

RAJYA SABHA

LIST OF BUSINESS

Friday, December 16, 2022

11 A.M.

#QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS entered in separate lists to be asked and answers given.

(FROM 2.30 P.M. TO 5.00 P.M.)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS (RESOLUTIONS)

1. *SHRI HARNATH SINGH YADAV to move the following Resolution:-
"Having regard to the fact that-
 - (i) population, which produces, distributes and consumes goods and services, is an invaluable asset for a nation as it is a means to an end, *i.e.*, the economic development of a country;
 - (ii) due to the unprecedented rise in the population of the country in the past decades, a dreadful condition is arising on account of gross imbalance between available resources and overall development and services;
 - (iii) no Government can succeed in providing necessary resources and services at the same pace at which the population is growing;
 - (iv) more than 70 years have passed since the country got its independence but we have not been successful in providing potable water, healthcare facilities, food, housing, means of employment, electricity, etc., to the citizens as per the need due to the root cause of fast growing population,this House urges upon the Government to-
 - (a) formulate a stringent population control policy to check the mammoth growth of population, and
 - (b) make stringent and uniform population control laws to overcome the crisis arisen due to the rise in population."
2. SHRI BIPLAB KUMAR DEB to move the following Resolution:-
"Having regard to the fact that:-
 - (i) sustainable cultivation and promotion of Agarwood (*Aquilaria Malaccensis*) and its products may lead to significant economic empowerment of the farmers of the country, especially in the North Eastern region of our country;
 - (ii) optimising the potential of Agarwood in the State of Tripura alone has the potential to usher an 'economic revolution' by creating a 20 billion

At 12 Noon.

* Original notice received in Hindi.

rupees industry and making the capital of the State, Agartala, the capital of Agarwood in the country; and

- (iii) favourable factors such as low input for management and growth, lack of site specificity and intercropping adaptation could make Agarwood a preferred cash crop especially in States like Tripura where Agarwood is quite adaptable to the land,

this House urges upon the Government to-

- (a) set up an Agarwood Board of India under the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry for the holistic development of the Agarwood sector with its headquarters at Agartala, Tripura;
- (b) empower the Board to identify the issues, simplify the processes and encourage different Ministries of the Union and State Governments to work in collaboration for the overall development of Agarwood sector;
- (c) ensure availability of requisite support to the Board to plan intervention for promotion of the sector, prescribe policies for making it easier for growers to grow and harvest Agarwood and incentivise the industrial use of Agarwood;
- (d) promote scientific efforts for increasing production and productivity, improving the quality of Agarwood subject to fulfilment of conditions of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) of Wild Fauna and Flora and the Export Import Policy of Government of India;
- (e) provide adequate welfare measures for Agarwood cultivators, Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and workers of MSME Units engaged in production of Agarwood based products;
- (f) support research and development for maximising the potential of the Agarwood sector in the country;
- (g) provide incentives to young entrepreneurs to undertake innovation related to Agarwood and its products for making India the export powerhouse of the world."

3. SHRI VAIKO to move the following Resolution:-

"Having regard to the fact that:-

- (i) India is a pluralistic society, consisting of myriad cultures, languages, religions and ethos, and the founding fathers of the Constitution provided for federalism which is the foundation of democracy;
- (ii) India being a multi-region and multi-linguistic nation with people of different hues and colours, decentralisation is the need of the hour;
- (iii) over the years, some important subjects have been transferred from the State List to the Concurrent List thereby diluting and undermining the powers of the States;
- (iv) important and sensitive subjects which have a bearing on the people of the country should be left to the States alone to decide in respect of its policy and implementation, since the State is nearer to the people than the Union of India;
- (v) to protect the unity and integrity of the country, federalism in true sense should be provided for in the Constitution;

- (vi) there is an urgent need to improve the harmonious development of the Centre-State relationship and to empower the States with more self-sufficient, autonomous and financial powers;
- (vii) there is an urgency to examine and consider all the recommendations of the various Review Commissions submitted in the past, on the working of the Constitution for implementation, this House urges upon the Government to-
 - (a) take necessary measures, including amendments to the Constitution to bring back the subjects which were transferred from the State List to the Concurrent List, in the past;
 - (b) ensure that the residuary powers are vested with the States, by reviewing and restructuring the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution;
 - (c) take necessary steps to ensure that the States are financially empowered by allocating more finance to them from the divisible pool; and
 - (d) provide corpus funds to mitigate the sufferings of the people of each State with such amounts depending upon the natural disasters each State had faced in the past, like drought, floods, cyclone, heavy rains".

