

RAJYA SABHA

***SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE**

(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

Wednesday, July 19, 2017/ Ashadha 28, 1939 (Saka)

MATTERS RAISED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIR

1. Need to get Presidential Assent to the N.E.E.T. Bill Passed by the Tamil Nadu Assembly

SHRI A.K. SELVARAJ: The students of Tamil Nadu were agitating against NEET since its announcement as they all have studied according to the State syllabus and now, all of a sudden moving to some other syllabus for the purpose of NEET cannot be accepted. The State Government of Tamil Nadu enacted a Bill seeking exemption for Tamil Nadu students from the NEET and it was sent to the Centre for Presidential assent, but till date there has been no response. The NEET was against the interest of Tamil Nadu students. The test was based on Central Board of Secondary Education syllabus, whereas most students had studied on State syllabus. I urge upon the Government to seek Presidential assent to the NEET Bill immediately so to save the future of lakhs of students from Tamil Nadu.

*This Synopsis is not an authoritative record of the proceedings of the Rajya Sabha.

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: The Tamil Nadu Government and all the political parties in Tamil Nadu want a permanent exemption from this NEET examination. A Standing Committee also recommended that the States which did not want to be part of the NEET examinations have to be exempted. The infrastructure was developed according to the needs of the students in Tamil Nadu and it is denial of seats to the students of Tamil Nadu.

SHRI A. NAVANEETHAKRISHNAN: Two sets of questions have been framed. The easier question paper was distributed to the Northern States and the tough question paper was given to the Tamil Nadu students and hence, they were not able to secure more marks. It is a discrimination. I urge upon the hon. Finance Minister to take appropriate steps to get the assent of the President.

SHRI T.K. RANGARAJAN: Only five per cent of Tamil Nadu Board students may get admission. Fifty per cent of the questions are out of syllabus. The State Assembly passed the resolution in this regard.

SHRI D. RAJA: I urge upon the Union Government to give exemption to Tamil Nadu. Otherwise, it will adversely affect.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR), responding to the matter, said: As far as Tamil Nadu and NEET issue is concerned, we have discussed with everybody concerned parties. The matter is in advance stage and is sub-judice.

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA) responding to the matter, said: The Ministry had initiated that there should be an all-India examination called the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test, which was supported by the Supreme Court and, later, it was also supported by all Parties. Last year exemption was given and this year, NEET examination was put in place. Meanwhile, Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly has come out with a Bill which has come to the President of India. We have given our view-point on it.

2. Death of Four Sanitation Workers in Septic Tank in Ghitorni, Delhi

SHRI ALI ANWAR ANSARI: The inhuman manual scavenging is going on for thousands of years. Although this manual scavenging has been declared illegal by the Government, still this is going on unabated. On last Saturday, four persons died in the septic tank in the Ghitorni due to poisonous gas. Two thousand five hundred Dalit's have died in the country in the last two and half years in the similar manner, but no action has been taken in this regard. These kind of incidences have been taking place in the whole country and no machines etc. are there for this work. Our feelings have died in this regard. The law in this regard should be implemented.

(The entire House associated)

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI THAAWAR CHAND GEHLOT), responding to the matter, said: I would like to submit that wherever any such incident takes place, the Central Government in co-operation with the State Government takes action. I would like to assure the House that we are trying to abide by the law made in this regard literally and would continue to do so in future also. If Hon'ble Members have any information and names as such, they must write to me. I assure that I will take action.

3. Need to revoke the Move to annex the Central Institute of Classical Tamil to the Central University, Thiruvavur

SHRI D. RAJA: In 2004, the Government of India had accorded Classical Language status to Tamil Language. Originally the functions of the Institute were given to the Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore. On the demand of many political parties and scholars in Tamil Nadu, it was shifted to Chennai. Now there are reports that the functions of this Institute will be transferred to the Central University in Thiruvavur. What is the position? I urge upon the Government that it should remain at Chennai as an autonomous institute.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR) responding to the matter, said: Government has not taken any such decision. We respect all Indian languages and we are not going to impose any language on anybody. These are not true reports. Our policy is to promote all Indian languages.

4. Privatisation of Hindustan Newsprint and Other Public Sector Units

SHRI K. K. RAGESH: Workers of Hindustan Newsprint have taken to the streets against the privatization of this PSU. Hindustan Newsprint is fully a subsidiary of Hindustan Paper Corporation. Now, the Government has decided for 100 per cent disinvestment of this particular company. It was a profit making company till 2011-12. The company is facing certain crisis due to faulty policy of the Government. Repeated requests for modernization of this company have also not been taken up seriously. It is the policy of the Government that is responsible for the present crisis. Unfortunately, the Government is not ready to accept the modernization proposal. It is not only Hindustan Newsprint but all

other public sector companies in our country are being privatized. I demand the Government to immediately stop disinvesting Hindustan Newsprint Limited.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

