Sixteenth Series, Vol. VI No. 12 Tuesday, December 09, 2014

Agrahayana 18, 1936 (Saka)

LOK SABHA DEBATES

(English Version)

Third Session

(Sixteenth Lok Sabha)

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LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Tuesday, December 09, 2016/Agrahayana 18, 1936 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[HON. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

… *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE (GULBARGA): Hon. Madam Speaker, I had given an adjournment motion. I had submitted one on Friday as well. I had also come to request you, but owing to lack of time I could not meet you. This is a very important matter. – [English] Situation arising due to hike in excise duty on petrol and diesel raised by the Government of India through notification. ... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I have received notices of adjournment motions from Shri N. K. Premachandran and Shri Mallikarjun Kharge regarding the notification enhancing excise duty on petrol and diesel. The matter is important; however, it is not necessary to interrupt today's business for this purpose. These matters may also be raised through other avenues. Therefore, I cannot permit any of the notices of these adjournment motions.

. . . *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Please proceed with the next notice. [English] I will allow the discussion during `Zero Hour'.

. . . *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: It has gone on record.

… *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: I will allow in `Zero Hour', not now.

… *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE: You may kindly convert this. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: You may raise this issue during Zero Hour. I am not refusing permission to raise the matter.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV (AZAMGARH): Madam Speaker, this is a very important matter. ... *(Interruptions)* This will increase prices. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: You may raise this matter during Zero Hour.

... *(Interruptions)*

11.04 hrs

*ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: Q. No. 221, Shri C. R. Patil.

(Q. 221)

[Translation]

SHRI C. R. PATIL: Madam Speaker, this year there is a likelihood of record production of cotton in the country, as cotton has been cultivated over a larger area. Cotton prices are falling across the world, and our exports too are expected to decline by 35 percent this year. In view of this, the Cotton Corporation of India has not yet begun procurement in Gujarat.

Through you, Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the Hon. Minister what the reason for this? I also wish to know when the Cotton Corporation of India will start its centre in Gujarat.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MOHANBHAI KALYANJIBHAI KUNDARIYA): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member has expressed

* **For Questions, please visit** https://sansad.in/ls/questions/questions-and-answers .

concern for the farmers and has asked why the CCI has not opened its centre in Gujarat.

Through you, Madam Speaker, I would like to inform the Member that the auxiliary centre in Gujarat has been functioning for the last 20 days. In Gujarat, 95,04,023 cotton bales have already been procured.

SHRI C. R. PATIL: Madam Speaker, through you, I would like to know at which position our country stands in cotton production. Which countries are first and second? It has appeared in the press that in Maharashtra, the Cotton Corporation of India has been instructed to purchase only 25 quintals of cotton from each farmer. Is this true? Will this not cause dissatisfaction among farmers? I also wish to know whether similar instructions have been issued for the farmers of Gujarat.

SHRI MOHANBHAI KALYANJIBHAI KUNDARIYA: Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member has stated that in Maharashtra only 25 quintals will be procured from each farmer, this is not correct. In Akola, Maharashtra, 1,21,613 bales have been procured, and in Aurangabad, 1,37,081 bales have been procured. This means that a total of 2,58,694 bales have been procured in Maharashtra.

The Hon. Member's second question was regarding our rank. In global cotton production, China stands first with 6.84 million cubic tons. India stands second with 5.82 million cubic tons.

DR. MANOJ RAJORIA: Madam Speaker, the Hon. Minister has provided data showing the country's advancement in cotton production. In this progress, several districts of Rajasthan, the State I represent, such as Hanumangarh, Banswara, Sri Ganganagar, Nagaur, Pali and others produce B.T. Cotton. However, no Cotton Research Institute has been established in Rajasthan so far.

Through you, Madam Speaker, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether there is any plan to establish a Cotton Research Institute in Rajasthan to further enhance cotton production. If so, by when will it be set up?

