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**Title: Regarding the Amendment in MMDR Act, 1957**

**SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN (KOLLAM):** Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I thank you for allowing me to speak.

Sir, I would like to raise a very serious matter concerning beads and minerals. The Mines Ministry, Government of India has issued a notification by which eight out of twelve atomic minerals which were in Schedule B of the MMDR Act, 1957, are taken away from the Schedule and a new schedule is incorporated by name Schedule D and thereby, both private sector and public sector can undertake mining of minerals which are included in Schedule D of the MMDR Act, 1957. This is indirectly permitting the private sector in mining of atomic minerals. It is against the principles of our national security. The NDA Government led by BJP during the year 2019 has issued a notification. It is very clear that monazite, ilmenite, zircon and sillimanite are all atomic minerals. Monazite is having thorium and uranium. It is a raw material for making nuclear bombs and it is very essential for nuclear power also. It is quite unfortunate that all these eight minerals are being taken away from the Schedule, incorporating a new schedule by which the private sector is being allowed to mine these minerals. It is against the national interest and national security of the country.

Hon. Chairperson, please also see that it is allowed only for the public sector undertakings like IREL, TTP and Kerala Minerals and Metals Limited, and it is confined to the public sector as per the Government of India's policy.

These orders are given by the same Government. Even the marketing of monazite, ilmenite and all these rare earth minerals and also export thereof, can only be done through IREL in the public sector. Unfortunately, one fine morning the Ministry of Mines is coming with a notification that they are going to amend the MMDR Act, 1957 by which the private sector is allowed to get mining lease. That cannot be allowed.

Sir, there is one more point. As per the existing law, only the State Government is empowered to give the mining lease. By the new proposed amendment, even the Central Government is also given the permission or authority to giving mining lease. This is against the federal character of our country. The right of the States is being taken away by the Centre.

For these two reasons, we strongly oppose this amendment. I would like to urge upon the Government of India, through you Sir, to withdraw all the notifications and go back from the proposed amendment since it is against the national interest and against the public sector undertakings.

Thank you very much for giving me the time to speak.

