

आत्म-संतोष बढ़े। साथ ही मैडम, इस रेल विभाग के अंदर जो दलित वर्ग के लोग हैं इनके अधिकारियों और कर्मचारियों, को मकान आवंटन में भी दुर्व्यवहार किया जाता है और आवंटन करते समय इनको आवंटन नहीं किया जाता है जबकि रिज़र्व कोटे के अनुसार जितने मकान उनको मिलने चाहिए उतने मकान उनको नहीं दिए जाते। आज वे कर्मचारी शहरों के अन्दर किराये के मकानों में रहते हैं जबकि मालिक मकान भी उनको किराए पर मकान नहीं देते हैं। यह दुर्दशा उनकी हो रही है।

मैडम, मैं यह चाहूंगा कि सामाजिक न्याय का नारा देने के साथ-साथ सामाजिक न्याय भी करिए। केवल नारों से काम चलने वाला नहीं है। इसलिए इस ओर भी मैं सरकार का ध्यान आकर्षित करना चाहूंगा।

धन्यवाद।

RE. BAN ON TRANSPORTATION OF WOOD FROM JAMMU & KASHMIR

SHRI SAIFUDDIN SOZ (Jammu & Kashmir): Madam Vice-Chairperson, earlier I wanted you to be here to support me, but now that you have gone to that exalted position, I crave your indulgence to understand the dimension of the crisis in my mind.

Madam, the people of Kashmir have suffered, all these seven years, great economic deprivation apart from political and psychological setbacks. As against that backdrop, now there is a crisis, or, a series of crises, which the people of Kashmir are facing. The felling of trees is banned. It should be banned, it should be regulated I have no objection. But now, the transportation of dry wood, fallen timber, everything, is banned with the result that there is a crisis in Kashmir where all the people do not have gas connections. So the people have to have to firewood to burn their choolhas. And there are mosques, which have connected hamams, so that they get warm water in the winter season, but there is no firewood available for them. Similarly, packaging stuff is required for horticulture and that packaging stuff also is not available. No popular tree or willow tree can be felled, even under the orders of the Chief Conservator of Forests. There is a total ban.

Madam, it so happened that a PIL was moved before the hon. Supreme Court I am

not going into the merits of that case nor do I raise objections to the Court's interim order. But whatever was the order passed by the Supreme Court of India, it has* resulted in a series of crises in Kashmir where even the timber that had been earmarked for two years to be exported outside the State we get some revenue through supply of sleepers to the Railways and deodar timber to other States and Government departments is not being transported. So everything is at a standstill. Also, the department which maintains the depots where timber can be purchased and which pays salaries to its employees out of the sales it is a commercial department has no money to pay salaries to their employees. Ten thousand employees of the Forest Department have not received even their salaries for two months. That's why I have raised this matter here.

The Government of Jammu & Kashmir will, of course, approach the Court. In fact, the PIL was moved by vested interests, and they said in that PIL that all the timber flows to Pakistan and is burnt by militants. So the Court gave a blanket order. A clear national policy is enunciated. There is a total ban. But the Jammu & Kashmir State cannot be brought under the purview of a blanket order like this because it is a poor State and a border State, and the people there have to use firewood. But even dry wood, which is rotten, is also banned from transportation.

Therefore, through this august House—through you, Madam Vice-Chairperson—I am urging the hon. Prime Minister to summon the Attorney-General of India to understand the dimensions of the crisis that the Kashmir Valley is facing, because it is a public issue, a very important issue, and we have already suffered enough there.

The hon. Chief Minister can come here. His D.O. letter has come to the hon. Prime Minister. The Attorney General should understand the dimension of this crisis. The people have a crisis. They have already suffered economic deprivation all these seven years. Madam, you understand the crisis. We do not have sufficient electricity there. So, firewood has to be there. Therefore, the Attorney General should be asked to hold discussion with the hon. Prime

Minister. After understanding the crisis, he should appear before the hon. Supreme Court so that it is explained to the hon. Supreme Court and that we shall get a suitable verdict which will give relief to the people of Kashmir.

PR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA (West Bengal): Madam; I associate myself with him and just say....

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (Shrimati Renuka Chowdhury): Don't elaborate on it.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA (West Bengal): I will take one minute.

We share the concern for the environment. We agree that there is need to implement the laws. The question is not only of natural environment but also human environment. Nothing which uproots human beings and destroys their economy should be applied mechanically. Just now we were discussing the same issue. The same sort of issue came up. I urge upon the Government to look into the whole issue of environment, economics and law together so that such anomalies are not created in implementation of the law. Thank you very much.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (Shrimati Renuka Chowdhury): I am sure the Government will take note of this.

SPECIAL MENTIONS AVERTED MID AIR COLLISION NEAR CALCUTTA

SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT (Gujarat): Madam Chairperson, I am rising to draw the attention of this august House to the fact that another mid-air horror might have struck near Calcutta or the Bay of Bengal. It was averted not because of any effort on the part of the Government or the Civil Aviation Department or the Control Tower but possibly because of an act of God. The lives of passengers in two foreign aircraft were saved. This was hardly a week after the horror which struck near Delhi due to the collision of a Saudi-747 aircraft and a Khazak aircraft. Unfortunately, 350 persons died in the accident. What the Government did was to see that the bodies were identified and, if nobody claimed the bodies, to collectively bury or cremate them.

The question is very simple, Madam. The Commercial Pilots Association of India has said in a public statement that equipments worth more than Rs. 300 crores were lying at the Palam Airport. They were supposed to be for the purpose of modernising the Control Tower. They have not been used since 1996. Who is responsible for this? Whatever the former Minister or the former Government might have done, I am not an agent of any Government. What has the Minister in charge today done since this Government came to power? The person in charge of the Control Tower has said that they were not at fault so far as the collision between the aircraft near Delhi was concerned. Some Judge has been appointed. My submission is, if we can take the advice of, or have consultation with foreigners on crucial issues, delicate issues of manufacturing of our planes, why we should not invite experts from outside to see how this collision occurred in mid-air near Delhi.

It has appeared in the Press that airport equipments worth crores of rupees were lying at the Ahmedabad Airport and that they were also not being used for the Control Tower purposes. It is known to everybody, each one of us, that during the last three years more than 1100 persons have died due to air crash or accidents in air.

If this is going to happen and the Government is not going to take effective measures, I have got apprehensions. The people will be very much afraid of travelling by aeroplane. They will not know what will happen to their plane when the air-hostess announces that in a few minutes the aircraft will land at a particular destination. They will think that anything can happen before the aircraft lands.

My request and my particular submission to the Government is that the Government must associate with the inquiry into this collision between the Saudia aircraft and the Kazhak aircraft, a foreign expert or an Air bus expert, a 747 Boeing expert to go through a definite finding as to how this accident has occurred.

Secondly, an air accident has been averted near Calcutta by the act of God which has been reported in *The Times of India*. The person