inland Shipping Strategic Plan should not be implemented in a hurry. From ancient times, ships have opened up India's doors. You know in the 15th century, Vasco da Gama came from Portugal to India through a ship. But even before that, Samrat Ashok sent his children to the South East Asia. Shivaji had a fleet. Kanhoji Angre was Shivaji's Admiral. He had the finest navy. The Vijayanagar kings and Cholas also had fleets. So, I would urge upon the Shipping Minister ? he has got straight four years till the next elections ? that he should show some result in Andhra Pradesh which is having the second-largest coastline in the country. It will benefit from the Bill, so will Maharashtra which has got a big coastline.

I do not want to prolong my speech. Bills should not be introduced only to establish or force regulations. There are too many regulations. You get a punishment because of this. You have to pay so much.

No, Bills or laws should be there to encourage shipping. And I would like our Indian shipping to benefit totally from this Bill.

I look forward to Kolkata benefitting because Kolkata has been an inland for a long time. Ships go out from Kolkata to Chennai, to Bangladesh. And it will benefit very much if shipping is included.

I have nothing to oppose in the Bill. I have made some suggestions.

With these words, I thank the hon. Minister.

Thank you.

SHRI D. M. KATHIR ANAND (VELLORE): Vanakkam, Madam Chairperson.

Esteemed Members of this House, I stand before you today not merely as a representative but as a voice of Tamil Nadu, a State wronged by the Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024.

This legislation, draped in the garb of modernization, is an insult to our maritime legacy, a betrayal of our economic aspirations, and a dagger aimed at the heart of our coastal communities. Tamil Nadu, with its 1,076 kilometres of coastline, its bustling ports, and its indefatigable people, deserves better than this half-baked Central-centric travesty.

Madam, let me tear through its façade and demand justice for my State. First, this Bill dares to dangle the carrot of ease of doing business by scrapping licences for the Indian-flagged vessels. It is a fine idea. You have ignored the stark reality of Tamil Nadu. Our shipyards are shadows of what they could be, our ports groan under decades of neglect, and our shipping firms struggle to compete. Where are the ships we are meant to flag?

Madam, Gujarat may boast its maritime might, but Tamil Nadu languishes without the infrastructure to claim this so-called benefit. Our visionary leader, our hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Shri M.K. Stalin, has fought to rise above this apathy, pushing for port expansions at Tuticorin, modernizing Chennai, and dreaming of a shipbuilding hub in our State. Why, then, does this Bill offer us crumbs while others feast? We demand funding, not empty promises.

Secondly, the Bill's grand talk of integrating inland waterways with coastal shipping, is a cruel joke for Tamil Nadu. The Buckingham Canal, once a jewel of our trade network, lies choked and abandoned, a victim of Central indifference. Our Chief Minister has tirelessly championed its revival, allocating funds and drafting plans to link it to our ports. Yet, this Bill offers no support, no commitment, just vague platitudes about

coordination. Why must Tamil Nadu beg for what other States are handed? We will not be sidelined while the Centre dreams of rivers that we do not have. Restore our waterways or admit this Bill is a sham.

Madam, thirdly, the National Coastal and Inland Shipping Strategic Plan is a slap in the face of the State's autonomy. Every two years, the Centre will dictate our maritime fate as if Tamil Nadu's needs can be scribbled on a bureaucrat's notepad. Our minor ports need dredging, our fishing harbours need protection, our industries need connectivity. Yet, this Bill chains us to a centralized leash. Our Chief Minister has shown the way, fostering maritime growth with initiatives like the Tamil Nadu Maritime Board and coastal economic zones. Why should his efforts be shackled by a plan that ignores our voice? We demand co-ownership of this strategy, not subservience to it.

Madam, fourthly, the environmental stakes of this Bill are a ticking time bomb for Tamil Nadu. Our Gulf of Mannar, our Palk Bay, are not just waters, they are our lifeblood, cradling biodiversity found nowhere else. Increased shipping, spurred by this Bill, promises oil spills, pollution, and ruin for our fishermen.

The Ennore disaster still haunts us-oil-stained shores, poisoned fish, broken livelihoods, yet enforcement falters. There is a fine of Rs. 15 lakh, a pittance when our ecosystem hangs in the balance. Our Chief Minister has stood firm, enforcing green norms and pushing for sustainable ports. This Bill must match his resolve with ironclad safeguards or it is a death sentence for our coast.

Finally, the Bill's contempt for our small-scale operators is unforgivable. Tamil Nadu's maritime soul beats in the catamarans and mechanized boats of our 1.2 million fisherfolk and traders. They are not footnotes; they are our backbone. Yet this Bill fixates on grand vessels,

leaving our small operators to drown in red tape and costs they cannot bear.

Our Chief Minister has uplifted them with subsidies, training, and harbour upgrade efforts which this Bill ignores. We will not let Delhi crush the very people who sustain us. Amend this Bill to protect them or face our wrath.

Hon. Members, Tamil Nadu is not a beggar at the table of progress. We are a titan which is demanding our due. Our Chief Minister has lit the path, expanding Tuticorin's capacity, greening our ports, and dreaming of a maritime renaissance. But this Bill dims that light with its neglect, its arrogance, its blindness.

I say to this House to rewrite it, fund our ports, revive our waterways, respect our autonomy, shield our environment, and honour our small operators.

Anything less is an affront to Tamil Nadu's pride, a mockery of our Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's toil, and a betrayal of our people.

We will not bow; we will not break. Give us justice, or prepare for our roar.

Thank you, Madam.

SHRI LAVU SRIKRISHNA DEVARAYALU (NARASARAOPET): Thank you, Madam, for allowing me to speak on this Bill.

I stand in support of the Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024. Madam, we have a great history of seafaring, trading and maritime. As *Dada* has just mentioned earlier, from Medieval times, we were trading with all the way from mainland Europe to Japan, and also our ship building has been one of the world class until the time Britishers arrived into the country. So, we

had great history in maritime but somehow in the last few centuries or so, we have really fallen behind and recently, we have been far behind with regard to the logistic cost that India is bearing.

When you look at the logistics cost that India does have on par with the GDP, we have almost 13-14 per cent of the cost that we have to pay for the logistics whereas the global average is around 8-9 per cent. So, this is actually hampering the MSMEs, the manufacturing sector, that is there in India. So, to bring down this logistics cost, this Bill is very much needed.

The second reason why this Bill is needed is that only 6.4 per cent of the transport mix across the country is happening with the waterways either be it the inland waterways or outside the ocean. So, this is very less when compared to the world average. So, this Bill is very much necessary to increase the transport mix so that more goods can be transported.

The third reason why this Bill is needed is that there is a provision for 100 per cent FDI that can be brought into this sector. Unlike the aviation sector or the national highways sector where the FDI was allowed, it was very much well taken up and most of the projects are being funded but somehow, because of a lot of bureaucracy that is involved in this sector, this 100 per cent FDI even though it is allowed, is not being taken into account. So, this Bill is very much needed for encouraging this.

Coming to suggestions that I want to make, I have three suggestions.

The first one is - I think *Dada* has already mentioned about it - that fifty per cent of the Indian domestic cargo has to be mandated so that

they can be transported *via* Indian flagged vessels. For example, China does that wherein the China flagged vessels will have mandatory condition that some per cent of the cargo has to be taken care of by the Chinese flagged vessels. So, I hope the Minister will take this into account.

The second suggestion is that there are a lot of seafarers that are doing a lot of good work not only in Indian vessels but also in the vessels outside the country. So, mandate the minimum quota for the Indian seafarers so that they get better jobs on the Indian vessels.

The third suggestion I want to make is that 49 per cent of the Indian coastal fleet is almost 20 years old or more. What the people are asking for is low-cost capital and long-term financing because the shipbuilding industry needs to be developed. We do not have an Indian shipping vessel fleet when compared to even small countries like France and Italy which have their own shipping liners. Even China has its own shipping vessel fleet. I think we need to look at it in this direction. This low-cost and long-term financing is the need of the hour, and I hope the hon. Minister will take this into account.

When discussing this Bill, we must also consider Andhra Pradesh which has one of the longest coastal lines of 1,000 kilometres, three major ports, and 12 non-major ports. We have become a hub for shipbuilding and maritime trade. Our hon. Chief Minister, Shri Chandrababu Naidu, recently announced a Maritime Policy which I am not sure if any other State has done. However, in Andhra Pradesh, it was announced only three months ago. We understand the need to develop this industry, and thus we have announced this policy.

The Union Government has announced the establishment of five shipbuilding and ship repair clusters, one of which is coming to Andhra

Pradesh. I thank the Minister and our hon. Prime Minister for this sanction. Additionally, I request that the Buckingham Canal, which has been there for the last 100 or 150 years, and runs through my district of Guntur all the way to Chennai, be considered, as it will reduce shipping and maritime costs. We have ships, a large coastal line, and many ports. However, if there is also an inland shipping process with this Buckingham Canal, it will significantly lower the logistics costs. Therefore, I request the hon. Minister to look into this matter.

Madam, this sector needs to be developed, which is why Andhra Pradesh has introduced the Maritime Policy. For this sector to grow, two things must be kept in mind: a robust security mechanism and an urgent need to safeguard port assets. I can provide an example of Vishakhapatnam Port. An incident occurred last year, around February or March, involving a shipping container that came from Brazil to Andhra Pradesh, importing seafood for the shrimp industry. However, INTERPOL sent a message indicating cocaine was in the shipping container, leading to the ship being stopped in Vishakhapatnam Port.

While I understand the need for caution, the due process took nine months to clear the container. If the process takes nine months, how can we encourage investment in the sector in India? I must mention that my name was dragged into that incident, but ultimately, nothing was found. I share this example because it does not bode well when we are asking for 100 per cent FDI to come in. Therefore, I request the Minister to address this issue.

The second issue pertains to Kakinada port. My fellow MP is also present here, and I mention this issue because we need to safeguard the port assets. In the previous Government, Kakinada port, valued at around Rs.2,500 crore for a 40 per cent stake, was taken out by force for

Rs.494 crore. The crux of the problem is that maritime trade is affected, and the transportation of goods from this port is hampered due to the lack of protection for port assets.

I request the hon. Minister to examine as to how these transactions are conducted to ensure transparency. Whenever such transactions occur, both the Central and State Governments should be informed as many people and employees working in the port are affected. Therefore, I urge the Minister to consider this. When we seek 100 per cent FDI and aim to streamline the processes, I request the Minister to address issues related to security and the safeguarding of port assets.

With these observations, I support this Bill wholeheartedly. Thank you.

डॉ. आलोक कुमार सुमन (गोपालगंज) : माननीय सभापति महोदया, मैं आपके प्रति आभार व्यक्त करता हूँ कि आपने मुझे आज कोस्टल शिपिंग बिल, 2024 पर अपनी बात रखने का मौका दिया है ।

महोदया, जैसा कि हम सभी जानते हैं, हमारे देश में 7,500 किलोमीटर का समुद्री किनारा है, जिसमें माल ढुलाई और यात्रियों की आवाजाही शामिल हैं । यह समुद्री किनारा विश्व के विभिन्न देशों के लिए माल ढुलाई में अपनी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका भी निभाता है, जो देश की अर्थव्यवस्था के विकास के लिए जरूरी भी है । यह भी देखा गया है कि समुद्र के रास्ते से माल ढुलाई केवल आसान ही नहीं है, बल्कि सस्ता भी है ।

महोदया, कोस्टल शिपिंग बिल, 2024 लाने का मुख्य उद्देश्य यह है कि इससे ट्रांसपोर्ट कनेक्टिविटी के साथ-साथ इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर को बढ़ावा मिले, समुद्री व्यापार को भी बढ़ावा मिले तथा उत्पादन लागत कम हो । पुराने कानूनों, जैसे कोस्टिंग वेसेल्स एक्ट, 1838 और मर्चेंट शिपिंग एक्ट, 1958 में एकरूपता का अभाव था । यह भी जरूरी है कि हम इस नए विधेयक में सेफ्टी, सिक्योरिटी और प्रदूषण जैसे विषयों को भी एड्रेस करें । वर्तमान विधेयक के पास होने से लाइसेंस रिकायरमेंट सिम्पल होगा तथा भारतीय झंडे वाले जहाजों की भागीदारी को बढ़ावा मिलेगा और भारतीय जहाजों को तटीय

शिपिंग में भाग लेने का अधिक मौका मिलेगा और इससे राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा को भी मजबूती मिलेगी ।

महोदया, तटीय शिपिंग यातायात में पिछले तीन वर्षों में लगभग 11 प्रतिशत की बढ़ोतरी हुई है । वर्ष 2021-22 में यह 133 मिलियन मीट्रिक टन प्रति वर्ष (एमएमटीपीए) और वर्ष 2022-23 में 151 मिलियन मीट्रिक टन प्रति वर्ष, वर्ष 2023-24 में 162 एमएमटीपीए रहा है । सरकार के 'समुद्री अमृत काल विज़न 2047' के अनुसार देश में परिवहन किए जाने वाले तटीय कार्गो की संख्या बढ़ाकर 1300 एमएमटीपीए करने की योजना है । इससे व्यापार एवं रोजगार को भी बढ़ावा मिलेगा ।

महोदया, इस विधेयक के सेक्शन - 41 में यह प्रावधान है कि कोस्टल शिपिंग में जो भी समस्याएं होंगी, उनका निष्पादन किया जाएगा । जैसा कि हम सभी जानते हैं कि हमारे देश में भारत के तटों से माल ढुलाई में तेजी आई है । शिपिंग मंत्रालय के डेटा का अध्ययन करने से पता चलता है कि सरकारी बंदरगाहों की तुलना में निजी बंदरगाहों में वृद्धि दर ज्यादा रही है । इस बिल में मेरा सुझाव है कि सरकारी बंदरगाहों की भी संख्या बढ़ायी जाए, ताकि अधिक से अधिक रोजगार का सृजन हो ।

