

[Shri H. N. Bahuguna]

to foreign countries recently. The British Oil Co. people told me that this was going to be a feat if we could have the pipelines ready in time in this fair weather season. And if this 68 million job is done within that period, it will really be a feat *par excellence*. So far as this job is concerned, the ONGC has done a good job of it. I am not giving a general certificate for them. But, so far as this particular job is concerned, I find that there is nothing wrong in the proposition; nor do I find anything wrong in Brown and Root giving their sub-contract to another Indian firm. They will be responsible to me—I mean the prime contractor is responsible to me. So far as Brown and Root is concerned, it is their responsibility to discharge their obligation. With these words, I would like to state that in this country, this is a new job and that job has been done by the people with great responsibility. They should not be dampened unnecessarily.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : I had an apprehension and that is why I have brought it before you. In the meantime, if I have something to be clarified by you, I shall place it before you.

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA : I may invite you to come and see me in that regard.

15-58 hrs.

INLAND STEAM-VESSELS
(AMENDMENT) BILL

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI CHAND RAM) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I beg to move :

“That the Bill further to amend the Inland Steam-Vessels Act, 1917, be taken into consideration”.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Motion moved :

“That the Bill further to amend the Inland Steam-Vessels Act, 1917, be taken into consideration.”

Shri Kadam

15-59 hrs.

[SHRI B. N. TIWARI in the Chair].

SHRI B. P. KADAM (Kanara) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, may I know why the Minister does not want to make a statement after moving the motion for consideration in support of the Bill?

SHRI CHAND RAM : That was because the hon. Deputy-Speaker had already called you.

SHRI B. P. KADAM : Therefore, I am helping you.

SHRI CHAND RAM : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the necessity for bringing forward this Bill has been briefly explained in the objects and reasons of this Bill. The parent Bill was enacted in 1917—almost six decades ago. An amendment of this Bill was brought about in 1951. Bhagwati Committee was set up to report about the inland waterways. They made certain recommendations. Now, the recommendations were processed in consultation with the State Governments as well as the Inland Water Transport Corporation, which is a Corporation under the public sector. Now, this Bill has been brought forward as a result of that recommendation and consultation. Certain deficiencies were felt in the Parent Act and the present Bill seeks to fill up those deficiencies. At this stage, I do not want to take more time of the House except to say that the various lacunae that we had been experiencing have been made up in this Bill.

16 hrs.

When the parent Act was enacted, there used to be steam driven ships. Now, during the course of time instead of steam driven ships other mechanically propelled ships have come into operation. The title of this Bill has been changed. One of the provisions also makes it obligatory for the insurance of the passengers. Similarly, provision has been made against overloading of cargo and carrying of more passengers. Those who defy this provision will be penalised. Similarly, provision has been inserted to make financial assistance available to those who want to operate on these lines. The Parent Act was also silent about the mortgage of vessels. Now mortgage of vessels with the banks and others financing institutions has been made possible. Earlier there was also sometime dispute between different States regarding fixation of rates. Now, if there is a dispute between different States any State can refer the matter to the Central Government and the Central Government will decide the rates. Earlier there was also difficulty in respect of clearance of blocked channels due to acci-

dents. Now, provision has been made to remove that lacuna. With these words I move.

SHRI B. P. KADAM (Kanara) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I wish to support this Bill. One can very well say that the Inland Steam-vessels Act, 1917 is largely out-dated in view of the fact that the steam vessels have ceased to exist or have been out of operation as the oil-fired vessels have come into existence with the advancement of technology. One thing which the Bill wants to introduce is to name the Act afresh by calling it "Inland Steam-vessels (Amendment) Act, 1977 and, I think, it is in the fitness of things. Then, of course, certain changes have been introduced for the purpose of mortgaging to get financial assistance for improvement or for purchase of vessels. Then, of course, there is provision for clearing of the channels which are blocked by the wreck or any other matter. This is very good. Then provision has been made for compensation to the travelling passengers. Then there is increase in the insurance facilities. One more thing which of course is very welcome is raising the standard of discipline so that no engineer or no skilled employee will desert the vessel or be absent without leave being sanctioned thus creating impediments and serious inconvenience to the public. One can realise the importance of this measure because the negligence on the part of the operators has played havoc during fairs, during pilgrimages during stormy weather conditions especially on the West Coast like ours. During the monsoon period, of course, this discipline is still more essential because the situation gets worsened. At the same time, one must see whether the purpose is served and I am very much anxious to see that the purpose is very well served. Goods must reach the destination safely, passengers must reach the destination safely. It should invariably lessen the danger to life and property and the general economic conditions of the people must be very well served.

Sir, I have gone very carefully through the report of the Bhagawati Committee to which the hon. Minister has made a reference. Of course, it is mentioned in the Statement of Object and Reasons. On the West Coast, the rains are very heavy from June to October and the rainfall is upto 120 inches or sometimes even more. Floods are routine and at least we have two or three floods in a year and the rivers get silted. What is Government going to do for this? The hon. Minister substituted the provision in this Bill for clearing the routes of the waterways whenever they are blocked, it necessary by blasting. Unfortunately what happens is that the

rivers are silted up thus creating a problem and being an impediment for the navigation. What has the Minister got to say on this? On page 136 of the Bhagawati Committee Report, it is stated like this:

"Mysore State has a coastline of 285 kms. bordering the Arabian Sea on its west. The Western Ghats pass through the state from north to south fairly close to the sea upto Bhatkal...."

Eastward of Western ghats are the rivers Krishna, Malprabha and Ghataprabha. Tungabhadra and the Cauvery. These rivers flow across the state in an easterly direction. They carry only the seasonal flow and are not navigable in their reaches within the State."

There is not much impediment except the Tungabhadra waterways which is to be attended to. On the West Coast we have got important rivers—Kali and Sharavati. The Kali river transport carries a minimum of 35,000 tonnes of cargo per year and the Sharavati carries 30,000 tonnes of cargo per year. The things carried by these two river transport system are timber, bamboo, and general cargoes. Cargoes like tiles, timber, bamboos, firewood, sand, chunam shells, fish, etc. are carried by this river transport. The timber product like rose wood and teak here is one of the finest varieties and it is perhaps the best in the whole world which is next or equal to Burma teak. It is one of the exportable commodities. Unfortunately the Kali river is silted. The power launches get stuck up and we have to wait indefinitely for several hours. Of course, the country boats also get stuck up and they are not be able to move. This problem is to be looked into. The intention of the Bhagawati Committee Report and the intention of this very Bill must be very well served.

I want to draw attention to this report, on page 137, Bhagawati Report :

"The mines at Supa and Londa lie in close proximity to the Kalinadi. The deposits of iron ore stated to be of the order of 200 million tonnes have been discovered at these mines. There is no rail connection to the port of Karwar. Transportation of ore along the Kalinadi from Supa and Londa to Karwar for purposes of export provides good potential for development of inland water transport. A traffic survey is, however, called for."