4. DR. V. SIVADASAN to move the following Resolution:-

"Having regard to the fact that:-

- (i) providing the right to higher education is a key part of protecting the right to education and realising that it is essential for ensuring the bright future of the Nation, there is an urgent need to take concrete steps towards achieving this;
- (ii) rising inequalities, digital divide, increasing privatisation, commercialisation and commoditisation of education are huge challenges in ensuring access to higher education in our country;
- (iii) there is a need to ensure equity, quality and access to higher education as the Gross Enrolment Ratio is hovering around an abysmally low figure of 26%, the key factor for which is the inability to afford the cost of higher education;
- (iv) the first step to resolve this would be the acknowledgement that providing right to higher education is the duty of the State and hence free higher education is the right of all citizens;
- (v) even after getting into the higher education institutes, the socio-economic disparities constitute a daunting barrier to the poor and needy which prevents them from achieving excellence necessitating an extensive and universal support system in addition to the mere avoidance of fee;
- (vi) a robust public education system is required which needs to be expanded in a major way to meet the pressing needs of the time and a substantial increase in budgetary allocation is called for in this regard;
- (vii) there is a need to build an enabling social infrastructure and allocate resources for this and address the issue of shrinking public spaces in the country;
- (viii) a Constitutionally guaranteed right to education cannot be meaningfully achieved without ensuring an extensive support

system in the form of public libraries which could function as centres to address the digital and information divide, and

- (ix) the funds allocated for creation of such enabling infrastructure is highly inadequate and there is a need to raise the government investment in education;

this House urges upon the Government to-

- (a) initiate steps to increase the spending on higher education in the country;
- (b) take steps to provide funds to build empowering public spaces and public libraries which will function as centres of knowledge production; and
- (c) take immediate steps to ensure that right to free higher education is made a Constitutional right."

5. DR. AMAR PATNAIK to move the following Resolution:-

"Having regard to the fact that:-

- (i) as per the Global Gender Gap Report 2022, India ranks 48th in the political empowerment sub-index and occupies the last rank, *i.e.*, 146th in the health and survival sub-index;
- (ii) according to the Inter-parliamentary Union, India stood 148th out of 193 countries in 2021, ranked by the percentage of elected women representatives in their national Parliaments;
- (iii) India was trailing Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan and has dropped six places since 2020;
- (iv) under the same study, India was ranked 160th in 2021 on the basis of the percentage of women at ministerial positions and this was a massive fall from the 134th position in 2020;
- (v) as per the data from the Election Commission of India, out of the total 4896 Members of Parliament or Members of Legislative Assemblies across the country, only 418 or 9% are women;
- (vi) in 2019, the number of women candidates contesting elections rose from 668 in 2014 to 724 in 2019, rising by less than 1% of all candidates (8.1% in 2014 to 8.9% in 2019);
- (vii) currently, in the 17th Lok Sabha only 78 women were elected as Members of Parliament (MPs), out of the 716 women candidates who contested elections which is only 14% of the House but it is a small improvement from 62 women Members of Parliament in 2014;
- (viii) according to the last Census, 48% of our country's population is female, which makes the percentage of women representatives, *i.e.*, 14.36% in the Parliament, abysmally low;
- (ix) in the 2019 election, an analysis of women candidates fielded by the national parties shows that only the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) and the All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) had more than 30% women candidates;
- (x) with respect to the Rajya Sabha, the inductions made in 2022 brought the number of women MPs to 30 out of 245, just over 10% of the House;
- (xi) the strength of women in the Rajya Sabha has been dismal since 1957 as the average number of female Rajya Sabha members has been 9.5% while the highest was 12.7% in 2014;

