

**REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT-  
RELATED PARLIAMENTARY  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
HOME AFFAIRS**

SHRI SOM PAL (Uttar Pradesh):  
Madam, I present the Thirty-sixth  
Report (in English and Hindi) of the  
Department-related Parliamentary  
Standing Committee on Home Affairs  
on the "insurgency situation in the  
North-eastern region".

**REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT-  
RELATED PARLIAMENTARY  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
AGRICULTURE**

SHRI RAMNARAYAN  
GOSWAMI (West Bengal): Madam, I  
lay on the Table, a copy (in English  
and Hindi) of the Eighth Report of  
the Department-related Parliamentary  
Standing Committee on Agriculture on  
the action taken on the  
recommendations contained in the  
Thirty-eighth Report of the  
Committee regarding National  
Watershed Development Project for  
Rainfed Areas relating to the Ministry  
of Agriculture (Department of  
Agriculture and Cooperation).

**MOTION FOR ELECTION TO THE  
NATIONAL SHIPPING BOARD**

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE  
TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G.  
VENKATRAMAN): Madam, I move  
the following Motion:—

"That in pursuance of Clause (a) of  
sub-section (2) of Section 4 of the  
Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 (44 of  
1958), read with sub-rule (1) of rule 4  
of the National Shipping Board Rules,  
1960 this House do proceed to elect,  
in such manner as the Chairman may  
direct, two Members from among the  
members of the house to be members  
of the National Shipping Board."

*The question was put and the motion  
was adopted.*

**RE. DEMAND TO BRING THE BILL  
ON RESERVATION FOR WOMEN**

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have  
to inform the hon. Members....

SHRIMATI RENUKA  
CHOWDHURY (Andhra Pradesh):  
Madam, I want to raise a matter of  
urgent importance. Just one week back  
India hosted a large conference where  
several nations met in India and a  
consensus was arrived at.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I know.

SHRIMATI RENUKA  
CHOWDHURY: Before the IPU....  
(*Interruptions*). I am talking about 50 per  
cent of the population. It is a matter of  
national importance. (*Interruptions*). This  
House is witness to assurances given by  
several responsible people with regard to  
33 per cent reservation for women.

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES (Goa):  
The Bill is before the Select Committee.  
(*Interruptions*).

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA  
(Karnataka): The report of the Select  
Committee is there... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI RENUKA  
CHOWDHURY: It is not even listed in  
the list of business. This just shows how  
deep is the reservation and bias...  
(*Interruptions*)....

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA  
(Karnataka): Let them decide who should  
speak first... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI RENUKA  
CHOWDHURY: You don't have to  
worry about that... (*Interruptions*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I would  
be happy, Mr. Hanumanthappa, if you  
spoke on it... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: I  
want to speak provided they allow me...  
(*Interruptions*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I allow  
you to speak...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI RENUKA  
CHOWDHURY: You are not allowed to

speaking. You can wait for your turn just as we have waited for 50 years...  
(Interruptions)...

SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA (Madhya Pradesh): We would like to ask when this Bill would be included in the business...  
(Interruptions)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We want parity. We also want the men to support it...  
(Interruptions)...

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: The tragedy of this nation is that men are not educated enough. They are not savvy enough.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA (West Bengal): We strongly support it...  
(Interruptions)...

SHRIMATI MARGRET ALVA: The Bill was introduced in the other House. It was referred to a Joint Select Committee. The report of the Joint Select Committee is before the House. All that we are asking is that the Bill be listed for discussion and voted upon. If the majority does not want to pass it, let them defeat it. We have no objection. But let them come out openly and defeat the Bill in the House. Let the women of the country know how serious they are about passing the Bill...  
(Interruptions)...

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: Let them be exposed...  
(Interruptions)...

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI (Uttar Pradesh): Our party has been consistently supporting it...  
(Interruptions)...

SHRIMATI MARGRET ALVA: It is part of the Common Minimum Programme. Why are you getting out of it now?

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: This is after the IPU recommendation. That is the tragedy...  
(Interruptions)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gujral, you want to say something...  
(Interruptions)...

SHRIMATI VYJAYANTIMALA BALI (Nominated): The Prime Minister of India, at the conclusion of the IPU Conference, said that this was a historic Bill. He said, "We will create history." Now it is not being passed in the House. It is a historic Bill according to our Prime Minister. What is historic about this Bill? There is a deliberate attempt to see that this Bill is not passed...  
(Interruptions)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay. I heard everybody...  
(Interruptions)...

SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA (Bihar): The report of the Joint Select Committee on the 81st Constitution Amendment Bill has already been given to Lok Sabha. Now we want that the Bill should be placed before the House for consideration and passing. That is the main issue.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It should not go into the historic archives...  
(Interruptions)...

SHRIMATI VYJAYANTIMALA BALI: We want the Prime Minister to come and enlighten us...  
(Interruptions)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Gujral is equally a senior Member. Let him make his comments.

गुजरल साहब हमारे हाउस के मेम्बर हैं। उनसे पूछना चाहिए। वे लीडर हैं।

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): Madam, I have more than due respect for the hon. lady Members. Let us not look at it as an issue of men versus women. Primarily, I think, most of us, if not all, are in favour of it. I had the privilege of first moving a non-official Bill here when I was sitting on that side. Therefore, let us not think as if only lady Members have to raise the voice of protest.

