

Attack on Indian fishermen by Sri Lankan Navy

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY (Puducherry): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I would like to raise a very important issue of Indian fishermen being attacked time and again by the Sri Lankan Navy whenever they are straying into the waters near Kachatheevu.

Sir, the Indian fishermen have been attacked. They have been taken as prisoners and kept in the Sri Lankan jail by the Sri Lankan Naval authorities and the Sri Lankan Administration. This has been going on for a long time. The Government of Tamil Nadu has to intervene and the Government of India has to intervene for the purpose of releasing those people. Sir, the recent incident in this regard has been on March 5th when the Indian fishermen went near Kachatheevu, which was handed over to the Sri Lankan authorities by the Government of India. Our fishermen went there. They didn't know whether it is an international maritime boundary or not. When they went there for fishing, the Sri Lankan Navy fired and killed one fisherman and another fisherman was seriously injured. And, thereafter, they have taken into custody more than 57 fishermen who have been from the coastal areas of Tamil Nadu. The hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has written to the Government of India, the hon. Prime Minister for releasing those fishermen who have been taken into custody, and so far about 47 of them have been released by the Sri Lankan Government. Sir, this has become a regular phenomenon. It is happening almost every month.

Sir, I think the solution for this is that our Indian Coast Guards have to be fully strengthened. Our Indian Coast Guards have to go to the Maritime Boundary for the protection of our fishermen who go for fishing around that area. The fishermen do not know whether it is an International Maritime Boundary or not. They do not know. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI D. RAJA (Tamil Nadu): They have the traditional right to use the Kachatheevu Island. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Let me complete. Then, you can speak. Sir, whenever they go there, they are taken into custody. They are ill-treated and beaten by the Sri Lankan Navy. This has become a regular phenomenon. Yesterday also, I had demanded that the Government of India should get back Kachatheevu from the Sri Lankan Government because there is a Church and our fishermen go there. They dry their nets in the area. Our fishermen go there and cook their food in the Island, the Kachatheevu Island. Therefore, Sir, for the benefit of our Indian fishermen, the Government of India should review this matter and take back Kachatheevu because our fishermen from Rameshwaram, Kanyakumari and Tuticorin go for fishing in that area. Now, Sir, I request the hon. Prime Minister, the External Affairs Minister and also the Defence Minister to see that our Indian fishermen who are going for fishing in the Kachatheevu area and near the Sri Lankan coastal waters are not attacked and killed. Sir, our Coast Guards are stationed there. Moreover, Sir, in Kanyakumari, we should have a Coast Guard station and we can do the surveillance through helicopters so that the Government of India can give protection to the Indian fishermen. Sir, it is becoming a law and order problem in the coastal area. To avoid that, I want the Government of India to intervene in the matter and protect our Indian fishermen and show our strong protest to the Sri Lankan authorities for unnecessarily killing of our fisherman by the Sri Lankan Navy. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I would associate myself with the matter. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I would like to associate myself with it. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): So, all of you are associating. ...*(Interruptions)*... You can associate on the Sri Lankan issue.

SHRI D. RAJA: Sir, the whole House should express concern as far as our fishermen are concerned. I associate with it. ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. K. MALAISAMY (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I associate myself with what the hon. Member has mentioned.

DR. V. MAITREYAN (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I also associate myself with what he has said.

SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR (Tamil Nadu): Sir I also associate myself with what he has said.

SHRI B. S. GNANADESIKAN (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I also associate myself with what he has mentioned.

SHRI C. PERUMAL (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I also associate myself with what the hon. Member has said.

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT (West Bengal): Sir, we all associate ourselves with what has been mentioned.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, the whole House associates itself with what has been mentioned here. ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. K. MALAISAMY: Sir, I wish to ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): You may associate yourself with what he has said.

DR. K. MALAISAMY: Sir, while we agree with most of the points made by Shri Narayanasamy, I must thank the Chair for having given me the permission to speak. I hail from that area and can speak with certain authority on the subject.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): But there is no time.

DR. K. MALAISAMY: Sir, I would just make two points that would help provide a perfect solution ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): Please don't make any points. Just associate yourself.

DR. K. MALAISAMY: Sir, the Kachatheevu originally belonged to the Raja of Ramnad.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): Just associate yourself.

