

RAJYA SABHA

***SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE**

(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

Monday, July 19, 2021 / Ashadha 28, 1943 (Saka)

ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have to inform Members that I had received a communication from the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs informing me that Shri Piyush Goyal, Minister of Commerce and Industry; Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and Textiles has been appointed as the Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha by the hon'ble Prime Minister.

Shri Goyal, who has been a second rank holder in the All India C.A. Examination, is a second term Member of our House. He comes with a political career spanning more than three decades and has got a wide ranging ministerial experience. He has held several portfolios such as that of Mines, New and Renewable Energy, Power, Finance and Corporate Affairs, Coal and Railways as a Minister in the Union Council of Ministers. During Shri Goyal's tenure as Minister of Railways, Indian Railways achieved its best ever safety record in 2018-19. Shri Goyal is also the recipient of 4th Annual Carnot Prize in 2018 in recognition of spearheading pathbreaking transformations in country's energy sector which included electrification of nearly 18,000

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

unelectrified villages in some of the remotest and inaccessible parts of the country.

I personally feel that this House will surely be benefitted by his rich political and administrative experience. His cordial and cheerful nature would further help him in discharging his duties as the Leader of the House efficiently.

I would also like to take this opportunity to place on record the remarkable contribution made by Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot, Governor of the State of Karnataka and former Leader of this House, in enriching the quality of debates in the House with his knowledge and expertise, and in ensuring the smooth functioning of this House.

OBITUARY REFERENCES

MR. CHAIRMAN: Since we met last in March, 2021, two of our colleagues, Dr. Raghunath Mohapatra and Shri Rajeev Satav and ten of our former Members, namely, Prof. N.M. Kamble, Shri Bhagwati Singh, Shri Balihari Babu, Shri Ajit Singh, Shri Matang Sinh, Shri Jitendrabhai Labhshanker Bhatt, Dr. Ramendra Kumar Yadav 'Ravi', Shri Jagannath Prasad Pahadia, Shrimati Shanti Pahadia and Shri Dilip Kumar, who was a popular cine personality, originally known as Yusuf Sarwar Khan; and Shri Milkha Singh, the legendary track and field sprinter, have passed away.

Dr. Raghunath Mohapatra passed away on the 9th May, 2021, at the age of 78 years.

Born in March, 1943, at Sasan Padia in Puri District of Odisha in a family of sculptors, Dr. Raghunath Mohapatra had his education at Padia in Puri town of Odisha.

An architect and sculptor, Dr. Mohapatra was initiated into sculpting at the tender age of eight years by his grandfather, a sculptor who worked with the royal family of Puri for upkeep of the Shri Jagannath Temple. Though he did not get any formal training in sculpture, his craftsmanship was such that he was revered as an

encyclopaedia in the field of sculpture. The uniqueness about his craft was that he never used machines for sculpting but chose chisel and hammer only to create several masterpieces.

A genius in the world of sculpture, Dr. Mohapatra served as a Senior Instructor and Superintendent in the Handicraft Training and Designing Centre, Government of Odisha. He was the recipient of several prestigious awards and recognitions like Padma Shri in the year 1976, Padma Bhushan in the year 2001 and Padma Vidhushan in the year 2013.

Dr. Raghunath Mohapatra was a nominated Member of the Rajya Sabh from July, 2018 till his sad demise.

In the passing away of Dr. Raghunath Mohapatra, the country has lost a legendary craftsman and sculptor par excellence.

Shri Rajeev Satav passed away on the 16th May, 2021, at the age of 46 years; very sad.

Born in September, 1974, in Pune, Maharashtra, Shri Rajeev Satav was educated at Fergusson College and ILS Law College, Pune.

An agriculturist, Shri Satav served as the Chairman, Agriculture and Animal Husbandry and Milk Development Committee, Zilla Parishad, Hingoli from 2007 to 2009. He started his legislative career as a Member of the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly from 2009 to 2014 and went on to serve as a Member of Sixteenth Lok Sabha from May, 2014 to May, 2019.

