

an investment of ₹ 89,375 crore is needed to improve the state of storage and transportation facilities for food crops. As the Centre is committed to double the farm income, I appeal to the Government to provide a dignified subsistence allowance to farmers as the first step to empower them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. Ashok Bajpai. Not present.

**Demand to expedite the process of the Semi High Speed railway  
corridor in Kerala**

SHRI K. J. ALPHONS (Kerala): Sir, there is a proposal to set up a semi high speed rail corridor in Kerala between Trivandrum and Kasargod. At present, it is a nightmare to travel by train from Trivandrum in the South to Kasargod in the North as it takes about twelve hours to cover 532 kilometers. Drone survey has already been done to determine the alignment. As per preliminary indications the project may cost ₹ 66,000 crores. About 1200 hectares of land has to be acquired. It is learnt that the Ministry of Railways has given in-principle approval for the project. I appeal to the Railways to expedite the process of preparing the estimate and grant sanction for the estimate along with firm commitment to fund at least 50 per cent of the project cost.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Narain Dass Gupta. Not present. Shri P. Wilson.

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**MATTERS RAISED WITH PERMISSION — *Contd.***

**Need to expedite cases falling under the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution**

SHRI P. WILSON (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I rise today to bring the attention of this august House to the fact that the legislative intent of the anti-defection law, inserted by the Constitution (Fifty Second Amendment) Act 1985, stands defeated by the inordinate delay in taking up and disposing complaints by the authorities referred to in Clause 6(1), that is, the Speaker of the House or the Chairman as the case maybe. We have noticed in the past few decades that various Speakers from State Legislatures, who act as a Tribunal under the Tenth Schedule, sit over the issue of disqualification indefinitely.

Sir, the object of the Constitution (Fifty Second Amendment) Act, 1985 is to curb the evil of political defections motivated by lure of office or other similar considerations which endangers the foundations of our democracy. A political party goes before the electorate with a particular programme and sets up its candidate on certain promises. Such a person who gets elected after election cannot change his affiliation for extraneous reasons.

[Shri P. Wilson]

Sir, there are many instances wherein the Speaker of certain State Assemblies sit over the issue relating to disqualification for years together, driving the aggrieved persons to approach the Courts. The hon. Supreme Court recently, in the Manipur Assembly case, had to step in and directed the Speaker to decide the disqualification petition within four weeks. The Court has also called upon the Parliament to consider amending the Constitution to substitute the Speaker of the Houses with an independent Tribunal to decide disputes concerning disqualification arising under the Tenth Schedule.

Sir, even in the elections to the municipal body posts across India, it has been widely reported that persons who have been elected under the symbol of one party switches over to other parties for indirect election of posts of Chairman etc., and the reason is that the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution is not extended to the local bodies created under part IX and IX A of the Constitution of India.

Sir, this august House should, therefore, act to save the purity of the democratic process, by ensuring that the mandate given by the people to a particular candidate is not tainted by that candidate switching allegiance. This can be done only by fixing a mandatory time frame to decide defection cases by the competent authority under the Tenth Schedule. I also request this August House to extend the application of the Tenth Schedule to posts in Part IX and IX-A that is municipal and local bodies by suitably amending the Constitution. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I associate myself with the concern expressed by the hon. Member.

SHRI M. SHANMUGAM (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I associate myself with the issue expressed by the hon. Member.

SHRI R. S. BHARATHI (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I also associate myself with the concern expressed by the hon. Member.

SHRI SYED NASIR HUSSAIN (Karnataka): Sir, I also associate myself with the concern expressed by the hon. Member.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Unfortunately, people are now saying that it is not defection, it is only affection and they are doing it with perfection. We must put an end to this. This is a very important issue across the country. Cutting across party lines we must really come forward to suggest some alternative to end this nuisance or nonsense or the unethical act of defection. It is a very important issue. Even the court has commented

recently, but everybody is taking time. Presiding officers are taking time, courts are also taking time. Then, we are helpless. The Law Minister is here. I hope that he will apply his mind. He need not reply now. I am not asking the Minister to reply now, but apply your mind and see to it that this issue is taken up at the appropriate level in consultation with all concerned.

Hon. Members, Shrimati Kahkashan Perween is not here. She had raised an issue.

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE; THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS; AND THE MINISTER OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): Sir, since you have raised this issue, I wish to make a submission. With the greatest respect to the hon. Supreme Court, those sweeping comments against the Presiding Officers, were surely avoidable. We need to have institutional respect for all the institutions of the country. The Presiding Officers of the Legislatures are equally important functionaries in the constitutional process. I must place it on record.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is why I also said...

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Sir, we should take note of it. I agree with the hon. Law Minister on this. This is a serious matter. It is a transgression. The Constitution is clear in its scheme of things and the division of powers.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before taking up the Question Hour, I have a suggestion to make; even the Secretariat must also take a note of it. When Members give notices, it is written in front of that 'Already raised one issue in this week.' On one or two notices admitted today, no such information was brought to my notice. So, either we must have a practice of whoever utilised one opportunity will get opportunity only the next week. Notices would be admitted on first-come-first-serve basis and will be taken up. And, secondly, if time permits, we will try to give opportunity to Members who have already been given an opportunity once in a week. And, nothing more than that should be seen and say, 'why this has been admitted' and all that, because yesterday I heard, when Narendra Jadhav spoke, and then he gave notice to speak on Marathi and time was available. So, I said 'okay.'

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR RAY: But, Sir, interpretation was not available.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. But, I think, it was transmitted outside and discussion took place in the Central Hall, rather than inside the House. After all, I have no intention of favouring anybody. We will try to keep that in mind. And, once time is available, it is left to the discretion of the Chair whom to allow and whom not to allow.

Now, let us take up the Question Hour.

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