

Need for social integration through inter-caste marriages

KUMARI SELJA (Haryana): Sir, we are celebrating the 150th Birth Anniversary of Gandhiji and it is very interesting that I have got an opportunity to speak on this subject of inter-caste marriages today. I am reminded of an incident that took place in Karnataka, interestingly Karnataka, on July 19th, 1937, when Gandhiji travelled to a place called Hudali in Belgaum and an inter-caste marriage between his granddaughter, Manu Gandhi, and Surendra Mashruwala was performed there. So, Sir, at that time also, a need was felt to have inter-caste marriages and Gandhiji took an initiative but, eighty-two years have passed. Dr. Ambedkar spoke of casteless society. And, according to him, the only way to achieve casteless society was when inter-caste marriages take place. But, Sir, today, we have seen a spurt in violence emanating from these inter-caste marriages. Sir, when inter-caste marriages take place in higher echelons of society, people stand up and laud, because they take place in a certain economic strata of society, but woe betide couples if they belong to a lower caste. Sir, we have seen recent incidents in State after State like in Uttar Pradesh where a lawmaker and his family were involved. I don't want to take a name; I don't want to point fingers at a certain person. But, Sir, we are lawmakers. This thing is happening. There was an incident I read about Thakor community in Gujarat. These things happen in my State, Haryana, and also in Punjab. State after State, this is happening. It leads to violence more often than not when one partner of the couple belongs to dalit community. Sir, it is difficult. The Supreme Court in its judgment last year, in 2018, spoke of protection homes. But, Sir, how many protection homes can you set up? How many such protection homes can give protection to such couples? Sir, in Haryana, in 2010, only six couples took refuge. In 2014, it rose to 1465 couples seeking refuge. But, Sir, as lawmakers, we do not just have to enact laws, but also have to show a way to society that this is the only way for social integration. We should stand up and speak, and not just leave it to NGOs. Sir, all of us need to stand up and speak on this whether in the social forums or here. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA (Odisha): Sir, I associate myself with the matter raised by Kumari Selja.

SHRI K.K. RAGESH (Kerala): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Kumari Selja.

SHRI K. SOMAPRASAD (Kerala): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Kumari Selja.

SHRI T.K. RANGARAJAN (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Kumari Selja.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Kumari Selja.

PROF. M.V. RAJEEV GOWDA (Karnataka): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Kumari Selja.

SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM (Meghalaya): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Kumari Selja.

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI (Punjab): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Kumari Selja.

SHRIMATI SAROJINI HEMBRAM (Odisha): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Kumari Selja.

CH. SUKHRAM SINGH YADAV (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Kumari Selja.

SHRI AMAR PATNAIK (Odisha): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Kumari Selja.

श्री पी.एल. पुनिया (उत्तर प्रदेश): महोदय, मैं भी स्वयं को इस विषय के साथ संबद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री मोहम्मद अली खान (आंध्र प्रदेश): महोदय, मैं भी स्वयं को इस विषय के साथ संबद्ध करता हूँ।

†مجد علی خان (آندھراپردیش): مہودے، میں بھی خود کو اس موضوع کے ساتھ سمبڈ کرتا ہوں۔

प्रो. मनोज कुमार झा (बिहार): महोदय, मैं भी स्वयं को इस विषय के साथ संबद्ध करता हूँ।

श्रीमती छाया वर्मा (छत्तीसगढ़): महोदय, मैं भी स्वयं को इस विषय के साथ संबद्ध करती हूँ।

श्रीमती विप्लव ठाकुर (हिमाचल प्रदेश): महोदय, मैं भी स्वयं को इस विषय के साथ संबद्ध करती हूँ।

†Transliteration in Urdu Script.

श्री मोतीलाल वोरा (छत्तीसगढ़): महोदय, मैं भी स्वयं को इस विषय के साथ संबद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री हुसैन दलवाई (महाराष्ट्र): महोदय, मैं भी स्वयं को इस विषय के साथ संबद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री संजय सिंह (राष्ट्रीय राजधानी क्षेत्र दिल्ली): महोदय, मैं भी स्वयं को इस विषय के साथ संबद्ध करता हूँ।

कुछ अन्य माननीय सदस्य: महोदय, हम भी स्वयं को इस विषय के साथ संबद्ध करते हैं।

MR. CHAIRMAN: We should all associate with the cause.

Mass hysterectomy of women sugarcane workers in Beed, Maharashtra

SHRIMATI VANDANA CHAVAN (Maharashtra): Sir, on several occasions in the past, we, in this august House, have voiced concerns about the safety and growing violence against women and children. Sir, we have enacted certain laws but it is unfortunate that in spite of this, crime against women and children continue unabated, and that too, at an accelerated pace. Not just that, Sir, but new forms of violence come to the fore. I wish to bring to light one such new form of violence which has come to the fore in respect of mass hysterectomies of farmer women from the Beed District of Maharashtra. Sir, the Beed District, in the Marathwada Region of Maharashtra is a parched area with little or no rainfall. As there are no means of livelihood in these villages, the farmers and the villagers offer themselves to get hired by the sugarcane cutting contractors for three months to four months period at a stretch by seeking jobs in some other areas of the same State. Typically, a contractor hires a couple —a husband and wife —and if any one of them remains absent for any reason, both of them are treated as absent and they have to pay a fine of ₹500. What is shocking is that it has been exposed by a media group recently which said that while selecting the couple for the work, the sugarcane cutting contractors are unwilling to hire a couple where the woman gets her monthly periods. Now, this is a normal thing for an employable lady. Because of this inhuman and absurd condition for seeking a job for a living, women sugarcane cutters in Beed are undergoing mass hysterectomies. Sir, it is estimated that about 5,000 women in the age group of as young as 20 years to 30 years have met this plight already. In her very own words to the Hindu Business Line, Manda Ugale stated, and I quote: "You will hardly find women with wombs in these villages. The Beed villages are villages of wombless women." Sir, this is something very serious. Worst, Sir, the contractor, who hires them, pays them ₹20,000 to ₹30,000 loan to get