

DR. KANIMOZHI NVN SOMU (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

DR. SANTANU SEN (West Bengal): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI JOSE K. MANI (Kerala): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI MOHAMMED NADIMUL HAQUE (West Bengal): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI BINOY VISWAM (Kerala): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

DR. AMAR PATNAIK (Odisha): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

SHRIMATI PRIYANKA CHATURVEDI (Maharashtra): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

DR. SASMIT PATRA (Odisha): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI ABIR RANJAN BISWAS (West Bengal): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI M. MOHAMED ABDULLA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI SUJEET KUMAR (Odisha): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by the hon. Member.

Need to declare Tea as national beverage of India

श्री पबित्र मार्गेरिटा (असम): नमस्कार, सभापति महोदय, बचपन से ही मेरी सार्वजनिक भाषण देने की थोड़ी-बहुत आदत रही है, लेकिन जीवन में पहली बार मैं हिन्दी में भाषण देने की कोशिश

कर रहा हूं। मेरा मानना है कि मेरी मातृ भाषा असमिया हो अथवा कोई अन्य भारतीय भाषा हो, लेकिन हिन्दी विश्व की एक अन्यतम श्रेष्ठ भाषा है।

माननीय सभापति महोदय, मैं आपके ज़रिए बहुत खुशी के साथ सदन को यह बताना चाहता हूं कि अगले साल, 2023 में असम की चाय के 200 वर्ष पूरे होंगे। We are completing 200 years in 2023. हम असमवासी और असम की सरकार डा. हिमन्त बिश्व सरमा के नेतृत्व में 200 साल पूरे होने का उत्सव मनायेंगे। मेरा निवेदन है कि भारत सरकार भी असम की सहायता करे और भारत के अन्य प्रांतों में भी इसे प्रचार और प्रसार के लिए मनाया जाए।

मेरा दूसरा प्वाइंट यह है कि चाय को नेशनल ड्रिंक घोषित किया जाए क्योंकि कन्याकुमारी से लेकर कश्मीर तक, गुजरात से लेकर उत्तर पूर्व तक हर घर में मां की रसोई में एक चीज रोज़ाना यूज़ होती है और वह है चाय। पूरे देश के नागरिक सुबह की शुरुआत एक कप चाय से करते हैं। चाय अपने भारत की संस्कृति का एक अभिन्न अंग है। So, I think this is the right time to declare tea as a national drink or beverage. मेरा तीसरा प्वाइंट यह है कि आजकल देखा जा रहा है कि चाय के नाम पर कुछ दूसरी चीज़ों को भी बाज़ार में बेचा जा रहा है - जैसे अपराजिता फूल। अपराजिता फूल वैसे तो ठीक है, लेकिन अपराजिता के फूलों के रस को ब्लू टी के नाम पर बाज़ार में बेचा जा रहा है। But it is not tea. Tea has a separate scientific name and aparajita flower has separate scientific name. चाय तो चाय होती है, लेकिन इसमें मिलावट करके दूसरे नाम से इसे सेल करना एक अनैथिकल प्रैक्टिस है, इसलिए मैं आपसे निवेदन करता हूं कि इस मिलावट को रोका जाए।

मेरा लास्ट प्वाइंट यह है कि चाय की पत्ती के पीछे चाय श्रमिकों का श्रम और त्याग होता है। असम में लगभग 50 लाख से अधिक चाय श्रमिक हैं, उन लोगों का इस क्षेत्र में त्याग है। ब्रिटिश राज के सौ साल और बाद में कांग्रेस सरकार के 70 सालों में हम लोग बहुत कुछ खो चुके हैं। मेरा निवेदन है कि चाय बागान के श्रमिकों के लिए एक स्पेशल पैकेज देना चाहिए for the overall development of my *chai shramiks*. महोदय, क्योंकि स्वतंत्रता आंदोलन में भी चाय बागानों के लोगों ने अपने प्राणों की आहुति दी थी और दूसरे डेवलपमेंट में भी चाय बागानों का बहुत कंट्रीब्यूशन रहा है। So, this is my appeal that tea may be declared as a national drink. Thank you.

SHRI MAHESH JETHMALANI (Maharashtra): Sir, I associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

LT. GEN. (DR.) D.P. VATS (RETD.) (Haryana): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRIMATI SANGEETA YADAV (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

DR. FAUZIA KHAN (Maharashtra): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

DR. SANTANU SEN (West Bengal): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

DR. ANIL SUKHDEORAO BONDE (Maharashtra): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

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

SHRI KANAKANEDALA RAVINDRA KUMAR (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI MAHARAJA SANAJAOBA LEISHEMBA (Manipur): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI HARNATH SINGH YADAV (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI KAMAKHYA PRASAD TASA (Assam): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRIMATI S. PHANGNON KONYAK (Nagaland): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI RWNGWRA NARZARY (Assam): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

DR. SASMIT PATRA (Odisha): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

DR. AMAR PATNAIK (Odisha): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI ABIR RANJAN BISWAS (West Bengal): Sir, I also associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

Need to continue GST compensation to States for 5 more years

SHRI ELAMARAM KAREEM (Kerala): Sir, I am raising an important issue. There is an urgent need to extend GST compensation for some more years. The compensation that was in place till June 30, 2022 was provided through a Central legislation. As the five year compensation period has ended, the States are no longer eligible for compensation. It is a matter of serious concern for States like Kerala. The fixing of rates and their equal apportionment deprived the States of a revenue neutral in GST. The standard rate of earlier Value Added Tax which was 14.5 per cent fell to 9 per cent. Compensation was a necessary measure to make good the loss consequent to fall in the standard rate and imbalance resulting for equal apportioning of GST rates. Also, the Covid pandemic has caused a substantial slowdown in economy, with revenues falling and expenditure obligations rising. Kerala also witnessed natural calamities in the two years preceding to pandemic. In our scheme of distribution of fiscal powers, there is a vertical imbalance between the Union and the States which has been worsening. States like Kerala are also facing added difficulties to conditionalities imposed on open market borrowings. The revenue deficit grants for Kerala will also cease with effect from the financial year 2024-25. In view of these facts and circumstances, I urge the Government to consider the request of Kerala and other States that the provision for compensation to bridge the shortfall in growth of GST revenues be continued for another five years. Sir, I am quoting from a letter sent by hon. Chief Minister of Kerala to hon. Prime Minister. He is referring from Fifteenth Finance Commission's Report. I quote "In recent years, rising fiscal deficit in many States has been a key indicator of growing vertical imbalances despite higher tax devolution from the Union, reflecting inadequate transfers to the States relative to their expenditure need and revenue raising capacity." This is a report of the Finance Commission that itself is not honoured by the Union Government. I am very sorry to say this. So, I urge upon the Government to take necessary action immediately.

SHRI SANJEEV ARORA (Punjab): Sir, I would like to associate myself with the Zero Hour mention made by the hon. Member.

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