This area comes under the Kalinadi Hydro Electric Project ; it is a big hydro electric project, perhaps the biggest in

[Shri B. P. Kadam]

Southeast Asia. The Supa belt covers an area of about 48 sq. miles and is going to be submerged in three or four years. The iron ore deposits lying under this bed are estimated about 200 million tonnes and they must be extracted and exported; it would give considerable long time employment to a large number of people. If the iron ore deposits are not exploited urgently, they will lie permanently submerged when the hydro electric project is taken up; it will be a loss. Besides, it will help us to earn foreign exchange. In this connection, I should like the hon. Minister to see that the purpose of this recommendation is carried out. I will now refer only to page 142 of the same report:

"Hydrographic surveys of all the waterways should be conducted in their navigable reaches and traffic surveys undertaken for formulation of well conceived schemes. Detailed cost-benefit study of the movement of iron ore economically to Karwar port for purposes of export along the Kalinadi is necessary."

Hon. Minister would please do well to look into these things. Goa is an area which has got vast iron ore and also very beautiful and well connected river channels. The main bridge at Borim collapsed about 6 or 7 years ago as a result of the collision with a barge carrying iron ore. I learn from my colleague from Goa that the barge is also lying sunk and so they now have a make shift bridge by the Army in existence and it shakes when people travel over it. When the Government has schemes to clear channels and waterways, I do not know why this should not be looked into. Dredging is a must in all the rivers in the west coast, not only in Karnataka.

I learn that the iron ore transporters from Goa are paying very nominal tax. I am sure they will certainly co-operate with the Government to see that the rivers are well dredged. I wish the Government would see to it that the purpose of the Bill is well served and that can best be done by implementing the suggestions in the report, to which I have referred as briefly as possible.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): Sir, with the advent of the private-owned British railways, the inland water transport system in the country was destroyed by the British Private Sector Railways. Today, what we see is they are killing the private sector railways and they have very successfully killed the inland water transport also. What is the reason?

Has the Government done anything in the last thirty years? I ask my friend on the right, Don't they owe an explanation to the country as to why this most precious mode of transport has been allowed to be destroyed altogether? What is the basis of inland water transport? In transportation business, what is the main basic raw-material? It is energy. Where the consumption of raw material is minimum and the output is maximum, that is the most desirable method.

Sir, as regards this Bhagwati Committee Report, which has been quoted, I happened to be one of the authors of that Report. In that we got this from two different international institutes. If you come to page 9—it clearly states—it is a fact which can't be disputed under any circumstances that one horse-power is known to move 150 Kgs. on road, 500 Kgs. on rail and 4,000 Kgs. on water. Your basic raw-material requirement for this mode of transport is a fraction of what you require for the road transport. Yes, road transport is growing by leaps and bounds. What is the reason? We have to find out from the Planning Commission, down to the Ministry and the Directorate. We will find out that.

Now we have a crisis in crude supply. Everything is most important. Most of the petroleum products are being imported. Today, in this situation of terrific energy shortage every where, we are completely neglecting that mode of transport which consumes least energy.

Then we are talking about putting a check on price rise. In price formula, how much transport consumes — has any exercise been done? Mr. Barua comes from Assam. If a thing goes from Calcutta to Assam he has to pay a minimum of 50% more than a Calcutta man pays. What is the reason? It is because everything is carried by road, and very little by railways. They have a huge marshalling yard in Jogi Gopa and that is going to vacant winds. What have they done in 30 years? I will reveal that on a future occasion. Then, what is the cost? We did an exercise in 1970 and we found that for a long lead of 600 Kms. and above, for inland water transport, the cost was 2.5 paise per ten Kms. and for road, it was 400% more. But the rise between 1970 and 1977 is much more in the case of road transport. Today, if you talk about price rise, you have to lay your hand on the mode of transport. That is not being done.

Mr. Chand Ram, you have taken over only a few days back, I wish you good luck here. You have come from a backward

community. We welcome you. But the question is, what about the pronouncement of a National integrated and coordinated transport policy? We have been talking about it since I came to Parliament. When you talk about planning, when you talk about planned economy, you are silent about the pronouncement of a national integrated and coordinated transport policy for the simple reason that there is a very powerful road transport lobby throwing money everywhere from top to bottom. I have said this long before, many a time on the floor of this House.

In advanced western countries—30 to Germany or America—they are expanding their inland water transport by leaps and bounds. We are a backward country, we have so much of water flowing everywhere. Here, the water transport has been killed, or butchered or murdered deliberately in a planned manner by people who are entrusted to look after it. I will come to those things later on.

Sir, I am Chairman of the Public Undertakings Committee. At present I am examining the activities of the Central Inland Water Transport Corporation. Very interesting and revealing information and evidence is coming before us, but I am not authorised to divulge anything here, and I shall not do so. I will tell the House through a Report in due course and in due time. But in the meantime, Mr. Minister, kindly make sincere efforts. Firstly, pronounce a national integrated coordinated transport policy and find out why the inland water transport has been allowed to die—and it is the cheapest transport and I say 'cheapest' is not a good enough word—and in the meantime, make efforts to maintain and expand the C.I.W.T.C. If you are pledged to putting a check on the price rise, as Transport Minister your job is to see that in transport sphere also you reduce the transportation cost to the Minimum.

I have been enquiring whether any sincere research has been conducted to develop a coal-fired boiler (quick-steaming variety) and at the same time small. No effort has been made. I went from place to place enquiring about it three years ago. Nobody could say that a coal-fired quick-steaming boiler suitable for inland water transport had been developed. It was totally dependent on crude. In the Bhagawati Committee Report we had clearly recommended that the maintenance of the important riverways in the country should be a national responsibility. But what has happened? We had made certain recommendations after doing a strenuous 3 year's work on this. We did enough home work. We did enough fact finding. We toured through the most remote parts of the

country and the Report goes into cold storage. My apprehension is that unless this is done, this Government will not be able to have a planned economy and will not be able to put an effective check on the price rise.

श्री लखन लाल कपूर (पूर्णिया) :
समानति जो, जहाँ तक अन्तर्देशीय वाष्प जलयान का सबाल है, इस संबंध में मुझे कहना है कि 30 वर्षों के बाद, इतना मौका मिलने के बाद, इस और समुचित ध्यान नहीं दिया गया और दिन प्रति दिन इसकी हालत बिगड़ती गई है और हालत यह है कि जो सेन्दूल इनरैंड वाटर ट्रांसपोर्ट कार्पोरेशन के पास जहाज हैं, वे काफी पुराने हैं लेकिन उन को बदलने की बात कभी नहीं सोची गई। इसके साथ ही साथ मैं यह कहना चाहूंगा कि जो भगवती कमेटी की रिपोर्ट है, उस में यह बताया गया है कि इस देश में करीब करीब 30 हजार किलोमीटर जलमार्ग है। लेकिन इसका हम सदुपयोग नहीं कर पा रहे हैं। इसके चलते हमारे व्यापार पर भी असर पड़ता है और दामों पर भी असर पड़ता है। इसलिए मैं चाहता हूँ कि सरकार को इस तरफ ध्यान देना चाहिए कि किस तरह से हम जलमार्ग की उन्नति करें और इसको ज्यादा से ज्यादा उपयोगी, बनाएं।

