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Title: Regarding attacks on Indian fishermen and retrieval of Katchatheevu Island in order to find a permanent solution to the Tamil Nadu fishermen issue.

SHRI T.R. BAALU (SRIPERUMBUDUR): The fishermen of Tamil Nadu are daily subjected to coercion; they are even whipped and beaten to bleed. It becomes a daily ritual. The Sri Lankan Navy is arresting our fishermen in the mid-sea. That too, they intrude into the Indian waters and arrest our fishermen. They are arresting our fishermen and snatching their harvest, their nets and damaging their boats. For that matter, recently, I have taken a delegation of Members of Parliament of both the Houses belonging to the D.M.K to the hon. Prime Minister, and requested him to see that he takes necessary action to stop all these undoings of the Sri Lankan Navy. I have also requested the hon. Prime Minister to see that the stakeholders, representatives of both the Governments, along with the elected representatives of both the countries, sit together to see that the problem is solved once for all so that fishermen of both the countries go for fishing, without any problem whatsoever.

This problem has been lingering on for the past many years. In the past two or three years, more than 500 fishermen were subjected to coercion and many of them were killed by bullets. So, I would request the Government of India to intervene and a mechanism is arrived at so that the problem is solved once for all.

As of now, 52 fishermen were under arrest and kept in Sri Lankan jail. The Government of India should come forward and initiate a mechanism so that there will be permanent peace and Tamil Nadu fishermen do not face any further problem. .  
...(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER:

Shri P.L. Punia is allowed to associate with the issue raised by Shri T.R. Baalu. ...(Interruptions)

DR. M. THAMBIDURAI : Madam, Speaker, the issue of fishermen of Tamil Nadu is a serious matter. For many years, the Sri Lankan Navy has been arresting our fishermen and taking them to their prisons` and keeping them there. Many incidents took place. About 500 fishermen were killed. Such sad incidents are continuously taking place. Our Hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has written many letters to the hon. Prime Minister and requested him to take necessary action. But the Union Government is not taking any action to see that arrested fishermen who were captive in Sri Lankan prisons are released. Recently, our Hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has written a D.O. letter to the Prime Minister stating that the Sri Lankan Navy is now acting with greater impunity and effectively thwarting Indian fishermen coming from the coastal districts of Tamil Nadu from peacefully pursuing their livelihood in their traditional fishing waters in the Palk Bay. Every fishing voyage of our fishermen is now laden with danger and the anxiety of possible attack, harassment, apprehension and custodial detention by the Sri Lankan authorities. It is extremely disheartening that hostile actions have been intensified by the Sri Lankan Navy after the recent fishermen level talks hosted in Chennai, which represented a positive step forward to resolve the livelihood issues through mutual agreement, between the fishermen of Tamil Nadu and of Sri Lanka with the support of their Governments.

In spite of peaceful talks being taking place, recently, seven mechanized fishing boats were taken away by the Sri Lankan Navy and also 29 fishermen were taken into custody and kept in jail. Apart from that, nearly 121 Tamil Nadu fishermen are there in Sri Lankan prison. I want to know what action is being taken by the Government of India on the efforts being taken by the Members of Parliament here, and also letters being written by our hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.

What action is the Government taking on this matter? DMK is telling that our Chief Minister is going on writing letters to the Prime Minister? What can our Chief Minister do? She can only write letters to the Prime Minister stating that the Tamil Nadu fishermen are suffering and they are arrested by Sri Lankan Navy. DMK was an alliance partner in the Coalition and for so many years they were in the Government. Why can the DMK not persuade the Prime Minister to take action and see that our fishermen are released?

Madam, Katchativu Island is a very important issue. Katchativu was a part of India, but it was ceded to Sri Lanka without following any procedure. The Parliament has to accept and approve that, but no Resolution was passed in Parliament. How can the Government of Sri Lanka claim that Katchativu is a part of Sri Lanka? It is our territory. Katchativu is the place

where we are able to get good fishes and that is why our Tamil Nadu fishermen are traditionally going there. But Sri Lanka is taking advantage of this position and arresting and also killing our fishermen. They are allowing Chinese people to come and fish there. This kind of thing is taking place. So, China is taking advantage of the situation. Our Foreign Policy has completely failed.

Recently, what did the Central Government say in the Supreme Court? They said that Katchativu issue is settled once and for all. How can they say that? So, we request the Central Government to take steps and get back Katchativu so that our fishermen can get their rights to fish in that area. Since we lost our rights, the Sri Lankan Government is misusing that and the Sri Lankan Navy is arresting our fishermen. We do not know what our Indian Navy is doing. Why can they not prevent this kind of arrest of our fishermen? So, these kinds of incidents are taking place. Therefore, we reiterate our demand that based on our Chief Minister's letter to the Prime Minister, the Government of India should take action immediately and release the 121 fishermen who are in prison in Sri Lanka.

