

Title: Regarding ban on fishing including shark in the coastal area.

12.54 hrs.

SHRI VAIKO (SIVAKASI): Hon. Deputy-Speaker Sir, I draw the attention of the Government to a very serious issue which will adversely affect the livelihood of lakhs of fishermen in the coastal areas of the country.

The gazette notification dated July 11, 2001 by the Ministry of Environment and Forests is a bolt from the blue to the fishermen of the country, particularly, from the Southern States of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and also other parts of the country.

Through this notification, the Government has banned more or less sixty different items harvested from the sea under Schedule I of the Act, prohibiting harvesting, processing, stocking and sale of shark and other sixty items completely. This is arbitrary and unjust because the Ministry did not consult either the fishermen or the States' Fisheries Departments or the Central scientific institutions on fishery.

The ban is unscientific. ...*(Interruptions)* This is not an issue to be taken up on partisan lines. You are interrupting without understanding the problem. ...*(Interruptions)* The Government will withdraw the ban; that is why we are bringing it to the notice of the Government. Are you not interested in the welfare of fishermen? Can you put your point and say for what reason the notification should be withdrawn? Please first listen to what I am going to say. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Vaiko, do not get yourself entangled with any other Member.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VAIKO : Sir, sharks and other elasmobranchs are apex predators and a ban on their fishing will lead to an imbalance in the food chain. This will affect the total fish catches, as the availability of the smaller prey fishes will decline. ...*(Interruptions)*

Already, fishermen, for thousands of years, are fishing these items including shark, seahorse and corals. It is their main livelihood. ...*(Interruptions)* When they go to the turbulent sea, there is no guarantee whether they would come back to the shores. They are already risking their lives. For hundreds and hundreds of years, they have been doing this. So, it is totally unjust.

Moreover, is it possible to catch a particular type of fish in the net? This is ridiculous. Through the net, could the fishermen dictate that only certain kinds of fish should come to the net? Is it possible? Therefore, fishermen have come all along from Kanyakumari in my State and from Kerala to Jantar Mantar in Delhi for staging a demonstration. I therefore draw the attention of the Government to the serious problem so that the ban could be immediately lifted, the prohibition could be scrapped and the Government could withdraw the notification to protect the lives of the fishermen whose livelihood is fully dependent on this activity. This is a very grave issue, to which I draw the attention of the Government. The Government should immediately withdraw the notification.

Thank you. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I will call you later. There are two more hon. Members to speak on this.

...*(Interruptions)*

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : रामजी लाल जी, जिस मैटर पर आपने नोटिस दिया हुआ है, उसी पर मैंने उनको बुलाया है। इसके बाद आपका नाम आएगा।

*SHRI P. MOHAN (MADURAI): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, while thanking you for this opportunity, I would like to

make it clear at the outset that I am emphasizing the demand made by the hon. Member, Shri Vaiko, who spoke just before me drawing the attention of this august House to the plight of fishermen who are hard hit by two of the directions issued recently by the Union Government. About 60 kinds of fishes have been banned from being caught by Indian fishermen who live along the long coastal line of the country thereby affecting fishermen particularly those who live along the coastal area of many states bordering the ocean. Crores of people dependent on fishing occupation have been affected by these notifications issued by the Union Government. On April the first of this year, another notification was issued by the Union Agriculture Ministry giving a blanket permission to the fishing trawlers of MNCs and foreign countries to go about fishing in our waters. Fishing community are very sceptical about this move. When there is a ban on our Indian fishermen, the very same Union Government permits foreigners to go about fishing on our high seas. I would like to point out that this strange and inconsistent a move which is evidently contradictory gives rise to a doubt about the integrity behind the move of the Union Government. When the interest of foreigners are taken care of, the interest of our countrymen are ignored. There is a ban on catching sharks. If sharks are not caught as and when they strike, it would endanger the other varieties of fish. All the species of fishes that are becoming extinct should be identified by Marine Research Centre, both at Mandapam and Cochin. Without consulting researchers a unilateral move has been resorted to. This must be rescinded. The ban comes into effect within 12 nautical miles, which fall within the jurisdiction of the State Governments. But the Union Government has taken action without consulting all the State Governments, which have right over territorial water in the sea. Already

* English Translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil

Tamil Nadu and West Bengal have stoutly opposed the Centre's move. Hence, I urge upon the Union Government to restrict the fishing trawlers of MNCs and foreign countries. Likewise the ban on fishing of 54 items must also be withdrawn.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Mohan, please conclude now. I am calling Shri P.H. Pandian.

SHRI P. MOHAN: Just one minute please, Sir. Permission granted to MNCs must be withdrawn. The ban on certain fishing items must also be withdrawn and rationalised.

MR DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr Mohan, nothing will go on record except the speech of Shri Pandyan.

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN (TIRUNELVELI): Thank you, Sir.

There are 50,000 fishermen in Tamil Nadu. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi, I will come to that issue after this.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: There are 50,000 fishermen's families in Tamil Nadu. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Rashid Alvi, he has given a notice.

...(*Interruptions*)

13.00 hrs.

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN : The Ministry of Environment has, through an order dated 11.7.2001, banned fishing of 53 varieties of fish and 54 varieties of other sea-animals under Wildlife Protection Act of 1972, citing flimsy reasons.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Will you please resume your seat? He has given a notice. Shri Mohan, please resume your seat. I have given the floor to him.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record except the speech of Shri P.H. Pandian.

