

[Sh. N.V.N. Somu]

18.10 hrs

fore the House. Though the speaker has announced it, yet the proposal has not come from the minister of Parliamentary Affairs.

(Interruptions)

SHRI E. AYYAPU REDDY (Kurnool): Members are treated in a very casual way. We do not know to what extent...

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMEN- TARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF IN- FORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI. H.K.L. BHAGAT): I say, Hon. Mem- bers are unnecessarily trying to take away the time. Speaker has the right and he has very rightly announced it.

(Interruptions)

SHRI V. SOBHANDREESWARA RAO: Speaker has announced it on the advice of the Government.

SHRI E. AYYAPU REDDY: We cannot even know to what time we will remain here.

(interruptions)

SHRI V. SOBHANNADREESWARA RAO: At that time he promised to inform us. Are we to suffer like this? Why not we meet tomorrow or the day after? *(Interruptions)*

SHRI N.V.N. SOMU: I would like to know whether the Hon. Members are going to get extra air ticket. That is what he is asking for.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not know. That can be discussed with the Minister. You can discuss it.

Now the Minister of Environment and Forests to make a statement.

STATEMENT RE NATIONAL FOREST POLICY

[English]

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z.R. ANSARI): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I seek your permission to lay* on the Table of the House the revised National Forest Policy.

The issue of revision of the Forest Policy formulated in 1952 has been under active consideration of the Government for some time. In view of the social, economic and ecological importance of forests, considerable thought has to be given to the multi-farious implications of the Forest Policy. Although the 1952 Forest Policy aimed at forest coverage of one-third of the total land area of the country, due to various constraints, this could not be attained. Rather, extensive diversion of forest land has taken place for non-forest use. The genetic diversity has also been considerably affected by the destruction of flora and fauna. The Government have increasingly realised the great importance of forests in contributing to the ecological stability of the country. This has necessitated a re-examination of the Forest Policy and giving emphasis to the conservation and ecological aspects.

The salient features of the new Forest Policy are:

1. Maintenance of environmental stability through preservation and restoration of ecological balance.
2. Conservation of the natural heritage of the country by preserving the remaining natural forests and protecting the vast genetic resources for the benefit of the posterity.

3. Meeting the basic needs of the people, especially fuel wood, order and small timber for the rural and the tribal people.
4. Maintaining the intrinsic relationship between forests and tribal and other poor people living in and around forests by protecting their customary rights and concessions on the forests.

The main approach outlined is as follows:

1. Existing forest land and forest will be tully protected and their productivity will be improved. Emphasis will be given to enhance forest over on hill slopes and catchment ares of rivers.
2. In order to conserve biological diversity, a network of sanctuaries, national parks, biosphere

reserves and other protected areas will be extended and better managed.

3. The people will be actively involved in programmes of protection, conservation and management of the forests.

We believe that the new Forest Policy will be able to achieve nature conservation and ecological balance at the same time meeting the essential requirements of the people.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to re-assemble on Monday, the 12th December, 1988 at 11.00 A.M.

18.15 hrs

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Monday, December 12, 1988/ Agrahayana 21,1910 (Saka)