

In many districts, the normal life is stranded for so many weeks. In the last fifty years, the State of Kerala has not witnessed such a grave situation. We are thankful to the Union Government that a team was sent to Kerala urgently to have a visit for some hours there. It was good. But the urgent task is that we need support now. The Central expert team should have visited there. Such a promise was there that a team would visit Kerala immediately. Don't wait till the drought come there. The point is that a paltry sum has been granted now. It is too less for the gravity of the situation there. So, our request is that as the Government of Kerala has requested, the State of Kerala should be supported by all means by the Central Government. We are also a part of India. So, please look into the matter. Our request is that don't mix up the matter with the question of Ockhi tragedy. A small part of Ockhi funds are still there being implemented. The Government of India is saying that those funds can be used for this purpose. Sir, it is not a correct position to be taken at this moment. So, we demand that a minimum of ₹ 1,000 crores should be granted now. That is what the Kerala Government has asked and that amount should be granted immediately.

One more request, Sir, is that on such occasions it is unfair to take the matter in a political way. Kindly don't politicise it. This is my request. Thank you.

SHRI K. K. RAGESH (Kerala): Sir, I would like to associate myself with the Zero Hour mention made by the hon. Member.

SHRI K. SOMAPRASAD (Kerala): Sir, I would also like to associate myself with the Zero Hour mention made by the hon. Member.

SHRI D. RAJA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I would also like to associate myself with the Zero Hour mention made by the hon. Member.

श्री नीरज शेखर (उत्तर प्रदेश): सभापति जी, मैं भी स्वयं को इस विषय से सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

Need for an urgent review of environmental regulations in Cities and States

SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR (Karnataka): Sir, I rise to bring to the attention of the House there is need for an urgent review of environmental regulations, especially, with reference to my city of Bengaluru because we all agree that we have a solemn obligation to protect our environment and resources for future generations.

Sir, I will just list out four brief points to justify this need for an urgent review of environmental regulation. One is, Sir, the functioning of State level environment regulators like the SEIAA is fraught with compromise. Instead of being a regulator,

[Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar]

they are itself seemingly party to or even complicit in rampant violation of environment regulations. In a glaring example, recently, Sir, a steel flyover was proposed in Bengaluru where the environment regulator instead of assessing the environment impact of felling thousands of trees gave the go-by for this project and it was over-turned only by the intervention of the NGT, which clearly shows that even the environment regulator has compromised on issues of protecting the environment. The second point is that it is out there in the open for everybody to see that the lakes of Bengaluru are dying. This is a direct result of the apathy and negligence of the Government authorities and, with their complicit collaboration, there is illegal constructions on the banks of these lakes and in the buffer zone.

Sir, there is complete disregard even for the NGT's direction which has clearly prohibited such construction. So, I request an urgent intervention and Inspection team to be sent to examine it by the Ministry of Environment and Forests. The third issue is illegal activities in the eco-sensitive zone of the Bannerghatta National Park, and the fourth is the rampant development projects in Karnataka that are giving a go-by to environment impact assessment, leaving no room for alternate sustainable solutions.

Sir, I would end by saying that the only recourse for citizens now is to approach the NGT, which is already overloaded and is itself recommending a 15-day window for the Government or regulators to act. But for that we need functioning State level regulators and so, there is an immediate need to review the environmental regulations.

SHRI SURESH GOPI (Nominated): Sir, I associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Shri Rajeev. Now, Dr. Sasikala Pushpa Ramaswamy.

DR. SASIKALA PUSHPA RAMASWAMY (Tamil Nadu):*

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are to talk about the 'threat to the ecosystem of Gulf of Mannar'.

DR. SASIKALA PUSHPA RAMASWAMY: Sir, I am coming to that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no.

DR. SASIKALA PUSHPA RAMASWAMY: *

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: *

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, madam. ...*(Interruptions)*... Then, Shri K. C. Ramamurthy.

*Not recorded

DR. SASIKALA PUSHPA RAMASWAMY:*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please. *...(Interruptions)...* Nothing goes on record. Nothing goes on record. *...(Interruptions)...* Shri K. C. Ramamurthy. *...(Interruptions)...* Please sit down. You have given notice on something else and you want to speak about something else. Shri K. C. Ramamurthy.

DR. SASIKALA PUSHPA RAMASWAMY: *

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is not going on record.

DR. SASIKALA PUSHPA RAMASWAMY: *

MR. CHAIRMAN: Then you would not get an opportunity in future also. Let me tell you that. *...(Interruptions)...* Shri K.C. Ramamurthy. *...(Interruptions)...* This is not the way. Please sit down. *...(Interruptions)...* Please sit down. Nothing is going on record.

Shri K. C. Ramamurthy. *...(Interruptions)...* Please put the mike down. *...(Interruptions)...* This is not going on record. I will have to name you and send you out. Please don't bring on such a situation. *...(Interruptions)...* Please sit down. Ukkarunga! Ukkarunga! *...(Interruptions)...* If you want time, you will have to give a separate notice. *...(Interruptions)...* If you have to give a separate notice, give it.

DR. SASIKALA PUSHPA RAMASWAMY: *

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would name you and you would never get a chance hereafter.

DR. SASIKALA PUSHPA RAMASWAMY: *

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is not going on record. Please. *...(Interruptions)...*

Non-functioning of Gandhi Chairs in various institutions

SHRI K. C. RAMAMURTHY (Karnataka): Sir, on the one hand, we are making preparations to celebrate the 150th Birth Anniversary of the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, next year and, on the other, I am anguished and pained to bring before the House the fact that due to sheer negligence, nearly 90 per cent of the Gandhi Chairs in various institutions have become non-functional.

Sir, there are 137 Gandhi Chairs in the country, but a mere 19 of these are functional. The number of students and researchers on Gandhian thoughts who focus on research, policy inputs and dissemination of Gandhian philosophy and works has substantially come down during the last decade.

*Not recorded