Shri Rajeev Satav became Member of this House on the 3rd April of 2020, from the State of Maharashtra. He actively participated in the debates held in this House and emphatically put forth the views of his party and his own on those issues. It is indeed saddening to lose a young colleague in such a short span of time.

In the passing away of Shri Rajeev Satav, the country has lost a promising leader and an able parliamentarian.

Prof. N.M. Kamble passed away on the 3rd of April, 2021, at the age of 99 years.

Born in October, 1921, in Satara District of Maharashtra, Prof. N.M. Kamble was educated at the Wadia College and Fergusson College, Pune and Siddharth College and Government Law College, Bombay.

An advocate, Prof. Kamble strived for the upliftment of Backward Classes and Buddhists. He also served as Vice-Chairman of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes from May, 2007 to May, 2010. Prof. Kamble authored a book on Inferior Village Servants and also published numerous articles and papers on Scheduled Castes, Tribes and Buddhists. He started his political career as a Member of the then Bombay Municipal Corporation in 1957.

Prof. N.M. Kamble represented the State of Maharashtra in this House for three terms— from April, 1974 to April, 1980; from August, 1980 to April, 1982 and again from April, 1984 to August, 1988. He also served as a Member of the Maharashtra Legislative Council for two terms and held various portfolios as a Minister in the Government of Maharashtra.

In the passing away of Prof. N.M. Kamble, the country has lost a dedicated social worker and an eminent parliamentarian.

Shri Bhagwati Singh passed away on the 4th of April, 2021, at the age of 87 years.

Born in August, 1933 in Lucknow District of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Bhagwati Singh was educated at the Lucknow University, Uttar Pradesh.

An agriculturist and a social worker, Shri Singh actively participated in farmer movements since 1953 and was involved in various constructive social activities. He endeavoured to solve the water problems in the rural areas of Lucknow and strived to inculcate the habit of water harvesting in villages.

Shri Bhagwati Singh started his legislative career as a Member of the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly in 1977 and remained its Member for two terms— from 1977 to 1982 and from 1985 to 1989. He was also a Member of Uttar Pradesh Legislative Council for two terms -- from May, 1990 to May, 1996 and from July, 1998 to July, 2004. Shri Bhagwati Singh held various portfolios in the Council of Ministers in the Government of Uttar Pradesh. He was also the Leader of the House in the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Council in the year 2003.

Shri Bhagwati Singh represented the State of Uttar Pradesh in this House, from July, 2004 to July, 2010.

In the passing away of Shri Bhagwati Singh, the country has lost a prominent farmers' Leader, an able administrator and an eminent parliamentarian.

Shri Bailhari Babu passed away on 28th of April, 2021, at the age of 70 years.

Born in December, 1950, in Azamgarh District of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Bailhari Babu was educated at Public Inter College, Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh.

A social worker, Shri Balihari Babu conducted several programmes of social upliftment and always endeavoured for the promotion of equality, harmony and brotherhood in society.

Shri Bailihari Babu represented the State of Uttar Pradesh in this House, from April, 2006 to June, 2009.

In the passing away of Shri Bailhari Babu, the country has lost a dedicated social worker and an able parliamentarian.

Shri Ajit Singhji passed away on the 6th of May, 2021, at the age of 82 years.

Born in February, 1939, at Bhadola village in Meerut district of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Ajit Singhji was educated at the Lucknow University; IIT, Kharagpur and Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, United States of America.

An agriculturist and a computer scientist, Shri Ajit Singhji worked assiduously throughout his life raising the issues of farmers and farming community and economic condition of India. He was elected to the Lok Sabha seven times and served as a Member of that House during Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh, Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Lok Sabha.

Shri Ajit Singhji served in the Union Council of Ministers under different Governments and held key portfolios including Food, Industry, Agriculture and Civil Aviation.

Shri Ajit Singhji represented the State of Uttar Pradesh in this House, from July, 1986 to November, 1989.

