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Title: Problems being faced by the fishermen in Ramanathapuram Parliamentary Constituency, Tamil Nadu.

SHRI K. SHIVKUMAR ALIAS J.K. RITHEESH (RAMANATHAPURAM): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am going to raise a very important matter of urgent public importance. My district is one among the thickly populated districts where a huge number of fishermen are living. They are unable to do the fishing because of the atrocities of the Sri Lankan Navy.

Our parliamentary party leader, hon. Thiru T.R. Baalu had already raised this issue of atrocities of the Sri Lankan Navy, in this august House. This is not the first or second incident in my constituency; it has been happening since 1983. After I became an MP, I have raised this issue six times in this House. In response to that, the arrested fishermen were released immediately. I was happy expecting that there would be normalcy after that. But contrary to my expectations, the situation has become even worse. Everyday, the Sri Lankan Navy is beating our fishermen brutally, breaking their boats, tearing their nets, taking away their caught fishes, looting their mobile phones, torturing and harassing them against the natural principle of law.

The innocent fishermen are their targets. I do not know why they attack them regularly and what their inner motive is behind that. Recently, when the Sri Lankan President visited India, all the MPs belonging to DMK and Congress party met him and represented this issue; and he had given an assurance that this would not happen in future. But it is still happening.

Sir, I am expressing this issue with broken heart. Somehow, we should stop the atrocities of the Sri Lankan Navy. It is not at all a big issue for our UPA Government if it decides to do it. Being a Member of the most affected constituency, I would like to give some statistical data about the atrocities of the Sri Lankan Navy. From 13th August, 1983 to till date, 223 fishermen have been shot dead; 89 fishermen are missing; and 516 fishermen have been wounded. For the past 27 years, the number of boats seized and drowned is 160. Since 1983, 299 such incidents have occurred. For the past three years, due to cyclone and depression, no fishermen went for fishing. But a day before that, the Sri Lankan Navy attacked and wounded 200 fishermen and damaged 100 boats. So far, 1280 fishermen have been imprisoned. The value of the cost is Rs. 600 crore approximately.

As an MP, I did not want to tell the House about the entire atrocity of Sri Lankan Navy. If we hear the statement of the affected fishermen, tears will come automatically. I have discussed with the fishermen of both the countries. The fishermen of both the countries are interested to do fishing peacefully. The Sri Lankan Navy is arresting our fishermen. Sometimes, our Navy is also arresting the Sri Lankan fishermen. Unlike our Navy, the Sri Lankan Navy is cruelly torturing our fishermen.

My sincere suggestion is that we should find a way to allow the fishermen of both the countries to do fishing. I have represented this issue several times. We could not find out a permanent remedy. I do not know what to do. My Party's as well as my only intention is to solve the grave issue of the fishermen. Thank you.