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title: Issue regarding alleged killing of labourers from Tamil Nadu by the Andhra Pradesh. *

DR. P. VENUGOPAL (TIRUVALLUR): Hon. Deputy-Speaker Sir, 20 poor labourers from Tamil Nadu were killed by the Andhra Pradesh Police on the 7th of this month. Many of them are tribals. In the name of Red Sanders Anti-Smuggling Task Force, they reportedly moved from two different directions from Ethagunta and Cheekateegalakona and encountered about 100 smugglers in the Seshachalam forest in Chittoor district. That had resulted in the death of 20 woodcutters from Tamil Nadu.

In this incident, there is more than what meets the eye. The police claim that they were violently attacked by 100 smugglers. But there is no trace of the remaining 80 people. It was reported that they were cutting trees and carrying logs but around the strewn bodies of the poor labourers, red sandalwood logs (evidently old logs) were found to be systematically kept. Surprisingly, no one from the police force was hurt.

Seven of the woodcutters were shot in the face and the back of their neck. Some of the bodies had burnt injuries and their skin was peeling off. Some media persons have reported that most of the dead bodies had decomposed suggesting that they were killed much before the so-called Tuesday Encounter. Even the renowned forensic expert has raised serious doubts about the claim of the AP Police.

The brutal attacks on the labourers and gruesome murders have been seen widely in the social media. It has touched the conscience of the entire nation.

Though the Police Chief of Andhra Pradesh was calling it a commendable job, the National Human Rights Commission and the Government of Tamil Nadu have asked the Andhra Pradesh Government to come clean with the facts. Even the High Court of Andhra Pradesh wanted an inquiry.

In an Inter-State matter like this, how and why the AP Police acted on its own in haste and murdered people without arresting them and bring to light the kingpins behind the so-called smuggling? Since this tragedy has raised many doubts, the Centre must have swung into action by now as it involves Central Government officials like IPS officers and Customs officials.

We must uphold the rule of law and we all believe that all are innocent till it is proved beyond doubt that they are guilty of smuggling or any other law violating activity. Our Government of Tamil Nadu guided by our leader Amma has come forward to give Rs. 1 crore as ex-gratia to all the families of the deceased in the tragic incident – Rs. 60 lakh from the Government and Rs. 40 lakh from our Party, the AIADMK. Each family of the 20 people killed was given away Rs. 5 lakh. This House must now discuss the ways to bring to light what had happened in reality and to compensate adequately the loss to the poor labourers and to their families. The errant officials must be punished by appropriate authority.

With this I conclude. ...(*Interruptions*)

HON. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Dr. A. Sampath, Shri P.K. Biju and Shri P. Karunakaran are allowed to associate with the matter raised by Dr. P. Venugopal.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, thank you for giving me an opportunity to oppose the Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (Amendment) Ordinance. ...(*Interruptions*)

14.15 hrs.

SUBMISSIONS BY MEMBERS ...Contd.