5. Government's Move to outsource Defence-related Production to Private Sector

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: I would like to draw the attention of this House to an issue which indicates that the Government is not only selling out our national assets, but also indulging in destructive exercise by destroying the manufacturing capability of the country in respect of Defence production. The Government has decided that out of the total 273 products produced by Ordnance Factories, 182 products are to be outsourced by private players. This will lead to seven Ordnance Factories become jobless and another 14 Ordnance Factories become redundant. So, destroying our ordnance factories and destroying our Defence PSUs is thoroughly anti-national.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: We have a serious situation concerning defence on both the fronts. No country has given up its indigenous ammunition and spares making capacity, which the Indian Defence PSUs have been doing.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

6. Serious Concern over Increasing Drug Menace in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana

SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY: Drugs are widely being used throughout the country, more particularly, in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and also in Karnataka. Unfortunately, in the last couple of months, there has been an increase in the use of these illicit drugs and narcotic substances, particularly, by film actors, college students and

even by school-going children. Even the law-enforcing agencies are miserably failing to control these drug traffickers. It is time for the central agencies to intervene in the matter.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

7. Need for Speedy Return of 39 Indians Stuck in Iraq since 2014

SHRI PARTAP SINGH BAJWA: About three years ago 40 Indian youths were kidnapped by ISIS in Iraq. Out of them one of the youths came and stated here that 39 people were gunned down in front of him and he alone could have escaped. The Minister said that they are very much alive; they are in Mosul and they would ensure that everybody safely comes out. We want to know where these youths are. What action is being taken by the Government of India? This is my request that the country should not be misled.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

8. Need to take Urgent Steps to prevent Vector-borne Diseases in Metropolitan Cities

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Half of the country is affected by floods. People are suffering. Even wild animals are in trouble. In Delhi and the National Capital Region, cases of Malaria have doubled. Vector-borne diseases are on the rise in most of the metropolitan cities. Even though the municipal authorities have taken a number of initiatives to combat its possible outbreak, the number of incidents is not decreasing. They must launch a full-fledged awareness campaign, apart from spraying insecticides in the stagnant water in tanks, open nallahs, drains, etc. Antibiotics and other medicines should be distributed to the civic bodies. I would urge the Government to take immediate steps in this regard.

(Shri Ranvijay Singh Judev associated.)

9. Unrest among Farmers of Tamil Nadu due to Leakage of Oil from Pipelines Laid by O.N.G.C. in Agricultural Lands

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: After a leakage of oil pipeline of ONGC in a village in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, the people began a peaceful protest and asked to stop the works by the ONGC. Since there was no response from the ONGC and the civil authorities, the oil spill continued and started destroying the fertile lands as well as contaminating the drinking water. The children who have drunk that water have fallen ill. The police recklessly started lathi-charging the people, and women and children were injured. They have arrested more than ten people. Government is refusing to give them bail. The situation is getting worse. All the shops are closed. The people are on the streets. They are refusing to go back to their houses. People are very restless. Those who are arrested are not released. I urge the Central Government to take cognizance and instruct the ONGC to immediately go there and stop the works till the people accept that proposal.

(Shri T.K. Rangrajan and Shrimat Kanimozhi associated.)

SHORT DURATION DISCUSSION

Situation Arising out of the Reported Increase in the Incidents of Lynching and Atrocities on Minorities and Dalits across the Country

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD), initiating the discussion, said: It is not only an issue of lynching alone but is a matter related to law and order. It is a very serious issue which needs to be resolved unitedly. We are raising a discussion on the incidents of atrocities on minorities and dalits across the country. Incidents like hanging of two children to death in Jharkhand, gunning down of a muslim youth after dragging him out of the house in Chapra district, lynching of 7 dalits for skinning a dead cow, burning of dalits houses in Saharanpur district of Uttar Pradesh, burning alive a 90 year old dalit for entering a temple in Hamirpur etc. happened are a matter of great concern despite 70 years of independence. These incidents are not restricted to any religion. Jharkhand has turned into a playground of lynching, arson and loot. There is no such state in the entire country where incidents of lynching have not taken place. These types of incidents also took place in the past but they were limited up to individual level and they were not irrespective of any religion. But one or some persons from a specific organization have been found indulged in the recent incidents of lynching and they are getting protection. This is not the fight of any religion or caste. It is the fight of we all. I salute the few journalists and newspapers participating in this fight. It is the government's duty to maintain law and order in the country and we will assist fully in doing so. Government must protect the poor, the dalit, labourers, farmers and common man. I hope Leader of House will understand the seriousness behind it and politics of vote will be avoided.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI): The criminal incidents that have taken place are not related with any government. They are concerned with individuals. These are absolutely related with crime and they must not be taken as communal incidents otherwise it will help the persons with criminal bent of mind. Action has been taken and all the guilty persons have been arrested in all such cases and they are in jail now and strict action under legal provisions is being taken against them. Tolerance and good faith is in the blood of our country's people and this is why our country is putting challenge against such type of forces. The Prime Minister has given a very clear message that all state governments should take strict action against all such anti-social elements and people must remember that there is law to protect cow and violating law is not an option. State governments must also ensure that some people may not take their personal revenge in the name of cow protection. I would like to state clearly that the agenda of development is above all for our government and we cannot compromise with anything for this. All state governments should take strict action against the guilty ones in the recent incidents of lynching. We not only condemn such incidents but also say to face them unitedly to abolish them.