In the passing away of Shri Ajit Singh, the country has lost a prominent farmers' leader, an able administrator and a distinguished parliamentarian.

Shri Matang Sinh passed away on the 6th May, 2021, at the age of 67 years.

Born in August, 1953, in Tinsukhia District of Assam, Shri Matang Sinh served in the Union Council of Ministers as Minister of State in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, from 1994 to 1998.

Shri Sinh represented the State of Assam in this House, from April, 1992 to April, 1998.

In the passing away of Shri Matang Sinh, the country has lost a good administrator and an able parliamentarian.

Shri Jitendrabhai Labhshanker Bhatt passed away on the 7th of May, 2021, at the age of 94 years.

Born in March, 1927 in Surendranagar District of Gujarat, Shri Jitendrabhai Labhshanker Bhatt was educated at H.L. College of Commerce, Ahmedabad.

A Chartered Accountant by profession, Shri Jitendrabhai Labhshanker Bhatt served as the President of the District Co-operative Union, Surendranagar, from 1973 to 1977. He was also a founder

member and Chairman of the Surendranagar Law Society which runs various educational institutions; and of the Surendranagar District Co-operative Milk Union. Shri Bhatt was also the organiser and Vice-President of the Surendranagar Mercantile Cooperative Bank Limited opened in the year 1983.

Shri Jitendrabhai Labhshanker Bhatt represented the State of Gujarat in this House, from August, 1987 to August, 1993.

In the passing away of Shri Jitendrabhai Labhshanker Bhatt the country has lost an educationist, a pioneer of cooperative movements and an eminent parliamentarian.

Dr. Ramendra Kumar Yadav 'Ravi' passed away on the 14th of May, 2021, at the age of 78 years.

Born in January, 1943 at Chatra in Madhepura District of Bihar, Dr. Ramendra Kumar was educated at the Patna University, Patna.

An academician and writer, Dr. Ramendra Kumar took active part in social, cultural and political activities right from his student days. He started his academic career as a Lecturer and served as the University Professor of Hindi and Principal of T. P. College, Madhepura. Dr. Ramendra Kumar also served as the Founder Vice-Chancellor of B. N. Mandal University, Madhepura, and as the Senator of Lalit Narayan Mithila University, Dharbhanga. He authored many books in Hindi and wrote several articles and poems in leading literary magazines.

Dr. Ramendra Kumar started his legislative career as a Member of Bihar Legislative Assembly in the year 1981 and served as the Member of that Assembly for two terms till 1989. He also served as a Member of the Ninth Lok Sabha from 1989 to 1991.

Dr. Ramendra Kumar Yadav 'Ravi' represented the State of Bihar in this House for two terms - from July, 1992 to July, 1998 and again from July, 1998 to July, 2004.

In the passing away of Dr. Ramendra Kumar Yadav 'Ravi', the country has lost a prolific writer, an eminent academician and an able parliamentarian.

Shri Jagannath Prasad Pahadia passed away on the 19th of May, 2021, at the age of 89 years.

Born in January, 1932, at Bhusawar Village in Bharatpur district of Rajasthan, Shri Jagannath Prasad Pahadia was educated at the Agarwal College, Agra; M.S.J. College, Bharatpur; the Maharaja College and the Rajasthan University Law College, Jaipur; and the T.N.B. Law College, Bhagalpur.

An agriculturist and social worker, Shri Pahadia actively participated in student movements and organised night schools for illiterate children and adults. Working relentlessly for upliftment and empowerment of Dalits, tribals and other socially backward people, he also assisted Community Development Blocks in their developmental activities in the fields of agriculture, cottage industries, Panchayati Raj, cooperatives and family planning. Shri Pahadia also took part in movements against 'purdah' and prostitution. He also served as the Editor of 'Adhikar', a weekly of Bharatpur.

Shri Pahadia started his legislative career as a Member of the Second Lok Sabha and went on to serve as a Member of Fourth, Fifth and Seventh Lok Sabha. He also served as a Member of Rajasthan Legislative Assembly for four terms. Shri Pahadia also served as Deputy Minister in the Union Council of Ministers holding portfolios of Finance; Food, Agriculture, Community Development and Cooperation; Labour, Communications and Supply.