महोदया, अप्रैल, 2023 से अगस्त, 2023 सरकारी बंदरगाहों द्वारा संचालित कोस्टल शिपिंग में केवल 1.3 प्रतिशत की वृद्धि हुई है । कुछ बड़े तटीय केन्द्रों में तटीय आवाजाही में पिछले साल की तुलना में गिरावट आई है । वर्ष 2023-24 में प्रमुख बंदरगाहों में 750 लाख टन तटीय कार्गो का संचालन किया गया है जबकि गैर-प्रमुख बंदरगाहों से 550 लाख टन की ढुलाई हुई है ।

महोदया, माननीय प्रधान मंत्री श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी जी और हमारे माननीय मुख्य मंत्री श्री नीतीश कुमार जी के नेतृत्व वाली सरकार ने यह निर्णय लिया है कि पाँच राज्यों - गुजरात, महाराष्ट्र, केरल, आंध्र प्रदेश और ओडिशा - में शिप बिल्डिंग और शिप रिपेयर क्लस्टर्स स्थापित किए जाएं । इस विधेयक से निश्चित ही कोस्टल शिपिंग में मजबूती आएगी । वर्तमान विधेयक के पास होने से भारत के समुद्री बुनियादी ढाँचे में क्रांतिकारी बदलाव आएगा ।

सभापति महोदया, कोस्टल शिपिंग बिल के पास होने से देश में जलमार्ग के नए राजमार्ग बनेंगे, देश में रोजगार के नए अवसर पैदा होंगे और विकास का मार्ग भी प्रशस्त

होगा । इस बिल में मेरा सुझाव है कि हर मौसम में काम करने वाले गहरे पानी के बंदरगाहों को भी बनाने का प्रावधान किया जाए, ताकि हम समुद्री क्षमताओं का भरपूर उपयोग कर सकें ।

महोदया, ?सस्टेनेबल डेवलपमेंट गोल्स - 14? समुद्रों और सतत विकास के लिए समुद्री संसाधनों के उपयोग की बात करता है, इसलिए मेरा यह सुझाव है कि हरित ईंधन और हाइड्रोजन संचालित जहाजों के निर्माण को भी बढ़ावा दिया जाए, ताकि समुद्री प्रदूषण को भी अधिक से अधिक कम किया जा सके ।

महोदया, इन्हीं शब्दों के साथ मैं अपनी बात समाप्त करते हुए इस विधेयक का समर्थन करता हूँ ।

16.00 hrs

SHRI ANIL YESHWANT DESAI (MUMBAI SOUTH-CENTRAL): Thank you, Madam, for giving me an opportunity to participate in the discussion on the Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024. I have a few points to make. I think the Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways is absent from the House.

This Bill has a main objective to enhance and strengthen the water-based trade. India has more than 7,500 kilometre coastline, out of which around 750 kilometres are in Maharashtra. As per the laws of the shipping industry, major ports are regulated by the Central Government and minor and intermediate ports are taken care of by the Maritime Boards of the State Governments.

Madam, when nothing was in sight and when India was ruled by the Britishers, or much before that, when the Mughal emperors reigned India, it was Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, who you could call or describe as a visionary, was the Rear Admiral of the naval fleet. Kanhoji Angre was the Chief Commander of the Naval Force of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Since then, in Maharashtra, we have witnessed many changes.

However, over the years, the infrastructure that should have been robust is, unfortunately, lacking here in India.

16.02 hrs

(Dr. Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar *in the Chair*)

Madam, waterways is the cheapest mode of transportation when compared to rail or even road transport. But what laws are we going to follow? Now, regarding this Bill, within the time allotted to me to speak, I would like to say that, as mentioned earlier by Prof. Sougata Ray Ji, the powers granted to the Director General of Shipping (DGS) through this Bill are quite significant. This concentration of power in the hands of the Director General could hamper the objectives and aims that the Bill seeks to achieve.

There is also a revision in penalties. When we think of encouraging one aspect, and if the Government is seriously considering implementing measures for the people, the participation of private players is also envisaged in this. A lot of encouragement has been given to facilitate their involvement as well. While regulation is necessary to maintain accountability and enforce the law, it should not be overly restrictive. If we want to ensure the right kind of liberty, at the same time, we must strike a balance. If we look at international standards, we are still far from meeting those benchmarks.

Take, for instance, the compounding of offenses. These powers currently lie with the Principal Officer and the DGS authorities. While strict actions such as revocation of licenses are understandable for habitual offenders, there should be a distinction for cases where mistakes occur due to oversight or inadvertence. For instance, if an individual forgets or misplaces essential documents during a check and is penalized with severe consequences, it not only affects that person or organization but disrupts the entire ecosystem.

Another important aspect is regarding the recruitment of skilled professionals. Indian seafarers today face significant challenges because foreign shippers dominate the industry. If Indian-flagged vessels are to play a larger role, we must compare our situation with international practices.

Internationally, total exploitation of our seafarers and sailors is happening, and there has to be a check as far as this new regulation is concerned. Their emoluments, their remuneration, and really that kind of scope need to be there so that the crew is developed and the other technical staff is also developed. Furthermore, this is not only for the carrying or carriage of goods and passengers. Besides that, non-propelling vessels like drilling units are also included in this. By encouraging trade out of the coast, coastal trade must progress as it has been designed. Therefore, these are the areas where I think the Government will need to give much more attention than what has only come out by way of this legislation. Once it is done, I believe we will be at par, or we should have the objective that India would be one of the best and compete internationally with foreigners and advanced countries. We need to build that kind of infrastructure and provide the necessary encouragement. I support this Bill. Thank you, Madam.

16.08 hrs

***m11 SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE (BARAMATI):** Madam, I stand here on behalf of the Nationalist Congress Party (SP) to speak on the Coastal Shipping Bill.

As mentioned earlier by my colleagues, India has a history of maritime trade and a strong naval fleet for generations. Be it Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, the Chola dynasty, or the Pandyan dynasty, these are several dynasties that contributed significantly to maritime wars and

trade, making our global trade much closer and more effective. While this happened in India's history, modern India emerged under the leadership of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Maharashtra has a long coastal route connected to other States in the south. In our long coastal line, we in Maharashtra have the JNPA, which is one of the finest ports in India. We also have the Mumbai Port, which is a very old but effective port in Maharashtra, located in Mumbai. Additionally, the new Vadhavan port is coming up in Maharashtra, which we discussed just last week.

I appreciate the efforts of the hon. Minister, but I have noticed that he comes up with one Bill every week. I request him to bring a large consolidated Bill that makes effective changes in his Ministry, as it will have a larger impact on the maritime trade that this Government is trying to promote. I would like to make a few suggestions to the hon. Minister and ask him a few questions for clarification regarding the industry as well. There were the 1838 and 1958 Vessels Acts, which talked about regulation, safety, security, and pollution prevention. While he is covering all these points and consolidating several of these issues every week in his Department, I request him to ensure that every fisherman is protected and looked after whenever we undertake this sort of work because we just debated fishery, dairy, agriculture, and allied businesses. My colleagues from the DMK are sitting here. I know how much they suffer every time a fisherman inadvertently crosses the border, as they have no clue. There are really no borders there. They are caught and punished. I think while we have policies for port and maritime trade, we must be very sensitive to the fishermen of this country, who are a critical part of our economy. They participate in the growth of this country. Just because they do not have a loud voice or create crores of infrastructure does not mean they do not deserve a voice in this House that we are standing on.

I would like to ask them a few questions to seek clarifications. As regards streamlining of licensing in these procedures, I appreciate the efforts of the Government to bring the foreign and the Indian vessels together on the same thing. But while you are bringing this great introduction by using technology, I would like to ask this. Will there be a license which will be approved or rejected in a timeline manner? If you are using so much technology, it has to be very effective and it has to be time bound and only then this industry would really grow. Nobody wants harassment.

The second thing is that they have used the word 'services'. Now, there are various services after GST has come. In the Income Tax Bill there is a word 'service'. GST has a word 'service'. Every industry has the word 'service'. Now, in this also they have brought in a 'service'. So, while there is taxation and services, the definition of the word 'services' must be totally uniform in all these cases. This is something that the Government must clarify, and if they have not done it, I would urge them to bring it under one meaning in every Bill and make sure that it is the same everywhere so that there is no confusion in any industry.

The next thing is about modernization and digital integration. Now, they have talked about making a database. It is so easy with so much technology, but this real database has to be analysis-driven and make sure that policy-making and investments in this industry are tracked. It is because most young people who are looking for jobs are always confused as they do not know where to apply, and even if they apply the skilling is not good enough. There is always upgrading of skills required with so much change in technology. The Government must clarify about the specific intervention it is doing, be it for policy or employment.

Last week, my colleague and friend, Shrimati Kanimozhi ji talked extensively during the Question Hour about environmental safeguard. She herself comes from a constituency which has a very big port, which was mentioned by my colleague earlier. Now, the whole thing is the decarbonization efforts for making sure that there is no or less pollution. I would not say 'no pollution' because that is not possible. It is too idealistic to expect that. But can we not work towards making it a 'zero pollution' business and making sure that the fuel in this entire shipping industry is clean? India has huge ammonia efforts. We have a lot of ammonia. Is it possible to integrate it? This is an international demand.

I would like to just quote this. From 1st January, 2023, all ships must comply with International Maritime Organization's energy efficiency, existing shipping index and a carbon intensity indicator. I think that this is very critical and Shrimati Kanimozhi ji also talked about it in the Question Hour. I think that environment has to be at the centre of any growth of any great infrastructure project in this country while we make these policies.

Prof. Ray has already talked about conflict resolution. I would not repeat it, but I would like to make a small point on what he has suggested. I would like to reiterate that the Director General is going to be made in-charge of all this policy. Will it be too much consolidation of power in one place? I would like to reiterate what Prof. Ray has said, please rethink it. It is not that we do not mistrust anybody, but to consolidate energy in one place may not be the ideal situation in any business for that matter.

The other small point is about ease of doing business. This Government constantly talks about ease of doing business. So, they have used the word penalties, restrictions, etc. These are not words

anybody likes in a growing economy anywhere in the world. So, I would urge them like we have made in other laws that you either give them a first warning, second warning and third warning or even a case, which my colleague Shri Krishna -- I may not have agreed with his entire speech, but I do value his intervention -- made that if there is an industry which is suffering and if somebody has a penalty and for nine months somebody, who has really not done anything wrong, has to suffer, then the business suffers, and not only the business, the owner suffers, and thousands of stakeholders of that company suffer who are very poor, hardworking and honest citizens of this country. So, while you are talking about penalties and ease of doing business, I think this Government must focus. Do not put fear in the industry.

Even for taxation, while speaking during the Finance Bill, I mentioned not to put fear in the industry. Investors are honest. Indians, by nature, are honest. So, do not threaten them or bring fear, be it in income tax or be it in GST. We do not want tax terrorism or any policy to scare investors.

If you are making policies, make them people friendly. Show people that you have faith in them. Indians will deliver superior results. We need to make sure that India's growing economy becomes 5th largest, 3rd largest and from 3rd largest to the 1st largest economy. We are very happy if they reach the target by 2047, 2057 or whichever year they are aiming at. But these are all idealistic things on paper. I think they need to walk the talk to make sure the businesses do not suffer.

My last point is about good investors in India's ship building industry. There are very serious interventions this Government needs to make to ensure there is a good and easy tax policy. The Government

needs to ensure good and easy access to credit and infrastructural support if the Government wants to encourage maritime trade.

I again take this opportunity to appreciate all the good work done by the hon. Minister. If he consolidates it, it will be far more effective. The hon. Minister is an effective Minister already.

श्री रविंद्र दत्ताराम वायकर (मुम्बई उत्तर-पश्चिम) : सभापति महोदया, इस बिल पर बोलते हुए छत्रपति शिवाजी महाराज को Called the father of Indian Navy. हमारे देश में समुद्र का पहली बार महत्व छत्रपति शिवाजी महाराज जी ने सोचा । इसी के कारण उन्होंने तट के ऊपर किले भी बनाये थे, अपनी सेना और फौज भी रखी थी । मुंबई में इसे गोदी कहा जाता है । वहां से हम व्यापार करते हैं, गोदी से माल लेकर वर्ल्ड में सभी जगह व्यापार करते हैं । अब वधावन बंदरगाह शुरू होने जा रहा है । देश के दस बड़े पोर्ट्स में एक नाम वधावन का आने वाला है ।

आपने मुझे कोस्टल शिपिंग बिल, 2024 पर बोलने का अवसर दिया, आपका आभार । यह विधेयक केवल एक कानून नहीं है, बल्कि भारत की शक्ति को डेवलप करने की दिशा में एक क्रांतिकारी कदम है । भारत एक समुद्र राष्ट्र है, जिसमें 7500 किलोमीटर लंबी तटीय सीमा केवल पर्यटन या सुरक्षा तक सीमित नहीं है, बल्कि यह आर्थिक प्रगति का आधार बन सकती है । आज वैश्विक व्यापार 90 प्रतिशत समुद्र मार्ग से होता है । कोस्टल शिपिंग हमारे देश के लिए एक कॉस्ट इफेक्टिव, इको-फ्रेंडली और सस्टेनेबल ट्रांसपोर्ट विकल्प बनकर उभरा है ।

यह विधेयक भारत को लॉजिस्टिक हब में बदलने की दृष्टि से एक मजबूत नींव डालता है । कोस्टल शिपिंग बिल, 2024 के तहत अब केवल भारतीय जहाजों को कोस्टल ट्रेड करने की अनुमति होगी । विदेशी जहाजों को उसके लिए डायरेक्टर जनरल शिपिंग से लाइसेंस लेना पड़ेगा, जिसका कई लोगों ने अभी जिक्र किया । लाइसेंस तो उनको लेना ही चाहिए । हमें हमारी सुरक्षा देखनी है कि कौन आता है, कौन जाता है, इसके लिए लाइसेंस लेना जरूरी है । क्लॉज 3, 4 और 5(के) के प्रावधान में कोस्टल वॉटर के अनुशासित और पारदर्शी व्यापार को बढ़ावा देना है । क्लॉज 8 के अंतर्गत एक नेशनल कोस्टल और इनलैंड शिपिंग स्ट्रेटजी प्लान तैयार किया जाएगा, जो शिपिंग सेक्टर के लिए एक दीर्घकालीन रोडमैप साबित होगा ।

