

**Concern over missing oil tanker with 22 Indian sailors off the coast of Benin, West African country**

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, even after five days of the missing of oil tanker with 22 Indian sailors on board, there is no trace of this merchant ship which lost its contact at Benin, West Africa. No contact has been established with the vessel so far and there have been no reports of a ransom call.

Sir, it is suspected that the Marine Express carrying 13,500 tonne of gasoline may have been hijacked by pirates in the pirate-infested Gulf of Guinea. According to the Shipping Ministry, all communication with the vessel has been lost. The Ministry of External Affairs said that the Indian Mission in Abuja is in touch with authorities in Nigeria and Benin.

Worried relatives of these crew members have sought the help of the Ministry of Shipping. This is the second ship to go missing in the last one month. In January, another vessel had gone missing off the coast and later it was released after reportedly paying ransom.

I request the Government of India to take up the matter very seriously with the authorities in Nigeria and Benin and to closely monitor the situation. They should get in touch with their counterparts in Nigeria.

Sir, international authorities like International Maritime Bureau's Anti Piracy Reporting Centre should also be involved to find out the fate of the vessel and to ensure the safety of Indian crew members. I request the Government to extend all help in this regard and make a statement on this issue in Parliament at the earliest.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now Shri Partap Singh Bajwa; not present.

SHRI PRAMOD TIWARI (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, I am here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are not Partap Singh Bajwa; I know you personally. I called you. You were not there. You came back. I noticed that. You will get your turn once the roster is over. Now, Shrimati Sasikala Pushpa.

**Need to make Tamil as official language of the Madras High Court**

SHRIMATI SASIKALA PUSHPA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I wish to speak about a very important issue. Recently, the Central Government, through the Law Ministry, rejected the demand of Tamil Nadu for using our own language, Tamil, in the Madras High Court proceedings as the Official Language.

We speak more about co-operative federalism, but it is very unfortunate that in true spirit, where are we? In 1997, 1999 and 2006 also, the Tamil Nadu State

[Shrimati Sasikala Pushpa]

Legislative Assembly passed a Resolution and forwarded it for the approval of the hon. President. But, in 2018 now, replying to my Parliament Question, the Ministry of Law and Justice stated that the Supreme Court has decided not to accede to the proposal.

Sir, in Article 348, clause (2), it is clearly stated that the Governor of a State may, with the previous consent of the President, authorise the use of Hindi language, or any other language used for any official purposes of the State, in proceedings in the High Court having its principal seat in that State. When the Constitution itself allows this, why has my people's right to know what is happening in our High Court been denied? Sir, I would like to ask the Law Ministry in which way Tamil, which is our goddess and the first language of the world, is considered to be inferior to any other language of the world. Sir, Thirukkural and many other Tamil literatures shaped the ethical and moral values of the people of the whole world. What is stopping BJP from promoting my own language in my own State? Sir, it is an insult not only to the Tamil people, but also to the whole country because Singapore and Sri Lanka allow their citizens to use Tamil as official language. Therefore, I would request the Government to reconsider the Resolution sent by the Tamil Nadu State Legislative Assembly. Our hon. Amma also then and there insisted on this issue, that is, use of Tamil language in the proceedings of Madras High Court. Kindly reconsider this issue and do justice to the Tamil people. Thank you.

SHRI T. K. RANGARAJAN (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I associate myself with the matter raised by Shrimati Sasikala Pushpa.

SHRI D. RAJA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Shrimati Sasikala Pushpa.

SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN (Karnataka): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Shrimati Sasikala Pushpa.

SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD (Karnataka): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Shrimati Sasikala Pushpa.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Shrimati Sasikala Pushpa.

SHRI K. K. RAGESH (Kerala): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Shrimati Sasikala Pushpa.

SHRI PRAMOD TIWARI (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Shrimati Sasikala Pushpa.

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR RAY (West Bengal): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Shrimati Sasikala Pushpa.

श्री सभापति: यह एक आदर्श स्थिति होगी, जब हरेक हाई कोर्ट में लोग अपनी स्थानीय भाषा में ही बोल सकेंगे, अपना केस प्रेजेंट कर सकेंगे और जजमेंट भी आ सकेगी। यह एक आदर्श स्थिति होगी। This will be an ideal situation if the country moves in that direction. For that, there has to be broad consensus and everybody should agree for the same.

SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA (Assam): Sir, the Guwahati High Court is the High Court for seven States. Which language will be the Official Language there?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The North-East is a different case, but I am saying that by and large, to the extent possible, the people should know what the advocate is arguing.

SHRI LA. GANESAN (Madhya Pradesh): This spirit should be supported.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, that's right. Now, Shri P. L. Punia. पुनिया जी, आपके पास टाइम कम है, इसलिए थोड़ा जल्दी अपनी बात खत्म कीजिएगा।

**Need to pass the SC/ST Reservation (Posts and Services) Bill, 2008,  
in the current Session**

श्री पी. एल. पुनिया (उत्तर प्रदेश): सभापति जी, मैं आपका आभारी हूँ, आपने मुझे दलित समाज से जुड़े एक महत्वपूर्ण विषय पर बोलने का मौका दिया। अनुसूचित जाति/जनजाति के कल्याण से संबंधित अनेक बिल पार्लियामेंट में लम्बित हैं। चार वर्ष से अधिक समय से the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Reservation (Posts and Services) Bill, 2008, राज्य सभा में पास होने के बाद लोक सभा में लम्बित है। कुछ संशोधनों के साथ यह बिल लोक सभा में पास होना था, लेकिन पिछले कई वर्षों से केंद्र सरकार ने इस महत्वपूर्ण बिल पर विचार करने हेतु लोक सभा की कार्यसूची में अभी तक सम्मिलित नहीं किया है। इसके अलावा SC/ST Reservation in Promotion Bill और मैला ढोने की प्रथा पर तत्काल रोक लगाने वाला बिल एवं अन्य कई बिल पार्लियामेंट में लम्बित हैं, जिनको राज्य सभा के माध्यम से तत्काल लिया जाना चाहिए।

माननीय सभापति जी, मेरा आपसे अनुरोध है कि हर महत्वपूर्ण बिल को शीघ्र से शीघ्र पास करवाने हेतु आवश्यक कदम उठाए जाएं तथा the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Reservation (Posts and Services) Bill, 2008 को वर्तमान सत्र की कार्यसूची में सम्मिलित करके पास करवाया जाए। मैं माननीय प्रधान मंत्री जी से भी इस महत्वपूर्ण विषय पर हस्तक्षेप करके, बिल को पास करवाने के लिए प्राथमिकता हेतु अनुरोध करता हूँ।

श्री हुसैन दलवाई (महाराष्ट्र): महोदय, मैं माननीय सदस्य द्वारा उठाए गए विषय से स्वयं को सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री शमशेर सिंह ढुलो (पंजाब): महोदय, मैं भी माननीय सदस्य द्वारा उठाए गए विषय से स्वयं को सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।