MADAM SPEAKER:

Dr. Ram Chandra Dome will associate himself with the matter raised by Dr.Thambidurai.

**श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज (विदेश):** धन्यवाद अध्यक्ष महोदया...(व्यवधान)

**श्रीमती जयाप्रदा (रामपुर):** अध्यक्ष महोदया, मुझे भी एक मिनट बोलने का समय दीजिए।

**अध्यक्ष महोदया :** आप इनके बाद बोल लीजिएगा।

**श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज :** अभी यही मछुआरों का विषय है। महोदया, आपको याद होगा, जब आपने सर्वदलीय बैठक बुलाई थी, अपनी ओर से उठाये जाने वाले विषयों में मैंने इस विषय को भी चिह्नित किया था। आज तूँकि यह विषय सदन में उठा है, इसलिए मैं आपकी अनुमति से इसके साथ सम्बद्ध करना चाहती हूँ। मैं उन्हें तमिलनाडु मछुआरे, तमिलनाडु फिशरमैन नहीं कहती, मैं कहती हूँ इंडियन फिशरमैन फ्रॉम तमिलनाडु। वे तमिलनाडु में रहने वाले भारतीय मछुआरे हैं। अब यह केवल शब्द परिवर्तन नहीं है। इस शब्द के बदलते ही समस्या की व्यापकता समझ में आती है, पूरी दृष्टि बदल जाती है। वे भारतीय मछुआरे हैं, जिनकी सुरक्षा के लिए भारत सरकार जिम्मेदार है। जब हम तमिलनाडु फिशरमैन कहते हैं तो लगता है कि स्टेट सैक्टोर कोई समस्या है। लेकिन वे इंडियन फिशरमैन हैं, हमारे भाई हैं। हमारे ऊपर उनकी सुरक्षा की जिम्मेदारी है। मैं आपको बताना चाहती हूँ कि जब मैं एक संसदीय शिफ्टमंडल लेकर श्रीलंका गई थी तो उनके राष्ट्रपति के साथ बातचीत में यह विषय मैंने बहुत जोरों से उठाया था तो उन्होंने कहा कि फिशरमैन ओनली लुक्स एट दि फिश। एक मछुआरा केवल मछली देखता है, आगे-पीछे कुछ नहीं देखता तो मैंने कहा कि अगर आपकी यह भावना है तो आप श्रीलंकन नेवी को क्यों नहीं कहते कि वह उन्हें गिरफ्तार न किया करे, न उन्हें मारा करे। लेकिन मेरे वहां से लौटने के बाद ही पांच मछुआरे मार दिये गये। उसके बाद भी कई मछुआरे मारे गये। अभी मैं रामेश्वरम गई थी, मेरे जाने के एक दिन पहले 38 मछुआरे पकड़ लिये गये। उसके बाद फिर 15 मछुआरे पकड़ लिये गये। अभी जैसा तमिबदुई जी कह रहे थे कि 121 से लेकर 125 तक मछुआरे आज श्रीलंका की जेल में हैं।

बालू जी मैकेनिज्म की बात कह रहे हैं। मैकेनिज्म तो था, परंतु कागज पर था। मैकेनिज्म यह था कि दोनों तरफ के ज्वाइंट सैक्रेटरीज बैठेंगे और इस समस्या को हल किया करेंगे और उसकी रेगुलर मीटिंग होगी। लेकिन मुझे दुःख के साथ कहना पड़ता है कि जब मैंने तत्कालीन विदेश मंत्री से यह बात की तो पता चला कि बरसों-बरस से मीटिंग ही नहीं हुई। फिर ऐसे मैकेनिज्म का क्या करना, जो केवल कागज पर हो। आज मैं यह कहना चाहती हूँ कि उस समय यह तय हुआ था कि दोनों तरफ के फिशरमैन के साथ इकट्ठे बैठकर मीटिंग होगी, दोनों तरफ के मछुआरों के प्रतिनिधि जायेंगे और वे आपस में बैठकर समस्या का हल निकालेंगे। मुझे नहीं लगता कि वह बैठक आज तक हुई है। इसलिए मैं आज इस मंच से आपके माध्यम से मांग करती हूँ कि भारत सरकार तुरंत हस्तक्षेप करके हमारे जो मछुआरे तमिलनाडु में रहते हैं, मगर भारतीय मछुआरे हैं, उन्हें तुरंत रिलीज करने के लिए प्रयास करे और उन्हें रिलीज करवाये।