इस विधेयक के माध्यम से 1958 के मर्चेन्ट शिपिंग एक्ट के पार्ट 14 को समाप्त किया जाएगा और अब सभी प्रकार के जहाज, चाहे वह मोटरलाइज्ड हो या सेल्फ प्रपल्ड हो या सेलिंग वेसेल्स हो, इस कानून के दायरे में आएंगे। इस बिल में सर्विस जैसे रिसर्च, एक्सप्लोरेनशन और कर्मिशयल एक्टिविटीज को कॉस्टिंग ट्रेडर में शामिल किया गया है जो मैरिटाइम इकोनॉमी को वित्तीय सहायता प्रदान करेगा। यह कानून इस बात की भी व्यवस्था करता है कि अगर जहाज पूरी तरह से भारतीय नगरिकों के स्वामित्व में है तो उसको लाइसेंस लेने की आवश्यकता नहीं होगी, यानी हम अपने लोगों को बढ़ावा दे रहे हैं। यह कदम इज ऑफ़ डुइंग बिजनेस को बढ़ावा देता है। बिल में पेनल्टी को आधुनिक बनाया गया है। बिना लाइसेंस के संचालन पर 15 लाख रुपये तक का जुर्माना होगा, यानी कानून नाम की कोई चीज होनी चाहिए। पन्द्रह लाख रुपये जुर्माना या मुनाफे का पन्द्रह गुना जुर्माना लगाया जा सकता है यानी एक स्ट्रांग कानून होना चाहिए कि यदि हमने गलती की तो हमें भुगतना ही है, चाहे कोई भी हो। उसी प्रकार से डायरेक्टर जनरल ऑफ़ शिपिंग को यह अधिकार दिया गया है।

आवश्यकता पड़ने पर यह जहाजों को रोक भी सकता है। यह केवल एक नियम नहीं है, बल्कि मैरीटाइम सेफ्टी और इसके प्रति सरकार की प्रतिबद्धता का प्रमाण है। यह विधेयक एक ऐसे समय आया है, जब भारत में शिपिंग और पोर्ट डेवलपमेंट ने कई महत्वपूर्ण उपलब्धियां हासिल की हैं। वर्ष 2014 के बाद इनलैंड वॉटर में 320 प्रतिशत की वृद्धि हुई है। इससे कम लागत पर माल की आवाजाही भी सुनिश्चित हुई है।

सभापति महोदया, मैरीटाइम डेवलपमेंट फंड के रूप में 25,000 करोड़ रुपये की व्यवस्था की गई है, जिसमें सरकार 49 प्रतिशत की भागीदारी करेगी तथा बाकी योगदान मेजर पोर्ट, पीएसईज़, वित्तीय संस्थान और प्राइवेट इंटाइटल्स को दिया जाएगा। हमें किसी न किसी की मदद करना है, यानी हमारा भी हिस्सा होगा और बाकी लोगों को इसमें भाग लेने का मौका मिलेगा। शिप बिल्डिंग फाइनेंशियल असिस्टेंस पॉलिसी 2.0 के तहत 18,090 करोड़ रुपये की राशि स्वदेशी जहाज निर्माण उद्योग को सशक्त बनाने के लिए निर्धारित की गई है। इसका उद्देश्य भारतीय शिपयार्ड को अंतर्राष्ट्रीय स्पर्धा में सक्षम बनाना है।

इसके साथ ही साथ मुंबई अंतर्राष्ट्रीय क्रूज टर्मिनल का संचालन वर्ष 2025 तक शुरू करेंगे, जो हमारे टूरिज्म बेस्ड मैरीटाइम इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर का प्रतीक होगा। सरकार की

प्रतिबद्धता है कि 150 मैरीटाइम प्रोजेक्ट्स को 06 सितंबर, 2025 तक पूरा किया जाए। यह केवल समयबद्ध नहीं है, बल्कि परिणाम केन्द्रित शासन का उदाहरण है। तटीय पोत परिवहन विधेयक भारत की समृद्धि और अर्थव्यवस्था पर परिवर्तनकारी प्रभाव डालने की क्षमता है, जिसका सबसे महत्वपूर्ण लाभ यह है कि भारत की लॉजिस्टिक लागत को कम करने की मदद कर सकता है। वर्तमान में देश की सकल घरेलू उत्पादन यानी जीडीपी 13 या 14 प्रतिशत से वैश्विक औसत 8.9 प्रतिशत के बीच है।

सभापति महोदया, कोस्टल शिपिंग विशेष रूप से कोयला, इस्पात और सीमेंट जैसे भारी मालों के लिए सड़क और रेल परिवहन की तुलना में एक कम लागत वाला और प्रभावी विकल्प प्रदान करता है। यह विधेयक सड़क और रेल परिवहन से कोस्टल शिपिंग की ओर एक मॉडल शिप को प्रोत्साहित करता है, जिससे परिवहन लागत में कमी आएगी और अंतर्राष्ट्रीय बाजार में भारतीय वस्तुओं की प्रतिस्पर्धात्मक क्षमता बढ़ेगी। इस विधेयक में कुछ महत्वपूर्ण पहलू हैं, जिनमें और बेहतर किया जा सकता है।

महोदया, हमें इसके माध्यम से सबसे पहले उन देशों से सीखने की आवश्यकता है, जिन्होंने कोस्टल शिपिंग को अपने ट्रांसपोर्ट सिस्टम में सफलतापूर्वक एकीकृत किया है। जैसे अमेरिका की तरह भारत में इंडियन फ्लैगशिप की अनिवार्यता सुनिश्चित कराना। जापान और आस्ट्रेलिया जैसे देशों की मल्टीमॉडल कनेक्टिविटी से हम सीख सकते हैं कि कोस्टल शिपिंग को रोड और रेल ट्रांसपोर्ट से कैसे जोड़ा जाए। इसको जोड़ने से हमारा व्यापार और अच्छा हो जाएगा।

दूसरा, यह बिल सुनिश्चित करता है कि कोस्टल शिपिंग पर भारतीय नाविकों की अनिवार्य नियुक्ति हो। जब हम 'आत्मनिर्भर भारत' की बात करते हैं, तब मैरीटाइम जॉब्स का सृजन हमारी प्राथमिकता होनी चाहिए। यह जरूरी है कि इन जहाजों पर भारतीय नागरिकों को प्राथमिकता देनी चाहिए। तीसरा, डोमेस्टिक शिपिंग ऑनर्स और ऑपरेटर्स को वित्तीय बोझ उठाना पड़ता है। खासकर टैक्स और ऑपरेशनल कास्ट के रूप में, यदि भारत को लॉन्ग टर्म कोस्टल शिपिंग इको सिस्टम बनाना है, तो इन चुनौतियों को दूर करना होगा। टैक्स रिजीम का सरलीकरण करना होगा और वेसल फाइनेंसिंग को सस्ता या सुगम किया जाए।

चौथा, भारत की कोस्टल शिपिंग का मॉडल शेयर 6.4 प्रतिशत है, जबकि चीन, जापान और अन्य देशों में 30 प्रतिशत से अधिक है। इसका सीधा असर सड़कों के

ट्रैफिक, प्रदूषण और लॉजिस्टिक कास्ट पर पड़ता है । हमें कार्गो मूवमेंट को इंडियन फ्लैग वेसल पर अनिवार्य करना चाहिए, ताकि भारतीय शिपिंग को मजबूती मिले और विदेशी निर्भरता घटे । अभी भारत की लॉजिस्टिक जीडीपी 13 से 14 प्रतिशत है ।? (व्यवधान) मैं कुछ सुझाव देना चाहता हूं ।

महोदया, बंदरगाहों का आधुनिकीकरण और निजीकरण करना चाहिए । भारत के बंदरगाहों का आधुनिकीकरण तकनीक से लैस करना और प्रक्रिया को डिजिटल बनाना महत्वपूर्ण है । इससे दक्षता बढ़ेगी, समय की बचत होगी और लागत कम होगी । तटीय नौवहन को बढ़ावा देने के लिए नीतियां बनाना आवश्यक है । इससे सड़क और रेल परिवहन पर निर्भरता कम होगी, जिससे प्रदूषण और यातायात की भीड़ कम हो जाएगी । नदी और नहरों के माध्यम से अंतर्देशीय जलमार्गों का विकास करना माल परिवहन के लिए एक किफायती और परिवहन के अनुकूल विकल्प प्रदान कर सकता है । लॉजिस्टिक इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर में सुधार लाने के लिए बंदरगाहों को जोड़ने वाली सड़कों और रेल लाइनों में सुधार करना आवश्यक है, जिससे माल की आवाजाही आसानी से तेज हो जाएगी । कौशल विकास को बढ़ावा देना चाहिए ।

आपने मुझे बोलने का अवसर दिया, उसके लिए मैं आपको धन्यवाद देता हूं ।

KUMARI SUDHA R. (MAYILADUTHURAI): Madam, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. I represent a core stretch of the famed and historically significant Coromandel Coast of the Great Cholas. My Parliamentary Constituency, Mayiladuthurai, alone has nearly 50 kilometres of core coast, which once used to be among the top fishing destinations. Even now, besides the fishing community, Mayiladuthurai has such historically renowned ports like Tranquebar, Poompuhar and Pazhayar of Sirkali; places like Karaikal, Kodikkarai and Nagapattinam are not far away. So, I represent a critical stretch of our coast which has been neglected for long, and for which this Government doesn't have much plan to develop.

First of all, here are the salient features of the Bill under debate. The Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024 was introduced in Lok Sabha on 2nd

December, 2024. Territorial waters extend up to 12 nautical miles from the coast, about 22 kilometres. Adjoining maritime zones extend up to 200 nautical miles, about 370 kilometres. The Bill seeks to regulate all types of vessels, including ships, boats, sailing vessels and mobile offshore drilling units, regardless of them being self-propelled or not. The Bill expands this definition to include provision of services. Services include exploration, research, and any other commercial activity, except fishing.

Now, I would like to highlight the Coastal and Inland Shipping Strategy Plan. The Bill requires the Central Government to prepare a National Coastal and Inland Shipping Strategic Plan within two years of the commencement of the Act. My sincere concerns stem from only a couple of provisions which are as follows. One, it brings all vessels including ships, boats, sailing vessels under the ambit of this law. Second, it brings mobile offshore drilling units under the ambit of this law.

The Bill lays down too much importance to power and regulatory jurisdiction of the Union Government and less importance to people who own, manage and run the vessels for the general welfare and development of the nation.

I would like to ask this august House as to what has been done to help develop ports like Tranquebar, Poompuhar and Pazhayar in Sirkali. Unless berthing capacity, cargo handling capacity and repairing facilities are created and improved in these ports, this Bill will mean little or will not benefit the people of my Constituency in particular and Tamil Nadu in general. I would like to know what budgetary allocations and policy proposals are there for my Constituency.

The next important issue is offshore drilling, which is notoriously high from my Mayiladuthurai Constituency right up to the ecologically fragile

Gulf of Mannar. Even in its latest response, the Union Government had admitted that it had either granted or was considering offshore drilling permission for private companies as well public sector undertakings. Such joint destruction of my Coromandal coastal stretch along my Constituency and beyond is impermissible for social, political, economic and environmental reasons. I seek to know if the key stakeholders who are the fishermen community, have been consulted before these provisions were drafted and placed before this august House for debate.

This Government has three enemies. One is farmers, and other enemies are fishermen and weavers. It has done nothing for these three communities which have given India its identity in the comity of nations.

Of course, your bias against the women, the under-privileged communities and social justice will make the issue only worse. I want this House to first debate what this amendment proposes to do for the fishermen. I would like to know whether the fishermen community has been consulted before it is drafted and then cleared for further proceedings.

In Tamil Nadu, there are 14 coastal districts, including my Mayiladuthurai constituency. The coastline of Tamil Nadu has a length of 1,076 kms.

*There are 609 fishermen villages along the coastal line of Tamil Nadu,. In Mayiladuthurai district, in the two Assembly Constituencies Sirkali and Poompuhar, there are almost 46, 636 fishermen villages. At least more than 15, 000 fishermen of these villages are into fishing for their livelihood. What is the status of fishermen today who are honestly engaged in the profession of fishing? When they venture out into sea, for fishing, they are harassed by the Sri Lankan Navy personnel. Their boats are confiscated and these innocent fishermen are also arrested. Sri

Lankan Navy is illegally engaged into atrocities against our Indian fishermen. This Indian government is looking at them as Tamil fishermen and not as Indian fishermen and hence no help is extended to them by the Union Government. This is a wrong precedent. I raised a question in this House in this regard during last month. I asked that as to which are the adjacent places to our neighbouring countries where fishermen are arrested on seas around India. The reply was given by the Union Government that Indian fishermen have been arrested by the countries like Bangladesh, Pakistan, Dubai and Sri Lanka. Their boats have been confiscated and livelihood is very much affected. This is the worst situation. We are introducing Bills relating to Ports and Shipping in this House. But if fishermen are not there, there would not be no meaning for seas. There would not be any Trade. Ports or Port Trust will not exist. Nothing will be there. If the Union Government is not concerned about the fishing community, that community will become extinct. There are more than 3 Crore fishermen in this country. And out of which more than 20 lakh people are into fishing activities. We bring so many Bills such as Goods and Carriage, Port and Shipping Bill in this august House of Parliament for passing. But no action is taken by this Union Government to protect our fishermen community. Today we need to pay more Toll at Toll Plazas in the country. People have to give more ?entry fee? to go from one place to other. The toll amount which was Rs 75 earlier, has now been increased to Rs 150. This is a pathetic situation. From morning to evening, an Indian has to pay taxes everywhere. All these taxes are being taken away by the Union Government. This is affecting the livelihood of fishermen community very much. By making our people starve in hunger, this Government takes away all their income in the form of tax.