DR. K. MALAISAMY: Traditionally, the fishermen have the fishing rights. Unfortunately, as per the pact, it has been wrongly given to Sri Lanka, with the result that our fisherman cannot go there. What I am trying to say is ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, it is about the problems being faced by the fishermen. ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. K. MALAISAMY: Sir, either there should be a permanent deal for the Indian fishermen

or the agreement should be annulled and the rights of the fishermen restored. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): You may associate. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR: Sir, the rights of the fishermen must be upheld. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI B. S. GNANADESIKAN: Sir, I also associate myself with what the hon. Member has mentioned. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, I also associate myself with what he has mentioned. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री हरेन्द्र सिंह मलिक (हरियाणा): माननीय उपसभाध्यक्ष जी...*(व्यवधान)*... चेयरमैन सर न अलाऊ किया है ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री वी० नारायणसामी: बिल इंट्रोड्यूस हो जाए ...*(व्यवधान)*... उसके बाद करेंगे ...*(व्यवधान)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): You all have associated yourselves with what the hon. Member has mentioned. Mr. Ahluwalia, what do you have to say?

SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR: Sir, some fishermen are yet to be released. ...*(Interruptions)*... They should be immediately released and the Central and State Governments must take steps to get back Kachatheevu, in the interest of the fishermen of Tamil Nau. People are dying there everyday. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA (Jharkhand): Sir, yesterday, we had a detailed discussion on the issue of attack on the office of the CPI(M) and the Kerala issue, the killing of innocent, non-Marxist people in Kannur, Kerala. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Sir, he is again raising the issue of Kerala. ...*(Interruptions)*... How can they raise it without a notice?

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: The issue was raised again today, but it was...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): That is over ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: No, Sir, if you call for the records, it is all 'interruptions'. It has not come on the record.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): Give another notice. The Chairman may consider that.

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Let them give notice.

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: As you had requested, we asked our Members to be quiet and listen to Shrimati Brinda Karat...*(Interruptions)*... Mr. Venkaiah Naidu must also be allowed to speak on this issue.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): That is over. ...*(Interruptions)*... That subject is over.

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Allow him to speak, Sir. ...*(Interruptions)*... Let the other people also come. ...*(Interruptions)*... Non-Marxist people have been killed in Tripura, West Bengal and Kerala. ...*(Interruptions)*... What is going on in Kerala? If their voice is not heard in the Parliament, what is the relevance of it all? ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): As regards the Zero Hour, that discussion is over. If any hon. Member wants to discuss it, they can move a substantive motion, which the Chairman may or may not allow. ...(*Interruptions*)... As regards the Zero Hour, that discussion is over. ...(*Interruptions*)...

Now, Bill for introduction. The Central Universities Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2008. Shri Arjun Singh.

GOVERNMENT BILLS

The Central Universities Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2008

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Banaras Hindu University Act, 1915, the Delhi University Act, 1922, the Jawaharlal Nehru University Act, 1966, the North-Eastern Hill University Act, 1973 and the University of Hyderabad Act, 1974.

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN: Now, further discussion on the Railway Budget, 2008-09.

The Budget (Railways 2008-09)—Contd.

SHRI C. PERUMAL (Tamil Nadu): *Hon. Vice Chairman, Let me thank you for giving me an opportunity to put forth my views on the Railway Budget for the year 2008-09.

Railway provide job opportunities to thousands of people as the biggest employer in the country. This vast network is in operation right from the days of the Britishers. When it comes to service, safety and sanitation much needs to be done still. There are about eighteen thousand unmanned level crossings in the country. I fail to understand why this Government has not realized and taken note of the accidents that happen causing huge loss to life and property in these unmanned level crossings. This pains us all. About twenty people all of them village Panchayat officers died recently at an unmanned level crossing in Tamil Nadu in an accident. Railways must own responsibility. But it does not happen normally. It is disappointing that this budget do not mention any thing about manning this menacing unmanned level crossings.

Hon. Railway Minister has stated that twenty five thousand crores of rupees have been earned as profit this year. But announcement regarding new rail routes and new gauge conversion projects are not there much in this budget. I would like to reiterate my specific demand for the 11th time in this august House. I feel ashamed that my demand made ten times earlier has not been considered still. I have been repeatedly demanding a rail link between Jolarpet and Hosur. The people of this area have been requesting the railways to link these two towns via Tiruppathur, Kanthali, Bargur, Krishnagiri and Sholagiri. This is a

*The speech was originally delivered in Tamil