दूसरी बात मैं कहना चाहती हूँ कि जो मैकेनिज्म कागज पर बना हुआ है, उसे एक्टिवेट करे, क्रियान्वित करवाये, ताकि वह बैठक बराबर हो।

तीसरी बात यह है कि उस मीटिंग के दौरान जो तय हुआ था कि दोनों तरफ के मछुआरों के प्रतिनिधि बैठेंगे। वे अपनी समस्याओं को जानते हैं, वे आपस में रिलेटेड भी हैं।

वे इसका एक स्थायी हल निकाल सकेंगे। वह मीटिंग तुरंत करवाई जाए ताकि इन घटनाओं की पुनरावृत्ति न हो। हम लोगों का दिल दहलता है, जब पता चलता है कि तीन साल की बच्ची का बाप मारा गया। अभी जब मैं रामेश्वरम गई तो कितनी विधवाएं मुझे मिलीं, कितनी ऐसी माताएं मुझे मिलीं जिनके बच्चे मार दिए गए थे। कोई छोटा-मोटा नंबर नहीं है, श्रीलंकाई नौसेना द्वारा हमारे सैंकड़ों मछुआरे मारे गए हैं और सैंकड़ों पकड़े हुए हैं। उनको रिजीज़ कराने के लिए हमें तुरंत प्रयास करना चाहिए। भारत सरकार से मैं मांग करती हूँ, यहां विदेश मंत्री तो नहीं बैठे हैं, लेकिन मैं संसदीय कार्य मंत्री जी से कहना चाहती हूँ कि आप भारत सरकार से कहें कि सरकार तुरंत हस्तक्षेप कर के हमारे उन मछुआरों को जो तमिलनाडु में रहते हैं, मगर भारतीय मछुआरे हैं, उनको रिलीज कराने के लिए प्रयास करें। ...(व्यवधान)

**अध्यक्ष महोदया :**

श्री शिवकुमार उदासी,

श्री देवजी एम. पटेल,

श्री वीरिन्द्र कुमार,

श्री वीरिन्द्र कश्यप एवं

श्री अशोक अर्गल, स्वयं को श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज के विषय के साथ संबद्ध करते हैं।

**श्री शैलेन्द्र कुमार :** मैडम, हम चाहते हैं कि इस पर सरकार की तरफ से कोई जवाब आए। ... (व्यवधान)

**अध्यक्ष महोदया :** अभी इसी विषय पर श्री एस.एस. रामसुब्बु जी भी बोल रहे हैं। उसके बाद आप बोल लीजिएगा।

â€ (व्यवधान)

SHRI T.R. BAALU :Madam, the hon. Minister wants to respond...(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: Let Mr. Ramasubbu also speak.

...(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: Please take your seat.

SHRI S.S. RAMASUBBU (TIRUNELVELI): Thank you, Madam. The fishermen community issue is a very important issue. The fishing community is affected in so many ways from the Sri Lankan side. This problem is taking place in Tamil Nadu and Sri Lankan Border sea shore area frequently. This is an important and crucial problem of fishermen in Tamil Nadu.

The UPA Government is taking various steps by talking to the Sri Lankan Government...(Interruptions) Madam, he has already spoken...(Interruptions) Why is he shouting?...(Interruptions) This is a very important issue. I am also concerned about the fishermen community; our Government is also more concerned about the fishermen community...(Interruptions) I am telling the fact.

Madam, our fishermen community should have to be protected. It is a fact that in this regard the problem is always there with Sri Lanka. So, both the Governments and both the fishermen communities have to talk mutually to solve this problem. Our Government has made some suggestions to the Sri Lankan Government also. Our Government informed them to settle the matter amicably. But in spite of that, our Tamil Nadu fishermen are affected and they are put in jail in Sri Lanka. Our Government has already told the Sri Lankan Government to release these fishermen who are in prison. Our Government is taking this action.

Madam, it is continuously taking place there. We have to put an end to this fishermen community problem. Both the fishermen from Indian side and also from the Sri Lankan side have to sit together and have to bring an amicable settlement to this issue. Our Government have to insist the Sri Lanka Government to bring an amicable settlement there. The fishermen community people have to be protected. It is very important. They should not be in prison and they should be released immediately.

Madam, our UPA Government is taking action and in spite of that, though the Tamil people are affected there. Our UPA Government already gave more attention for the rehabilitation of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. In the same way our Tamil fishermen should also be protected.

Madam, I would like to give one suggestion here that we need a separate Ministry for Fisheries. If there is a separate Ministry in the Centre then it would be easy for the settlement of all these problems of our fishermen. So, there should be one separate Ministry, a separate Minister and funds should be allotted for the fishermen community people and then only all the problems will be solved. So, I would urge upon the Government to look into this suggestion so that our fishermen are protected and our Government should take all the necessary action.

