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Title: Shri Anirudhan Sampath made a submission regarding need to provide adequate pensionary benefits to seafarers in the country.

DR. A. SAMPATH (ATTINGAL): Madam Speaker, I would like to invite the attention of the Government of India through you regarding the sad plight of our seafarers. We all know that transportation through the inland waters and maritime through ships is increasing day by day.

This is the copy of the gazette notification of the Government of India dated Monday, the 29<sup>th</sup> February, 2016. In this, chapter 2, section 9, sub-section 5 says, the wages included in the collective bargaining agreement or the seafarers' employment agreement shall be in accordance with the guidelines as laid down in the Maritime Labour Convention, which was signed on February 23<sup>rd</sup> in the 94<sup>th</sup> International Labour Organization Conference with 314 votes in favour, and none against. Nobody has voted against. In this body, the representatives of the Member-countries, I mean the Governments, employers, and seafarers alike participated. This has become legally binding to the Member countries. Our hon. Prime Minister has also publicly announced that the ratification of the Maritime Labour, 2006 is to be applicable in this country. He announced that ratification would be carried out. It is considered as the Bill of Rights of seafarers, a major pillar of the maritime policy.

Now, the problem is very sincere. Can you imagine that the registered retired seafarer is getting only Rs.200 as pension? Can a family of registered, retired seafarer sustain with a mere Rs.200 as pension? They are paid very low wages, very low salaries, not even the basic wages that has been specified by the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, which is ratified by India.

In many private companies seafarers are not paid their salaries even after six months. They have to work in the most roughest conditions in the sea. They are not even paid continuously for six months. In many private companies, even after they sign off and enter the main land, they do not get their salaries. They are not having proper working conditions that other seafarers get across the globe. Even other developing countries are offering much better working conditions to them. But our seafarers are not getting those benefits.

HON. SPEAKER: Please conclude. In 'Zero Hour' you have to be brief.

DR. A. SAMPATH: Madam, this is the plight of poor people. There is nobody to look after them. Kindly allow me for one more minute.

Madam, they are not given any other wage benefits that other transportation workers are getting. The workers in the railways and the aviation sector are getting various benefits like Dearness Allowance, Family Medical Scheme, Children Education Scheme, Leave Travel Allowance, Holiday Allowance and other social security benefits. But these people are not getting any of these benefits.

HON. SPEAKER: In 'Zero Hour' you have to speak very briefly.

DR. A. SAMPATH: Madam, I plead with you, this is the last day of this part of the Session. Please allow me.

HON. SPEAKER: That is why I am allowing you.

DR. A. SAMPATH : Madam, you are the protector of my rights.

HON. SPEAKER: Please conclude now.

DR. A. SAMPATH: Madam, there is a solution available. Implementation of International Labour Organisation norms and recommendations of MLC is a must. Wage and pension should be paid to them as it is given by other countries.

We are a large nation having more than 7,000 kms. of coast line and tens of thousands of people are working as seafarers. They are poor workers and they have no other alternative than their wages. So, my humble request to the Government of India, through you, is that the plight of these poor people should be looked into and their problems should be sorted out.

HON. SPEAKER: Shrimati P.K. Shreemathi Teacher, Adv. Joice George, S/ Shri P.K. Biju, Rabindra Kumar Jena, Sudheer Gupta, Alok Sanjar, Rodmal Nagar and Bhairon Prasad Mishra are permitted to associate with the issue raised by Dr. A. Sampath.

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THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI ANANTHKUMAR): Madam Speaker, hon. Member Dr. Sampath has raised a very important issue regarding the pensionary benefits that our seafarers should be getting. I also appreciate that India has a huge coast line and there are many retired seafarers who require that support for their upkeep and sustenance. Therefore, I will bring the entire issue to the notice of the concerned Minister so that this can be taken care.