हमारे बिहार के अन्दर गंगा, घाघरा, गंडक, कोसी, सोन, महानन्दा आदि नदियाँ हैं। सारे बिहार में नदियों का जाल बिछा हुआ है लेकिन कोई ऐसा प्रबंध नहीं है—न राज्य सरकार की तरफ से और न केन्द्रीय सरकार की तरफ से—कि इन नदियों के जलमार्ग का हम उपयोग कर सकें। इसका नतीजा यह होता है कि सारे संसार में जितने लोग साल में हवाई जहाज की दुर्घटनाओं में मरते हैं उससे ज्यादा लोग सिर्फ बिहार में नाव दुर्घटनाओं में मर जाते हैं। यह इसलिये होता है कि हमारे बिहार के अन्दर, और बंगाल, असम इत्यादि जो प्रान्तों में ग्रामीण लोग इस यातायात के साधनों को बड़े पमाने पर

[श्री लखन लाल कपूर]

इस्तेमाल करते हैं उनमें अधिकांश में पुरानी नौकाएँ होती हैं। ऐसी हालत में उनको जान की रक्षा नहीं हो पाती। ऐसा इस कारण से होता है कि वाटर ट्रांसपोर्ट का कोई अच्छा प्रबंध नहीं है।

हमारे बिहार के अन्दर जलमार्गों के साधन के रूप में गंगा, घाघरा, गंडक, सोन, कोसी आदि जो नदियाँ हैं उनका बहुत अच्छा उपयोग हो सकता है। गंगा जिसकी 2500 किलोमीटर की लंबाई है—गंगोत्री से ले कर बंगाल की खाड़ी तक—उसका भी कितना इस्तेमाल हो पा रहा है? उसके द्वारा कलकत्ता से पटना और पटना से गाँजीपुर जाने का भी अच्छा प्रबंध नहीं है। इन मार्गों पर भी हम जो पुराने बेसल्स हैं, पुराने तट हैं जन्हीं का इस्तेमाल करते हैं। इनकी कोई अच्छी व्यवस्था अभी तक नहीं हो पाई है। इसलिए मैं चाहता हूँ कि सरकार को इस तरफ ध्यान देना चाहिए।

इन नदियों की वजह से बिहार दो भागों में बँटा हुआ है—एक उत्तर बिहार जिसकी आबादी 46 प्रतिशत है और दूसरा दक्षिण बिहार जिसकी आबादी 54 प्रतिशत है। इन दोनों भागों में आने जाने के लिए मोकामा पर सिर्फ एक राजेन्द्र पुल बना हुआ है और अन्य कोई साधन नहीं है। सिर्फ उसी पुल से रेल और सड़क ट्रांसपोर्ट आता जाता है।

सभापति महोदय : पटना के नजदीक भी एक पुल बन रहा है।

श्री लखन लाल कपूर : मौजूदा तो सिर्फ एक ही पुल है जिससे रेल और सड़क यातायात आता-जाता है। बिहार में तीन जगहों पर जहाजों से लोग आते-जाते हैं। एक बरारी से महोदेवपुर, दूसरे सकरी गली से मनहारी घाट और तीसरे महेन्द्रघाट से पलेजाघाट। इनकी बड़ी दुर्व्यवस्था है। इनसे

जो बेसल्स चलते हैं वे भी बंद कर रहे हैं और इसलिए बंद कर रहे हैं कि जो प्राइवेट कांटेक्टर्स हैं उनकी रेल अधिकारियों से साठगांठ रहती है। इसका परिणाम यह होता है कि लोगों के पास सिवाय नाव के और कोई दूसरा चारा नदी पार करने का नहीं रहता। मुना है कि परारी-महादेवपुर तथा सकरी और मनहारी को भी बंद करने जा रहे हैं। जहाँ कांटेक्टर्स चलते हैं और मनमाने ढंग से अधिकारियों को पैसा देते हैं और पब्लिक को बहुत तकलीफ पहुँचाते हैं। मनहारी घाट के जहाज भी बंद होने जा रहे हैं।

इसलिये मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि बिहार की जनता के जीवन की रक्षा का यह सबाल है। उसके आर्थिक पहलू और व्यापार को मदेनजर रखते हुए इस पर ज्यादा से ज्यादा ध्यान दिया जाना चाहिए, इसके लिए काफी खर्च किया जाना चाहिए जिससे घाघरा, गंगा, सोन नदी आदि में जलमार्ग की व्यवस्था हो सके। आजकल बड़े पैमाने पर जलमार्ग का उपयोग नहीं हो रहा है। इसलिए सरकार इस तरफ ध्यान दे।

SHRI BEDABRATA BARUA (Kalia-bor) : Mr. Chairman, I am in full agreement with what Shri Bosu has just now said, He had some difficulties in saying certain things, but I would prefer to be more blunt in regard to these things.

It is curious that this inland water transport in this country, which is ancient not only in this country but in the whole world, and which was existing in this country at a time when there was no road transport or hardly any railways a century ago, which continues even in modern times the most economic means of transport, is not being developed. All the projects for the development of waterways have been either shelved or sabotaged at the ministry's level or by persons charged with the responsibility of looking after the inland water transport corporation, which is supposed to run transport in the Brahmaputra Ganga canals and other national waterways, This is really something peculiar.

I am glad that Shri Bosu has made my work simpler by giving the comparative

costs for the different means of transport. If you take the road transport, which is monopolising the entire transport of the north eastern areas and employs about two crores of people, its fuel cost is 26 times that of the water transport, according to the Bhagwati Committee Report—one House Power hauls 150 Kg. on road and 400 Kg. by water vessels. Considering the fact that the fuel cost has gone up now, one can imagine what a tremendous amount of saving the water transport can give today by avoiding the waste of fuel, most of which is imported. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that water transport should be given all impetus. But what is actually happening is just the opposite on this. This system is neglected at the cost of other systems of transport.

Take the initial cost. It is double the rate for road transport and six times for the railways, as compared to inland water transport. So far as maintenance is concerned, it is 4 to 5 times for roadways and 9.6 times for railways per kilometre. In spite of all these favourable points for waterways, it is the road transport which is completely ousting the water transport, and that too in a very vital area where there is no other means of transport. As Shri Bosu has stated, now the whole NE area is in the grip of the transport operators, who are trying to see that there is no improvement in either the railways or inland water transport.

Before 1950 most of the trade in the north-eastern areas used to pass through the steamers. Even after 1950, about 90 per cent of the tea and 80 per cent of the jute used to go by water transport. Since then there has been a gradual deterioration of the channels. In fact, there was no maintenance of the channels and after the trouble with Pakistan in 1965 the maintenance was completely abandoned and there was no navigability. This is really distressing.

Our Constitution provides that there should be national waterways like national roadways and railways. Yet, what has happened to this cheapest means of transport? No particular route in the country has been declared as a national waterway up till now. When the Central Government has not done anything in the matter, how can the State Governments develop the waterways when they have no resources? When the railways could be assisted as early as when Lord Dalhousi was the Viceroy of India, why is it not possible at least now to invest some money to develop the national waterways and modernise them?

I do not agree with the Bhagwati Commission when they say that what the Inland Water Transport Corporation needs

is modernisation. They have simply not utilized even the capacity in their old vessels. They have fixed the rates in such a way that they are costlier than private operators. Then how can they compete? Is it a scientific commercial operation to keep the freight rate higher than the road rate at any point of time? Will the STC or any other government commercial organisation do it? Then, how can they popularise this cheap means of transport? I have got the worst suspicion that they are in collusion with the road transport operators at various level. That is the reason why in the entire north eastern region the water transport system has been completely neglected. Because the cost differentials are vast, it is not possible for them to do it. When goods come to Assam or the north-eastern area, they come by trucks because they offer lower rates, but why should there be an impediment in the Act itself? If it is a private concern, I can understand it, but so far as this Corporation is concerned, it should simply get in. You have to go to the north-eastern area to see to what condition they have reduced the roads there. Because thousands of trucks are operating in the entire area inhabited by two crores of people, making not only 50 per cent profit and raising the cost of articles in consequence but also making it impossible to maintain the roads in the monsoon season.