There is increase in poverty rates and India as a nation is totally shattered by this Union Government. Particularly, when you use ATM for taking money, transaction is free for one or two times. If it exceeds five times, a fine of Rs 23 will be deducted for every transaction through ATM. Rs 23 is an amount used for fetching food by an ordinary person on a single day. In the name of tax and fine, you are taking out all the money from the pockets of Indians. This is a nation which is looting all the money from its people. V.O. Chidambaram Pillai operated Indian ship against the British. This Ship was operated by him as a matter of self-dignity and to protect our soil from the clutches of mighty British. But it seems that this Government has once again fallen in the hands of rulers like British. This is a big shame. All the people are running against the present (British like) Government. This Government is snatching away all the money from the pockets of our people in the name of tax. I request you to just stop this injustice. There are so many issues other than this to be discussed on this Bill. You have not sought any suggestion of the stakeholders of this Bill, the fishermen community. But you want to pass this Bill in a hurry. This is gross injustice.*

Now, I come to certificate of equivalence. All the Indian officers and engineers, who got their competency licence from foreign countries, which are white flag nations, that is, England, Singapore, New Zealand etc., as per the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), should be given an opportunity to work on the Indian coastal ships. It has been observed that there is a shortage of highly trained officers and engineers to work on ships like coastal tankers. So, the Indian nationals, who have taken competency certificates from white flag nations, can be employed on these vessels. Presently, rules and regulations are in place, but it has been reported that a lot of difficulties are being faced by owners and

authorised recruiting agencies in getting certificate of equivalence from the Mercantile Marine Department.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude.

KUMARI SUDHA R.: Madam, I am concluding in one minute. So, amendments need to be done so that the transition of these Indian officers and engineers from working in foreign shipping to coastal shipping is easy. Coastal shipping will get a lot of benefits from the experienced, highly-skilled, and trained seafarers.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Member, Shri Mukesh Dalal ji.

? (*Interruptions*)

KUMARI SUDHA R.: I am concluding in one minute.

Clause 3 prohibits the engagement of vessels, other than Indian vessels. ? (*Interruptions*)

SHRI MUKESHKUMAR CHANDRAKAANT DALAL (SURAT): Thank you very much, hon. Chairperson, Madam for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Coastal Shipping Bill.

I have risen to speak and support the Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024. The Indian shipping industry is a crucial part of our economy involving both public and private players, and it encompasses ports, shipping and waterways. India's location is crucial for global shipping routes. India has 12 major ports and 205 minor ports handling large volume of cargo traffic. In 2024, they handled 817.97 million tonnes of cargo, showing an increase of 4.45 per cent from the previous year.

Madam, India's maritime history dates back to 13th century to 16th century. India is one of the world's top five ship recycling countries and

holds as large as 30 per cent share in the world market. India ranks 18th in the world's shipping tonnage. India is the 16th largest maritime country in the world and has a merchant fleet of 1,491 seagoing ships, with a total capacity of 13 million GT. अगर पोर्ट्स होंगे तो शिप्स होंगे और शिप्स होंगे तो शिपिंग इंडस्ट्रीज़ होंगी ।

The Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024, which was approved by the Union Cabinet, aims to simplify and modernize regulations in India's coastal shipping sector and to enable the statutory imposition of specific licensing conditions for vessels engaged in coastal trade, thereby promoting the regulation of such activities and boosting the domestic coastal shipping economy. The Bill will also benefit the ship owners and shipyards in India, non-vessel operating common carriers and cargo owners, besides seafarers. It will repeal and replace certain provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, and it aims to enhance the share of coastal shipping from the current 6.5 per cent to 7.5 per cent by 2030, and further to 12 per cent by 2047.

The Bill is set to benefit the shipowners, shipyards in India, non-vessel operating common carriers, cargo owners, and seafarers.

Additionally, the Indian shipbuilding is expected to receive a significant boost as the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways officially indicates that the Bill will promote the use of India-built ships for coastal shipping and trade.

The Modi Government has encouraged and supported the shipping industries through various policy initiatives such as 100 per cent FDI in automatic route for ports, facilitating 10 years tax holiday in making, maintaining of ports and creation of a huge fund of Rs. 25,000 crore, that

is, Maritime Development Fund, for a long-term financing for the maritime industries.

India has a coastline of 7,516 kilometres. Shipping industry accounts for 13-14 per cent in the country's GDP growth. It handles about 95 per cent of the country's trade by volume and 70 per cent by value. The Government plans to invest Rs. 7,000 crore only in port infrastructure project by 2035 to bolster the maritime sector.

मैडम, मोदी जी पिछले साल द कोस्टल शिपिंग बिल, 2024 लाए थे । यह देखने की बात है कि द इंडियन पोर्ट्स एक्ट आजादी के पहले बना । यह वर्ष 1908 में बना था । अभी कांग्रेस में कोई समझ नहीं है, जी ।

Additionally, the Government plans to establish shipbuilding and repair clusters in five States ? Gujarat, Maharashtra, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha. These clusters will not only generate employment opportunities but also bolster India's position as a global hub for ship manufacturing and maintenance. The Bill also seeks to integrate coastal maritime transport with inland waterways.

Madam, the Congress never invented and invested in ports and shipping.

Madam, with your kind permission, I may recall that on June 19, 2024, the Modi Government approved plans to invest over Rs. 800 billion in the construction of Vadhavan port located in North of Mumbai which is going to be one of the top ports of the world.

Madam, it is also heard that to boost the shipping industry, the Government is planning to establish a new shipping company to expand its fleet by at least 10,000 ships in the next decade. यह मोदी जी का विजन और मिशन है । On July 26, 2024, the Modi Government announced a new shipbuilding financial assistance policy providing financial aid of Rs. 337

crore to enhance India's competitiveness against foreign shipyards. Since the inception of the policy, 313 vessel orders worth Rs. 10,500 crore have been secured.

Gujarat has a vast coastline of 1600 kilometres. It has three ports - Kandla, Mundra and Hazira, which have a great potential, if developed, to generate employment in the State. Hazira port near Surat is less developed and I demand that some fund may be provided for the development of Hazira port.

Apart from that, seashore is near to Surat at Dummas, Dhabari and Dandi. These three seashores, if developed fully, and if provided funds, then have a great potential for fishermen.

The proposed Bill is a key component of India's comprehensive strategy to accelerate the growth of its maritime sector. The country aims to double its container handling capacity within the next five years, potentially creating an estimated 20 lakh jobs. To foster a more favourable regulatory environment, the Bill is expected to play a pivotal role in achieving these ambitious goals. Additionally, the Government plans to establish shipbuilding and repair clusters in five States. These clusters will help boost development. The Bill is unique in the sense of licensing reforms, integration with inland waterways, boost comprehensive database development for the shipment and most importantly, boost seafarers and shipbuilding in the country.

To conclude, the Bill represents the transformative step towards revitalizing India's maritime industry by simplifying processes, reducing bureaucratic hurdles, and fostering a more business-friendly environment. By introducing a standardized and expedited clearance mechanism and simplifying regulations, it aims to make this sector more attractive to operators and investors.

It will attract FDI and foreign investment in the future. The removal of licensing reforms will streamline coastal shipping operations, enhancing efficiency and cost-effectiveness while driving growth and investment in the industry. Ultimately, these reforms will boost the competitiveness of India's coastal shipping sector, improving its global standing and creating new opportunities for innovation and expansion. In all, I support this Shipping Bill, which will carry India towards a developed Viksit Bharat by 2047, a vision of Shri Narendra Modi. Thank you.

SHRI MADDILA GURUMOORTHY (TIRUPATI): Thank you, Madam, for giving me an opportunity to participate in the discussion on the Shipping Bill, 2024.

I would like to highlight its transformative potential for India's maritime sector by emphasising its key positives. Clause 4 of this Bill simplifies the regulatory process by allowing the Director-General to grant licences for coasting trade. It encourages more domestic operators to engage in coastal shipping and boost domestic shipping activities.

Clause 8 (2) (b) integrates coastal shipping with inland waterways, creating a seamless multimodal transport network. This enhances connectivity and reduces transportation costs, benefiting both domestic and international trade. Clause 8 (2) (f) promotes the use of Indian-built vessels, supporting domestic shipping and repair industries. Further, Clause 8 (2) (f) fosters self-reliance in maritime infrastructure and creates jobs.

Clause 9 of this Bill establishes the National Database of Coastal Shipping to ensure transparency and aid in information sharing, enhancing transparency and facilitating better decision-making. These provisions collectively aim to modernise India's maritime sector, promote domestic participation, and enhance national security through a robust

coastal fleet. Madam, I would like to seek clarification from the hon. Minister for the following questions: - As per Clause 3, how will the statutory imposition of different licence conditions on foreign vessels affect international trade and foreign investment, especially considering this Clause which prohibits foreign vessels from engaging in coastal trade without a licence?

As per Clauses 15 and 25, will the stringent penalties introduced disproportionately affect smaller business persons? If so, what measures can be taken to mitigate this impact? As per Clause 37, how will the Government ensure consistent enforcement of the law under this Clause as this allows for exemptions and delegation of power to prevent favouritism or uneven application of laws?

Madam, as per Clause 8 (2) (b), what steps will be taken to ensure the seamless integration of coastal shipping with inland waterways as proposed in this Clause to maximise its benefits for domestic trade, especially in States like Andhra Pradesh, which has the second longest coastal line and has made major strides in developing new ports and harbours? Regarding environmental compliance, how will the integration of environmental standards under the Bill be enforced, and what specific measures will be taken to ensure compliance?

With this, I support the Bill. Thank you, Madam.

श्री सुधाकर सिंह (बक्सर) : सभापति महोदया, मैं इस सदन में कोस्टल शिपिंग बिल, 2024 का विरोध करने के लिए खड़ा हुआ हूँ। इस विधेयक के शीर्षक में शिपिंग और स्ट्रेटेजिक प्लान जैसे शब्दों के माध्यम से एक आधुनिक और दूरदर्शी दृष्टिकोण का आभास दिया गया है। लेकिन जब हम इसके प्रावधानों को गहराई से पढ़ते हैं, तो यह स्पष्ट होता है कि विधेयक दरअसल सरकार की उसी केन्द्रीयकृत नीति और निगरानीपरक शासन प्रणाली का विस्तार है, जो लगातार विधायी प्रक्रियाओं को कमजोर कर रही है।

मैं स्पष्ट करना चाहता हूँ कि मैं समुद्री व्यापार या आधुनिकीकरण के विरोध में नहीं खड़ा हूँ। मेरा विरोध उस दृष्टिकोण से है, जिसमें लोकतांत्रिक भागीदारी, क्षेत्रीय विविधता और व्यावहारिक जरूरतों की उपेक्षा की गई है। सरकार यह दावा करती है कि यह विधेयक देश में नौवहन क्षेत्र को गति देगा। परंतु तथ्य यह है कि इस क्षेत्र में 100 परसेंट प्रत्यक्ष विदेशी निवेश की अनुमति मिलने के बावजूद जमीनी स्तर पर कोई बड़ा परिवर्तन नहीं दिखाई दे रहा है। कारण साफ है कि नौतियों की अस्पष्टता, प्रक्रियाओं की जटिलता और सबसे अहम भारतीय नाविकों तथा श्रमिकों को रोजगार में प्राथमिकता देने की कोई गारंटी नहीं। यह विधेयक रोजगार निर्माण की बात तो करता है, लेकिन इसमें कहीं नहीं लिखा है कि भारतीय नागरिकों को प्राथमिकता मिलेगी और न कोई न्यूनतम प्रतिशत तय किया गया है। अगर सरकार वाकई इस क्षेत्र को रोजगार उत्पन्न करने वाला इंजन बनाना चाहती है तो कम से कम 50 प्रतिशत नौकरियां भारतीय नागरिकों के लिए आरक्षित होनी चाहिए। ऐसा नहीं है कि भारत के बहुत सारे नौजवान दुनिया के अन्य देशों में नौपरिवहन में काम कर रहे हैं। लगातार खबरें आती हैं कि विदेशों में समुद्री जहाज जो हाइजैक कर लिए जाते हैं, वह वर्षों तक उसमें फंसे रहते हैं।

इस विधेयक में दो वर्षों के भीतर एक राष्ट्रीय तटीय और अंतर्देशीय शिपिंग रणनीति बनाने की बात की गई है, लेकिन इसमें स्थानीय उद्योगों, मछुआरों और विशेषकर क्षेत्रीय विशेषज्ञों की कोई भागीदारी नहीं दिखती है। यह भारत की व्यापक परिवहन और व्यापारिक आकांक्षाओं से स्पष्ट रूप से कटा हुआ प्रतीत होता है, विशेष रूप से राष्ट्रीय लॉजिस्टिक्स ढांचे में आंतरिक जलमार्गों को एकीकृत करने की अत्यंत आवश्यकता के संदर्भ में यहां कोई चर्चा नहीं है।

सरकार ईज ऑफ डूइंग बिज़नेस और लॉजिस्टिक्स लागत को कम करने की बात करती है, लेकिन यह विधेयक नदी परिवहन की क्रांतिकारी संभावनाओं को पूरी तरह से बेदखल कर देती है। खास तौर से बिहार जैसे राज्य में, जिसे प्राकृतिक दृष्टि से एक अद्वितीय भौगोलिक लाभ प्राप्त है। बिहार में सात प्रमुख नदियाँ गंगा, गंडक, घाघरा, कोसी, सोन, कर्मनासा और पुनपुन नदी बहती हैं। यह प्राकृतिक राजमार्ग अभी भी भारी रूप से उपेक्षित हैं। राष्ट्रीय जलमार्ग अधिनियम, 2016 के तहत घोषित 111 राष्ट्रीय जलमार्गों में से कई जैसे एनडब्ल्यू-1, एनडब्ल्यू-37 और एनडब्ल्यू-58 मुख्य रूप से बिहार से होकर गुजरते हैं, जिससे नेपाल को भी अंतर्राष्ट्रीय व्यापार को सुविधा देने की बात कही गई है। समुद्री मार्ग से नेपाल के साथ भारत का जो समझौता हुआ है, वह

इन्हीं नदियों के माध्यम से सम्भव हो पाएगा । इसलिए इन नदियों को बिना जोड़े हुए हम नेपाल को समुद्री व्यापार का रास्ता नहीं दे पायेंगे ।