Thank you, Madam...(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: What is the subject? I do not have your notice.

...(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: I do not have anyone's notice.

...(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: Notice! What is the subject?

...(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): Madam, we share the concerns of the hon. Members on the issue of fishermen community with Sri Lanka...(Interruptions)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : आप बैठ जाइये। अब हमने मंत्री जी को बुला लिया है।

â€¦(व्यवधान)

श्री शरद यादव (मधेपुरा): महोदया, आप हमारी बात सुन लीजिए...(व्यवधान) मैंने आपको नोटिस भी दिया है...(व्यवधान) मैंने एस.सी., एस.टी., ओबीसी के लिए भी कहा है...(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : एक मिनट आप सुनिये। डेम जी, आप किस विषय पर बोल रहे हैं?

â€¦(व्यवधान)

MADAM SPEAKER: Do not get up just like that.

...(Interruptions)

श्री शैलेन्द्र कुमार: महोदया, हम लोग जवाब चाहते हैं...(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : वे बैठेंगे तभी तो मंत्री जी जवाब देंगे।

â€¦(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : आप बैठ जाइये।

â€¦(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : आप बैठिये।

â€¦(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : डॉ० रामचन्द्र डेम जी, कृपया आप बैठ जाइये।

â€¦(व्यवधान)

MADAM SPEAKER: Nothing will go in record.

(Interruptions) â€¦\*

MADAM SPEAKER: Hon. Member, nothing is going in record.

...(Interruptions)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : शरद यादव जी, आपको बुला देंगे। अब आप बैठ जाइये।

â€¦(व्यवधान)

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Madam, we share the concern of hon. Members on the issue of the fishermen. It is because of the efforts of the Government of India that many fishermen have been released. We will continue to engage with Sri Lanka and ensure that no arrests are made. I will also bring this to the attention of the External Affairs Minister of the concerns expressed in this House, But I would like to assure everybody that the Government of India has viewed this with concern,

has taken it up, has engaged and it is because of that so many fishermen have been released. ...(*Interruptions*) जो बात हमारे माननीय सदस्य कह रहे थे...(व्यवधान)

SHRI T.R. BAALU : Sri Lankan Navy has arrested our fishermen when our boats are drifted whereas Sri Lankan fishermen were going up to Andhra and Odisha. How come are they going? Indian Navy should look at it. They are allowing them to go. ...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: Let him complete. आप बता दीजिए।

⌂€| (व्यवधान)

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Madam, this is not merely a concern of Members or of political parties, this is a concern of the whole country. I have said that due to the Government of India's efforts a large number of fishermen have been released.

We will continue with this engagement to ensure that there are no arrests made in future and all those who have been arrested are also released. That is our prime importance.

With regard to hon. Members concern about जो 17 जातियां हैं, जो उत्तर प्रदेश की विधान सभा ने पिछड़ी जातियों का प्रस्ताव पास किया है कि इनको अनुसूचित जाति में शामिल किया जाये।...(व्यवधान)

श्री दाय सिंह चौहान : इसके कुछ पहले की सूची जिसमें कुछ जातियां छूट रही हैं।...(व्यवधान)

श्री कमल नाथ : मैं तो उन 17 की बात कर रहा हूँ जो।...(व्यवधान)

श्री दाय सिंह चौहान : इसके पहले जो हमारी सरकार ने पास किया था, पहले कुछ जातियां छूट गयी थीं, उनको इंग्लैंड करते हुए और कोटा बढ़ाते हुए।...(व्यवधान)

श्री कमल नाथ : महोदया, इस पर केवल एक प्रस्ताव नहीं है। विभिन्न विधान सभाओं का समय-समय पर ऐसा प्रस्ताव आया है। इस पर जानकारी लेकर मैं गृह मंत्री जी को सूचित करूँगा।...(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : ठीक है। शरद यादव जी, आपको क्या कहना है?

⌂€| (व्यवधान)

श्री शरद यादव : महोदया, मैं एस.सी.,एस.टी. और ओबीसी वाले मामले पर कहना चाहता हूँ।...(व्यवधान)

श्रीमती जयाप्रदा (रामपुर) : महोदया, मैं आपका एक मिनट लेना चाहती हूँ।...(व्यवधान)

MADAM SPEAKER: I have not got your notice. I want to know what you want to speak on.

...(*Interruptions*)

**12.33 hrs**

*At this stage, Dr. M. Thambidurai and some other*

*hon. Members left the House.*

MADAM SPEAKER: Just send me the notice as to what you want to say. I have no idea about what you want to say.

...(*Interruptions*)