SHRI MOHANBHAI KALYANJIBHAI KUNDARIYA: Madam Speaker, regarding the Hon. Member's request for establishing a Cotton Research Institute in Rajasthan, I would like to inform him that two centres have already been opened in Rajasthan, one at Banswara-Udaipur and another at Gangapur. Work is presently underway at these two centres to explore how cotton can be produced efficiently and economically in Rajasthan.

SHRI RAVNEET SINGH: Madam Speaker, at present cotton prices are continuously falling across the world, and cotton farmers in our country are also suffering heavy losses. Is the Government or the Ministry preparing to introduce a warehouse receipt financing system to protect the farmers, so that farmers may obtain finance, store their cotton in warehouses and godowns, and sell it in the market when the prices improve? Is the Union Government bringing any such scheme?

SHRI MOHANBHAI KALYANJIBHAI KUNDARIYA: Madam Speaker, at present the Government is procuring cotton at the MSP fixed by it. The Government is considering how farmers can receive better prices for their cotton.

[English]

SHRI B. VINOD KUMAR: Madam, the Hon. Minister in his reply in para (b) and (c) had stated that the prices of cotton in most cotton producing States have declined during the current season, that is, 2014-15 mainly on account of worldwide cotton glut resulting in lower exports. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether the Ministry of Commerce is taking any remedial measure with regard to exports. Further, the Minister had also stated that the Cotton Corporation of India is purchasing cotton from the farmers while they

are in distress. At present, MSP is Rs. 4,050. Is the Government going to increase the price to Rs. 5,000? If yes, when?

[Translation]

SHRI MOHANBHAI KALYANJIBHAI KUNDARIYA: Madam Speaker, I have already stated the MSP. At present, the MSP is Rs. 4,050. The suggestion to increase the MSP is under our consideration, and we are examining how better prices may be provided to farmers. Secondly, despite very high production of cotton in the country, exports are not taking place accordingly, due to which prices are falling. The Government is concerned about the farmers in this regard.

[English]

SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE: Madam Speaker, NAFED is the agency which does the entire procurement of cotton in the country. NAFED, right now, has a huge financial crunch and the cotton production in Maharashtra and the entire country has been exceptionally good even this year. Is the Government of India looking at paying up Rs. 300 crore which is pending with NAFED since the Cotton Corporation of India is helping the Government of Maharashtra for procurement of cotton? But the MSP has become a

huge problem. So, what intervention is the Government is making towards addressing the NAFED issue?

[Translation]

SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH: Earlier NAFED used to procure in Maharashtra through the Federation. At present, the Federation within Maharashtra is carrying out direct procurement. Previously, NAFED had opened 54 procurement centres through the Federation, and this time the Federation is carrying out this work by opening 64 procurement centres.

(Q. 222)

[Translation]

SHRI RAMA KISHORE SINGH: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the Hon. Minister for the reply given. Today, adulteration has become a very serious challenge for the entire country. Whether it is adulteration in milk, in food items, or in beverages, it is adversely affecting people's health. This is a very serious matter. Despite that, the action that ought to be taken and the system that ought to exist are still not adequately present in our country.

Through you, Madam Speaker, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether the Government, in the light of the recent observations of the Supreme Court, is considering bringing a law to impose stringent punishment, including life imprisonment, to prevent adulteration in food and beverages. If so, by when?

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Madam Speaker, as far as the matter of food items is concerned, it is dealt with by the FSSAI. Through the Food Safety and Standards Authority, we determine the standards. As has been stated in my reply, we have the data for the last three years. This data is collected through the Health Ministry from the State Governments. The BIS comes under us; however, our Ministry is not