गंगा नदी, विशेष रूप से राष्ट्रीय जलमार्ग-1 का हिस्सा है, जो इलाहाबाद से हल्दिया तक पूर्वी उत्तर प्रदेश, बिहार, झारखंड और पश्चिम बंगाल से होकर जाती है । इसकी कुल लंबाई लगभग 1600 किलोमीटर है । यह भारत की सबसे महत्वाकांक्षी अंतर्राज्यीय जलमार्ग परियोजनाओं में से एक है और बिहार के व्यापार को बदलने की असीम संभावनाएं रखती है ।

उपलब्ध आंकड़ों की दिशा में यह स्पष्ट रूप से Inland Waterways Authority of India के अनुसार राष्ट्रीय जलमार्ग-1 के जरिये माल ढुलाई की लागत 1 रुपये 30 पैसे प्रति टन किलोमीटर है, जबकि रेल से 2 रुपये 41 पैसे और नदी के जरिये 3 रुपये 62 पैसे प्रति टन किलोमीटर का खर्च आ रहा है । वहीं साहिबगंज टर्मिनल से लागत साढ़े 4 रुपये प्रति टन किलोमीटर है । ये आंकड़े मामूली नहीं हैं । ये आर्थिक क्रांति के वाहक हैं । साथ ही आईडब्ल्यूटी न केवल चार गुना कम ईंधन खर्च करता है, बल्कि कम प्रदूषण, न्यूनतम शोर और लगभग शून्य दुर्घटना लागत के साथ माल परिवहन का सबसे टिकाऊ तथा पर्यावरण सम्मत तरीका है । बिहार जैसे राज्य में जहाँ रोज़गार और औद्योगिक संपर्क दोनों की नितांत आवश्यकता है । आईडब्ल्यूटी आर्थिक दक्षता और पारिस्थितिक संतुलन दोनों प्रदान कर सकता है ।

हमने इसके सफल उदाहरण भी देखे हैं, जहाँ गंगा के ज़रिए विदेशों से उर्वरक पटना के फतुहा तक, सीमेंट पटना तक और गाड़ियों व कलपुर्जों की सप्लाई वाराणसी तक देखने को मिली है । हाल में भारत और नेपाल के बीच हुए समझौते के अनुसार गंडक और कोसी नदियों को अंतर्राष्ट्रीय जलमार्ग के रूप में विकसित किया जा रहा है, जिससे नेपाल को समुद्र तक पहुँच मिलेगी और बिहार को क्षेत्रीय व्यापार के लिए एक ऐतिहासिक अवसर मिलेगा । लेकिन इन परियोजनाओं के लिए गहरी जलधाराएँ, उच्च क्षमता वाले बार्ज और सीमा पार लॉजिस्टिक समन्वय की आवश्यकता है, जो कि एक स्पष्ट, समर्थक तथा दूरदर्शी कानूनी ढाँचे के बिना संभव नहीं । यह विधेयक दुर्भाग्य से इस दिशा में कोई ठोस प्रयास नहीं करता । सिर्फ समुद्री वाहकों और विदेशी शिपिंग कंपनियों तक ही सीमित रहता है ।

यह बिहार और पूर्वी भारत के लाखों उत्पादकों, व्यापारियों और किसानों को पूरी तरह अनदेखा करता है, जिनके लिए सस्ता और विश्वसनीय व्यापार संपर्क जीवनरेखा बन सकती है ।

हमें यह बात नहीं भूलनी चाहिए कि बिहार की ये ही नदियाँ, जो हर साल मानसून में बाढ़ से तबाही लाती हैं, यदि समझदारी से इनको प्रबंधित और नेविगेट किया जाए, तो ये समृद्धि की रीढ़ बन सकती हैं । गंगा, कोसी, सोन आदि नदियों से डरने की बजाय, हमें उनकी ताकत को आर्थिक धमनियों में बदलने की आवश्यकता है । हर साल तटबंध बनाना और बाढ़ राहत देना कोई समाधान नहीं है, जबकि नदी की खुदाई (dredging), टर्मिनल निर्माण, फ्लडप्लेन इंडस्ट्रियल हब और बार्ज नेटवर्क में निवेश करना एक दूरदर्शी रणनीति है ।

नियंत्रित नौपरिवहन के लिए निरंतर रख-रखाव की जरूरत होती है, जिसमें खुदाई, तट मजबूती और ट्रैफिक नियंत्रण शामिल हैं और यह साल भर रोज़गार देता है । सुपौल, सहरसा, कटिहार, खगड़िया, अररिया और मधेपुरा जैसे बाढ़ प्रभावित जिलों को आंतरिक लॉजिस्टिक्स गलियारों में बदलना, उन्हें आपदा क्षेत्र से विकास क्षेत्र में बदल सकता है । हर टन माल जो नदी से ढोया जाता है, वह केवल पैसा और ऊर्जा ही नहीं बचाता, बल्कि वह शांति, स्थिरता और गरिमा की बुनियाद भी बनाता है । उन क्षेत्रों में जो अब तक सिर्फ विस्थापन और पीड़ा के प्रतीक रहे हैं । यह वह बदलाव है, जिसकी बिहार की जनता हकदार है । माल परिवहन पर कोई भी गंभीर कानून, वह चाहे समुद्र के जरिए हो या नदी के, उसमें इतनी हिम्मत और कल्पना होनी चाहिए कि वह इस परिवर्तन को सम्भव बना सके ।

यही वह कानून है जिसकी भारत को जरूरत है, न कि यह खोखला विधेयक, जो शिपिंग कंपनियों की सेवा करता है, लेकिन भारत के जलपोत-निर्माताओं को भूल जाता है । धन्यवाद ।

SHRI TANGELLA UDAY SRINIVAS (KAKINADA): Hon. Chairperson, I rise today in strong support of the Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024, which is a crucial step towards unlocking India's immense maritime potential.

Despite having a 7,500-kilometre coastal line and key access to global shipping routes, coastal shipping accounts for only seven per cent of India's total freight movement. This is a missed opportunity, especially when coastal shipping is 60 to 70 per cent cheaper than road transport and 30 to 40 per cent cheaper than rail transport. Strengthening this sector can help reduce India's high logistic cost of 14 to 15 per cent of GDP compared to the global average of 8-10 per cent.

The Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024 stands as a cornerstone reform designed to regulate, modernise and revitalise India's coastal shipping industry. One of its most significant provisions is the expansion of the definition of coasting trade. Beyond just transports of goods and passengers, it now includes vital services such as offshore exploration, research and commercial activities. This is a game-changer because nearly 50 per cent of Indian flagged vessels operate in the offshore sector. By bringing them under a structured regulatory framework, this Bill will attract investment, enhance operational safety and strengthen India's position in offshore oil, gas and maritime services.

Additionally, this Bill eliminates licensing requirements of Indian-owned vessels, removing bureaucratic hurdles and making operations more seamless. This is an essential reform because today only 1.2 per cent of global shipping tonnage is registered as Indian vessels, far below our economic potential. Prioritising Indian-built and Indian-crewed vessels will create thousands of jobs for our Indian seafarers and reduce our reliance on foreign flagships.

This reform is not just economic. It is about protecting our people. India is the third-largest provider of seafarers globally, contributing nearly 10 per cent of the maritime workforce. At most, Indian seafarers are employed on foreign-owned vessels, leaving them vulnerable to

exploitation. Disturbingly, India recorded the highest number of abandoned seafarers in 2024. To safeguard our maritime workforce and ensure stable employment, this Bill can incorporate provisions to mandate minimum quota of Indian seafarers and Indian flagged vessels.

A key feature of this Bill is the establishment of a National Coastal and Inland Shipping Strategic Plan, aimed at integrating our 14,500 kilometres of inland waterways with coastal shipping. This integration is essential to make maritime transport a cost-effective and efficient mode for goods and passengers. However, this vision cannot be realised without better maintained waterways.

In the past five years, not even a single capital dredging project has been undertaken by the Inland Waterways Authority of India.

17.00 hrs

Only maintenance dredging has been carried out. If we truly want to unlock the potential of our waterways, we must invest in large-scale, planned capital dredging to ensure navigational depth and modernize India's dredging fleet with advanced technology.

The Bill lays the foundation for a coastal fleet which is owned and operated by Indian citizens but to truly realize this vision, we must build a fleet that is built, owned, and operated by Indians. Strengthening our domestic ship-building industry is critical. The Government has already taken commendable steps, such as the revamped ship-building financial assistance policy, the maritime development fund of Rs. 25,000 crore, the establishment of ship-building clusters in five coastal States, including Andhra Pradesh. However, to maximize the impact of these initiatives, they must be expanded. My constituency, Kakinada, is the ideal location to drive growth of this sector. With its natural deep-water

port, strategic location, and well-developed industrial infrastructure, Kakinada is primed to become a leading ship-building hub. If we channel the right investments and policy support, Kakinada can be at the heart of India's ship-building renaissance.

Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, the NDA Government is charting a new course for India's maritime future. Through bold reforms and strategic initiatives, we are not just boosting coastal shipping but transforming India into a self-reliant maritime powerhouse, which is built on Indian ships, driven by Indian talent, and sailing towards global leadership.

I conclude by extending my full support to the Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024. Thank you. Jai Hind!

श्री राजा राम सिंह (काराकाट) : सभापति महोदया, धन्यवाद ।

महोदया, यह बिल अपने परपञ्च को शुरू में ही रखता है -- to consolidate and amend the law relating to regulation of coastal shipping, promote coasting trade and encourage domestic participation therein, to ensure that India is equipped with a coastal fleet, owned and operated by the citizens of India for its national security and commercial needs, and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

सभापति महोदया, मैं इस बिल के विरोध में इसलिए खड़ा हूँ, क्योंकि एक शब्द शुरू में चला था, जो कि 'पीपीपी' पब्लिक प्राइवेट पार्टनरशिप था । लेकिन, इसको हमने कुछ ही दिनों में 'प्राइवेटाइजेशन ऑफ पब्लिक प्रॉपर्टीज़' होते हुए देखा था । अब यह शब्द इस बिल से चार 'पी' में बदलता हुआ दिखाई दे रहा है, जो है 'पब्लिक प्रॉपर्टीज़ फॉर प्राइवेट प्लेयर्स', इस बिल के जरिए यह कोशिश की गई है ।

सभापति महोदया, निजी मुनाफे को देश की सुरक्षा और देश हित में बताने की कोशिश की गई है । अभी माननीय सदस्य श्री के. सी. वेणुगोपाल जी ने अपनी बात रखी थी कि हल्दिया से लेकर केरल के पोर्ट तक धीरे-धीरे एक ही व्यक्ति की मोनोपली बन

रही है । इस बिल में कहीं से भी इस मोनोपली को चैक करने का, कंट्रोल करने का कोई प्रोविजन नहीं है । न तो भाड़ा नियंत्रण के मामले में, न ही ड्रग्स, जो बड़े पैमाने पर प्राइवेट पोर्ट्स से, प्राइवेट वैसल्स से आ-जा रहे हैं, उनको नियंत्रित करने के मामले में और इसी तरह से अन्य इल्लिगल चीजों को भी कंट्रोल करने का कोई प्रोविजन इस बिल के भीतर दिखाई नहीं देता है । मैंने इसको पढ़ने की कोशिश की है ।

महोदया, यह बिल निजी मुनाफे को ही नैशनल सिक्योरिटी बताने की कोशिश कर रहा है । हम तो यह महसूस कर रहे हैं कि जैसे मध्य काल में राजाओं ने अपने व्यापार के लिए भिन्न-भिन्न वैसल्स चला रखे थे, जिनको वे प्राइवेट ढंग से यूज़ करते थे, उसी तरह से इस पार्लियामेंट को अपना नैशनल ग्रीप कमजोर करते हुए प्राइवेट के हवाले कर देने के लिए यह बिल लाया गया है ।

17.03 hrs

(Shri Dilip Saikia *in the Chair*)

सभापति महोदय, सबसे दुखद बात यह है कि इस बिल के लिए कहा जा रहा है कि आजादी के 75वें साल में इस एक्ट को हम स्वीकार कर रहे हैं । ऐसा लगता है कि राष्ट्र हित और राष्ट्र की सुरक्षा से रिलेटेड बहुत बड़ा काम करने जा रहे हैं । लेकिन, इस बिल के जरिए हम सब कुछ प्राइवेट हाथों में सौंपने जा रहे हैं ।

सभापति महोदय, इसीलिए, मैं इस बिल का कड़ा विरोध करता हूं और इसके खिलाफ बोलता हूं ।

***m19 *SHRI NAVASKANI K. (RAMANATHAPURAM):** Hon. Chairman Sir, Vanakkam. I thank you for allowing me to speak on Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024. Tamil Kings ruled the world even before 1000 years. King Raja Raja Cholan called as *Kadaaram Kondan* ruled an extensive area including Ports by operating Ships to countries like Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and even China. Similarly, our freedom fighter V.O. Chidambaram Pillai owned a Ship during those days and even threatened the British. Tamils were known for Management of Ports. They excelled in this field. There were more than 20 Ports which were operating in Tamil Nadu successfully. Trade activities were successfully taking place through

these Ports. Now only two or three Ports are fully functional in Tamil Nadu. Rest of the Ports are dysfunctional. This Government has closed the natural Ports rather opening the artificially created Ports. This Government has allocated Rs 5000 Crore to Gujarat. You are also developing a Port near Maharashtra after allocating sufficient funds. But the Ports of Tamil Nadu remain closed. We have a doubt that whether our Hon Minister is a Minister for our country or only for the State of Gujarat. The entire coastal area from Cuddalore to Nagappattinam, Sirkali and Thondi of Tamil Nadu should be developed, as Ports were operating from these places during olden days. These Ports should be developed in such a way that it would result in better trade and cultural ties with several other countries of the world. But privatisation of all these ports by this Government is a matter of concern. Every Port is being given to Adani. This should be stopped. Our seas should be protected. We should protect the lives of fishermen who thereby protect the seas. Tamil Nadu fishermen are time and again arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy besides confiscating their boats. We have been raising this issue in this House. We have met the hon. Minister of External Affairs and demanded from him a solution. Our hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has been raising this issue with the Hon. Minister of External Affairs and the Hon. Prime Minister. But the issue of arrest of Indian fishermen is not stopped. Their boats are confiscated. Sri Lankan government takes these boats of Indian fishermen and makes them the property of the Sri Lankan Government. These boats are even put on auction. No relief is given to the affected Indian fishermen. For each boat seized by the Sri Lankan Government, our Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, on behalf of Tamil Nadu Government, has provided Rs. 6 lakh as assistance to the affected fishermen. Now this relief amount has been increased as Rs. 8 Lakh. But the Union Government does not pay even a single Rupee. This Union Government does not stop our Indian fishermen from being arrested by

the Sri Lankan Navy. Sri Lankan Government levies lakhs and crores of Rupees as fine for releasing the fishermen and their boats. The fine amount is being increased by them now and then. I put before the Union Government through you that, why is this Government unable to control Sri Lankan Government in such matters. When there was an economic crisis in Sri Lanka, Indian Government helped Sri Lanka in a big way on humanitarian grounds. We welcome all these measures. At the same time, is it not the duty of our Government to ensure safe fishing rights for our fishermen? This Government should act upon to make our fishermen engaged in fishing safely in the Lakshadweep area. Their arrest should also be prevented by this Union Government. We have been urging upon this issue for so long. Fishermen protect our seas. Management of Ports and schemes thereon can be implemented only through the cooperation of fishermen. Only with their help, you can streamline the transportation across seas. Protect our fishermen in order to protect our seas. Particularly protect our Tamil fishermen. When Gujarat fishermen are arrested by the Pakistan Navy, this Union Government promptly swings into action immediately. Whereas, when our Tamil fishermen are arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy, you do not act swiftly. I urge that urgent and immediate action is warranted. Security of Tamil fishermen should be ensured. There should be talks between the Representatives of fishermen communities of both the countries and a permanent solution should be arrived. In many countries, the fishermen of neighbouring countries engage in fishing peacefully. But the issue between Indian and Sri Lankan fishermen is still not solved. I urge upon the Union Government to focus on this issue and find an everlasting solution. Thank you.

