

7.00 P.M.

SHRI A. NAVANEETHAKRISHNAN: Sir, only three minutes are left.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Just wait for a minute. One hon. Member has proposed that after 7 o'clock we can consider two things. It is up to you. Otherwise, for tomorrow you have already decided and the House has given consent to forgo lunch break. कल हम लंच नहीं करेंगे और सुबह से बैठेंगे, इसी पर सबकी सहमति है, तो क्या कल के लिए सहमति है?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Then you can speak tomorrow. So, we shall take up Special Mentions now. Shrimati Vijila Sathyananth, please lay your Special Mention.

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Sir, it is very, very important.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: All the issues are very important. I do agree with you.

SPECIAL MENTIONS

Demand to grant dual citizenship to Sri Lankan Tamil refugees in India

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH (Tamil Nadu): Sir, for more than 30 years, thousands of Sri Lankan Tamils have been living in India. There are close to one lakh Lankan Tamil refugees living in 107 camps spread across Tamil Nadu and about 36,000 of them are living in other States. Sri Lankan Tamils living in India as refugees have not been granted citizenship so far. The demand for dual citizenship to Sri Lankan Tamils in India was first made by our former Chief Minister, late Dr. Puratchi Thalaivi Amma to enable them to get employment in India. This was also part of the AIADMK's 2016 Election Manifesto.

The hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Thiru Edappadi K. Palaniswami, has appealed to the Centre to consider granting dual citizenship to Sri Lankan Tamils living in India. The AIADMK Party as well as its Government have been favouring dual citizenship because Sri Lankan Tamils have immovable properties like houses, buildings and lands in Sri Lanka. If they acquire single citizenship in India, they will forfeit claims to their assets in Sri Lanka. It is learnt that the Indian Constitution does not stand in

[Shrimati Vijila Sathyananth]

the way of granting dual citizenship to Sri Lankan Tamils. If need be, the Union Government should make any amendment necessary for that matter and also work towards entering into a treaty with the Sri Lankan Government in order to protect their properties after the grant of dual citizenship to them. I urge upon the Government to take necessary steps to grant dual citizenship to Sri Lankan Tamils at the earliest. Thank you, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr. Santanu Sen; not present. Now, Shri A.K. Selvaraj.

Need to include Tamil Nadu under Atal Bhujal Yojana

SHRI A.K. SELVARAJ (Tamil Nadu): Sir, the Government has launched a new scheme known as "Atal Bhujal Yojana (ATAL JAL)" in December, 2019 to strengthen the groundwater resource management in the country. ATAL JAL is aimed at promoting Panchayat-led groundwater management and behavioural changes with primary focus on demand-side management. The scheme proposes an outlay of ₹6,000 crore to be implemented over a period of five years from the year 2020-21. This scheme is expected to benefit nearly 8,350 Gram Panchayats in 78 districts in seven States in the country. However, Tamil Nadu has not been included in the scheme. Tamil Nadu is a water-stressed State and has utilised the surface water potential to the maximum possible extent. The vagaries of monsoon made Tamil Nadu dependent on groundwater leading to depletion of groundwater in the State. A total number of 541 firkas out of 1,166 firkas in the State fall under critical and over-exploited categories. In order to improve the water resources, Tamil Nadu has been implementing a number of schemes like Kudimaramathu scheme with farmers' participation, construction of check dams, artificial recharge structures, rejuvenation of rivers and water bodies, etc. An innovative mission called "Tamil Nadu Water Resources Conservation and Augmentation Mission" has been launched as peoples' movement by Tamil Nadu Government to protect, preserve and augment water resources in the State. Therefore, I appeal to the Central Government to include the State of Tamil Nadu in the scheme of "Atal Bhujal Yojana (ATAL JAL)" so that groundwater resources of Tamil Nadu can be further augmented. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD (Karnataka): Sir, there is no Cabinet Minister. This is a sorry state of affairs.