a Central agency. Different Ministries perform different functions, the work relating to misleading advertisements is handled separately, while that concerning food is different. As per my information, during the year 2011-2012, a total of 64,593 samples were tested, out of which 8,247 were found to be correct. Prosecutions were launched in 6,845 cases, and convictions took place in 764 cases. The figures for the year 2012-2013 are also available. The latest data for the year 2013-2014 shows that 72,200 samples were tested, of which 13,571 were found to be correct. Prosecutions were launched in 10,235 cases, and convictions took place in 3,845 cases.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMA KISHORE SINGH: Madam Speaker, at present in our country, FSSAI is the agency responsible for inspections. Under it, there are 151 laboratories, out of which 68 laboratories are recognized by the FSSAI, while the remaining 83 laboratories are not accredited by the NABL. The figures relating to adulteration that have come to light show that even in cases where culprits were identified, if I may cite the example of Bihar, 251 cases were taken to the criminal and civil courts. However, not a single person was convicted or apprehended. This has happened because the investigations were not conducted properly. Moreover, there is also a shortage of officers

there. Through you, Madam Speaker, I would like to know, Will the Hon. Minister establish an effective mechanism in the country for examining adulterated food and beverages, ensuring adequate deployment of food laboratories and Food Safety Officers, undertaking regular modernization of food testing laboratories, collecting data on adulteration at the central level on a regular basis, and taking appropriate action against the guilty persons?

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Madam Speaker, in the 'B' part of the first question, the Hon. Member has referred to the issue of punishment. According to the Health Ministry, there are two types of food: unsafe food and poor quality food. For unsafe food [English] that does not result in injury, [Translation] the punishment prescribed is 6 months' imprisonment and a fine of Rs.1,00,000. For cases involving non-grievous injuries, the punishment is 1 year's imprisonment and a fine of Rs.3,00,000. For grievous injuries, the punishment is 6 years' imprisonment and a fine of Rs.5,00,000. In cases resulting in death, the punishment is imprisonment for not less than seven years, which may extend to life imprisonment, along with a fine of Rs.10,00,000. For food of poor quality, a fine of Rs.5,00,000 is prescribed. In the case of misbranded food, the fine is Rs.3,00,000. For misleading advertisements, the fine may extend up to

Rs.10,00,000. For [English] food extraneous materials, [Translation] the fine is Rs.1,00,000. For possession of adulterants, the fine is Rs.2,00,000 in the case of non-injurious materials and Rs.10,00,000 in the case of injurious materials. We do have food testing laboratories. However, food safety is a State subject since all the work in this regard rests with the States. I have no hesitation in stating that, in most States, there is hardly any proper infrastructure. There should be a Steering Committee, a State Food Safety Commissioner, committees under them, and designated officers at the district level, but such mechanisms are mostly absent. There are 125 crore consumers in this country. From the Hon. President to the peon, everyone is a consumer. Everyone has to purchase something or the other. We ourselves are not satisfied with this situation. However, the Union Government has no direct authority in this matter. He has also referred to the FSSAI in this regard.

Madam Speaker, through you, we would like to request the State Governments that in other countries, cases of food adulteration are taken very seriously, but we do not treat them with the same seriousness. I would like to urge the State Governments that if there is any need to amend the laws pertaining to this matter, they should do so. The Union Government is fully prepared to extend all possible

cooperation in this regard. It is not only necessary to provide for stringent punishment, but also to ensure that strict action is taken against all those found guilty. We already have provisions for punishment. For the past 10 days, we have been seeking information regarding the action taken against such offenders, but no report has been received so far.

[English]

PROF. K. V. THOMAS: Madam Speaker, we have two very effective legislations for food safety and standards. But the implementation of these Acts is done by State Governments. Even though the Government of India has enacted these two legislations, my request to the Hon. Minister is that we should intervene with State Governments so that these laws are effectively implemented and there should be effective awareness campaigns so that consumers know what their right is.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Madam Speaker, as I have stated earlier, the matter was earlier governed under the Food Adulteration Act, 1954. In the year 2006, the Food Safety and Standards Act was enacted, and under it, the Rules and Regulations were framed in 2011.