The question is one of management. I raised it in another forum also in Bombay. There is no question asked when a corporation like this, with its cost structure and position, makes a loss of Rs. 4 crores a year. The man in charge must take the responsibility for it. I do not go into the question of punishment, there may be some legal difficulties. It may be that the cost of maintaining the waterway has also been put on the Corporation, there may be other reasons, but there must be somebody, let him be a military person if you like, but somebody who will say "no nonsense" and get things done. The waterways have been ruined, may be due to historical reasons or negligence, but they must be kept open.

This is one of my demands, that the Ganga-Brahmaputra route must be declared a national waterway. After the Bhagavati Committee's Report which came in 1970, things have moved very fast. In 1971 Bangla Desh was liberated and we have not had problems with Bangla Desh affecting our transport from Calcutta to Dibrugarh because Bangla Desh is basically interested in the maintenance of their transport through the waterway. There have been a number of agreements with them. So, there is no difficulty or

[श्री Bedabrata Barua]

pretext. The Bhagavati Committee's Report is not the last word. Things have advanced so much today. So, in the interests of the nation, in the interests of conservation of fuel, in the interests of the development of the entire north-eastern area and its communications, Government should certainly declare this route as a national waterway and do all that is necessary to keep this open as it was open from the stone age up to the beginning of the century. I am not demanding much more than that. I want Government to give this their full consideration.

श्री ज्ञानेश्वर प्रसाद यादव (खगरिया) : सभापति महोदय, माननीय मंत्री जी ने जो अन्तर्देशीय वाष्प जलयान (संशोधन) विधेयक सदन में पेश किया है उसका मैं समर्थन करता हूँ और वह इसलिये कि आजादी के 30 साल बाद जल परिवहन के विषय में जो 1917 का पुराना कानून था उसमें संशोधन कर जल परिवहन व्यवस्था को इस देश में हमारे मंत्री जी अच्छी तरह से चालू करना चाहते हैं। इसलिये मैं इसका स्वागत करता हूँ।

सभापति जी, जिस प्रकार से प्रकृति ने हमको अन्य समपदायें दी हैं उसी प्रकार से नदियाँ भी हमारी प्राकृतिक सम्पदा हैं जिसका उपयोग अपने राष्ट्रीय जीवन में हमने नहीं किया जिसके कारण हमको परिवहन के मामले में बहुत अमुविधा हुई है। हम तो गंगा के किनारे रहते हैं, देखते थे कि अंग्रेजों के जमाने में माल ढोने के लिये कलकता की कार कम्पनी यू० पी० तक पानी के जहाज चलाया करती थी और कम पैसे में लोगों का माल पहुंचाया करती थी। लेकिन आजादी के काल में उस कम्पनी को बन्द कर दिया गया। बिहार में नदियों को भरमार है।

गंगा एक ऐसी नदी है जो बंगाल की खाड़ी से लेकर गंगोत्री तक बहती है। अभी इंग्लैंड के एक व्यक्ति ने बंगाल की खाड़ी से लेकर गंगोत्री तक गंगा में जल अभियान किया था। उससे भी इस बात की पुष्टि हो जाती है कि हम इस जल-सम्पदा का उपयोग करें। आज

दुःख के साथ कहना पड़ता है कि सिवाय केरल सरकार को छोड़कर अन्य किसी भी राज्य सरकार ने अन्तर्देशीय जल-व्यवस्था के अनुसार जल परिवहन चलाने का कोई भी इन्तजाम नहीं किया है।

केन्द्रीय सरकार प्रतिवर्ष बिहार सरकार को 6, 7 लाख रुपया दिया करती थी ताकि जल-परिवहन की दिशा में बिहार सरकार कुछ कदम उठाये, लेकिन हर साल पैसा लैप्स हो जाता था या लौटा दिया जाता था। इस साल जल-परिवहन डायरेटरेट अलग करने का विचार किया गया और केन्द्रीय सरकार से मांग की गई कि जल-परिवहन में बिहार को योगदान दे।

सभापति जी, मैं आपके माध्यम से एक और बात कहना चाहता हूँ जिसका इस बिल में प्रस्ताव किया गया है। 1917 के जो कानून थे उसमें राज्य सरकार को किसी प्रकार का अधिकार नहीं था। भगवती कमेटी की रिपोर्ट के अनुसार राज्य सरकार को भी इस प्रकार का अधिकार दिया गया है कि वह अच्छी तरह से इसमें कारगर हो सके।

अभी तक जल-परिवहन में चलने वाले लोगों को अपने जीवन की सिक्योरिटी की कोई गारन्टी नहीं थी। नतीजा क्या होता था कि प्रतिवर्ष, जैसा कि अभी माननीय सदस्य ने कहा, हजारों लोग नाव में बाढ़ के समय में डूबकर मरते थे। लेकिन इस कानून के अन्तर्गत इस प्रकार की व्यवस्था की गई है कि जल-परिवहन में चलने वाले यात्रियों को भी सुरक्षा की गारन्टी दी जायेगी।

इसके साथ ही मैं मंत्री महोदय का ध्यान एक और बात की ओर आकृष्ट करना चाहता हूँ। केन्द्रीय जल-परिवहन विभाग के द्वारा काढ़ागोला घाट से कहलगांव घाट तक चलने वाली एक जलयान सेवा है, जिसमें 150, 200 कर्मचारी कार्यरत हैं। कटाव के कारण वह सविस बन्द है। इसके द्वारा जो माल ढोया जाता था, ट्रक-लोड लेकर माल ढोता था, काढ़ागोला

घाट से कहलगांव घाट तक माल ले जाता था, वह जलयान इस समय बेकार बैठा हुआ है। इसलिये कि काढ़ागोला घाट में जो सड़क कटाव में कट गई है, उसको आज तक पी० डब्ल्यू० डी० द्वारा बनाया नहीं गया है। इसी कारण वहां पर चलने वाली जल-परिवहन व्यवस्था बन्द पड़ी हुई है।

इतना ही नहीं, केन्द्रीय सरकार के द्वारा जो जल-परिवहन व्यवस्था की गई है, उसमें प्राइवेट फ़ैरी वाले लोग मनमानी करते हैं, अपनी फ़ैरी उसके बगल में ही लगाते हैं। मुझे जानकारी है कि मैरिन एक्ट में इस तरह की व्यवस्था है कि सरकारी जहाज से कम-से-कम 2,000 फुट की दूरी पर प्राइवेट जहाज लगाये जा सकते हैं। उनको मैरिन इंजीनियर का सर्टिफिकेट लेकर जहाज चलाना चाहिये था, लेकिन वह सब कुछ नहीं होता है। वह बराबर जहाज चलाते हैं जिससे जो सरकारी जहाज केन्द्रीय जल परिवहन विभाग का चल रहा है उसके काम में बाधा पड़ती है। मैं चाहूंगा कि कम-से-कम इस विषय में केन्द्रीय सरकार विहार सरकार को जल परिवहन के मामले में आत्म निर्भर बनने के लिये, व्यवस्था को सुदृढ़ करने के लिये उचित निर्देश दे। साथ ही साथ केन्द्रीय सरकार से यह भी अग्रज कर्हंगा और विहार में जो कमी है, उसकी ओर उसका ध्यान आकृष्ट करना चाहता हूं। वह कमी यह है कि अंग्रेजों के वक्त में विहार का जो गंगा का इलाका है, साहब गंज से लेकर बक्सर तक वह श्री भग्गूसिंह या बच्चा सिंह के हाथ में नीलाम कर दिया गया था। नतीजा यह होता है कि केन्द्रीय सरकार द्वारा चाहे रेलवे फ़ैरी चलाई जाती है, या अन्य कोई जल-परिवहन की व्यवस्था होती है उसमें उनके या उनके कर्मचारियों द्वारा बाधा डाली जाती है और वे बाधक बनकर रहते हैं।