***m20 श्री आनंद भदौरिया (धौरहरा) :** सभापति महोदय, आपने मुझे तटीय पोत परिवहन विधेयक, 2024 पर अपनी पार्टी की तरफ से अपनी राय रखने का अवसर

प्रदान किया है, इसके लिए आपको धन्यवाद देता हूं ।

सभापति महोदय, हम लोग इस सदन में जब से चुन कर आए हैं, तब से सरकार की तरफ से कई सारे विधेयक प्रस्तुत किए गए हैं, लेकिन ज्यादातर जो बिल्स आए हैं, उनके आने के दो कारण हमारी समझ में आए हैं । एक तो रिकॉर्ड पर रिकॉर्ड बनाना कि हम इतने संशोधन विधेयक लेकर आए हैं, हमने इतने पुराने नियमों में संशोधन किया है और दूसरा कारण कि जो आम आदमी है, उसके व्यापार की बिना पर, उसकी जरूरतों की बिना पर, उसके व्यापार के हितों की अनदेखी करके जो बड़े व्यापारी मित्र हैं, कहीं न कहीं उनको लाभ पहुंचाने के लिए ये विधेयक और संशोधन विधेयक लाने का काम हो रहा है ।

महोदय, यह जो तटीय पोत परिवहन विधेयक आया है, कहने को तो यह मछुआरे और तटीय इलाकों के लोगों के हितों को लेकर है, लेकिन ऐसा नहीं है । हम आज एक अप्रैल को जब इस पर चर्चा कर रहे हैं तो कहीं न कहीं यह उन मछुआरों के लिए एक धोखा साबित होने का काम होगा ।

सभापति महोदय, मैं रामचरितमानस का इसलिए जिक्र कर रहा हूं क्योंकि जो मछुआरे हैं, अगर हम उन्हें उत्तर प्रदेश के परिप्रेक्ष्य में देखें तो वहां वे निषाद समाज के अन्तर्गत आते हैं, केवट समाज के अन्तर्गत आते हैं । ये वही केवट और निषाद समाज के लोग हैं, जिन्होंने मर्यादा पुरुषोत्तम भगवान श्रीराम को नौका में बिठा कर गंगा पार कराने का काम किया था और उसकी उतराई भी नहीं ली थी, लेकिन आज वह मछुआ समुदाय संकट में है ।

सभापति जी, देश के समुद्री व्यापार, मछुआरों और छोटे जहाज मालिकों के हितों के साथ एक बड़ा खिलवाड़ हो रहा है । इस बिल में कहा गया है कि भारतीय स्वामित्व वाले जहाजों को लाइसेंस की जरूरत नहीं होगी, लेकिन यह सिर्फ एक छलावा है, क्योंकि आप विदेशी कंपनियों को भारतीय तटीय व्यापार में शामिल कर रहे हैं । इसके आंकड़े बताते हैं कि भारत का 95 प्रतिशत अन्तरराष्ट्रीय व्यापार समुद्री मार्ग से होता है, लेकिन हमारे पास अपने जहाजों की तो संख्या नगण्य है । हमारे पास अपने जहाज ही नहीं हैं । फिर सरकार विदेशी जहाजों को भी तटीय व्यापार में लाने का काम करेगी । इससे भारतीय शिपिंग कंपनियों का व्यवसाय चौपट हो जाएगा । क्या सरकार को अपने यहां जहाज बनाने पर, अपने यहां नए जहाज लाने के ऊपर काम नहीं करना

चाहिए था? कबीरदास जी ने कहा है - ?जिन खोजा तिन पाइयां?, ?गहरे पानी पैठ?, लेकिन सरकार ?गहरे पानी? में नहीं उतरना चाहती है, वह केवल विदेशियों को लूटने का रास्ता देना चाह रही है ।

महोदय, इस बिल में सर्विसेज को तटीय व्यापार में शामिल किया गया है, जिसमें तेल, गैस की खोज, समुद्री शोध जैसे काम आते हैं, लेकिन मछली पकड़ने को इसमें शामिल नहीं किया गया है यानी बहुराष्ट्रीय कंपनियों को तटीय इलाकों में ड्रिलिंग और खनन का अधिकार मिलेगा, भारत के लाखों मछुआरों के अधिकारों की अनदेखी होगी । क्या यही सरकार का ?सबका साथ, सबका विकास? है? यह कहीं न कहीं मछुआरों की आवाज को दबाना है ।

सभापति जी, इसलिए हम कहना चाहते हैं कि सरकार को मछुआरों के हितों के ऊपर भी कुछ काम करना चाहिए । उत्तर प्रदेश में जब समाजवादी पार्टी की हुकूमत थी और माननीय अखिलेश यादव जी मुख्य मंत्री थे तो उन्होंने ?मछुआ आवास? देने का काम किया था, मछुआ समुदाय के केवट, निषाद समाज को तालाबों के पट्टे देने का काम किया था, उनको पेन्शन देने का काम किया था । क्या माननीय मंत्री जी को इस तरीके की कोई योजना नहीं लानी चाहिए, जिससे इन मछुआ, केवट, निषाद समाज के लोगों का कल्याण हो सके? उत्तर प्रदेश की सरकार ने इन जातियों को एस.सी., एस.टी. का दर्जा देने के लिए प्रस्ताव बनाकर भेजा, लेकिन वह भी अभी तक लम्बित है । यह सरकार निषाद, केवट समाज को आरक्षण नहीं देना चाहती है ।

सभापति जी, हम कहना चाहते हैं कि पुराने कानून में बिना लाइसेंस तटीय व्यापार करने पर छह महीने की जेल या दस हजार रुपये का जुर्माना था । अब इस बिल में उस सज़ा को बढ़ा कर 15 लाख रुपये या कमाई का चार गुना कर दिया है । माननीय मंत्री जी, यह किसके हित में है? बड़ी कंपनियों के लिए तो यह छोटी रकम है, लेकिन जो छोटे जहाज़ मालिक हैं, जो मछुआरे हैं, वे कैसे इतना बड़ा अर्थदंड दे पाएंगे?

सभापति जी, इस बिल में डायरेक्टर जनरल ऑफ शिपिंग को यह अधिकार दिया गया है कि वह किसी भी जहाज़ को जब्त कर सकता है । यह प्रावधान सरकारी दमन को बढ़ावा देगा । क्या यह सरकार का ईज़ ऑफ़ डूइंग बिज़नेस की जगह ईज़ ऑफ़ हेरासमेंट नहीं है? इसलिए मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि आज मछुआरों को खाली हाथ और

आँखों में पानी है । मछुआरों की यही कहानी है । सरकार उनका समुंद्र छीन रही है और आँखों में पानी भर कर छोड़ रही है ।

सभापति जी, इस बिल में राष्ट्रीय तटीय और अंतरदेशीय शिपिंग रणनीति बनाने की बात कही गई है, लेकिन इसमें दो साल का समय दिया गया है, यानी सरकार के पास कोई योजना तैयार नहीं है । वह बिना सोचे समझे कानून ला रही है । आपका इशारा मैं समझ रहा हूँ । मैं एक बात कह कर अपनी बात समाप्त करना चाहता हूँ । माननीय सभापति जी, यह बिल राष्ट्र विरोधी है । इस बिल में भारतीय समुद्री हितों को बेचने की तैयारी है । यह छोटे जहाज़ मालिकों, मछुआरों, देशी शिपिंग उद्योग के लिए विनाशकारी है । मैं सरकार से मांग करता हूँ कि इस बिल को तुरंत वापस लिया जाए । इस पर व्यापक विचार-विमर्श किया जाए । अगर सरकार ऐसा नहीं करती है, तो यह साबित होगा कि सरकार विदेशी कॉर्पोरेट के एजेंडे पर काम कर रही है ।

मैं अंत में सिर्फ यही कहना चाहता हूँ कि सत्ता के दीपक जल रहे हैं, पर मछुआरे अंधेरे में हैं, चौराहे पर खड़ा हुआ विकास सिर्फ भ्रष्ट तंत्र के फेरे में है ।

आपने समय दिया, आपका बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद ।

DR. RANI SRIKUMAR (TENKASI): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I rise to speak on this significant Coastal Shipping Bill which, this Government claims, will promote coastal trade and increase domestic participation. Despite being a country with about 7,500 kilometres of coastline, 14,500 kilometres of inland waterways and being strategically located near major international shipping lanes, we have not utilized our crucial waterways to our full potential. The inland freight transport is just as per NITI Aayog. Maritime transportation, particularly coastal shipping, is widely recognized as a more cost-effective alternative to other modes of transport. So, when this Bill was introduced, we hoped that this Bill would facilitate coastal shipping and promote employment opportunities for our people, but this Bill has not only failed to address the crucial issues, it has also made it worse.

As per Section 345, the Director General has been given considerable discretionary power in assessing applications and imposing additional conditions. While flexibility is necessary, excessive discretion without clear guidelines could lead to inconsistent or biased decision-making. The Director General is given broad discretionary powers to suspend, revoke or modify licences. While such powers are necessary for regulation, there are concerns about the lack of checks and balances. If misused, this could lead to arbitrary action without sufficient oversight. The criteria for suspension, revocation or modification of licenses are broad, including violations of any conditions of licences or failure to comply with any applicable law. This could be seen as overly vague, leading to uncertainty and potential misuse. This section does not clearly mention about any appealing process or mechanism for challenging the suspension, revocation or modification of a license. This could leave licensees without an effective way to contest decisions which are unfair or unjustified. The term 'reasonable opportunity to be heard' could be interpreted differently, leading to arbitrary application of the law. A more different process could ensure fairness and clarity without giving undue power to the Director General of Shipping.

As per Section 8 of this Bill, the Union Government must publish a National Coastal and Inland Shipping Strategic Plan within two years of the commencement of the Act and update it every two years.

The plan will include assessment of coastal shipping routes, operational improvements, long-term traffic forecasts, best practices, new routes, promotion of Indian vessels, and other necessary matters. A Committee will be formed to draft the plan, including members from various relevant agencies, such as the Director-General of Shipping, Inland Waterways Authority, major ports, State maritime boards, ship owners, seafarers, and maritime experts.

The problem with this section is that the Strategic Plan is mandated to be drafted and updated every two years, but who is responsible for its execution? There is no mention of performance monitoring to ensure that improvements are implemented. The Committee is only responsible for drafting, not ensuring implementation. The Committee consists mostly of Government representatives and some industry players. Key stakeholders like cargo owners, logistics providers, and coastal community representatives are missing.

The Strategic Plan mentions promotion of Indian vessels, but how this will be done is unclear. No specific incentives, for example, subsidies, tax benefits, are mentioned to encourage domestic vessel participation. Developed countries like China, European countries and the USA are giving incentives. They are giving tax benefits to their own crews, and they are doing more efforts to develop the ports to enhance the shipping traders. But in India, despite flying Indian flags and employing Indian crew, Indian shipping companies have to pay high taxes, but the foreigners are enjoying the exemptions. The exemptions and the cost advantages should be given to the Indian shipping traders also.

The Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024, introduces stringent penalties to ensure compliance, but a balanced approach is necessary to foster industry growth. While strict enforcement is essential to maintain safety and efficiency, excessive penalties without remedial provisions could discourage new entrants and smaller operators. Currently, penalties under Sections 15, 16, and 18 impose heavy fines, imprisonment, and vessel detention for violations like unauthorized operations, expired licenses, and false reporting. However, the absence of grace periods or rectification opportunities may create unintended barriers.

To promote compliance without stifling participation, the Bill could incorporate graduated penalties, warning mechanisms, or rectification periods for minor infractions. This would ensure regulatory discipline while allowing businesses, especially new entrants, to adapt to compliance requirements without disproportionate deterrence.

India's coastline is not just a trade route, but it is a line of defence. We have seen smuggling, illegal fishing, and even security threats from the sea. But this Bill is silent on coastal surveillance, naval coordination, and security measures.

Now-a-days drug trafficking through Indian ports remains a growing challenge. One of the most critical measures India must adopt to curb drug trafficking is the enhancement of port surveillance and the integration of advanced technology in security operations. If India fails to modernize its port security infrastructure, its ports will remain soft targets for international drug syndicates, undermining national security and public health efforts.