The Authority was also constituted under the same framework. The Hon. Member, who has also been a Minister earlier, has rightly pointed out the issue. The difficulty, however, is that this subject pertains to the Health Ministry. We have constituted an Inter-Ministerial Committee so that matters relating to any Department are at least acted upon properly. Instead of leaving the responsibility of one Department to another, the work should be carried out in a coordinated manner, and we are ourselves making sincere efforts in that direction. If required, we shall request our Hon. Health Minister to convene a meeting with the Health Ministers of the States to review how this law can be further strengthened, and how appropriate action can be taken under it.

SHRI SHARAD TRIPATHI: Madam Speaker, under Column 'B' of Question No. 222, which pertains to food items, it has been noted that for the preservation of beverages and food items that are stored for long periods, sodium bicarbonate has been used until now. Preservation methods are also available under the Ayurvedic system. Through you, Madam Speaker, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister, Will the Hon. Minister be pleased to coordinate with the Health Ministry and formulate a policy for preservation using the Indian and Ayurvedic methods?

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Madam Speaker, we shall certainly take forward the suggestion made by the Hon. Member. ... *(Interruptions)* Shri Rama Kishor Singh had raised a question regarding Bihar. It is indeed a matter of concern that, so far, neither a Steering Committee has been constituted in Bihar nor is there any Tribunal to consider such matters.

SHRI SULTAN AHMED: Madam Speaker, in matters related to food adulteration and food contamination, the Hon. Minister has stated that the powers have been delegated to the States, and the Union Government also performs this work through food laboratories. He mentioned that in foreign countries there are stringent laws against adulteration and action is taken, whereas in our country, it is not enforced effectively. Fines ranging from Rs.2,00,000 to Rs.10,00,000 are prescribed, yet adulteration is still found in oil, milk, and other food items. Is the Government considering enacting any law to provide exemplary punishment, the strictest possible penalties, so that adulteration can be curbed? The Hon. Minister has referred to the Health Ministry and Food Processing, but how can the 125 crore consumers in the country be protected from adulteration? Is any such law under consideration?

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Madam Speaker, as I have stated, the punishment ranges from Rs.1,00,000 to life imprisonment. However, I repeatedly emphasise in Parliament that the Act is one matter, the fact is another, and the tact is yet another. Therefore, there is no deficiency in the law itself; the responsibility for its implementation does not lie with the Union Government but with the State Governments. We have a federal structure, and within that framework, we cannot go beyond these limits.

(Q. 223)

[Translation]

SRIMATI NEELAM SONKER: Madam Speaker, the Dussehri mangoes of Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh and the Langra mangoes of Banaras are world-famous. Their sweetness is unmatched by any other mangoes in the world. Will the Hon. Minister of Agriculture be pleased to inform whether any policy has been formulated to increase the production of these two varieties of mangoes and to ensure their preservation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. SANJEEV BALYAN): Madam Speaker, the most important point is that there is no shortage in production. Over the past few years, there have been persistent issues regarding mango exports. There are twenty countries where our mangoes could not reach, and discussions are ongoing to increase exports to those countries. In addition, there are some countries where mango exports are continuing. The Government is continuously making efforts to increase production. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: It would also be appropriate if they were to serve mangoes first.

... (Interruptions)

DR. SANJEEV BALYAN: In the Twelfth Five-Year Plan, the Government's focus is primarily on increasing productivity. For this, high-quality seeds of good varieties, the revival of old orchards, and effective medicines to protect them are being researched continuously, and efforts are ongoing.

SHRIMATI NEELAM SONKER: Madam Speaker, has the Government formulated any policy for life insurance of fruit-producing farmers and insurance for their fruits? In our country, fruit-producing farmers are affected every year by droughts, floods, and cold, and in some cases, even resort to suicide. If there is any scheme for this, kindly inform us.

DR. SANJEEV BALYAN: Madam Speaker, the Weather-Based Crop Insurance Scheme has already been implemented in the country. Under this scheme, whether it is crops or horticulture, insurance coverage can be provided. Regarding the Hon. Member's query about whether there is any specific scheme for farmers engaged in horticulture, no separate insurance scheme has been initiated by the Government for farmers working in the horticulture sector.