- (xii) Odisha was the first State in our country to implement the provisions of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 in advance to give opportunities to women by making reservation of 1/3rd seats for them and women belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes out of the total seats under the able leadership of former Chief Minister, Shri Biju Patnaik;
- (xiii) not only was it one of the few States in the country's history to announce a 30% reservation for women in all government jobs in 1991, but it was also the first State to announce a 33% reservation that is now further increased to 50% in Panchayati Raj institutions through the Odisha Zilla Parishad Act of 1991;
- (xiv) currently Odisha is the only State in the country having one-third women MPs in Lok Sabha;
- (xv) on the occasion of the 24th foundation day of Biju Janata Dal, the incumbent Odisha Chief Minister said that BJD will continue to demand 33% reservation for women in the Legislative Assemblies and the Parliament and he also said that we cannot deprive half of our population of their rights and they must have their rightful place in the political space of our country;
- (xvi) the Father of our Nation, Mahatma Gandhi also believed in women's empowerment as in one of his famous quotes, he stated that there is no occasion for women to consider themselves subordinate or inferior to men;
- (xvii) a 2018 study titled, 'Women Legislators and Economic Performance' by the United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research estimates that women legislators in India raise luminosity growth in their constituencies by about 15 percentage points per annum more than male legislators;
- (xviii) according to the United Nations, the percentage of women in Parliament has doubled globally in the last 20 years but India has not shown a corresponding trend;
- (xix) low representation of women in the Indian legislature can be traced to the patriarchal structure of politics in the country;
- (xx) lack of reservation for women in Parliament and State Assemblies, unwillingness among political parties to give tickets to women, a general lack of awareness of electoral politics among women, and the lack of family support are few reasons for their low representation in the Parliament and State Assemblies;
- (xxi) another often cited excuse is a lack of winnability of women, a complete fallacy in the face of counter-evidence as according to the Election Commission statistics, in every Lok Sabha election since 1952, women have won at a higher rate than men;
- (xxii) there is established and growing evidence that women's leadership in political decision-making processes enhances their capability, for example, research on *Panchayats* (local councils) in the country revealed that the number of drinking water projects in areas with women-led councils was 62% higher than in those with men-led councils;
- (xxiii) a greater representation of women in elected offices balances the process and prioritizations that elected bodies focus upon and in terms of policy making; the inclusion of women adds behind-the-scenes discussion rather than confrontation on the floor of the House;

- (xxiv) more women will mean that they would bring with them personal experiences and viewpoints that will ensure more robust debates, more bipartisan decisions and more balanced legislative outcomes on a variety of issues;
- (xxv) if the Government is truly committed to ensuring women reservation, we can become one of the world's leading economies and an equitable society and for the purpose the Government must go beyond just announcing a new India, where women contribute equally to the country's development;
- (xxvi) in democracies like South Africa, Australia, Sweden, Germany and the UK, political parties have acknowledged the gender gap in legislation and course-corrected to enable a democracy that hears diverse voices on legislation and policy;
- (xxvii) the parties should self-enforce voluntary quotas or minimum limits of 33% or 50% for women in their candidate lists and party leadership roles as most of our neighbours like Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh, have reserved Parliamentary seats for women and both these tactics have boosted the number of women in world Parliaments;
- (xxviii) our country has so far made no progress on the Bill to reserve one-third of the seats in Lok Sabha and the State Legislative Assemblies for women (One Hundred and Eighth Amendment or the Women's Reservation Bill) though it was introduced a decade ago;
- (xxix) as stated in the report on the Progress of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) released by UN Women, women play a crucial role in sustainable, climate-friendly development, along with affordable and clean-air energy, as upheld in SDG goals 13 and 7;
- (xxx) as India has assumed the leadership of G20 this year, this is the perfect opportunity for our country to bring this epoch-making change;
- (xxxi) our Government must consider the benefits and the urgent need for increasing the representation of women in Parliament,

this House urges upon the Government to:

- (a) introduce 33% reservation quotas for women in Parliament to increase the representation of women and to ensure greater inclusivity in Parliament;
- (b) establish the constitutional obligation of the principle of equality between men and women in the legislative branches at all levels like the Zilla Parishad, Block Samitis and Gram Panchayats;
- (c) introduce institutional mechanisms guaranteeing women's participation in the decision-making process, ensuring implementation of mechanisms, set the objective of achieving a minimum representation of women in all major decision-making bodies particularly within elected assemblies and promote women's participation in all sectors of social and economic life.
- (d) promote Election Commission-led efforts to encourage reservation for women in political parties;
- (e) conduct awareness and education campaigns to develop role models that encourage women towards politics.”