Shri Pahadia served as the Chief Minister of Rajasthan, from June, 1980 to July, 1981. He also served as the Governor of the State of Bihar from March, 1989 to February, 1990 and that of Haryana from July, 2009 to July, 2014.

Shri Jagannath Prasad Pahadia represented the State of Rajasthan in this House for two terms - from March, 1965 to March, 1966 and again from March, 1966 to February, 1967.

In the passing away of Shri Jagannath Prasad Pahadia, the country has lost an able administrator, a dedicated social worker and a distinguished parliamentarian.

Shrimati Shanti Pahadia passed away on the 23rd of May, 2021, at the age of 84 years.

Born in August, 1936, in Sawai Madhopur District of Rajasthan, Shrimati Shanti Pahadia worked assiduously for rural development and the upliftment of weaker sections of the society. She took keen interest in adult education, particularly, women's education and raised her voice against child marriage, purdah system and dogmatic traditions.

Shrimati Shanti Pahadia started her legislative career as a Member of the Rajasthan Legislative Assembly in May, 1980 and remained its Member till October, 1980. She represented the State of Rajasthan in this House from April, 1984 to April, 1990.

In the passing away of Shrimati Shanti Pahadia, the country has lost a dedicated social worker and a distinguished parliamentarian.

Shri Dilip Kumar whose real name was Yusuf Sarwar Khan passed away on the 7th of July, 2021 at the age of 98 years.

Born in December, 1922 at Peshawar in the North-West Frontier Province of undivided India, Shri Dilip Kumar was educated at the Wilson College and the Khalsa College, Mumbai.

As a student, Shri Dilip Kumar excelled in the literary activities and sports. He had an abiding interest in the Urdu poetry. He made his debut as an actor in 1944, thus, beginning a long and illustrious association with the film industry which lasted for more than five decades during which he acted in over 65 films, notable ones being Devdas, Naya Daur, Mughal-e-Azam, Ram aur Shyam, Ganga Jamuna etc.

Shri Dilip Kumar was also crowned as the 'Tragedy King' of Hindi cinema as he had the remarkable ability to transform melancholic roles into award winning performances. A doyen of

Indian film industry and an inspiration to generations of film artists, Shri Dilip Kumar heralded a new era in film industry at a time when our country was putting behind the shackles of colonial rule. He also served as the Sheriff of Bombay in 1980.

Shri Dilip Kumar was recipient of several prestigious awards and recognitions for his performances in films, both in India and abroad. Shri Dilip Kumar was awarded Padma Bhushan in the year 1991, Dada Saheb Phalke National Award in the year 1994 and Padma Vibushan in the year 2015.

Shri Yusuf Sarwar Khan alias Dilip Kumar represented the State of Maharashtra in this House from April, 2000 to April, 2006.

The passing away of Shri Yusuf Sarwar Khan alias Dilip Kumar marks the end of an era in film industry and the country has lost a legendary film artiste and an able parliamentarian.

Shri Milkha Singh passed away on the 18th of June, 2021, at the age of 91 years.

Born in November, 1929, at Govindpura village in Punjab province of the undivided India, Shri Milkha Singh's early life was marked by great adversity. He was orphaned in the violence that took place during the partition.

Undeterred by hardships, Shri Milkha Singh joined Indian Army and was subsequently selected for special training in athletics by the Army. His competitive progress earned him selection to represent India in the 1956 Melbourne Olympics which provided him the much needed global exposure and since then, there was no looking back for Shri Milkha Singh.