[English]

SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMCHANDRAN: Madam Speaker, we are extremely happy to note that India is the largest producer of fruits in the world. The fruits, especially, mangoes and bananas from India are favourite ones in the international market. But it has been distressing to note that huge consignments of Indian fruits, which have been exported to European countries, have been rejected owing to the presence of pesticides and insecticides. Under these circumstances, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister as to what stringent measures have been taken by the Government to see that the presence of pesticides and insecticides is being removed from these fruits. I would also like to know as to whether the ICAR is looking seriously into the matter.

[Translation]

DR. SANJEEV BALYAN: Madam Speaker, to promote the export of agricultural products, there were specific issues raised by foreign markets, particularly the European Union. For fruits exported from our country to Europe, plant health-related technical documents have been provided to those countries to ensure compliance. A stringent system of inspection and certification has been established to ensure that exported agricultural products are free from pests and diseases. A

Special Standard Operating Procedure has been prepared for agricultural products sent to European countries to ensure that exports meet their standards, preventing non-compliance issues that could affect our products. Additionally, the APEDA, the agency under the Ministry of Commerce overseeing agricultural imports and exports, is continuously working on various matters. Importantly, APEDA is focusing on infrastructure development, which includes sorting and grading facilities, pack houses, waste treatment plants, water safety measures, and fumigation. The second aspect is market development; until the market is developed, exports cannot proceed. This includes determining the appropriate packaging for products exported abroad. The third aspect is quality development, with laboratories being established to conduct quality-related testing. We are also continuously providing transport assistance through APEDA.

[English]

SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMCHANDRAN: Madam Speaker, I am sorry, I am not satisfied with the answer given by the Hon. Minister. I would like to know whether the ICAR is looking seriously into the matter.

[Translation]

SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH: The Hon. Member had certainly asked about mangoes. Currently, their export is restricted, and this restriction has been in place for several years. Our Hon. Minister has also informed that it was imposed due to an outbreak of certain pests, which occurred many years ago. I assure that within the next two to three months, this restriction will be lifted. Efforts in that direction are progressing rapidly, and we will soon resume the export of mangoes.

[English]

SHRI V. ELUMALAI: Madam Speaker, the import of mangoes was banned by the European Union in May last. What action has the Government taken to solve this issue? I would like to know whether the export of mangoes will begin again. Has the Government given any compensation to the affected mango merchants?

[Translation]

DR. SANJEEV BALYAN: The question has already been addressed. As I mentioned earlier, efforts are being made by the Union Government to resolve the issues with the European Union. Regarding the losses incurred due to the halt in exports, the Government is not considering any compensation.

[English]

SHRI SIRAJUDDIN AJMAL: Respected Madam, in a developing country like ours, where lion's share of the population are farmers, it has been seen that from the day of Independence till today, no visionary planning has been done as far as the farmers' most vital factor affecting their economy, that is, sustainable system of marketing, is concerned.

It has also been seen in my Constituency Barpeta and also Mankachar that vegetables and jute have been thrown on the streets by the farmers. Now, I would request the Hon. Minister to kindly inform the House whether any long-term planning is being done so that these farmers can sell their produce in the open market very easily and do not have to throw vegetables on the road.

[Translation]

DR. SANJEEV BALYAN: Madam Speaker, the Union Government has been continuously writing to the State Governments to bring amendments to the APMC Act, enabling farmers to sell their produce anywhere without any hindrance. So far, around 12 State Governments have given their consent, and directives have also been issued to them for strengthening the mandis. The Ministry of Agriculture has initiated a scheme to establish a mandi in Delhi itself, where space will be allotted to Farmer Producer Organisations. No fee

will be charged for this. Cold storage and warehouse facilities will also be provided within the mandi, where space will be allotted to them. The Union Government is making continuous efforts to ensure that all State Governments cooperate in this and amend the APMC Act, so that farmers can sell their produce anywhere without difficulty. These efforts are being consistently undertaken by the Union Government.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Virender Kashyap.