Sir, I will conclude my speech by raising an important issue. The Union Government extends its help to all neighbouring countries whenever they face economic crisis. But this Union Government becomes a silent spectator with folded hands when our Tamil fishermen are harassed by the neighbouring countries. It is painful to note this inaction of this Union Government. If this Bill is passed, it will severely impact the lives of our fishermen. Union government is behaving with a step-motherly attitude as regards the issues of our fishermen. We consider all Indian fishermen as our brothers. We will not support this Bill as it affects the livelihood of our fishermen and we will never allow its implementation also.

Therefore, the Tamil Nadu Government, under the able leadership of our hon. Chief Minister, is taking a lot of efforts and measures for uplifting

the traders. I request the Union Government to follow the steps of our able hon. Chief Minister in uplifting the traders.

Therefore, I urge the Union Government to modify this Bill accordingly, taking into consideration the concerns of the coastal State Governments, industry, stakeholders, and the fishermen community.

Thank you, Sir.

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN (KOLLAM): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson Sir. I rise to support this Bill with certain strong reservations and concerns, and I would seek clarifications from the hon. Minister.

The Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024 seeks to repeal Part XIV of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 except Section 411A. The primary advantage of having coastal shipping is that it can result in shaping necessary national and State-level policies and programmes targeted towards transportation, logistics and trade. The Government is forced to bring this Bill. According to my limited information, limited knowledge, the Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024 is brought in because of the competition between the foreign-flagged vessels and the Indian-flagged vessels. So, it is giving a preferential treatment to the Indian-flagged vessels. That is why, I am supporting this Bill. A large coastal population is depending on the activities related to the seas and base. By means of this legislation, the Government intends to increase the modal share of coastal shipping from the current rate of 6.4 per cent to 7.5 per cent by 2030, and ultimately 12 per cent by 2047. The share of coastal shipping in Japan and the European Union is five to six times higher than that of India. As far as China is concerned, it is seven times higher than that of India. This is the global scenario, global situation prevailing as far as the coastal trade or coastal shipping is concerned. My specific question to the hon. Minister is whether the Government is able to achieve the target

of 12 per cent modal share by 2047 through this legislation alone. According to me, it is not possible unless and until the Government has a strong political will to implement the programme, implement the provisions of this Bill in a better way.

Though the Bill is a welcome step, as the Indian-flagged vessels and operators are getting preferential treatment in coastal trade to foreign-flagged vessels, I have some strong reservations and concerns. I would like to flag them one by one. The first one is this. I would like to seek an explanation or clarification from the hon. Minister regarding the applicability of the Act. Clause 1 (2) (a) says that this Act shall apply to every vessel, other than an Indian vessel, engaged in coasting trade, irrespective of the place of residence or domicile of the owner. Clause 1 (2) (b) says that this Act shall apply to every chartered vessel referred to in Chapter IV. This is the provision which is given regarding applicability of the Act according to Clause 1.

Coming to Clause 6 of the Bill, it is very specifically stated that every vessel, including Indian vessels engaged in coasting trade, shall report to the Director-General the following information in such form and manner as may be prescribed. So, the applicability of the Act is clearly mentioned in Clause 1. It is applicable to every vessel, other than an Indian vessel. But Clause 6 is very clear that it is applicable to Indian vessels also. I am not going to Chapter VI of the Act. It is especially stated that it will be applicable to Indian vessels according to Chapter VI. It seems to be contradictory because in one way it is applicable only to these vessels, and here it is given in a different way by virtue of Clause 6. That is the first clarification I am seeking.

The second one is this. The definition of cooperative society, and the limited liability partnership is not provided. The definition for these

two terms, "cooperative society" as well as the "limited liability partnership" is not provided in the Bill, either in this Bill or in the Merchant Shipping Act or in the notified Merchant Shipping Bill. The definition is not specifically provided. That is the second concern I would like to make.

And the third one is regarding Clause 18 sub-clause (a) of the Bill. It states that when the licensee fails to furnish the information required by the Director-General within the stipulated time, it attracts harsh punishment. Just now, my learned friend has already spoken about it. What is the punishment? The punishment is imprisonment for six months and a fine up to Rs. 50,000 or both. If an operator or a vessel owner is not providing the information as required by the DG (Shipping), then, there is a punishment of six months of imprisonment or a fine of Rs. 50,000 or both. A disproportionate punishment is provided in Clause 18(a). That is not fair according to me. So, that has to be looked into.

Further, at the same time, another point to be noted is under Section 35(2), clause 3. The Director-General can ask any other matter as may be prescribed. So, absolute discretion is provided to the DG. When you are having a disproportionate punishment, on one side, of six months imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 50,000 or both, at the same time, the discretionary power is given to the Director-General that any matter, as may be specified, can be asked for information from the concerned persons. That means unfettered authority and discretionary powers are vested with the Director-General. That has to be looked into as it is arbitrary to provide excess powers to the Director-General.

The fourth concern is regarding Section 26(1) and Section 30 clause 5 of the Bill, that is, offences mentioned and penal provisions under Sections 15 to 25, are all compoundable. On the one side, harsh

punishment is there, and on the other side, all are compoundable offences. It may lead to bureaucratic corruption, thereby harassing the operators or licensees.

And the fifth point is that there is no dispute resolution mechanism for promoting ease of doing business. The Government is always talking about it. Almost all the legislations are for ease of doing business. If you want to achieve this ease of doing business, we should have a dispute resolution mechanism. Unfortunately, in this Bill, it is missing. That is to be looked into.

Sir, I would like to conclude my speech by giving two or three suggestions. The number one suggestion is this. In India, since a large part of the coastal shipping is in the unorganized sector, the State Governments and the district authorities should also be allowed to issue licences for small vessels and country boats which are conducting voyages on shorter routes and at the cross-border level in border areas. The second suggestion is that the process of getting vessels registered should be made easy with fewer documents in transparent and digitalised manner, and special assistance should be provided to vessel owners. The third suggestion is this. The National Register of Coastal Shipping must be made available in the public domain with integration from other relevant organisations such as Directorate General of Foreign Trade.

The fourth suggestion is with regard to the dispute resolution mechanism about which I have already explained. That should be established.

Sir, I am now concluding. A successful regulatory framework depends on the efficiency and transparency of enforcement mechanism

as well as the capacity of the Director-General of Shipping to handle the increased responsibility.

I hope that the Government will consider these suggestions and concerns which can be addressed in future amendments.

With these words, I conclude. Thank you very much, Sir.

***DR. D. RAVI KUMAR (VILUPPURAM):** Hon. Chairman Sir, Vanakkam. I appreciate this Bill as it is brought here with good intentions. The revenue that is being generated through maritime trade is very less in India as compared to other nations of the world. China is earning 7 times higher revenue than us. Therefore, the efforts being made by the Government in increasing the revenue through maritime trade is appreciable. Tamil Nadu ranks second among States of our country in terms of a long coastal line. It has a coastal line spreading to a length of 1076 kilometres. Three big Ports namely Chennai, Ennore and Tuticorin and as many as 17 small ports are situated in Tamil Nadu. Hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu framed a policy in the year 2023 in this regard particularly for expanding the sea resources and maritime trade in this area. This is for increasing the maritime trade by using the sea routes, particularly the cargo transport. Road transport has so much of congestion today. Therefore, this policy was framed in order to increase the cargo transport through sea route. The State Government of Tamil Nadu has sought financial assistance from the Union Government in this regard. Therefore, I urge upon the Union Government to provide funds and encourage the efforts of the State Government of Tamil Nadu. Seventeen ports of Tamil Nadu are operated as captive ports being used for a particular purpose. Tamil Nadu Government has been working for improving these Ports. Union Government should also cooperate. I urge the Union Government to provide funds for development of these Ports.

Territorial water is an important aspect mentioned in this Bill. Sea area up to 12 nautical miles from the shore is called as territorial water. This territorial water is in the control of the State Government. The State Governments are in a position to have the control and command over this territorial waters. But this Bill has included the provisions relating to territorial water and adjoining water. Therefore, this is like interfering into the powers of the State Government. I strongly condemn this aspect. This territorial water term should be removed from this Bill. Union Government should stop interfering into the powers of the State Government. Particularly during the 17th Lok Sabha, an effort was made by this Government to bring small ports and minor ports under the control of the Union Government. Hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, when he came to power in the year 2021, wrote a letter opposing the move of the Union Government. Thereafter this Bill was withheld. Therefore, it seems that the Union Government is indirectly trying to do the same type of action through the present Bill. I therefore urge that the Union Government should stop interfering into the powers of the State Government. I urge that such a provision should be removed from this Bill. As mentioned by hon. MP Shri N.K. Premachandran, punitive clauses in this Bill are little disturbing. Services is term that is linked with commercial purpose in this Bill. Particularly those who engage in sea related research and those who go with some other purposes are also brought under this commercial purpose through this Bill. This will create unnecessary difficulties to the people, particular our fishermen. This may lead to the harassment of our fishermen. Our fishermen community is already very much affected. This provision will lead to furthering their suffering. Therefore, I urge that the 'Services' clause should be removed from this Bill. There are 19 fishermen villages in my Parliamentary constituency. Marakkanam is a historically famous area

which was once a Port. There is long pending demand for creation of a Port in Marakkanam area. We met Hon Finance Minister in person last week and stressed upon this demand. This demand has also been forwarded by Tamil Nadu Government to the Union Government. I urge that this demand should be fulfilled by considering the proposal of setting up of a Port in Marakkanam and adequate funds should be allocated. As mentioned by several hon. MPs here, our fishermen are very much affected due to the atrocities of the Sri Lankan Navy. We met our External Affairs Minister and requested him to consider a proposal that instead of Sri Lankan Navy arresting our fishermen and putting behind bars, our forces can arrest them and bring them back to our land. We intimated that otherwise it becomes an issue between the two countries. China is trying to interfere in this issue by providing big boats to Tamil fishermen in Sri Lanka. If China comes in, then that will be an international issue. Hon. Prime Minister is scheduled to visit Sri Lanka very soon. As mentioned by our senior Member of Parliament Thiru T. R. Baalu in this House, today morning, that when hon. Prime Minister visits Sri Lanka, our Government should try to find an amicable and permanent solution to this issue between the fishermen of both the countries. I urge that Hon Prime Minister should take suitable action in this regard.

Thank you for this opportunity. Vanakkam.

17.41 hrs

श्री दर्शन सिंह चौधरी (होशंगाबाद) : सभापति महोदय, धन्यवाद । अभी हमारे एक सदस्य 1 अप्रैल के बारे में बोल रहे थे । मैं उनको बताना चाहता हूं कि अब चैत्र माह के नव दुर्गा नवरात्रि चल रहे हैं । आज नव दुर्गा का तीसरा दिन है । अगर चन्द्रघंटा मड़या की पूजा आप करें तो आपका भी कल्याण होगा और सद्बुद्धि भी आएगी । मैं नवरात्रि

की बधाइयां देते हुए आज का जो तटीय पोत परिवहन विधेयक, 2024 है, मैं इसके समर्थन में बोलना चाहता हूं। हमारे ग्रंथों में कहा गया है कि :-

रत्नाकराधौतपदां हिमालयकिरीटिनीम् ।
ब्रह्मराजर्षिरत्नाढ्यां वन्दे भारतमातरम् ।?

हमारी भारत माता की सीमाएं तीन तरफ से समुद्र से घिरी हुई हैं और एक तरफ से हिमालय इसकी रक्षा करता है। समुद्र तटीय कानून लाना और उनमें सुधार करना तथा जो वर्षों से कानून पंगु बने हुए थे, उनमें सुधार करने का काम आदरणीय नरेन्द्र मोदी जी की सरकार ने किया है। मैं आपके माध्यम से मोदी जी का धन्यवाद करना चाहता हूं और इस कोस्टल शिपिंग बिल, 2024 का समर्थन करता हूँ। इसका समर्थन इसलिए भी करता हूँ कि इस बिल के माध्यम से हमारे तटीय क्षेत्रों में समुद्री व्यापार परिवहन को सुव्यवस्थित करने की दिशा में एक महत्वपूर्ण कदम होगा। इसका उद्देश्य तटीय शिपिंग को बढ़ावा देना, पर्यावरण संरक्षण को सुनिश्चित करना और अर्थव्यवस्था को सुदृढ़ करना है।

महोदय, मैं इसके प्रमुख बिंदुओं को बताना चाहता हूँ। इससे समुद्री व्यापार को प्रोत्साहन मिलेगा। यह विधेयक तटीय जलमार्गों के माध्यम से माल परिवहन को बढ़ावा देता है, जिससे परिवहन लागत में कमी आएगी और व्यापार को गति मिलेगी। वर्तमान में भारत में कुल बंदरगाहों की क्षमता लगभग 2,600 मिलियन टन प्रति वर्ष है। माननीय मोदी जी ने विकसित भारत की कल्पना वर्ष 2047 तक की है और इसको 10 हजार एमटीपीए तक बढ़ाने का लक्ष्य लिया है। मैं इसके लिए धन्यवाद देता हूँ। पर्यावरण संरक्षण की दृष्टि से तटीय शिपिंग में सड़क परिवहन की तुलना में कार्बन उत्सर्जन कम होता है, जिससे पर्यावरण पर सकारात्मक प्रभाव पड़ता है। यह विधेयक हरित ऊर्जा के उपयोग को प्रोत्साहित करता है, जिससे समुद्री परिवहन को और अधिक पर्यावरण मित्र मिलने की संभावना बनी रहेगी। मैं आज इस बिल का भी समर्थन इसलिए भी करता हूँ कि इससे स्थानीय अर्थव्यवस्था और रोजगार को बढ़ावा मिलेगा। हमारे मित्रगण कुछ कह रहे थे और उन्होंने आदिकाल के उदाहरण दिए। हम उस आदिकाल को भी जानते हैं। हमने रामसेतु पर भी विश्वास किया, लेकिन आपने तो उसके विरोध में शपथपत्र दिए। मैं तो कह रहा हूँ कि :-

राम ना मारे काहू को पापी नहीं है राम,

आप ही मर जात है, कर-कर खोटे काम ।?

