

Shri M. Mohamed Abdulla — ‘Request for reduction of fees of Government exams for the benefit of poor students’ — not present. Shri Subhas Chandra Bose Pilli — ‘Demand to retain the height of the Polavaram multi-purpose irrigation project in Andhra Pradesh’.

**Demand to retain the height of Polavaram multi-purpose irrigation project
in Andhra Pradesh**

SHRI SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE PILLI (Andhra Pradesh): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, the Polavaram Project is the lifeline of Andhra Pradesh and any reduction in its capacity threatens its completion, functionality and long-term benefits. We urge the Government of India to take immediate corrective action to address the pressing issues.

The proposal to lower the height of the dam from 45.72 metres to 41.15 metres is deeply concerning. This reduction would cut the water storage capacity from 194 TMC to just 115 TMC, drastically undermining the objectives of the project. Polavaram was designed to irrigate 7.5 lakh acres and supply drinking water to lakhs of people. Lowering its capacity will severely impact farmers, disrupt water security and betray the commitments made during the State’s bifurcation. The Centre must uphold the original plan and ensure full storage capacity. The project cost has now escalated to Rs. 30,436.95 crore and yet, the Union Budget 2025-26 has allocated only Rs. 5,936 crores, a figure grossly insufficient to meet the 2026 deadline. Without fulfilling it further delays are inevitable. Pushing away the project uncertainty, the Centre must immediately release all pending funds to prevent cost overruns and ensure timely execution. Under our former Chief Minister, Shri Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, significant progress was made despite early floods and Covid-related challenges. Essential structures including the spillway, spill channel and cofferdam were completed without disruptions. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat.

SHRI SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE PILLI: The Central Government must sanction Rs. 10,127 crore for continued construction. I request the Government to make Pollavaram Project its priority.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member, Shri R. Girirajan (Tamil Nadu) associated himself with the matter raised by hon. Member, Shri Subhas Chandra Bose Pilli. Shri Derek O'Brien - Need to preserve coastal culture of Goa.

Need to preserve coastal culture of Goa

SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN (West Bengal): Sir, smaller States rarely get a chance to have their voices heard here. So, I am happy today to raise the issue of the need to preserve the rich coastal culture of Goa.

Sir, the coastal culture of Goa is basically made up of two communities. One is the fishing community with all their great traditions and the other is the toddy-tapping community. These are the two communities. Now, the vibrant communities in these fishing villages — I have been there once or twice and have seen myself — have a great tradition, but now they are going through an existential crisis, for a variety of reasons. It is primarily because of the CRZ, the Coastal Regulation Zones. As a result, these fishermen cannot build homes, cannot do up their homes, cannot park their boats and face all kinds of problems. Worse than that, the trawlers are coming and robbing them of their livelihood.

So, the issue here is affecting 20,000 fishermen and about 1 lakh people in this community. Tough times for them! I want to quickly contrast this to what is happening for the fishermen in Bengal. There is a special scheme called 'Samudra Sathi Scheme' under which each fisherman gets Rs.10,000 for two months for off-fishing season. There is another scheme called 'Matsya Jeebi Credit Card'. This is to protect the fishermen so that they do not get duped in a long-term institutional credit. These are the issues. There is also one more issue in Goa relating to salt pans. This is an old Goa tradition of using salt pans. From salt pans, they extricate salt. That too is under trouble. These should be preserved as heritage sites. We appeal to the Government to save the fishermen and to save Goa, as the Supreme Court said, 'Do not turn it into a concrete jungle'. We must protect that. And what do the people of Goa do? What are the options they have? The last time when they voted, we were hearing slogans. There are two ways to use Zero Hour. One is, you can raise these issues or you can stand up and shout the slogans for your leader. I am using these issues. The Government of Goa is doing nothing. And what was the Opposition doing there? They elected 11 MLAs from the Congress in good faith. But eight Congress MLAs left and went to the BJP. So, who will protect the people of Goa? I appeal to this Government, leave the politics aside and let us get together to help the State.