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Title: Need to take necessary action to release 32 persons who were arrested in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh on the suspicion of red sandalwood cutters and lodged in Chittoor prison.

**\*\*SHRI V. ELUMALAI (ARANI):** Hon. Madam Speaker, Vanakkam. Thank you for this opportunity for allowing me to raise a very important issue in this House.

Madam Speaker, I am deeply pained to state that as many as 32 innocent persons belonging to Tiruvannamalai, Vellore and Chennai districts of Tamil Nadu were arrested in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh on the suspicion of red sandalwood cutters and lodged in Chittoor prison. Madam, these 32 persons were arrested by the Andhra Pradesh police at Renigunta Railway Station while they were travelling through Garudadri Express from Chennai to Tirupathi. Madam, all these innocent persons were charged under sections 109 and 120 B of the Indian Penal Code and under section 20 (1) (d) of the Andhra Pradesh Forest Act. I fail to understand how these innocent persons were arrested on the suspicion that they would have gone there to cut red sandalwood.

Madam, India is an independent country. Any person can travel to any place, as there is freedom of movement. I want to know whether, at present, there is any restriction to this freedom? Can the poor be arrested on the basis of mere suspicion?

Hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Dr. Puratchithalaivi Amma has urged the Hon. Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh to urgently intervene in this matter and facilitate their early release. Hon. Puratchithalaivi Amma has also deputed two advocates to liaise with Andhra Pradesh Government in ensuring safe release of all those 32 persons belonging to Tamil Nadu.

I urge upon the Union Government to intervene in this matter and ensure that the Andhra Pradesh State Government takes necessary action to release all the 32 innocent persons belonging to Tamil Nadu, who are presently lodged in Chittoor prison. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER:

Shrimati R. Vanaroja,

Shri B. Senguttuvan,

Shri N.J.T. Natterjee,

Shri K. Parasuraman,

Shrimati, K. Maragatham,

Shri V. Panneerselvam,

Shri T.G. Venkatesh Babu,

Shri P.R. Senthilnathan,

Shri P.R. Sundaram,

Shrimati V. Sathyabama and

Dr. K. Kamaraj are permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri V. Elumalai.

...(Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: Please go back to your seats. Do not do like this.

...(Interruptions)