Hon. Minister, you have heard about mangoes, now listen to the matter concerning apples.

SHRI VIRENDER KASHYAP: Madam Speaker, Jammu & Kashmir is the leading producer of apples in the country, but Himachal Pradesh also produces a significant quantity. Over the past few years, we have observed a large influx of imported apples, which has caused considerable difficulties for domestic apple producers. During the tenure of Atal Ji’s Government, import duties were increased to 50% to compensate apple producers. However, in recent years under the UPA Government, import duties were repeatedly reduced.

Through you, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether the Government has any plan to increase the import duty to 100% in the coming days to support apple producers.

DR. SANJEEV BALYAN: Madam Speaker, it is true that we do import some fruits, primarily apples and cashews. In recent years, whether in Jammu & Kashmir or Himachal Pradesh, most of the work has been focused on improving storage facilities, reefer vans, and pack houses, particularly for apples, which has somewhat reduced apple imports. Currently, the import duty on apples is 35%. As of today, the Government has no scheme to increase the import duty. The existing import duty on apples remains at 35%.

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Madam Speaker, through you, I would like to point out that the highest production of pineapples in the country occurs in West Bengal. Unfortunately, there is hardly any food processing industry there, which leads to severe exploitation of the farmers. The region also produces oranges, particularly in Darjeeling. The Darjeeling area shares borders with Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh. Oranges from Darjeeling are exported to Nepal. Bangladesh imposes customs duty on Darjeeling oranges; in other words, if oranges from India are imported there, they are subjected to customs duty, whereas Bhutan allows duty-free import of oranges.

This situation causes considerable hardship for the farmers of Darjeeling.

Through you, I would like to ask the Hon. Minister whether the Ministry will consult with other departments to devise measures to protect the interests of these farmers.

DR. SANJEEV BALYAN: Madam Speaker, it is true that certain facilities in the North-East are insufficient, whether in terms of processing or storage. The Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Food Processing have launched several schemes to address this issue. However, the progress so far has not been as substantial as the Hon. Member mentioned. The Government is continuously focusing on fundamental infrastructure, be it storage or processing, because, as the Hon. Member is aware, transportation costs in the region are very high. Until proper processing facilities are in place, the fruits are likely to spoil. ... *(Interruptions)* The Hon. Member is referring to West Bengal. It is true that the country lacks adequate facilities there as well, but work on this is ongoing. Both Ministries are working together on this matter. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: what about the exports going to Bangladesh? ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: We shall take this matter up.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH: The discussions will be held with the concerned authorities regarding this issue.

(Q. 224)

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHAV LAKHANPAL: Madam Speaker, through you, I would like to raise before the House a subject which perhaps has been discussed earlier as well. We all know that during the Olympics, Commonwealth Games, or Asian Games, India ranks very low in the medal tally relative to its population. It is a matter of shame that smaller countries often win more medals than our cities. The policies of the previous Government regarding sports were flawed in some way, or there was a lack of proper monitoring mechanisms.

Through you, my question to the Hon. Minister is: Is the new Government considering establishing a monitoring mechanism to encourage sports at the junior, middle, and senior levels in schools and colleges? Alongside this, will it also ensure that the budget allocated for sports is being utilized appropriately?

[English]

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL: Madam, the Hon. Member has brought a very, very important question to his House. This is a very serious matter for all of us. As you know, sports is a State subject and to promote sports and its development, both the State and the Centre

must go hand-in-hand. In this regard, whatever policy that has been framed, is aimed to promote and develop sports in the country. Particularly, our Hon. Prime Minister has given a lot of emphasis for the promotion of sports in the country. That is why, in the last Budget there was an additional allocation of resources.

As you know, particularly to target medals in the international events, we have to prepare from the grassroots, that is, from the school level. At the same time, now-a-days sports science and sports medicine have become an integral part of the entire exercise. That is why, physical fitness is very essential for all the school children to develop their ability in different disciplines of sports.

