

reservation to 50 per cent. This complete ignorance of the 76th Constitutional Amendment questions the very right of the Parliament. The DMK Government in Tamil Nadu has been dilly-dallying on the issue. Even though it is a partner in this Coalition Government at the Centre, it is shocking that no initiative ...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): Sir, I object to what the hon. Member is saying...*(Interruptions)*...He is saying that being a partner in this Government, we are doing this and that ...*(Interruptions)*...This type of commentary should not be there.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI MD. SALIM): Mr. Muthu Mani, you avoid that...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. MUTHU MANI: Sir, in 1994, in a meeting held at Gudalur, the present Chief Minister, Mr. Karunanidhi, very boldly declared that if he became Chief Minister, he would protect this 69 per cent reservation...*(Interruptions)*...Otherwise, he would go to jail with a smiling face.

SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN: Sir, this should not be discussed here...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI MD. SALIM) Mr. Muthu Mani, you are speaking about the 69 per cent reservation. ...*(Interruptions)*... That is all. You do not go beyond that, please. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN: He cannot speak about the Chief Minister here...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI S. MUTHU MANI: Sir, you back in 1951, when Supreme Court struck down ...*(Interruptions)*...the order of the then Government providing reservation, the then Prime Minister, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru got clause (iv) added to article 15 of the Constitution through the First Constitutional Amendment. The reserva-

tion was restored thereafter. The Constitution has been amended several times so far for relatively smaller causes. (Time Bells rings) But here is a case of grave injustice to the people of Tamil Nadu. If the 76th Amendment of the Constitution has not been honoured by the Supreme Court, then what is the remedy? Should the Parliament and the Centre be mute witnesses when an Act is passed by the Parliament is ignored? The Centre should live up to the expectations. The Prime Minister keeps on saying that he comes from the lower strata of society. If the promises of this Government are genuine the Government should bring a Constitutional Amendment immediately to protect the 69 per cent reservation in Tamil Nadu and also to give all the States the authority to fix percentage of reservation which should be outside the scope of judicial scrutiny. If this is not done on an extreme emergency basis, the situation can turn out to be grave.

Sir, I also demand that the Centre should prevail upon the Tamil Nadu Government to release Mr. K. Veeramani, the leader of Dravida Kazhagam and his followers who have been kept in judicial custody for democratically protesting against the observations of the Supreme Court against the 69 per cent reservation. I hope that this Government will save the dignity of the Parliament and render social justice to the people of Tamil Nadu.

SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN: Sir, I object to this. ...*(Interruptions)*... It should be removed. ...*(Interruptions)* ...I cannot keep quiet because I am a Minister.

Blocking construction of roads by Army on Indo-Myanmar border

SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH (Manipur): Mr Vice-Chairman, Sir, I rise to make a Special Mention about the Army's blocking the construction of roads in the border area of Manipur in the Indo-Myanmar border.

Sir, as you know, Manipur is a State where only one-tenth of the area is val-

ley; the rest 9/10 is a hill area. The road is just near Indo-Myanmar borders in the hill district of Ukhrul where, about 25 kms., belt the Army does not allow the PWD people to enter and do their works. They chase away the PWD people while they do their work.

Since a large portion of Manipur is a hill area, exploitation of the hill areas is very much important for the development of Manipur. The State Government is taking a very keen interest in the development of hill areas. But now the Army which is posted on the Indo-Myanmar border is preventing the construction of roads.

We all know that the road is very important for economic development. It is recognised all over world. In this connection, Sir, The Chief Minister of Manipur has already written to the Defence Minister, Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav. However, no reply has come yet.

If this situation is allowed to continue, the laying of roads in the hill areas would come to a stop. Already, in the wake of this obstruction, the construction of more than 250 kms. of road covering seven roads has been affected. Therefore, while drawing the attention of the hon. Defence Minister this, through House I would like him to look into this matter. This is an undeveloped area. In the context of the Common Minimum Programme of this Government, attention should be paid to such backward areas.

Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI MD. SALIM): Shri S. Niraikulathan. There should be no disturbance now. It is his maiden submission.

Need to Enhance the Financial Assistance under Jeevan Dhara Scheme to SC/ST and Backward Classes Farmers

***SHRI S. NIRAIKULATHAN (Tamil Nadu):** Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, before I begin my maiden speech, I express my

*English translation of the original speech delivered in Tamil.

profound gratitude to my revered leader Dr. Puratchi Thaivi, who has sent a commoner like me to this august House. But for the benevolence of the General Secretary of AIADMK, Goddess of the poor, former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, and our guardian angel, Dr. Puratchi Thalaivi Annai Jayalalitha, I would not have been in this hallowed assembly of hon'ble Members.

I also thank the Chairperson for permitting me to make my special mention. Sir, I wish to refer to the Million Wells scheme known as Jeevan Dhara introduced by the centre for helping the poor farmers belonging to SC/ST and backward classes. Though this scheme is generally beneficial to the farmers, I feel it my duty to bring to the notice of the centre, the necessity to modify this scheme for better results.

Under this scheme, Rs. 40,000 is given as financial assistance to small and marginal farmers for digging up open well for irrigation. This amount is generally insufficient for constructing a well for the purpose of irrigation. Only in areas where the water table is on a very upper level, a 40-feet deep open well can provide water for irrigation.

But in dry regions like Ramanathapuram district, 40-feet deep open wells constructed under the Jeevan Dhara scheme remain dry and the disappointed farmers are unable to cultivate their lands without water for irrigation. Even the report of the geologists of Ramanathapuram district says that water can be obtained only if a tube well of more than 150 feet is sunk into the open well. The report states, "after completing the well, bore well may be sunk upto a depth of 30 to 40 meter below the open well for better yield". This is the report of the Assistant Director of Geology of Ramanad district.

Sir, I am only trying to point out as to how both, the spirit of the scheme and the order of the Government are contrary to each other. Because of this, small and