आवश्यकता इस बात की थी कि आज जब हम स्वतंत्र हो गये हैं, तो जल-परिवहन में इस कुव्यवस्था को समाप्त किया जाये और

एक विधेयक ला कर विहार की सम्पूर्ण जल-सम्पदा को सरकार के अन्तर्गत ले लिया जाये, ताकि नदियों पर और खासकर गंगा पर, किसी खास व्यक्ति को जो मानोपली हो गई है, उस को समाप्त किया जाये।

अगर जल-परिवहन व्यवस्था को सब राज्यों में कारगर ढंग से चलाया जाय, तो सड़क परिवहन का भार भी कम हो जायेगा। आज सड़क-परिवहन पर बहुत भार पड़ने के कारण एक्सिडेंट्स में वृद्धि हो गई है और माल-भाड़ा भी बहुत बढ़ गया है। सड़क-परिवहन के भार को कम करने के लिए जल-परिवहन के विकास की आवश्यकता है।

इनलैंड वाटर ट्रांसपोर्ट कांफ़रेंशन के कर्मचारी फरक्का, कहलगांव और पटना में काम करते हैं। आप को सुन कर ताज्जुब होगा कि उन से चौबीसों घंटे काम लिया जाता है, और उन के लिए रेस्ट नाम की कोई व्यवस्था नहीं है। उन की यूनियन के द्वारा, जिस के प्रेजिडेंट डा० रामजी सिंह, एम० पी० हैं, यह मांग की गई है कि उन लोगों को सप्ताह में कम से कम एक दिन की छुट्टी दी जाये। लेकिन अभी तक इस स्वीकार नहीं किया गया है।

उन कर्मचारियों की आज यह अवस्था है कि वे सविस के सम्बन्ध में अपने आप को असुरक्षित पाते हैं। अगर मंत्री महोदय इस विधेयक में उन लोगों के लिए भी कोई व्यवस्था करते, तो अच्छा होता।

मैं जल-परिवहन व्यवस्था को सारे देश में सक्षम रूप से चलाने के लिए मंत्री महोदय से जोरदार निवेदन करते हुए इस विधेयक का समर्थन करता हूं।

SHRI PRASANNBHAI MEHTA (Bhavnagar) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, at the outset, I appreciate the measure taken by the Government to bring forward this Bill to make a legal provision according to the requirements of the country.

[Shri Prasannbhai Mehta]

In the western most part of our country, there is a long pending project, namely, the Ghoga Dahej service project. I would like to put it pointedly to the notice of the hon. Minister through you, Sir, that this Ghoga Dahej service project is a long pending proposition. It will cater not only to my constituency but also the western—most part of our country. It has a good hinterland also. In my home town of Bhavnagar, a public undertaking factory is coming up, namely, the Machine Tools Factory. Its requirement is a cheaper transport system. This project is an important factor for the Machine Tools Factory because it will reduce the cost of the tools manufactured in that factory.

As you are very well aware, in any production, the cost of transport is a major factor. If you want to reduce the cost of the capital goods and other goods, it is very necessary that wherever water transport is available, you should utilise the water transport system. Therefore, I bring to the notice of the hon. Minister this long pending project, namely, the Ghoga Dahej service project.

It has not taken shape yet. It is said by the Government, time and again, that it is under consideration. I would urge upon the Minister to look into it and implement it as early as possible. That is my first point.

My second point is that there is rural area called 'Bhal'. There is a creek between Bhal and other parts of my constituency. A small boat is running there but it is very irregular and nobody comes forward to cater to this rural area. Therefore, I would suggest that Government should initiate and give a mechanised boat vessel for this rural area for the village people which will help boost their economy also. This is not only a question of my constituency but the whole area will be benefited and will help boost the economy of that distant part of our country.

SHRI SAUGATA ROY (Barrack-pore) : I rise to support the Bill since there is nothing in the Bill that is very objectionable. The Minister, after becoming Minister, has brought forward this Bill. It is also our intention that, in his maiden venture of introducing the Bill and getting it passed in this House, he should be helped by everybody. Of course his career is very interesting. Immediately after becoming Minister the hon. Minister Shri Chand Ram went for a long sojourn abroad and we saw his statement from London that

he was going to buy some trawlers from Poland. I want to tell him that there are deep waters. He is from a land-locked State like Haryana State and we come from a riverine State. You buy a ship. It may cost Rs. 6 crores or Rs. 10 crores. You buy it from Yugoslavia, Japan, or Poland, but you should be very careful about this shipping business.

Coming back to the problem of inland shipping this internal shipping has been an area which has been neglected in our country, and I am to say that after the Britishers went away from this country, the condition of internal shipping has deteriorated very much in our country. Especially those of us from the eastern region, those who have the advantage of having Ganga and Brahmaputra as our life-line, know that specially after the partition of the country all the river routes which started from Calcutta and went up to Upper Assam, most of them, were blocked for a long time. But now that we have got a protocol with Bangladesh, it is necessary to gear up the operation of merchant ships and others through Bangladesh, through different water ways as a whole. I believe Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu has also brought forward various irregularities, various acts of omission and commission by the Central Inland Water Transport Corporation Ltd. which has its head quarters in my State. I can only say that after Meneil Berry gave over the company after 1965 when its ships were acquired as an enemy property by Pakistan Government, after the Government took it over, the condition of the CIWTC has deteriorated every day. I find no logical reason why internal shipping should not be a profitable venture especially in the eastern region where the road routes are more difficult, more costly to maintain than the water routes. For this purpose what is necessary is setting up of a chain of internal river ports, and it was proposed at one time that an internal river port on the Ganges at Frakka would be set up. All this depended on the flow of water into the main channel of Hooghly river from the Farakka barrage, and now in the last three months after the recent conclusion of the Farakka Agreement, all hopes of any internal water transport in the Hooghly are going down. This morning I had the opportunity to mention that even an oil tanker which was bought for the purposes of serving the oil jetty at Haldia Port ran around at Haldia and it was in the danger of being broken up a property worth Rs. 6 crores or more would have broken up and gone down the water. Unless this whole problem of Ganga waters can be resolved, we do not have any future for water communication, not

only in the southern reaches of the Ganga, from Farakka downward to the sea, but also in the upper reaches of the Ganga as somebody was saying, from Raj Mahal to Buxar. The flow of water to Farakka will affect the water transport throughout this area. So, I take this opportunity of debate on the Inland Steam-Vessels (Amendment) Bill to disapprove of the recently concluded Agreement with Bangladesh and to emphasize that it has been a sell-out of the interests not only of West Bengal but also of the whole country under foreign and domestic pressures, and unless the waterway of the Ganga can be revived, there is no future for internal water transport and navigation in this area—especially in the eastern region.

