

Sixteenth Loksabha

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Title: Need to allow Bullock Cart race celebrated in Pune district of Maharashtra

SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO (SHIRUR): I wish to draw the kind attention of the Government towards a very important and sensitive issue pertaining to Bullock Cart Race or Bail Gada Sharyat, as locally called, which is celebrated extensively in the District of Pune in Maharashtra. This traditional festival has a history of being celebrated for the last many centuries.

However this has been banned by the Ministry of Environment and Forests citing provisions of Section 22 of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960. The Hon'ble Supreme Court also gave similar judgement on 7th May, 2014. It is pertinent to mention here that a similar ordinance was passed by the Tamil Nadu Assembly in the case of Jallikattu, in which bulls are used, which was earlier banned alongwith Bullock Cart Race. This was approved by the Hon'ble President of India and has been implemented in Tamil Nadu. Jallikattu, is regularly held in Tamil Nadu now. Keeping the sentiments of the people in mind, the Maharashtra Government had also passed a resolution and issued an ordinance as in the case of Tamil Nadu, which was sent for the kind approval of the Hon'ble President of India. The Hon'ble President had given his approval. However, this could not be implemented on account of the intervention of the Hon'ble High Court of Bombay on an appeal fixed the by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. Thus, the people of Maharashtra have been deprived of the celebration of their festival and cultural heritage.

The farmers are agitated a lot and are taking out processions, staging agitations and other unlawful activities. They are planning major agitations throughout Maharashtra in the near future.

In view of the above, there is no other way except passing an amendment to the Act in the Parliament. Keeping in view the above, I earnestly request you to kindly table a bill of

amendment to the Act in both the Houses of Parliament in the ongoing session itself so that this cultural festival is allowed in Maharashtra also as in the case of Tamil Nadu.