As you know, the subject of sports in school comes under the domain of the Ministry of Human Resource Development. We have been working with them to closely integrate sports and physical education with school education. From our side, SAI has always been conducting sports talent contest at different levels. Even through our Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan we conduct rural sports, woman sports, backward region sports and North-Eastern Region sports. Also, of late, we have included one more scheme, that is called Himalayan Region Sports. These are aimed to cater to our school children for a better tomorrow.

I would like to inform the Hon. Member of Parliament that this Government has decided to launch a new scheme in the next year, that is, National Sports Talent Search Scheme for children between the age of 8 and 12. This particular talent search scheme will be conducted at the block and district levels in every State. After completion of this particular test, a number of talented school going children will be selected and groomed accordingly. At the State level, junior sports academies and sport hostels equipped with better training facilities and better exposure will also be started for them. This is the target we have fixed for the future sports in India.

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHAV LAKHANPAL: Madam Speaker, in our country, at the rural level, at the block level, or in villages with a large population, the establishment of sports centres or provision of sports-related facilities is lacking. For instance, in my Parliamentary Constituency of Saharanpur, there is an annual Kabaddi competition in which participants come from various regions. However, the local players organise it themselves by collecting funds or through donations. They receive no financial assistance from the Government. My question is whether the Government will prepare any special

scheme to identify and nurture talent at the village level, as our country is not lacking in talent?

[English]

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL: Madam, we have a scheme, that is, Rural Sports Competitions. We give financial assistance to the States and the Union Territories. At block level we give Rs. 1 lakh per block, at district level Rs. 4 lakh per district, at State level Rs. 2 lakh per district and at national level Rs. 10 lakh per discipline. This is mainly to groom talent in the countryside.

I would like to make a sensible request to the Hon. Members of this august House to help these four competitions to grow and develop, namely, Rural Sports Competitions, Woman Sports Competitions, North East Games and Sports Competition for Left Wing Extremism affected areas. If we could organize these competitions perfectly, then definitely our talents in villages will get a chance to prosper distinctly.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri J. C. Divakar Reddy – Not present.

Shrimati Ranjeet Ranjan.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI RANJEET RANJAN: Madam Speaker, the Minister himself is also a sportsperson, and we used to play cricket in the past. In your response, you have provided details of the RGK Scheme, which envisages the development of playgrounds in Gram Panchayats under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act of the Ministry of Rural Development. However, we have heard that the ongoing MGNREGA scheme in four hundred and fifty districts is now proposed to be implemented in only two hundred districts. Earlier, under the Rajiv Gandhi Sports Authority, work was already underway in Panchayats and Blocks. The answer you gave and the written reply differ significantly. As the Hon. Member mentioned, regarding how development will be carried out at the village level, you have provided a response. However, according to the written reply, development of playgrounds at the rural level was to be initiated under the Rural and MGNREGA schemes, as the primary purpose of the MGNREGA Act was labour development. Therefore, the Ministry, with a larger budget, focused on developing sports infrastructure at the block level. Now, the allocation has been reduced from Rs. 500,000 to Rs. 160,000. I would like to ask how many blocks and Panchayats this scheme was already operational in, and how many blocks and Panchayats have benefited so far. You may

respond for only six months, as payments under MGNREGA have not been made since May. The scheme was that playgrounds would be provided in the Panchayats, stadiums at the Block level, and the allowance for children, which at the Block level is only Rs. 5,000, would be increased. The allowance per person and child is Rs. 260, which also includes rent; this is the minimum required amount. Will you increase it further? The Hon. Member is asking whether corruption in its implementation will be reduced so that the talent of children can be nurtured.

[English]

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL : Madam, I would like to let the Hon. Member know that the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan (RGKA) has started from this year. Till February, it was PYKKA and later on PYKKA was replaced by RGKA. So, through this scheme, we will definitely reach to all the blocks in the country, and the Gram Panchayats will also develop playgrounds for all children to play.