I also want to emphasize at this stage that this Ministry of Shipping and Transport is an expert in closing down concerns. The Minister may or may not be aware that they have already closed down the Central Road Transport Corporation, a public sector undertaking, and I hear that a proposal has been mooted, in the Ministry for closing down also the Central Inland Water Transport Corporation which employs a large number of persons. We strongly object to any such step being taken by the Government; we want this Central Inland Water Transport Corporation to survive and thrive carrying the enormous amount of cargo that is being carried on throughout this eastern region.

Lastly, I want to say this. Naturally, the Act which was passed in 1917 needs a lot of amendments. But all the amendments that the Government is bringing are piece-meal amendments; they are not wholesale amendments. This new amendment that has come does not implement in full the recommendations of the Bhagavati Committee. It would have been better if the Ministry had brought forward all the necessary changes, as recommended by the Bhagavati Committee, for improving the inland water transport in the country instead of bringing piece-meal legislations, small legislations, for amending, for instance, the name of 'steam vessel' to inland vessel or mechanically propelled vessel. These are minor changes. What is necessary is a structural change in the whole internal water transport system of the country, so that it can really survive.

I have only spoken of the eastern part. I need not emphasize that there is also scope for inland water transport in the south India and, to some extent, though not very much, in the western India. But I would say that our main

waterways, the Ganga and the Brahmaputra, being in the eastern region, the needs of the eastern region have to be specially kept in mind, and I request the Minister to take immediate steps so that the original and promised inland port at Farakka can be set up at the earliest and also the inland water communications system near the Sunderbans, which is the life-line in the south of West Bengal, can be revived.

With these words, I give my support to this Bill.

17 hrs.

[SHRI M. SATYANARYAN RAO *in the chair*]

SHRI PURNA SINHA (Tezpur): Sir, it is a good augury that the Prime Minister chose to have the active association of Shri Chand Ram as Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Shipping. He being a person associated with the Inland Water Transport movement in India, we very much expect that things will develop considerably and that we will be able to see a lot of improvement in the inland water transport system in India.

India is mainly a riverine country where there are so many big rivers. Coming as I do from Eastern India and having been born and brought up on the banks of the Brahmaputra, we used to avail ourselves of the river transport system as school-boys and college-boys to go to Gauhati for our education. The train services had come later: the river system was the original and basic system on which we depended. Now, the history of river transport in Assam is such that river steamer services used to ply not only along the 720 kilometres of the Brahmaputra which passes through Assam, dividing the State into two, up to Bengal, but also upstream along the Ganges to Uttar Pradesh. In those days, when communication was so very difficult, it was the river transport—not only the earlier vessels of our indigenous type but also steam vessels run by the British companies—which used to maintain the cultural link between North India and Eastern India so that the people of the Garo Valley and the Brahmaputra Valley had emotional integration by this mode of transport. But now the picture is a dismal one. The joint Steam Company formed by combining the Inland River Steam Navigation Company and the River Steam Navigation Company owned by the British used to ply a large number of vessels—about 600 to 700 vessels. Not only steam vessels but other type of vessels also used to ply for the purpose of carrying goods produced

[Shri Purna Sinha]

in Assam and Eastern India to Calcutta, and other imparted materials from Calcutta onwards, at a cheap rate: at one time the cargo rate used to be Re. 1/- per maund. The Steamer Companies used to ply light steamers on the tributaries of the Brahmaputra also, apart from the main rivers of Brahmaputra and the Ganges. They used to go several kilometres inside districts and they used to carry all the agricultural produce into the markets of Calcutta and also textiles and other consumer goods into the rural areas. But after the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965 and the taking over of the steamer services in Eastern India and the formation of the Central Inland Water Transport Corporation, things deteriorated so much that, from the beginning, this Corporation created by the Government of India and financed by it helped only to murder and destroy the whole inland water transport system in Northern and Eastern India. I was President of the workers' union of the Central Inland Water Transport Corporation for many years. I have some insight into the affairs of this Corporation. This Corporation has been there only to lose. Now, during the Indo-Pakistan war, most of the serviceable steamers were left in East Pakistan. What happened thereafter? The Joint Companies kept the serviceable steamers in that country and the unserviceable ones, the old ones, were left over in the Indian waters. The Central Inland Water Transport Corporation which had acquired 670 vessels over the last ten years after their creation since 1967 have destroyed as many as 500 vessels worth 50 many crores of rupees. If the Members of Parliament go over to that area., they will find many vessels grounded on the banks of the river and rusted and used by homeless people. Either the vessels have been so destroyed or sold as scrap. This Corporation has been incurring a loss of Rs. four crores a year on an average and according to my information, they have sustained a total loss of Rs. 20 crores till now. What justification has this Corporation to exist as a public sector undertaking, I do not know? I feel that the earlier it is disbanded, the better it will be. All its assets can be taken over by the concerned State Governments and they can form their own corporations, if necessary, or these services can be taken over by the Transport Department of the State Government. They can run with the available vessels short-distance ferry services to carry passengers and the cargo.

In my State, not less than five lakhs of people cross from the north bank to the south bank and vice-versa of the Brahmaputra river from so many ghats. Some of these ghats are managed by the State

Government Inland Water Transport Department. The rest are auctioned to the private mohaldars. They charge any rate they like. But for a river like this when it is in high spate you require big steamers or vessels run by steam engines or diesel engines so that they can carry the passengers and the cargo from one bank to the other when the river is in flood. What happened this time when floods occurred in Assam. I regret to mention in this House that about 175 people died because of floods this year in Assam in the rivers of North-East. If some vessels or diesel vessels were available there, some lives, property and some cattle stock could have been saved. The Central Inland Water Transport Corporation has been an idle spectator to these happenings in that area. If the Government of India, that is the Ministry of transport and Shipping had cared for the development of river-communication in those part, particularly the States of Assam, West Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, things would have been much different from what it appears today. They should have been able to create employment opportunities to a large number of people. You know the river craft trade and the particular *Nzvik* people, that is, those who ply boats in Bihar, Assam and UP have almost become extinct now. These people are being shifted from river transportation to seeking land for cultivation which they do not get because there is not enough land. If, on the other hand, the Inland Water Transport Corporation develops the river transport, then I hope lighter vessels like the Hovercraft can be gainfully used as they do in Europe. Also Hydrofoils which are plying in the fjords of Norway can be gainfully used in strong current rivers. They can ply at shallow waters upstream to Sadiya and further inland.

At the same time there is no conservancy system. You know after 1950 because of the earthquake the Brahmaputra has become shallow and the tributaries have become unnavigable. If lighter river-crafts are introduced, they can gainfully maintain part of the river transport system that is essential in that part of the country. At the same time, they can ply ferry boats. Ferry boats are not so very costly as big steamers. They can be plied gainfully from one bank to the other, from upstream to downstream and from downstream to upstream, and cargo and passengers can be transported at cheaper rates. Now, road transport is in competition with rail and river transport.

