

बाल्मीकिनगर से महज दो किलोमीटर की दूरी पर आदिकवि महर्षि बाल्मीकि का आश्रम, राजन्य व्यवस्था के तहत निर्वासिता मां सीता की सीतामढी, लवकुश का प्रशिक्षण स्थल, धरती में समाई सीमास्थली तथा पांच-सात किलोमीटर पर भगवान महात्मा बुद्ध की जन्मस्थली कपिलवस्तु नगर अवस्थित है। अगर केन्द्र सरकार तमसा नदी पर अवस्थित इस ऐतिहासिक, धार्मिक एवं सांस्कृतिक स्थल को, जहां तमसा नदी, सोनमद्र और गंगा मिल कर त्रिवेणी कहलाती हैं तथा राष्ट्रपिता महात्मा गांधी की संघर्ष भूमि है, क्योंकि यह पश्चिम चम्पारण में अवस्थित है, विकसित करें तो यह राष्ट्रीय एवं अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सैलानियों का तीर्थस्थल बन जाएगा, आकर्षण का केन्द्र बिन्दु बन जाएगा। तब हम इस घरोहर पर गर्व कर सकेंगे तथा विदेशी मुद्रा का भंडार भी बढ़ेगा, जिससे देश को सुदृढ़ और विकसित करने में बल मिलेगा।

भारत सरकार एवं नेपाल सरकार के संयुक्त प्रयत्न से ही यह संभव है तथा बिहार सरकार का पर्यटन विभाग भी इस दिशा में प्रयत्नशील है। तदर्थ केन्द्र सरकार से कारगर एवं त्वरित प्रयत्न की अपेक्षा से मैं यह विशेष उल्लेख प्रस्तुत कर रहा हूँ। घन्यवाद।

श्रीमती सरोज दुबे (बिहार): मैडम, मैं इससे एसोसिएट करती हूँ।

डा० कुमकुम राय (बिहार): मैडम, मैं भी एसोसिएट करती हूँ।

श्री विजय सिंह यादव (बिहार): महोदया, मैं भी अपने को इससे सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

प्र० राम देव भंडारी (बिहार): महोदया, मैं इससे एसोसिएट करता हूँ। मैडम, यह बहुत ही रमणीक स्थल है। एक बार आप अवश्य जाकर देखिए।

उपसभापति : आप बुला रहे हैं तो मैं जरूर देखूंगी।

Need to confer special category State status to Orissa

MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR (Orissa): Madam, I would like to place before this august House the following hard facts about the precarious position of Orissa, which justify review of the Government of India's decision for not granting Special Category status to the State.

It is a debt-trapped island of poverty and backwardness. Its socio-economic profile is worse than some of the Special Category States. Barring Meghalaya and Mizoram, all other nine Special Category States have more *per-capita* income than Orissa. The State's tribal population is more than that of the 11 Special Category States put together. Its tax base is very weak. The gap between the State's *per-capita* income and the national *per-capita* income is increasing alarmingly. It did not get debt relief because of

large amount of interest payments. It is deficient in infrastructure like Railways, proper roads, ports, telecom and irrigation facilities. Optimal exploration of its vast natural resources demand heavy investments. Poor infrastructure inhibits adequate private investment and the State's economy continues to languish. The State is extremely vulnerable to natural calamities and was ravaged by 15 major natural calamities during the last 40 years. The memories of the Super Cyclone of 1999 and the floods of 2000 are fresh in our minds.

In the light of the above, I would like to make an earnest request to the Government of India to review its decision and grant Special Category status to Orissa.

DR. M.N. DAS (Orissa): Madam, I associate myself with this Special Mention.

SHRI BIRABHADRA SINGH (Orissa): Madam, I associate myself with it.

SHRIMATI SUSHREE DEVI (Orissa): Madam, I also associate myself with this Special Mention.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I want to put before the House a minor technical problem. We have a Bill, namely, the Election Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2003, which Mr. Arun Jaitley has to move the motion. It has been allotted two hours, but there are not many speakers to speak on this Bill. The Parliamentary Affairs Minister says that Shri Arun Jaitleyji would be busy in Lok Sabha also because there is some discussion on Ayodhya. If the House so agrees, we can ask Shri Arun Jaitley to come to the House to move the Bill, and we can do it before lunch. We can shift the lunch hour a little bit. We can take up the rest of the Special Mentions, which are left, after the Bill.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE (West Bengal): Madam, there is a problem. This Bill has been pending. It is an important Bill, in the sense, that it is a Bill of 1999. The Bill was referred to the Standing Committee in 2000. The Standing Committee gave its Report in 2001. The Government suddenly brought this Bill before the elections of Himachal. We have to make certain observations on the Bill. The observations of the Parliamentary

Standing Committee for evolving a larger political consensus has not been worked out or accepted by the Government. In view of that, Members would like to speak. The Bill will be passed; there is no doubt in it. But, I am not in favour of just rushing through the Bill by suspending all other Business. This is my most respectful submission.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No; nobody is rushing through it. ...*(Interruptions)*... Just one second please. Nobody is rushing through it. It is a question of only changing the time. Two hours have been given.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: I would like to submit for a minute. Two hours mean, even if we start at 12.35 p.m., it would have to go on till 2.35 p.m.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, I would tell you. There is a 30-minute time for the Congress, and you will have the full 30 minutes; BJP has 22 minutes. Then I have only 2-3 members from TDP, CPI(M) and another Member from 'others.' In any case, it is not going to go up for 2 full hours.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: This is what I had to say and it is for you to decide, Madam.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I left it for the House to decide. It is not my decision. If it were my decision, then I would have taken a decision. It is the collective decision of the House. This is the thing. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI B.P. SINGHAL (Uttar Pradesh) : Madam, there is no dispute in it. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There would be a discussion. It is only the timing that is talked about - as to when should we do it. If there were less number of Special Mentions, we would have taken it up as soon as the Special Mentions were over.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Even in the morning, we were told in the Chairman's Chamber that the Special Mentions would be taken up to the lunch - hour and after the lunch - hour, the legislative business would

be taken up. Even in the morning, this was only the information given to us in the Chairman's Chamber.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Rajagopal, please answer on behalf of the Government, because I can't answer for the Government. I simply informed the House according to what I had been briefed. I simply placed that before the House.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): Madam, if there is no consensus, let us continue as it was originally planned.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Then we would continue as it is.

Uprooting of trees around Nehru Place

SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE (Assam): Madam, Nehru Place Greens is a park spread over about seven acres, planted with 2,000 trees in Nehru Place, New Delhi. There is no other such park in the area. The ambient air quality in this park is superior to its surrounding areas and hence morning walkers and people working in the offices are using it. It acts as a green lung for the people living in the neighbouring residential colonies such as Chittaranjan Park, Hemkunt Colony, Greater Kailash, East of Kailash, Kailash Colony, New Friends Colony, and Maharani Bagh, besides thousands of people working in offices and visiting the area.

The Delhi Development Authority is now planning to cut a large number of trees to make way for a night bazaar, build kiosks for hawkers, build parking garages and build other commercial structures. The intention is to make money from the land used as a park. Right to clean air is a fundamental right of all citizens and is a priority for good health. It certainly is more important than providing night shopping bazaars. As for parking and bazaars, there are alternative sites available in the area. Delhi has a stated policy of Clean and Green Delhi. This will remain only in words if such a park is allowed to be destroyed by vested interests.

I, therefore, request your kind intervention in any way that you think would help to stop this disaster from happening. Thank you.