Fondly known as the 'Flying Sikh' in recognition of his sprinting ability and achievements, Shri Singh won Gold medals in the 200-metre and 400-metre events in the Asian Games held at Tokyo in 1958. He also won a Gold medal in the 400-metre event at the 1958 Commonwealth Games and thus became the first gold-medallist at the Commonwealth Games from independent India. As an iconic achievement for Indian athletics, Shri Milkha Singh secured fourth

position in the 400-metre finals at the 1960 Rome Olympics and the national record he set on that day was broken only after 38 years in 1998. In 1962, Shri Singh won Gold medal in 400-metre event and took another Gold medal as a part of 4 x 400-metre relay team at the Asian Games held at Jakarta. He also represented the country in the Tokyo Olympics held in the year 1964. He was awarded the Padma Shri in the field of sports in 1959.

Shri Milkha Singh's achievements paved a path for Indian athletics to put a footprint on the world sports map. He had been a guiding light for the aspiring athletes and left no chance to motivate and guide them. Sportspersons and common people will continue to draw a great deal of inspiration from his life and deeds.

In the passing away of Shri Milkha Singh, the country has lost a legendary athlete and a great motivator.

We deeply mourn the passing away of Dr. Raghunath Mohapatra, Shri Rajeev Satav, Prof. N.M. Kamble, Shri Bhagwati Singh, Shri Balihari Babu, Shri Ajit Singh, Shri Matang Sinh, Shri Jitendrabhai Labhshanker Bhatt, Dr. Ramendra Kumar Yadav 'Ravi', Shri Jagannath Prasad Pahadia, Shrimati Shanti Pahadia, Shri Dilip Kumar originally known as Yusuf Sarwar Khan and Shri Milkha Singh.

(One Minute's silence was observed as a mark of respect to the memory of the departed.)

OPENING REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN

MR. CHIRMAN: Hon. Deputy Chairman, Shri Harivanshji, the Leader of the House, Shri Piyush Goyalji, the Leader of the Opposition, Shri Mallikarjun Khargeji, the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Shri Pralhad Joshiji, the Members of the Council of Ministers, Leaders of various Groups and the respected Members of the House, I extend a warm welcome to all of you to this Monsoon Session, which gives yet another opportunity to resonate with pain, aspirations and

expectations of the people from Parliament, the apex Legislature of our country. For about a year and a half, the people of the country, and across the world, have been passing through a crisis of the last 100 years in the form of Covid-19 pandemic. This disease has not only dented the health of the people but also the economies across the globe, resulting in a multitude of adverse effects on the lives and livelihoods. The people are living amidst unprecedented uncertainty; and, there is no certainty about this uncertainty. Yet, through the collective efforts of the people, the Central Government and the State Governments, and all other stakeholders concerned, have been able to contain the extent of adversity in the form of infections and mortalities. As a result of such collective efforts, our country compares favourably with many nations, including those better endowed in terms of resources of all kinds. But, there is no place for complacency.

The second wave of the pandemic has tested us severely. The Governments and all others concerned had to work overtime to address these bottlenecks in our health infrastructure. Despite our best efforts, a good number of precious lives have been lost. The need of the hour is to learn from the experiences of the first and second waves, to be better equipped for the possible fresh bouts of the pandemic that are being talked about. Ultimately, we shall collectively overcome the challenge of the invisible corona virus that has exposed the limits of modernity and our pace of living and attitudes as well.

One chief lesson to be drawn is that we need to live in harmony with the society and with the environment. Despite huge scientific, medical and technological advances, life cannot be taken for granted. We need to reset our minds with attitudes for an even flow of life.

Hon. Members, we have assembled today for the 254th Session of Rajya Sabha which has 19 sittings scheduled. Since the Budget Session last year, three Sessions had to be curtailed and the last Winter Session could not be held. We hope to run through this Monsoon Session in full. People look up to Parliament in their quest

for meeting their aspirations and alleviating their sufferings. They are living under the pandemic-induced stress since last year. This Monsoon Session, which we hope to be a fuller one, assumes enhanced significance in the context of the prevailing situation in the country, and the sufferings of the people further to be compounded by the possible third wave. Amidst this uncertainty, the Parliament needs to ensure the people of required support of all kinds with the necessary interventions with suggestions, pointing out the drawbacks, if any, and also the improvements; and all sections of the House need to constructively ponder over the course of events since the outbreak of the pandemic last year, through informed discussion on all aspects of the problem. It then logically follows that all of you have to make the best use of this opportunity provided by this Monsoon Session. We cannot afford to let the people down in the hour of pain and suffering.

