

PETITION RE. GRIEVANCES AND DEMANDS OF CATAMARAN AND COUNTRY BOAT FISHERMEN

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): Sir, I beg to present a petition signed by Sri Matanhy Saldanha, General Secretary, Goenchea Ramponkaracho Ekvott, Goa and others regarding grievances and demands of catamaran and country boat fishermen.

12.27-1/2 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

(i) REPORTED DECISION TO IMPORT COPRA AND COCONUT OIL

SHRI V M SUDHEERAN (Alleppey): With your permission, I rise to mention the following matter of urgent public importance in the House.

The reported decision of the Union Government to import copra and coconut oil will have disastrous consequences for Kerala's economy in general and for the lakhs of coconut growers in particular. Kerala contributes 78 per cent of the coconut production in the country. The total coconut cultivation in our country is 11 lakh hectares. But of which Kerala cultivates 8 lakh hectares of coconut. The total milling copra produced in India is about 3,43,000 tonnes; out of which Kerala's contribution is 3,34,000 tonnes. This clearly shows that coconut is the main cash crop of Kerala in which 80 lakhs of people are engaged. They are small growers. Kerala produces the main portion of the cash crops and spices to meet the requirements of the country and for earning foreign exchange. Any decision to import copra and coconut oil will definitely bring down the prices of coconut nuts and coconut oil, which will adversely affect the small coconut cultivators. This will shatter the economy of Kerala. It is evidently convinced that we produce 3,42,000 tonnes milling copra, which

is adequate to meet the domestic requirements in our country. So, there is no justification for the decision of the Union Government to import copra and coconut oil while our country is self-sufficient to meet the domestic demands. I would like to urge upon the Union Government to reconsider and revoke the reported decision to import copra and coconut oil so as to save the lakhs of coconut cultivators and the economy of Kerala.

(ii) REPORTED BLOCKING OF RIVER BHAGIRATHI BECAUSE OF A LANDSLIDE

श्री ० रामजी सिंह (भायलपुर): अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं नियम 377 के प्राचीन भागीरथी के प्रवाह में अवरोधक सम्बन्ध में प्राथमिकता शीक महत्व के विषय पर वक्तव्य देना चाहता हूँ।

समाचार-पत्रों की खबरो के अनुसार उत्तरकाशी जिले में उत्तरकाशी से लगभग 40 किलोमीटर दूर गंगानदी के पास चट्टान टूटकर गिर जाने से भागीरथी का प्रवाह रुक गया है और वहाँ एक कुत्रिम झील बन गई है। हमने उस क्षेत्र में हरमिल की बली डूब गई है। परन्तु उससे भी अधिक खतरा उत्तरकाशी से इलाहाबाद तक के गंगा के किनारे के क्षेत्रों के लिये हो गया है।

उत्तरकाशी नगर खाली कराया जा चुका है। 20 वर्ष पहले भी इस क्षेत्र में लुहारीनाग नामक स्थान पर इस प्रकार की झील बन गई थी। हिमालय की चट्टानें बहुत कमजोर हैं और वहाँ पर सबक निर्माण तथा जंगलों की बेरहमी से कटाई के कारण सूखान एक निश्चित घटना हो गई है।

आठ वर्ष पूर्व भागीरथी की दूसरी सहायक धनकनंदा में अयंकर दुर्घटना हुई थी, जिसका प्रभाव गया नहर पर भी पड़ा था। पिछले वर्ष पिठौरागढ़ जिले के तवाघाट नाम स्थान पर सूखान से 44 व्यक्ति मर गये थे। हिमालय में ये दुर्घटनाएँ शीत विकास नीतियों के कारण हो रही हैं, क्योंकि इन विकास कार्यों से वहाँ पर प्रकृति के साथ अनावश्यक छेड़छाड़ की जा रही है। टिहरी में भागीरथी पर एक विशाल बांध वहाँ की जनता और स्वतंत्र वैज्ञानिकों की राय के खिलाफ केवल सबसे ऊँचा बांध बनाने के राष्ट्रीय अहंकार की दृष्टि के लिये सार्वजनिक पुस्तक के संरक्षण में बन रहा है। इस प्रकार की योजनाएँ पूरे देश के लिए अयंकर तबाही का कारण बन सकती हैं। अतः सरकार को हिमालय क्षेत्र के विकास को एक 100 वर्षीय योजना वहाँ के प्राकृतिक संतुलन की सुरक्षा को ध्यान में रखकर बनानी चाहिये।

