

Regarding death of a boy among three students due to waterlogging in basement of coaching centre and issues related to sea-food export in view of US Marine Mammal Protection Act

SHRI HIBI EDEN (ERNAKULAM): Madam, I would like to draw the attention of the House to a very important matter but before that, with your permission, I would like to say that it was quite an unfortunate incident which happened in the IAS coaching centre in Delhi. The boy who died in this incident was staying near to my Constituency. There has been a strong protest on the part of the students. It was quite an unfortunate incident. The people who are involved in this particular incident, even if it is the NDMC or even if it is the management of the institute who ran this illegal building, should be prosecuted according to the law of land.

Culpable homicide should be charged on this particular issue and strict action should be taken on this particular incident. No such incident should happen in the future.

Now, I am coming to my matter related to this 'Zero Hour'. It is regarding a very important issue related to the seafood export in this country.

According to the Marine Products Exports Development Authority, around Rs. 60,000 crore is the worth of the seafood which is being exported from India to the United States and to different parts of the globe. This is one of the major industries which the Government is also seriously looking upon.

The United States is currently the largest market for Indian seafood, with shrimp being the major component -primary export commodity. However, the Indian Industry is facing a severe threat due to the restrictions imposed by the United States of America since 2019, citing the need for Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) to protect sea turtles.

Furthermore, compliance with the U.S. Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) is also vital for maintaining our seafood exports. The MMPA prohibits the intentional killing of marine mammals in commercial fisheries and it is crucial for India to adhere to these regulations to ensure continued access to the U.S. market.

Conservation of marine mammals is essential not only for environmental sustainability but also for the economic well-being of our seafood industry. And we understand that. We are for it. But, unfortunately, we are in a position where the seafood industry is going to be drastically affected.

India had come up with various conservation laws protecting marine life and our marine environment even earlier than the USA. The survey conducted by Fisheries Survey of India (FSI) and Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) submitted in 2024, clearly stated that no marine mammals or sea turtles are caught in the fishing nets in the Kerala coasts. ? (*Interruptions*)

Madam, this is going to definitely affect our seafood industry. So, the Government should intervene and proper action should be taken in this regard.