

friends here, it is high time the Government honoured this great genius. It is a matter of pride, not for Tamil Nadu alone, but for the whole of India. And we should all take part in his achievement. And it is high time that the Government should recognise his genius.

SHRI N. E. BALARAM (Kerala): Sir, I associate myself with the sentiments expressed by Mr. Gopalsamy.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN (West Bengal): Sir, I fully appreciate what the hon. Member has said. On this statement that it is discriminatory to the Tamils, I would like to say that it is not a question of the Tamils or the South Indians or anybody else. Talents are not properly appreciated in our country. When the Bharat Ratna or the Padma Bhushan, is conferred, they are conferred on thieves who are in jails now. So, honours are not conferred on the geniuses. This Government should take a view that real talents should be properly honoured. It is the view of the entire House that talent should not be ignored whether they are of Tamils or anybody else.

श्रीमती वीणा वर्मा (मध्य प्रदेश): सर, मैं श्री गोपालसामी जी के साथ एसोसिएट करते हुए यह कहना चाहूंगी कि दूरदर्शन समाचारों में साहित्य और संस्कृति को बहुत कम महत्व दिया जाता है। जैसे हमारे सब माननीय सदस्यों ने कहा है खास तौर से साहित्यकारों पर, जब चार-चार देश के प्रमुख साहित्यकार अपनी कविता पढ़ते हैं तो दूरदर्शन पर एक लाईन नहीं बनती, या और भी संस्कृति के बारे में पुरस्कार होते हैं

या कोई कंट्रोवर्सी होती है तो उसमें भी समाचारों में कभी उसकी न्यूज़ नहीं बनती है। मैंने समय-समय पर यह भी एक विचार रखा है कि जिस तरह से हम कहते हैं कि विदेश के समाचार सुनिए, देश के समाचार सुनिए, खेल समाचार सुनिए, क्रिकेट समाचार सुनिए, तो ऐसे ही सांस्कृतिक समाचार सुनिए कह के सांस्कृतिक समाचार के टाइटल के अंतर्गत इस तरह के समाचारों को हम अपने दूरदर्शन में एक महत्व दें। यह भी मैं आपसे एक अपील करना चाहती हूँ।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI MD SALIM): On behalf of all the Members and on behalf of myself, I congratulate Mr. Ilayaraja for his achievement. At the same time, this sentiment should not be there that there is discrimination against any particular section of people. Doordarshan should also take care to project such talents.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Thank you, Sir.

Delay in sanctioning and implementing Development Scheme like Southern Gas Grid, Kayamkular Thermal Plant etc.

SHRI N. E. BALARAM (Kerala): Mr. Vice-Chairman, I thank you for the permission granted to me to mention some of the important issues on which some agitation is going on in Kerala.

Through you, I want to draw the attention of the Government, especially the Prime Minister, to the reasons for the agitation and I would request the Government to find some solution for it. Sir, there is a growing feeling in

Kerala among all sections of the people that the development works which have been either started or which have been allowed, are being delayed and some of the development works are being discontinued. I do not want to go into the entire problem or list out the whole thing. Recently there was a big agitation going on among all sections of the people and some of the most important dailies in Kerala have also taken up the issues and these issues were raised in the State Assembly also and the newspapers, several political parties and other sections of the people are complaining that the State Government is not taking a strong position against the kind of neglect being shown towards Kerala by the Central Government. They are also criticising the Members of Parliament coming from Kerala. There are 3 or 4 items which are very much agitating the minds of the people there. Some eight years back, the Government of India decided to set up a big naval academy in the northern part of Kerala. About six lakh acres of land was acquired. Thousands of families were shifted to some other places and I do not know what happened to them thereafter. Though a lot of money was spent, nothing was heard later about this naval academy and nobody today speaks about it. Some top leaders of the naval academy went there, stayed there and came back. Nothing was done thereafter. I do not know what has happened to that scheme. Our Chief Minister was repeatedly giving assurance in the Assembly that he had met the Prime Minister, that he met the Defence Minister and he promised that it will be done next week or on Friday or on Thursday and like that he promised. But for the last seven years, nothing has come about. This is one issue which is agitating the minds of the people in Kerala.