SHRI NARESH AGRAWAL: I am happy that the Prime Minister gave a statement over it but perhaps the statement of the Chief Minister of Goa is contradictory. We all Members are worried about the incidents of lynching. The composers of the constitution or the freedom fighters have not thought that our country will get divided in the name of religion, caste or region. But this is unfortunate. I do remember that in 1991, at the time of Ramjanambhumi movement, we were also put behind the bar. Even schools were turned into prison. We had to clear our stand before the public. After the incidents of lynching, no one is ready to transport the livestock from one place to another today. The cattle fairs, which used to be held in many parts of the country in the past have been stopped

after these incidents. The Government is not providing any fodder for the non-milching cows of the poor. The farmers are facing the menace of blue bull who destroys their whole crop. Today, the image of our country is at stake globally on account of killings in the name of religion, caste, etc. We are with the Government on all the matters related to the national interest and at the same time appeal to you to bring a strong and effective law to deal with these incidents of lynching.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: After Independence, we gave recognition to the concept of equality among people, irrespective of their religious affiliation, caste and gender. It is that equality today that is being questioned and is being severely trampled upon through these instances of lynching happened in many parts of the country. We have to look at the level of intolerance and the gruesome tales that are taking place now. There should be a Central order to ban private armies who are taking law into their own hands. This is happening because of a certain ideology and that is something we have to understand. This country was partitioned on the basis of religious affiliations. After Independence, India became a secular democratic country. Today, we have to control the people who believe in violence as it directly contradicts with the right to equality, provided in our Constitution. It seems that nationalism is only equated as Hindu or Hindutva nationalism today. Why is Jai Hind not a patriotic slogan and why is Bharat Mata ki jai alone a patriotic slogan? There should not be any kind of distinction on the basis of slogans being shouted. We should talk of Indian patriotism instead of Hindutva patriotism or Hindutva nationalism. Indian nationalism has to be nurtured. Hindu nationalism is the philosophy that is prevailing and that is rising in our country. This vigilantism, that we are seeing today, is the part of this larger effort, so it is no longer just a fringe doing it. The fight against this lynching and vigilante groups is essential to maintain our Constitutional order. Even the foreign media is saying it. What is happening in our country is something that is completely antithetical to the entire constitutional values and orders that we have given ourselves. What is happening is not my Mother

India. The Prime Minister concentrates on reforms and economic policies and not on this Hindutva. So, stop the country from moving towards a Hindu right. These lynchings are part of an ideological construct that wants to undermine the secular democratic character of modern India. Please ban all these cow vigilante groups and anti-Romeo squads. These groups must be legally banned and let us together build our country in whichever direction we want to take. Let us all together stop this degeneration in our country. That is my message to the House and my appeal to the Government to immediately ban these organizations.

SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN: Why has not that special court still been set up those seven dalit boys of Una? Empty words and generic comments will not work. Please name the groups, individuals and the organizations. The President of the BJP cannot say something like this that there is no apprehension anywhere in the country. Cow vigilante is a pretty term. The real term is 'cow terrorism'. This is cow terrorism and I want to build on this argument because this exactly is the argument which the BJP want. They don't want to answer the real questions. The narrative today is marginalised, those who are under-served, they are being killed, they are being lynched, and there are atrocities against them. Seventy per cent of those who do not have aadhaar cards today, are children below the age of twelve. There are so many problems to do with the ICDS, the Mid-day Meal scheme because of this. The Government has made Facebook into Fakebook, and they made it into an art form. Social media is a free place, it is an expressive place, but putting wrong pictures is not the way to use it. As regards to Postcard news, these are all related to small incidents and they have to amplify these incidents. I believe they are indulging in TV terrorism and in Press terrorism. These are not marginalized but are powerful media houses. They are also under pressure. Opposition parties will not cow down to their political terrorism and their political vendetta. Give us the answers to these questions. They are manipulating WPI-CPI data to make the numbers look good. The game here is that the Government manipulates the denominators. It is going beyond—financial terrorism and tax terrorism after the

GST. The Government has killed several industries in West Bengal. Twenty-five crore daily wage workers have lost employment. The MSME sector is in a mess. Reality shows at midnight will not work. The country wants answers to these questions. We were not for this rushed GST. The BJP, its Ministers and the Prime Minister say different things. I want the Minister of Health to examine and explore the great concept of giving free medicines to the under-privileged, to the poor and to the under-served which we are doing with a great success in West Bengal. Does the Government has a mandate to do what they are doing to children, indulge in political vendetta and terrorism, digital terrorism and in this kind of GST and to take away my privacy.

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***Supplement covering rest of the proceedings is being issued separately.