I appeal to all sections of the House to ensure that a meaningful Monsoon Session, that got underway today, is held. What is at stake is the credibility of Parliament and its Members. Let us be conscious of the immense responsibility cast upon us.

The Covid protocol was followed during the last Session and will be applicable for this Session also. 139 Members will be seated in the Chambers of the House and 92 in the Galleries above. But, I could see that nobody is there in the Galleries. I think, everybody has come to the House. That is not good for you, for the country and for the people. I hope that Rajya Sabha Secretariat circulates the seating arrangement once again so as to intimate the Members to understand what the arrangement is, which was there in the last Session and also this Session.

Like the last time, it is for the parties to decide on the seating of their respective Members. Members shall use their identity card numbers for all required purposes instead of Division Numbers due to the free seating. No visitors are being allowed to witness the proceedings of the House. Parliamentary papers and reports will not be circulated in physical form to avoid infections.

I am happy to inform you that 224 Members of Rajya Sabha, accounting for 97 per cent of the total, have taken vaccination, including 207 who have taken both the doses and 17 who took the first jab. Others are still to be vaccinated for medical reasons. I still appeal to all of you to adhere to the norms of Covid appropriate behaviour.

Hon. Members, there are reviews about the Committees. Introduction of the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees(DRSCs) in 1993 has been an innovative reform to enable round the year functioning of the Parliament and this has proved to be effective and useful. Since the assumption of office, I have been taking particular interest in the functioning of the eight DRSCs of Rajya Sabha through regular reviews and sharing the outcomes with respective Chairmen. Further to the last such review, I have written letters to the Chairmen of all the eight Committees on February 12th this year. I have therein urged them to ensure an average duration of two and a half hours per each meeting and attendance of fifty per cent of the members of each committee. I am glad to acknowledge the efforts made by the Chairmen and Members of these eight Committees in this regard with visible improvement in respect of both these parameters.

During the inter-session period further to the sine adjournment of the Parliament on March 25th this year, seven of the eight Committees of Rajya Sabha have held a total of 20 meetings and met for a total duration of 50 hours 38 minutes. This comes to an average duration of 2 hours 32 minutes per each meeting. This is the best performance for any reference period during the last four years. The average attendance of 48.48 per cent in each of the 20 meetings is close to the targeted 50 per cent. I compliment the Chairmen and Members of these Committees for their efforts.

During the inter-session period, the Committee on Commerce held the maximum of six meetings having met for the longest duration of 15 hours 51 minutes, accounting for over 31 per cent of the total duration of meetings. The Committee on Education, Women, Child,

Youth and Sports held three meetings for a total duration of 11 hours 16 minutes accounting for 22 per cent of the total.

In terms of average duration of each meeting, the Committee on Education, Women, Child, Youth and Sports has topped clocking 3 hours 45 minutes. This is followed by the Committee on Home Affairs - two hours 48 minutes; Committee on Commerce - two hours 38 minutes; Committee on Science and Technology, Environment, Forests & Climate Change - two hours 30 minutes and the Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture - two hours 02 minutes. In terms of average attendance per each meeting, the Committee on Education etc. has topped with 60.21 per cent followed by the Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture with 54.83 per cent. Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice - 51.78 per cent and the Committee on Science & Technology - 49 per cent.

Hon. Members, in the meeting of leaders of various parties and groups chaired by me day before yesterday, all sections have expressed a keen desire for smooth functioning of the House during this session. I hope that such noble intentions will manifest on the floor of the House. Political parties are central to our democracy and the Parliament is no doubt a political institution in that sense. But it is much more than that given the mandate of the Parliament. We must stand by the people in their hour of need by doing the needful during this Session. It should not be driven merely by political considerations. The pain, the suffering, the aspirations and the expectations of the people, the patrons of our parliamentary democracy shall guide the functioning of the apex legislature.

