

15.33 hrs.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2003 – contd.

Title : Consideration and passing of the Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill, 2003, moved by Shri Shatrughan Sinha on 18th December, 2003 and passed by Rajya Sabha. (Continued – concluded) (Bill passed).

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, the House will continue further discussion on the Bill for consideration – Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill. Shri Madhusudan Mistry was on his legs. He can take two more minutes. After that, the hon. Minister would give a short reply so that we can take up two or three more small Bills.

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (SABARKANTHA): Thank you, Sir. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN (TIRUNELVELI): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I seek your indulgence for one minute. I have to introduce the Bill at item No.39. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Pandian, the Private Members' Business would be taken up later.

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN : Sir, this is introduction of a Bill and would take only one minute.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: It is not a question of one minute but it is a question of procedural difficulty. We have taken up another item of business now.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY : Sir, we left this debate at the fag end of yesterday and I would not be taking much time of the House. In fact, I want to make a very few points very shortly.

As I said yesterday, I join my friends in expressing my concern in bringing this Bill so late even after recognising the International Maritime Organisation's conventions.

Now, it looks mandatory for all the ships and oil tankers to take permission and certification from the Government of India when they sail out of the Indian coast. What I am concerned much is about the whole Indian sea coast and especially the coast in Gujarat. We have the largest coastline in the country compared with other States. In the case of ships coming in for ship-breaking, we do not have any mechanism whereby we can check the entry of toxic materials like asbestos, lead, etc. So, how does the Government propose to save the coast of Gujarat from pollutants and hazardous material to which not only the labourers but also the people living in nearby areas become victims?

Recently, the Supreme Court has passed a judgement. I would like to know whether the direction that the Supreme Court has issued to the Union and State Governments has been taken into consideration. I would like to know whether a certificate would have to be obtained when a ship is being purchased.

The other thing is that I would like to draw his attention about the plight of the seamen. As I was looking at the Budget of the Shipping Department, a sum of only Rs. 14 lakh has been provided for the Seamen's Welfare Fund. There are two officers who will be, in fact, transferred and absorbed in some other departments. It is only in Chennai that they have these officers.

Thirdly, I would like to draw his attention about the Shipping Corporation of India as well as the Internal Waterways Authority, which, in fact, has to develop various other ports, especially in Gujarat where there are big rivers like Narmada, Tapi, Mahi, etc. Ahmedabad can be developed as a seacoast. Two hundred years before, Cambay was one of the shining seacoasts. Why is the drudging not taking place and why has the Waterways Authority not been developed?

From Goga to Surat is a four hours' journey by sea route, but if you go to Surat on a land route, it will take almost six to eight hours. So is from Mumbai to Dwarka, Dwarka to Cochin and Cochin to Mangalore. Why is the Department not developing these routes? This remains quite a mystery. But, nevertheless, I support the Bill and I just want to draw his attention to please stop from polluting the Gujarat seacoast and damaging the mangroves on the sea cost.

With these few words, I conclude.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, hon. Minister's short and sweet reply.

...(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI SHATRUGHAN SINHA): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, since I have been asked to be very brief, to make my speech very short, I will do one thing. Through you, I will convey my deep sense of appreciation and gratitude to this august House in general and to Shri Ramesh Chennithala, Shri Madhusudan Mistry, Shri Sudarsana Natchiappan, Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan, Shri Simranjit Singh Mann, Dr. Raghuvans Prasad Singh, who are not present in the House, Shri Anadi Sahu, Shri P.S. Gadhavi and, of course, to Shri Madhusudan Mistri in particular for their constructive suggestions, blessings and support to the Bill. But before I beg to move for ...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: for considerationâ€¦

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SHATRUGHAN SINHA: Sir, I am new to this. At least, I am being honest. ...(Interruptions) This is my maiden Bill which I am moving in this House. I am so glad that the entire House loves me, and so do I.

Now, I request the House to pass the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, the House will take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

"That clauses 2 to 6 stand part of the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 to 6 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, the Minister may move that the Bill be passed.

SHRI SHATRUGHAN SINHA: Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.