We are on your side.   
(Interruptions) One thing the Prime Minister has announced, we are bound to bring the Bill before this session of the Parliament. I can assure you that we will bring it with

the cooperation of all and we will pass it also.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Good, he said that he will bring it and get it passed.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: I only want to say that the Parliamentary Affairs Minister announced a list of 78 Bills to be brought before the two Houses and passed during the Budget Session but this was not in the list of 78, Mr. Leader of the House. This is what is concerning us. After all.

78 Bills have been listed as priority Bills for the Budget Session and this does not even find the 78th place in that list. That is why we are saying that you are backing out, you are not serious, Sir, the Government is not serious and the Government does not want it to come. This type of pronouncements in international conferences and in the Central Hall can be justified only if you list it before the House. You don't bring it to the Business Advisory Committee. Your Parliamentary Affairs Minister does not list it among the 78 Bills and you say we are bringing it in this Session.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I thought it was mentioned in the President's Address. It was mentioned in the President's Address and it is much more important.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: It was mentioned in the President's Address also.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL: Madam, I am no individual here. The main point is, I am trying to commit again on behalf of the Government that we will bring the Bill in this session.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: May I please....

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If you say something....

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: I won't say anything about the Bill. Madam, I am trying to place emphasis, many people try to trivialise this

demand of ours and the hon. Minister is absolutely right. This is not men-versus-women. But it is half the population being left out of the democratic process of decision-making which affects hundred per cent of our population. It is a matter of being prochoice and it is a matter of 'kicking off' although process, of being in a state of preparedness where women constituting 50 per cent of the population have the right to decide that they will participate in this. It is not a compulsion but the ability to stand up in a democratic nation and to say, 'I can and so I will' and this preparatory process for generations of young people who are coming up to learn to take each other, shoulder to shoulder, working towards democratic principles of this nation. So, Madam, I want to say that it is not a matter of numbers what we are, if we come, what is going to happen. Nothing is going to happen, things will only improve if we take the other 50 per cent of the population into this. It is a matter of choice. If a child can plan to become a doctor, a lawyer, a pilot, then a child should be able to say, 'I can become a politician'. When I say a child we do not gender-discriminate and hence if we talk about advanced nations, developing nations, it is not just economics but it is the ability to take both the genders into a developmental programme and hence the progress of a nation. So we cannot leave the 50 per cent out.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL: My throat is not good so I cannot match with her eloquence today I can try to say this thing. We sitting on this side of the House, and I am sure those on that side, firmly believe that no nation has ever progressed where women do not participate, where women do not participate more than they can. We feel proud of the fact that in this nation we have produced women of eminence like Mrs Gandhi and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and I could go on counting. The main point, therefore, is thanks to Gandhiji's legacy to which we are committed and that commitment is that women shall get their due from us.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: All nations have thrived by making commitments and not keeping them as far as women are concerned. (*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI VYJAYANTIMALA BALI: Madam, this is not included in the list of business.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Gujralji has made a point. All of you have spoken on the subject. There was a Declaration adopted at the International Conference. The Prime Minister addressed it. He also gave the valedictory address. His address was very clear. The President spoke. The Vice-President spoke and the Speaker also spoke. Everybody spoke on the Bill. The point is that without the participation of 50% of population in the decision-making, democracy is not complete. There are no two opinions on this and the Government is very much aware of this. Gujralji is committed and I take Gujralji for his commitment because I don't think he has failed us in the past. I am sure he is not going to fail us in future. We are all behind him and he would not fail in his commitment. He is saying that a Bill will come before the House. I am sure a Bill will come soon and all of you will pass it. We will be partners in this endeavour because the whole world is looking to us. It is not something that only we are looking for it. The whole world is looking to New Delhi. Everybody in the Conference said that they were looking to New Delhi. So, it is entirely up to New Delhi to let the world know what it is going to do for women. With that note, may I ask Gujralji to make his statement? Gujralji, has to make a statement on the trilateral agreement. Gujralji, you please make the statement. But I don't think we have the time to seek the clarifications now itself. I would seek the sense of the House if we could take up clarifications later.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes, Madam.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Gujralji, you may please make your statement.

## STATEMENT BY MINISTER

### Tripartite Agreement

#### Between India, Iran and Turkmenistan

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): Madam Deputy Chairman, I have the pleasure to inform the Hon'ble Members of this august House that on February 22, 1997 in Tehran, India, Iran and Turkmenistan signed at the level of Foreign Ministers an agreement on the international transit of goods between India, Iran and Turkmenistan. This has brought to fruition the process begun in April 1995 when the three countries signed a trilateral MoU on this subject. The three sides have worked together in a spirit of friendship mutual understanding and constructive cooperation in finalising this agreement. Its signing reflects the traditionally close relations India has with Iran and Turkmenistan. It is also in keeping with the vision of the Governments of these countries to promote economic cooperation amongst themselves and with other CIS countries which accede to it in future.

The cardinal objective of the agreement is to provide a suitable juridical and legal framework for the multi-modal movement of goods from India to Iran and Turkmenistan, and other countries that join the arrangement in the future, and vice-versa. The salient features of the agreement are:

- \* It facilitates simplifies and accelerates customs and other formalities including minimising documentation and inspection requirements for the transit of goods. For example, it provides that the goods transiting under this agreement will not be subject to examination through the customs jurisdiction *en route* except when irregularities are suspected.

- \* It provides for the exemption of import and export duties or other taxes for goods in transit. Only charges for specific services can be levied as stipulated by internal