(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN : Sir, this anti-fishermen order has adversely affected the livelihood of lakhs of fishermen all over India and also in Tamil Nadu.

Sir, my leader and the General Secretary of AIADMK, Puratchi Thalaivi, along with the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu have written letters to the Central Government to lift the ban. The ban is not lifted. ...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Mohan, do not compel me to name you.

...(Interruptions)

* Not Recorded

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN : The livelihood of 50,000 families of fishermen will be at stake. If Indian fishermen are prohibited in territorial waters, then these fishes will flow to other countries. They have a right to fish. If they are not fished in Indian waters, they are not going to be stable in waters. They will move to other territorial waters and they will cross over the territory. For example, if the fishes from the territorial waters of Andaman Islands move away to the Thailand zone, then that country has a right to fish in that zone. ...(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): Do not allow the Indian fish to cross over. ...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, I want to say something on this.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN : Sir, about 50,000 families have thronged to Delhi. They are staging a demonstration here in Delhi. So, the Government should understand the sentiments of the fishermen all over India, particularly in Tamil Nadu. They must lift the ban. If this order is not withdrawn, the livelihood of about 50,000 families will be lost.

Sir, fishermen are all over India including Lakshadweep, your own Constituency. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Pandian, I am telling you that you are spoiling your case. I am on my legs.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN : Sir, through you, I call upon the Government, on behalf of AIADMK, to withdraw this order. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I am on my legs. Will you resume your seat? Shri Jose, I am on my legs.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I will have to warn you. Please do not do this.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh, will you please resume your seat? Shri Ramji Lal Suman, will you please resume your seat? I will not call you if you interrupt like this.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please hear me patiently for a second. Shri Vaiko has raised a very important issue.

...*(Interruptions)*

श्री श्रीप्रकाश जायसवाल (कानपुर) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, हमारा बहुत इम्पोर्टेंट इश्यू है। उसे उठाने की आप इजाजत नहीं दे रहे हैं। *(व्यवधान)*

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : यह भी बहुत इम्पोर्टेंट इश्यू है।

डॉ. रघुवंश प्रसाद सिंह (वैशाली) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, हमारा भी बहुत महत्वपूर्ण मामला है। हम इतनी देर से बैठे हैं। हमें अपने इश्यू को क्यों नहीं उठाने दे रहे हैं। पहले स्पीकर साहब बैठे थे उन्होंने कहा था कि थोड़ी देर में आपको समय मिलेगा, लेकिन वे चले गए और अब आप आ गए हैं। साल भर हो गया, बिहार को एक

पैसा भी नहीं दिया गया है। बिहार के साथ घोर अन्याय हो रहा है। (व्यवधान)

श्री प्रमोद महाजन : आप लोग क्या कर रहे हैं, उपाध्यक्ष महोदय बोलना चाहते हैं, लेकिन आप लोग उन्हें बोलने का अवसर ही नहीं दे रहे हैं। (व्यवधान)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : यह जो आर्डर/नोटिफिकेशन निकाला है this is affecting everybody and I am also affected. They say do not catch `shark'. Can you put the gate mentioning that not for `shark'? Suppose, shark comes in the hook what will you do? What kind of a notification is it? I want the Government to take note of this order. About lakhs of people are affected by this order.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Will you please resume your seats? The Parliamentary Affairs Minister has to say something.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I am allowing all of you to associate with the subject.

श्री प्रमोद महाजन : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, इस सदन में जब कोई एक भी सदस्य महत्वपूर्ण बात कहता है तो स्वाभाविक रूप से उस पर प्रतिक्रिया करना मेरा कर्तव्य है। श्री वैको जैसे सदस्य, जो राष्ट्रीय जनतांत्रिक गठबंधन का समर्थन करते हैं, वे अगर कोई विषय उठाएँ तो ज्यादा महत्व देना पड़ता है। जब चेयर की ओर से आदेश होता है तो वह और भी महत्वपूर्ण हो जाता है। इसलिए मैं आपके आदेश का पालन करके फॉरैस्ट एंड ऐनवायरनमेंट मिनिस्टर, जो इस विषय को देखते हैं। (व्यवधान)

श्रीमती मार्ग्रेट आल्वा (कनारा) : कॉमर्स मिनिस्टर को कहिए।

श्री प्रमोद महाजन : दोनों तमिलनाडू के हैं, कोई फर्क नहीं पड़ता। दोनों मंत्रियों से बातचीत करके आपकी भावनाएं पहुंचा दूंगा।

SHRI A.C. JOS (TRICHUR): The Environment and Forests Minister is from Tamil Nadu.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Jos, why don't you hear? You must have the hearing habit also.

श्री प्रमोद महाजन : साधारणतया तो आपको सदस्यों के बोलने की रक्षा करनी पड़ती है लेकिन कभी-कभी ऐसा लगता है कि आपके बोलने की रक्षा करने के लिए मंत्री को खड़ा होना पड़ेगा। (व्यवधान)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : आपको भी खड़ा करना पड़ेगा।

श्री प्रमोद महाजन : मैं आपका आदेश संबंधित मंत्रालय तक जरूर पहुंचा दूंगा। आपने जो शार्क के बारे में कहा है, (व्यवधान)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : कैसे पकड़ेंगे? क्या आप लिखेंगे कि 'not for Shark'.

श्री प्रमोद महाजन : मेरी इतनी प्रार्थना है कि किसी के भी नेट में शार्क न आए।

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : प्रार्थना नहीं, नोटिफिकेशन चाहिए।