In the end, I urge all of you to rise to the occasion and demonstrate your commitment and responsibility towards the people in their hour of need by doing the needful during this session. We are all on test and I hope we acquit ourselves creditably by ensuring a productive monsoon session.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY CHAIR

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have to inform the hon. Members that in view of the special seating arrangements made for the current Session, I have acceded to the request made by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs to allow his junior colleague, the Minister of State in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, to lay all the Papers, listed under the heading 'Papers to be Laid on the Table' and 'Supplementary Statements of the Ministers' mentioned in the List of Business on their behalf.

GOVERNMENT BILL

The Marine Aids to Navigation Bill, 2021

THE MINISTER OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS; AND THE MINISTER OF AYUSH (SHRI SARBANAND SONOWAL), moving the motion for consideration of the Bill, said: This is a very important Bill for the entire country and particularly to develop our entire navigation system. Safe navigation is vital for the shipping industry. Even after two amendments, the existing Lighthouse Act, 1927 could not capture the latest technological advancements and expanded functioning in the field of marine aids to navigation. Hence, the Marine Aids to Navigation Bill, 2021 is proposed. The salient provisions of the Bill include use of the term 'marine aids to navigation' instead of 'lighthouses', development of vessel traffic services for enhancing the safety and efficiency of shipping and to protect environment, skill development through training and certification of operators, auditing and accreditation of training institutes, marking of wreck in general waters for safe navigation, development of heritage lighthouses, offences and penalties for obstruction and damaging aids to navigation. I request the House to consider and pass the Bill.

SHRI SUBHASH CHANDRA SINGH: The Government seeks to develop 65 lighthouses in public-private-partnership mode. Odisha's five lighthouses present huge potential for tourism under it.

The Government wants to develop them as hubs of tourism under the Sagarmala project. The 'False Point' is the oldest working lighthouse in India and its location makes it an adventurous tourist place on the eastern coast. The Paradip lighthouse and the century-old Gopalpur lighthouse also hold tourism potential. The Chilika Lake and the Gopalpur beach will be added attractions if these are developed as a place of tourist interest. I support this Bill.

DR. BANDA PRAKASH: The Bill proposes to replace the old Lighthouse Act, 1927 to incorporate best global practices, technological developments and India's international obligations in the field of aids to marine navigation. It aims to regulate state-of-the-art technologies in marine navigation and seeks to provide a fresh framework to establish and manage the vessel traffic services and also aims to empower the Directorate General of Lighthouses with additional power and functions.

SHRI KANAKAMEDALA RAVINDRA KUMAR: The Bill aims to change the navigation into a technology driven one. This Bill repeals the old Act and aims to bring in technology development but it does not mention about the technologies which are in vogue. In the port sector, PPP model is being implemented on a large scale. Sections 37-45 deal with various types of offences pertaining to navigational aids and penalties. I would suggest to the Hon'ble Minister that under section 41, the minimum punishment should be one year and the minimum amount to be paid as fined should be Rs. 2 lakhs. I support the Bill.

SHRI G.K. VASAN: It is a very important Bill. In the present day context, navigation is a common term. Tamil Nadu has three major ports and it has got several lighthouses. I would request the hon. Minister to visit these lighthouses and see the up-to-date facilities given in the lighthouses. The Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) is a functional framework of harmonized measures and services to enhance safety, security and efficiency of shipping. The Network of Automatic Identification System is intended to help DG Shipping, Ports, Navy and Coast Guard in tracking and surveillance. I would like to especially tell the Minister that the fishermen of the country

should be helped through the lighthouses. States like Tamil Nadu, which has three major ports, should be encouraged and lighthouses should be developed there for tourism. This Bill aims to further the work of the Directorate in line with modern-day developments. I support the Bill.

Discussion not concluded.

Desh Deepak Verma,
Secretary-General.

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