

Sixteenth Loksabha

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Title: Regarding financial condition of states in the country.

*DR. DHARAM VIRA GANDHI (PATIALA): I thank you, Hon. Madam Speaker for giving me the opportunity to speak on an important subject.

Hon. Madam, I request you to kindly give me five minutes today.

Hon. Madam Speaker, I am going to raise an important subject today that is going to be the central issue of Indian politics. It is the centre-state relations. Ours is a federal country. We have a union list, a state list and a concurrent list. But, in the last 70 years, all the Central Governments have encroached upon the rights of the states by either amending the constitution or by using unfair methods. Thus, the centre has become all-powerful whereas the states find themselves in a weak position vis-à-vis the centre.

Hon. Madam Speaker, all natural resources in this country lie in the states. The states generate all the resources. States generate all the G.D.P. But, the Union Government at the centre has all the financial powers. This centralization has led to an anomaly and imbalance. The states find themselves in the condition of beggars.

Madam, Punjab finds itself neck-deep under loans worth 2.25 lakh crores. Punjab has to pay 28,000 crores every year as interest on this gargantuan loan amount. Unemployment among youth is rampant in Punjab. Drug-abuse is common in Punjab. Agriculture is in ruins in Punjab....