Road transport is very costly. On foodstuffs and garments and other consumer goods which are carried from Cal-

Money could be made available and with the money the much wanted development of road and river transport should be achieved.

I would like to say that at one time Sodra-Dhubri 720 km. could be reached by river. To-day on 230 km. route from Gauhati to Neamatī it is impossible to ply freight steamers. We have never seen any steamer plying from Gauhati upstream during the last four or five years and gradually whatever is available at Gauhati and at the so-called dry dock at Pandu would also be reduced or taken away and ultimately the river transport will be the story of the past. I would submit to our Minister Incharge of Transport and Shipping to pay a little personal attention to the position now existing in so far as this water Transport Corporation is concerned. The whole system in the Eastern part and also in the Western part as Shri Saugata Roy and others were saying is sought to be looked into. There is enough possibility of developing inland water transport in India. People can regain cheap transport. Economy of the country can be improved and the consumer can be provided with things at a cheaper rate.

There was once steamer service from Calcutta to Silchar by Surma-Barak River touching (Karimganj or Kushiara river.) This is not existing now.

There should be some measure of effort in our conservancy to ply light steamers. I know river has gone shallow consequent upon earthquake happenings.

There were days when water could be diverted with the use of bamboos. Now the dredger provided is lying idle at Gauhati. It is said that there is no driver. Driver could not be put on the dredger which has been lying idle for the last so many years. This is too dismal picture of the river transport system. I hope our Ministry will take into consideration all these aspects and try to inculcate some spirit of service-business like and gainful in the Central Inland Water Transport Corporation. This Corporation has shown a loss of Rs. 20 crores. Other's show profit but this Corporation shows loss. The whole thing should be recast and remodelled and improvements should be brought about.

श्री चांब राम : यह जो अन्तर्देशीय जल यान संशोधन बिल मैंने पेश किया था इसके ऊपर आठ माननीय सदस्यों ने अपने विचार रखे हैं। मैं समझता हूँ कि जहाँ तक बिल की मुख्य धाराओं का सवाल है उनके बारे में

सहमति है और उनको समर्थन मिला है। व्यक्तिगत तौर पर माननीय सदस्यों ने कुछ सुझाव दिए हैं कि अन्तर्देशीय जल मार्गों को सुधारा जाए और उनमें जलयान चलाए जाएं। माननीय श्री कदम ने कर्नाटक और गोआ के बारे में कहा। दूसरे माननीय सदस्यों ने भी कहा है कि फला-फला जगह पर फ़ैरी सर्विस या जलयान सर्विस शुरू की जानी चाहिए।

इस बारे में हमारे लिये एक दिक्कत है, सेन्ट्रल गवर्नमेंट के लिये। और वह यह है कि जल विषय स्टेट सबजेक्ट है और कान्फ़रेंट लिस्ट के हिसाब से भी जब कोई बात करते हैं तो उसमें भी हमें स्टेट गवर्नमेंट से सलाह मशवरा या उनकी मन्जूरी लेनी पड़ती है। भगवती कमेटी ने ज़रूर यह सिफ़ारिश की है कि कुछ मार्गों को नेशनल वाटरवेज डिव्लेयर किया जाये और उन पर हमें नेशनल लेवल पर सर्विस चलानी चाहिये। बहुत सी स्टेट्स ऐसी हैं जहाँ दरिया हैं और उनमें जलयान चलाये जा सकते हैं, स्टेट्स चला सकती हैं। और जो मौजूदा संशोधन है वह इसीलिये है कि राज्य सरकारों के रास्ते में जो रुकावटें थीं या रैसैंजर्स और कारगो को लाने ले जाने में दिक्कत थीं, या उनको सुआवज़ा नहीं दिया जाता था, या पैसैंजर्स का बीमा नहीं कराया जाता था, कुछ दरियाओं में रुकावटें थीं जैसे जहाज खराब हो गया और वहीं पड़ा हुआ है तो कोई कम्पीटेंस किसी अफसर की ऐसी नहीं थी कि वह उसको निकाल कर रास्ता साफ़ कर पाता और जो मालिक है उस खराब जहाज का उस से इस काम का खर्चा लेता। ऐसा प्रोवीजन पहले बिल में नहीं था। तो जो रुकावटें जलयान या जल मार्गों को ठीक तरह से चलाने में थीं उनको दूर किया जाय इसी के लिये यह बिल लाया गया है।

कुछ माननीय सदस्यों ने कहा है कि हमने भगवती कमेटी रिपोर्ट की पूरी की पूरी सिफ़ारिशों को लागू नहीं किया है इस बिना के

[श्री चांद राम]

ज़रिये। ऐसी बात नहीं है। एक, दो सिफ़ारिशें ऐसी हैं जो हमने मन्ज़ूर नहीं कीं, बाकी सब मन्ज़ूर कर ली हैं और उसी के आधार पर यह बिल लाये हैं। इस बिल के लाने के बाद मैं समझता हूँ कि स्टेट गवर्नमेंट्स को सुविधा मिलेगी अगर यह अपनी-अपनी स्टैंट्स में जल मार्गों का उपयोग करना चाहें तो। हमने यह भी इजाजत दी है, पहले जल मार्गों पर जलयान चलाने के लिये माली मदद नहीं मिलती थी और उसकी वजह से जो सविस् है उसको बढ़ाया नहीं जा सकता था। हमने इस बिल में "मोर्टगेज" शब्द कहा है ताकि सरकारें वित्तीय निगमों से मदद लें सकें और राज्य सरकारें जल मार्गों पर अपने तौर पर जलयान चला सकें या प्राइवेट कम्पनियों के द्वारा चला सकती हैं।

बिहार, असम के मुख्य मंत्रियों से मेरी बात हुई, केरल के मुख्य मंत्री ने भी बात की। उन्होंने कहा कि हम कुछ सेवा शुरू करना चाहते हैं। मैंने कहा शुरू कीजिये सेन्ट्रल गवर्नमेंट मदद करेगी। माननीय प्रसन्न भाई मेहता ने एक सविस् के बारे में कहा, शायद घोषा से दोहज का जिक्र किया। उसके बारे में उनका एक सवाल भी था। वह रास्ता असल में इनलैंड वाटर ट्रांसपोर्ट का नहीं है। रास्ता समुद्र मार्ग से जाता है। लेकिन मैंने उनसे बात की है, अगर कोई कम्पनी उसको चलाना चाहती है तो हम जरूर मदद करेंगे। हमारी स्वीकृति की जरूरत है तो हम जरूर अपनी स्वीकृति देंगे। इसके अलावा अगर हमारी इनलैंड वाटर ट्रांसपोर्ट कारपोरेशन या मुगल लाइन उस सेवा को चला सकती है तो इस पर भी मैं विचार करने के लिये तैयार हूँ।

बिहार के कुछ सदस्यों ने सवाल उठाये है, उस मामले में मैं 18 तारीख को पटना जा रहा हूँ और वहाँ के मुख्य मंत्री से या सम्बन्धित मंत्रों से बात करने वाला हूँ। जो भी इस रास्ते में बिहार सरकार की रुकावटें