इसलिए मैं आपको यह याद दिलाना चाहता हूं कि रामसेतु को आपने तोड़ने की कोशिश की, लेकिन हमने शिपिंग और बंदरगाह को मजबूत करके न केवल व्यापार बढ़ाने का काम किया, बल्कि विरासत भी दी तथा विकास भी दिया । यह मोदी जी का मूल मंत्र है ।

?राम काज करने वालों में राम की शक्ति समाई,
पृथक पृथक नामों से सारे काम करें रघुराई,
भक्त परायण निज भक्तों को सारा श्रेय दिलाते हैं,
जिन पर कृपा राम करे वो पत्थर भी तिर जाते हैं ।?

मैं धन्यवाद देना चाहता हूं कि इससे स्थानीय अर्थव्यवस्था और रोजगार को बढ़ाने के लिए तटीय शिपिंग के विस्तार में स्थानीय उद्योगों को नए बाजार मिलेंगे, रोजगार के नए अवसर बढ़ेंगे । उदाहरण के लिए गुजरात सरकार ने वर्ष 2047 तक 2000 मिलियन टन प्रति वर्ष की कार्गो क्षमता प्राप्त करने का लक्ष्य रखा है ।

जिससे राज्य की अर्थव्यवस्था मजबूत होगी । बंदरगाह अवसंरचना का विकास विधेयक के तहत बंदरगाहों को बुनियादी ढांचे के विकास और आधुनिकीकरण पर जोर दिया गया है । वर्तमान में 56 परियोजनाएं, जिनकी कुल लागत लगभग 41 हजार 480 करोड़ रुपये है, कार्यान्वित की जा रही है । इसके लिए मैं धन्यवाद देता हूं । इससे बंदरगाहों की क्षमता में लगभग 550 मिलियन टन प्रति वर्ष वृद्धि होगी । इसीलिए यहां जो संशोधन इसमें लिए गए हैं, उनमें स्थानीय समुदायों की भागीदारी पर जोर दिया गया है, जिसमें तटीय क्षेत्रों में रहने वाली आम गरीब जनता की चिंता की गई है, क्योंकि अंत्योदय का लक्ष्य, जो पंडित दीन दयाल उपाध्याय जी ने दिया था, उसको साकार करने का काम आदरणीय नरेंद्र भाई मोदी जी ने किया है । नौवहन सेवाओं की सक्रिय भागीदारी के लिए लोगों को प्रोत्साहित किया जाएगा, जिससे उनकी सामाजिक और आर्थिक स्थिति में सुधार होगा । सुरक्षा मानकों का सख्ती से पालन होगा ।

महोदय, मुझे यह समझ में नहीं आता है कि जब विदेशियों पर हम प्रतिबंध लगाते हैं तो बार-बार विपक्षी मित्रों के पेट में दर्द क्यों होता है? कहीं न कहीं हमें दूसरा

कनेक्शन दिखाई देता है । अतः मैं कहना चाहता हूं कि तटीय शिपिंग के दौरान सुरक्षा के उपायों को और मजबूत किया जाएगा, जिससे समुद्री दुर्घटनाओं की संख्या में कमी आएगी । यात्रियों तथा माल की सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित हो जाएगी । इस बिल से हमारी हरित ऊर्जा को बढ़ावा मिलेगा । बंदरगाहों और जहाजों के नवीनीकरण ऊर्जा स्रोत के उपयोगों का बढ़ावा दिया जाएगा । सरकार ने सभी केंद्रीय और राज्य सरकार के बंदरगाहों में हाईड्रोजन हब स्थापित करने की योजना बनाई है और यह भी अपने-आप में जिस तरह से किसानों के क्षेत्र में हरित क्रांति आई है, ऐसे ही जल के क्षेत्र में हरित ऊर्जा प्राप्त करने की संभावना बढ़ेगी । ? (व्यवधान)

महोदय, मैं दो मिनट में अपना वक्तव्य पूरा करूंगा । नवाचार और अनुसंधान को बहुत बढ़ावा मिलेगा । मैं आपके माध्यम से अपने क्षेत्र, मध्य प्रदेश के लिए, चूंकि मैं नर्मदा मैया के क्षेत्र से आता हूं, हमारे यहां बड़े-बड़े डैम हैं । उनमें यदि शिपिंग और क्रूज की व्यवस्था हो जाए, हमारे यहां कुछ ऐसे समाज जैसे कीर समाज, उनको आरक्षण मिल जाए, जिससे उनको न्याय देने का काम हो । मैं आपके माध्यम से यह अनुरोध करना चाहता हूं । हमारी सरकार ने रिफार्म, परफार्म और ट्रांसफार्म का जो संकल्प लिया है, आत्मनिर्भर भारत का जो संकल्प लिया है, वह इस बिल के माध्यम से होकर गुजरता है । इसी भाव के साथ इस बिल के माध्यम से मैं यह भी बताना चाहूंगा कि पंडित अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी जी की 100वां जन्म जयंती हम मनाने जा रहे हैं । यह मैं उनके माध्यम से कह रहा हूं कि-

?जब नाव जल में छोड़ दी, मझधार में ही मोड़ दी ।

दे दी चुनौती सिंधु को, फिर धार क्या, मझधार क्या ॥

क्या हार में, क्या जीत में, किंचित नहीं भयभीत मैं ।

कर्तव्य पथ पर जो मिला, यह भी सही, वह भी सही ॥

हार मानूंगा नहीं, रार ठानूंगा नहीं ॥?

महोदय, मैं आपसे इस भाव के साथ अपनी बात समाप्ति की ओर ले जाता हूं । ये पंक्तियां मोदी जी के लिए हैं कि ?

?सागर की अपनी क्षमता है, पर मांझी भी कब रुकता है ।

जब तक सांसों में स्पंदन है, उसका हाथ नहीं रुकता है ॥

इसके बल पर ही कर डाले सातों सागर पार ।

तूफानों की ओर घुमा दो नाविक निज पतवार ॥

यह असीम, निज सीमा जाने, सागर भी तो यह पहचाने ।

मिट्टी के पुतले मानव ने और हम सबके नेता मोदी जी ने कभी न मानी हार ॥

तूफानों की ओर घुमा दो, नाविक निज पतवार ।?

महोदय, इन शब्दों के माध्यम से मैं इस शिपिंग बिल का पूर्णतः समर्थन करते हुए आपको धन्यवाद देता हूँ कि आज मुझे बोलने का मौका दिया ।

नर्मदा मैया की जय, भारत माता की जय, भगवान बलराम की जय और समुद्र देवता की जय । जय हिंद, जय भारत ।

CAPTAIN VIRIATO FERNANDES (SOUTH GOA): Thank you, hon. Chairperson, Sir, for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024 introduced in Lok Sabha in December 2024. This Bill aims to fundamentally revise India's regulatory framework for coastal and marine trade.

I want to point out certain Sections of the Bill which can create a problem for stakeholders operating in the shipping industry. First of all, the Bill grants significant discretionary powers to the Director-General and the Central Government, raising concerns about potential favouritism and lack of transparency.

The broad authority in respect of diversion of vessel routes, class of passengers or cargo that may be carried, restrict port entry and exempting certain vessels from the Act's provisions could lead to preferential treatment of specific entities, undermining fair competition. Then, the centralized decision-making and the absence of clear criteria

for granting exemptions or imposing penalties may cause disadvantage to smaller operators and create an uneven playing field. Additionally, the lack of independent oversight and transparency in decision-making processes heightens the risk of market distortions and raises questions about accountability and impartiality. Safeguards such as independent reviews and other accountability mechanisms are critical to mitigate this risk.

Sir, there is a document called the 'Minimum Safe Manning Document'. This is a certificate issued by the registrar of the ship certifying the ranks and qualifications required to work on a particular ship. It has been observed that inland vessel seafarers are eligible to sail on Indian coastal ships and river sea vessels. But in many cases, the documentation, training and certification that is required to comply with this is not easy to get. It is very difficult. Hence, the owners of the coastal ships and the recruitment agencies find it difficult to get such inland vessel crew. So, the registrar should be aware of the ground situation about the crew training.

Sir, there is also a certificate called the Certificate of Equivalence. All the Indian officers and engineers who get their competency licence from foreign countries, which are white flag nations like England, Singapore, New Zealand, etc., as per the International Maritime Organization, IMO, should be given an opportunity to work on the Indian coastal ships. It has been observed that there is a shortage of highly trained officers and engineers to work on ships like coastal tankers. The Indian nationals, who have taken competency certificates from white flag nations, should be employed on these vessels.

At present, rules and regulations are in place. But it has been reported that a lot of difficulties are faced by the owners. It has been

reported that the authorized recruiting agencies are finding it difficult to get the Certificate of Equivalence from the Mercantile Marine Department (MMD). So, amendments need to be done so that transition of these Indian officers and engineers from working in foreign shipping to coastal shipping is easy. Coastal shipping will get a lot of benefits from the experience and highly skilled training of these seafarers.

Clause 3 of the Bill prohibits the engagement of vessels other than Indian vessels in coasting trade in the coastal waters unless the licence for the same has been granted by the Director-General of Shipping. If in circumstances, a ship required for a particular specialized operation and research is not available in India, then on case to case basis, the Director General of Shipping should give a specialized licence for that foreign registered vessel after verifying all the documents and ensuring that the Indian ship owners do not have such vessel so that the particular operation can be completed.

Clause 7 of the Bill provides that no proper officer of customs shall grant clearance to a vessel other than an Indian vessel engaged in coasting trade to enter or depart from a port unless a licence is produced by the licensee or agent of such a vessel. It further provides for the detention of a vessel which fails to comply with the requirements of the Bill.

All the concerned departments related to coastal shipping, especially the Government agencies such as customs, immigration, and port authorities, should be well aware of the latest circulars, orders, and notices.

Sir, I will complete by giving some important suggestions. The Indian shipbuilders should be encouraged to install machinery and equipment on board the coastal ships, which as far as possible are made in India,

and the Indian MSMEs should be involved in the ship design. The authority to delegate the statutory certificates of the ship should be given to the IACS classification society. Fuel subsidies should be provided for coastal vessels. Furthermore, the Government should support infrastructure for hybrid vessels, such as battery stations at reduced tariffs at ports. When the coastal vessel comes alongside a port, shore power should be made easily available to all the ships. This will reduce carbon footprints and also enable the ship staff to carry out equipment maintenance. Presently, not many Indian ports have the facility to provide shore power to the ships.

Lastly, collateral-free loans for the construction of coastal vessels should be offered, with the vessel itself being the collateral, with an affiliation to the Government and the same to be mentioned in the Registry Certificate.

Thank you, Sir.

ADV. FRANCIS GEORGE (KOTTAYAM): Sir, I rise to address the Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024, a legislation while aiming to revitalize India's maritime sector, presents several concerns, particularly for coastal States like Kerala.

The Bill's centralisation of authority over coastal shipping diminishes the role of State Governments, potentially undermining the federal structure enshrined in our Constitution. States like Kerala, with extensive coastlines and unique maritime needs, risk losing autonomy over local shipping activities. This centralisation could hinder Kerala's initiatives to develop and manage its coastal resources effectively. Kerala's economy heavily relies on coastal trade for transporting goods such as spices, seafood, and coir products. The Bill introduces stricter licensing requirements, particularly affecting vessels not wholly owned by Indian entities. This could increase operational costs and reduce the

availability of vessels, adversely impacting States like Kerala whose exporters and importers depend on affordable coastal shipping options. Such measures may diminish the competitiveness of Kerala's products in both domestic and international markets.

The Kerala Maritime Board has been proactive in promoting short sea shipping services to alleviate road congestion and enhance regional trade. The centralised control proposed by the Bill may impede these localised efforts, stifling innovation and responsiveness to regional maritime challenges. The State's plans to integrate coastal shipping with inland waterways could face bureaucratic hurdles, delaying progress, and economic benefits. The stakeholders within the shipping industry have criticised the Bill for imposing excessive control over the hiring of foreign flag ships. The exporters and importers fear that increased transaction costs will undermine the global competitiveness of Indian exports. The requirement for licences when chartering foreign vessels, even for operations between international ports, adds layers of bureaucracy that could deter business and inflate costs. While the Bill seeks to streamline the coastal shipping operations, the introduction of new licensing regimes and regulatory measures risks creating additional bureaucratic obstacles. This could deter private investment and participation in the coastal shipping sector, which is vital for the economic interests of States like Kerala.

The increased penalties and stringent compliance requirements may disproportionately affect smaller operators, leading to a consolidation that favours larger entities. The concerns raised by various stakeholders suggest that the drafting of the Bill may have lacked sufficient consultation with State Governments and industry participants. A more inclusive approach could ensure that the legislation addresses the diverse interests and

challenges

faced by coastal States like Kerala. Engaging with local authorities, industry experts, and community representatives would lead to more balanced and effective maritime policies.

The Bill proposes to integrate coastal maritime transport with inland waterways. If the aim is, as suggested in the Bill, to lower transportation costs and promote competition within the sector, smaller ports like Kottayam Port in my constituency should be developed.

18.00 hrs

I hope that the Minister will pay particular attention to this matter.

One last point regarding the Vizhinjam International Seaport. I would like to invite the attention of the hon. Minister to this particular issue. Vizhinjam is poised to be a deep-water container international transshipment hub of the country. It is in the final stage of commissioning, being developed on a Private Public Partnership basis. This will bring home the Indian cargo transshipment business presently with ports like Colombo, Singapore, Malaysia, Salalah and Dubai. The Maritime India Vision, 2030 and the Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision, 2047 of the Ministry of Shipping, Ports and Waterways give top priority to this project. ? (*Interruptions*)

HON. CHAIRPERSON : Hon. Member, please conclude now.

? (*Interruptions*)

ADV. FRANCIS GEORGE: Sir, kindly give me one minute and I will complete. ? (*Interruptions*)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: No, time is not there.

? (*Interruptions*)

ADV. FRANCIS GEORGE: Sir, I will complete in a minute. ?
(*Interruptions*) Why am I raising this? This is the first project to get in-principle approval for Viability Gap Funding under the scheme for financial support to private public partnership in infrastructure.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Member, thank you.

? (*Interruptions*)

माननीय सभापति : सभा की कार्यवाही बुधवार, दिनांक 2 अप्रैल, 2025 को प्रातः 11 बजे तक के लिए स्थगित की जाती है ।

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