Secondly, all the State Governments in the South, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala, were repeatedly requesting the Central Government to set up a southern gas grid for South India. All the Members of

Parliament got a letter from the concerned Minister that this scheme was accepted in principle, and those letters have been lying in my pocket for the last three years that it is accepted in principle. I am not criticising anybody. That is not my intention. Now I understand that strong pressures are coming from other areas where people have got more clout with the Central Government and as a result this project is going to be shifted to another site. This is a very bad situation. Papers are writing articles; people are agitating and all the Members of Parliament are being accused. This is the situation.

The third important issue on which the people of Kerala are agitated is the lack of adequate supply of power. We do not have power stations or other sources of power supply. Ultimately the Central Government planned a scheme. All preparations were made; a site was selected and purchased by the State Government and everything in that regard was done. An amount of more than Rs. 21 crores was spent. This was for a thermal power station at Kayamkulam. Negotiations were going on. And about three months back, there was a big agitation on this question and the Chief Minister promised all of us when there was a conference of the representatives of different political parties and he said that he discussed it with the Minister of Power at the Centre and they are negotiating with Japan so that this Kayamkulam Thermal Power Plant could be set up this year itself. But no serious steps were taken by the Central Government. Now, I have got another letter from the concerned Minister that nothing is going to happen with regard to the Kayamkulam power plant this year. He is still trying to contact some people in Japan. Therefore, it has become uncertain. I do not know whether this project will be implemented or not. People are very much worried about it.

Then, the most important thing to which I would like to draw the attention of the Government is in regard to the doubling of railway lines in Kerala. In this connection, the Prime Minister conve-

[Shri N. E. Balaram]

ned a conference of all the M.Ps. from Kerala in his room. Almost every M.P. was there. There, I understand, the Prime Minister was asking as to from which side we were wanting the doubling, which part we were particular about, from Trivandrum to the southern side, or, from the Shoranur side. We did not answer the question. We left it to the Prime Minister. But what I understand now is that nothing is being done. Work on the Trivandrum -Quilon section was started. Work was started, but it was stopped. Therefore, on this issue the people are very much agitated. A big agitation is going on throughout Kerala. It is an impossible situation.

I do not know what the Government is thinking. Our Chief Minister is always 'defending' the Central Government, sometimes unnecessarily. On the other hand, the Chief Ministers of some other states are speaking boldly. They speak boldly when the matters concerning their States come up. I may not agree with the statements made by Mr. Moily or the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. They speak about the interests of their own States, but they speak boldly, very strongly. In the case of our State the Chief Minister does not take up the issues. I am not criticising the Chief Minister. This is not the place to do that, but unfortunately, nothing is happening in that State. We have got a very weak Government. Then, the Central Government is not at all showing any interest in the development of Kerala. This is the kind of impression, this is the kind of feeling, created in the minds of the people of Kerala. Steps should be taken to remove this kind of feeling. If this message goes to the Prime Minister, it is better for him, better for the State and better for the country so that he does something for the people of Kerala. Thank you.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI (Kerala): Sir, I associate myself with the Special Mention made by hon. friend, Mr. Balaram.

DEMAND FOR TAKING OVER NORTH-EASTERN REGIONAL MEDICAL COLLEGE IMPHAL BY CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

SHRI W. KULABIDHU SINGH (Manipur): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir thank you for giving me an opportunity to raise a matter of urgent public importance.

The North-Eastern Regional Medical College was established in the year 1972 immediately after Manipur attained Statehood. The North-Eastern Regional Medical College Society, comprising representatives of the North-Eastern States, except the State of Assam, had taken over the management of this medical college with effect from 1st August, 1976.

The funding pattern of the college is as follows: Hundred per cent of the non recurring expenditure is borne by the Ministry of Home Affairs through the North-Eastern Council. Hundred per cent of the recurring expenditure of the college is borne by the constituent States in the form of a *pro-rata* contribution at the rate of Rs. 1 lakh per student. This has become very inadequate. Fifty per cent of the hospital expenditure is borne by North-Eastern Council and the remaining 50 per cent by the constituent States.

This funding arrangement was to continue up to 31.3.1990 and, thereafter, the college was to be taken over by the Government of India, from 1.4.1990. All the beneficiary States have also urged the Central Government to take over this college, but up till now, no decision has been taken by the Centre in this regard.

In the Consultative Committee meeting of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare held on 9th August, 1992, I as a Member of the Consultative Committee, demanded the taking over of this college by the Centre. Thereafter, in the Action Taken Report of the Consultative Committee, it was mentioned that a Committee under the Chairmanship of the Former Director-General of Health Services was appointed. This Committee submitted a