

14.25 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

- (i) DEMAND FOR DIRECTING THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA TO GIVE UP PROPOSAL TO DEMOLISH SOME OF THE STEPS OF THE BRAHADEESWARA TEMPLE IN THANJAVUR IN TAMIL NADU.

SHRI S. SINGARAVADIVEL (Thanjavur): I wish to bring the following matter of urgent public importance for the attention of the House under Rule 377.

"The Brahadeeswara Temple" popularly known as the Big Temple, situated in Thanjavur Town in Tamil Nadu is of great historical and cultural importance. The said temple was constructed by the great Raja Raja Cholan of the Chola Dynasty. It attracts large number of pilgrims and tourists not only from our Motherland but also from other countries. The Archaeological Survey of India is now in charge of the maintenance of the Temple.

In the said Temple, there are 16 steps in the front courtyard, facing the gigantic Nandi (Bull) and leading to the Mahamandapam besides the narrow steps on either side of the entrance to the Mahamandapam. The 16 steps which are about 9 meters wide connect the court-yard with the Mandapam which is about 16 metres above and are mainly used by the devotees to reach the Mandapam. Further, the Vahanas for the annual festivals are carried along these steps. These steps were constructed by the Marathas long after the Cholas to facilitate the devotees.

Now it is learnt that the Archaeological Survey of India has proposed to demolish the 16 steps on the ground that the steps built by the Marathas take away the beauty from the frontage of the big temple constructed by the Cholas.

The removal of the 16 steps will cause inconvenience and affect the sentiments of the devotees. The other narrow steps on either side to the entrance to the Mahamandapam cannot also serve the purpose in these days when large number of devotees and visitors are thronging the said Temple daily.

In the said circumstances, the Minister of State holding independent charge of the Ministries of Education and Culture and Social Welfare should be pleased to take suitable steps to maintain the status quo in the interest of the public.

- (ii) CAUVERY WATER DISPUTE INVOLVING KERALA, KARNATAKA, TAMIL NADU AND PONDICHERRY.

SHRI T. R. SHAMANNA (Bangalore South): The Cauvery Dispute is pending for over several years. The States concerned are Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry. There is not much of problem between Kerala and Pondicherry. The dispute is mainly between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. The points of dispute are mainly the following:—

(1) The validity or otherwise of the 1924 agreement; and

(2) The protection of the existing Ayact of 28.2 lakhs of acre in Tamil Nadu on 75 per cent dependability.

Karnataka has made it clear that the 1892 and 1924 agreements were not valid on the following grounds—

1. The agreement was made when Mysore was not independent.

2. Before 1947, the Coorg District (where Cauvery takes its birth) and Kollegal Taluk were not parts of old Mysore.

3. At that time, Mettur Dam in Tamil Nadu was not Constructed;