हैं, विचार करूंगा जैसे मैंने शुरू में कहा कि जल स्टैंट सबजेक्ट है इसलिये प्राइमेरिली स्टेट्स को ही करना होगा, लेकिन फिर भी यह सोच कर कि भगवती कमेटी ने रिपोर्ट की थी और यह सोच कर कि इनलैंड वाटर ट्रांसपोर्ट सस्ता है, और माननीय ज्योतिमयबसू ने भी कहा है किसी रिपोर्ट के आधार पर कि उसके सदस्यों ने भी कहा है कि यह जल मार्ग साधन बहुत सस्ता है, इसमें कोई शक नहीं है कि जल मार्ग रोड ट्रांसपोर्ट और रेल ट्रांसपोर्ट से सस्ता है। अभी मैं पिछले हफ्ते विदेश यात्रा पर गया था, एक सदस्य ने कहा कि मैं लम्बे सफर पर गया था, लेकिन मेरी विदेश यात्रा का सफर लम्बा नहीं था। इसमें मैं हालेण्ड भी गया था। वहाँ पर जो इनलैंड वाटरवेज है, उसकी बहुत प्रगति हुई है, बहुत बड़े पैमाने पर वह चलाते हैं। मैंने अच्छी तरह से देखा, समझा और जो लोग उसे चलाते हैं, उनसे बातचीत भी हुई। वे लोग भी आये और हमारे लोग भी, जो इनलैंड वाटर ट्रांसपोर्ट से सम्बन्धित हैं, वह भी हमारे साथ हालेण्ड गये थे, और कुछ लोग वैस्ट जर्मनी भी गये थे, उन्होंने भी देखा है।

मैं चहता हूँ कि जल मार्ग का अच्छी तरह से उपयोग हो। मेरी चिन्ता इस बात से भी जाहिर हो सकती है कि इस मंत्रालय को संभालने के बाद मैं कलकत्ता गया जहाँ कि इनलैंड वाटरवेज का हैड आफिस है। इस वक्त इनलैंड वाटर ट्रांसपोर्ट में 126 जहाज हैं जिसमें से 17 बेच दिये हैं। लेकिन उनको भी पूरी तरह से डिस्पोज आफ नहीं कर पाये हैं। जो ठेका दिया था, वह ठीक तरह से नहीं कर पाये क्योंकि पब्लिक ग्रैंडरटेकिंग कमेटी ने कहा कि जब तक हमारी रिपोर्ट न आये, तब तक न बेचो। हमने उन डैफरेंस में उसे रोक दिया कि नहीं बेचेंगे। लेकिन इसमें कोई शक नहीं कि जितन इनलैंड वाटर ट्रांसपोर्ट के जहाज हैं, वैसलज हैं वह 80,100 साल पुराने हैं। अंतिम जलयान 1959 में खरीदा गया था। इससे अन्दाजा लगाया जा सकता है

कि बहुत पुराने किस्म के जहाज हैं। बड़े भी हैं, लेकिन वह पुराने हैं, बहुत चल भी नहीं सकते हैं। पानी भी नदियों में इतना नहीं है। बंगला देश के आस पास पहले चलते थे, लेकिन लड़ाई के बाद उसमें विघ्न पड़ गया, सन् 1972 से अब फिर चले हैं। जो हमारा प्रोटोकॉल बंगला देश से हुआ है वह 27-9-79 तक जारी रहेगा और जलमार्ग का सवाल भी प्रोटोकॉल में आता है कि बंगला देश में वह सर्विस चले।

असम में गोहाटी और कलकत्ता के बीच अभी सर्विस चल रही है लेकिन वह पुष्ता तीर पर नहीं चलती है। मैंने पिछले इनलैंड वाटरवेज के चेयरमैन से बातचीत की थी और कहा था कि असम गवर्नमेंट से बातचीत करनी है, और उनसे फैसला करना है कि वह कलकत्ता से वापिस सारा माल भेज सकते हैं या नहीं। मुश्किल यह है कि जो ट्रक हैं, वह डोर टु डोर डिलीवरी देते हैं और लोग पसन्द करते हैं कि हमारे दरवाजे पर ही सर्विस आये। इनलैंड वाटर ट्रांसपोर्ट डोर टु डोर सर्विस नहीं कर सकती है, जिसकी वजह से इस सर्विस को इतना इस्तेमाल नहीं किया जाता है, लेकिन इस मामले में यह ठीक है कि यह रोड सर्विस के मुकाबले में बहुत सस्ती है।

मैंने चेयरमैन से कहा था कि यह आपको करना चाहिये। चेयरमैन ने कुछ ढीलढाल की। मेरी चिन्ता इस बात से जाहिर हो सकती है कि मैं इस सर्विस को सुधारना चाहता हूँ मैंने कहा कि मेरी तसल्ली उनके काम से नहीं है। उन्होंने इस्तीफा दे दिया और मैंने वह मंजूर कर लिया। अब नया चेयरमैन लगाने जा रहे हैं। इसी बात से अन्दाजा लगाया जा सकता है कि जब से यह इनलैंड वाटर ट्रांसपोर्ट बनी है, तब से ही अभी तक 16.19 करोड़ रुपये का घाटा हुआ है। आप अन्दाजा लगायें कि किस तरह से यह सर्विस चलती रही है और मुझे मालूम नहीं कि क्या कारण इसके थे। जब कारण मालूम किये तो उन्होंने कारण

बताय, लेकिन मेरी उनसे संतुष्टि नहीं हुई और मैंने कहा कि इनको देखने की जरूरत है। इसमें घाटे की गुंजाइश मुझे नजर नहीं आती है। इस घाटे को पूरा करने की उनकी कोशिश होनी चाहिये। 1975-76 में एक साल में 3.98 करोड़ रुपये का घाटा था। यह कहना ठीक है कि हम उसका इस्तेमाल करें, लेकिन हालत यह है कि हमारा स्टाफ बहुत ज्यादा है, इनलैंड वाटर ट्रांसपोर्ट के पास जहाज बहुत पुराने हैं, और भी कई दिक्कतें हैं। लेकिन फिर भी मैं हाउस को एग्जोर करना चाहता हूँ कि इस मामले में हम पूरी तरह से सचेत हैं और उसका उपयोग करेंगे। मुझे उम्मीद है कि इस अगले साल में, मैं यह तो नहीं कह सकता कि घाटा नहीं होगा, लेकिन वह घाटा कम-से-कम होगा, ऐसा मेरा अनुमान है।

मैम्बर साहबान ने जो सुझाव दिये हैं, उन का मकसद यही है कि ये सर्विसिज ठीक तरह से चलाई जायें। बिहार के कई माननीय सदस्यों ने कहा है कि फेरी सर्विस वाले गड-बड़ियाँ और बेइन्साफियाँ करते हैं। हम ने अब जो प्राविजन किया है कि ज्यादा माल न लोड किया जाये, ज्यादा सवारियाँ न ली जायें, सवारियों का कम्पलसरी बीमा हो और कोई एक्सिडेंट बगैरह होने पर उन्हें मुआवजा दिया जाये, इस से इन सर्विसेज के काम में कुछ सुधार होगा। इस के बावजूद मैं स्टैंट गवर्नमेंटस से बातचीत करूंगा कि वे इन सर्विसेज पर ज्यादा कंट्रोल करें।

मैम्बर साहबान ने जो सुझाव दिये हैं और इस बिल को जो समर्थन दिया है, उस के लिए मैं उन्हें धन्यवाद देता हूँ।

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That the Bill further to amend the Inland Steam-vessels Act, 1917, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now we take up clause by clause consideration. There