गंगोली क्षेत्र में देस भर के सैकड़ों तीर्थ-यात्री रुके पड़े हैं और कई दिनों से सबक दूटने के कारण बड़ा रामन व अन्य आवश्यक वस्तुएँ नहीं पहुँच रही हैं ।

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: On a point of order, Sir About the privilege motion that was pending against the *Times of India*, I was told by your secretariat that it was going to be taken up today. You better tell us when it is going to be taken up.

MR. SPEAKER: It is not a point of order.

Prof. Dilip Chakravarty.

(iii) ADVERTISEMENT POLICY OF GOVERNMENT

PROF. DILIP CHAKRAVARTY (Calcutta South): With your permission, Sir, I want to raise a very serious matter concerning the literary newspapers all over the country, under rule 377.

The advertisement policy pursued by the Government of India is hitting hard the small newspapers and particularly the literary ones. The decision by the Finance Ministry to give exemption from income-tax only Rs. 40,000 per annum spent on advertisements had led to the denial by the business houses of advertisements given to the small newspapers. Further, advertisement policy of the Government is that no newspaper which has a circulation of less than 2000 should be getting any Government advertisement has also accentuated the problem. The attention of the Finance Ministry as also the Ministry of Information and Publicity is drawn to this special problem confronting the small newspapers and particularly the literary newspapers. Before the Janata Government came to power, the small newspapers felt assured that they would be benefited by the policy but unfortunately in reality, their expectations have been belied. This requires urgent, expeditious and favourable consideration by the Government.

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(iv) ALLOTMENT OF RAILWAY WAGONS FOR MOVEMENT OF SALT MANUFACTURED IN TAMIL NADU.

SHRI K. T. KOSALRAM (Tiruchendur): I would like to draw the attention of the Ministry of Industry to the situation arising out of the refusal by the Salt Commissioner to recommend to the Ministry of Railways allotment of wagons for the movement of nearly 7 lakh tonnes of salt manufactured by unlicensed manufacturers in the coastal areas of Tamil Nadu in spite of the undertaking of Government as expressed in its Press Note of 23rd April, 1948 and 11 May, 1955 that under its new policy, salt produced in units covering not more than 10 acres will not be subject to any restrictions by way of storage, transport and sale and to request him to consider whether the action taken so far and proposed to be taken in the future by the Salt Commissioner does not transgress the undertaking given by Government arising from the Gandhi-Irwin Pact of 1931 to remove all discriminations as between licensed and unlicensed manufacturers of salt, the latter being in the small scale sector in the rural areas of the coast, and to spell out the measures the Minister proposes to take to ensure the expeditious movement of this salt from Tamil Nadu to the needy areas of Bihar and eastern India for the price of salt has gone up and for the lifting of the ban on exports of salt imposed last year on the basis of inadequate data provided by the Salt Commissioner.

Now, this year, the production of salt is more than 70 lakhs of tonnes as against 45 lakhs which was estimated by the hon. Minister last year in reply to my question. I am glad that the Minister of State in the Ministry of Industry, Shrimati Abha Mati, is sitting here and, I hope, she will reply to all these points.

When the country has achieved self-sufficiency and has even an exportable surplus in salt, how does the Government explain its policy of placing import of salt under OGL from Pakistan, unless it be its intention to put down