[Translation]

SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR: Madam Speaker, Thank you. A very important question regarding sports has been raised here today. I believe that even today, very few families in India consider that their

children's future lies in sports. Employment is not generated through sports; even if one is a good player, they are unable to secure a job. This is a major problem. Secondly, when a person begins to play, the basic infrastructure is inadequate, and insufficient funds are spent on research and development. In countries across the world, the maximum possible funds are allocated to research and development to enhance the potential of athletes, so that they can win the maximum number of medals. There, both quantity and quality are emphasised. However, for many years, the Government of India has not run any programme aimed at maximising medal wins. I would like to ask whether this Government intends to implement such a programme so that we can win the maximum number of medals in the 2016 and 2020 Olympics, and what is the Government's plan in this regard?

[English]

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL: Madam, we have constituted a Committee called the Target Olympic Podium (TOP). This Committee comprises many veteran players of the country who have brought so many laurels to the country from international events. So, this Committee will select elite athletes, a minimum of 150, and this group of athletes will be groomed and they will be given all possible

support by our Government so that they can bring medals from the Olympics.

DR. MRIGANKA MAHATO: Respected Madam, it has been found that different sports are popular in different parts of India like football is popular in Bengal, North-East and Goa, and archery and athletics is popular in Jharkhand and several other States. So, my request to the Central Government is that the Central Government should concentrate on specific sports; target specific areas; and set-up sports academies so that those sports can be developed in that area and grooming can be done properly.

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL: Yes, I do agree with you, and for your information, we are going to start so many academies in the coming years so that we could facilitate our sportspersons to have better training facilities.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAMMAD SALIM: Madam Speaker, several questions have been answered, but nearly two decades ago, when the first Parliamentary HRD Committee was constituted, it had provided certain recommendations to the Government regarding sports. After that, several Governments came, several Sports Ministers served, but

that report was treated lightly, not taken seriously, and even today the same situation continues. The Minister himself hails from North-East India. Today, talent is emerging not from major cities but from small and medium towns and rural areas, yet emphasis is placed on events such as the Commonwealth Games. The Government allocates funds for these, expenses are incurred, sponsorships come in, and many people end up in jail, some are out on bail, some remain involved in sports. … *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Salim ji, please ask your question. You are saying a lot in a light-hearted manner.

… (Interruptions)

SHRI MOHAMMAD SALIM: I am referring to those who are out on bail. . . . *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Please ask your question.

SHRI MOHAMMAD SALIM: I state this clearly. In rural areas, at the sub-division and Taluka level, if sports infrastructure is not developed, there are several schemes, but the athletes who wish to play have to come to cities. Nowadays, private academies are emerging. Will the Government provide increased scholarships to such talent so that they receive proper nutrition, travel, and

accommodation facilities? People approach Members of Parliament saying that they do not have the fare for trains and therefore cannot attend the camps. Hence, will these scholarships or stipends be provided directly to talented youth at the district level or not?

[English]

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL: Madam, this is a very, very important suggestion which the Hon. Member has given. For the talented sportspersons, the Government will definitely try to find some way to help them out.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SANTOSH AHLAWAT: Madam Speaker, through you, I would like to address the Hon. Minister that there is a lack of well-developed sports grounds in rural areas. Does the Hon. Minister intend to formulate any scheme for the promotion of our traditional games, which are gradually disappearing, in rural regions?

[English]

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL: Madam, as I have already said, through Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan, we will develop playfields at *Gram Panchayat* levels which could accommodate our boys and girls in the villages. The target is to reach the villages. We have got so many

villages in the country. Our Ministry's target will be to reach the remotest villages so that we could detect talented sportspersons, bring them on to the right platform and give them the best possible facilities to play for India in the future.

[Translation]

SHRI VIRENDRA SINGH: Madam Speaker, the issue of sports cannot be resolved merely through question and answer sessions.

HON. SPEAKER: You may request a discussion on this matter.

SHRI VIRENDRA SINGH: Madam Speaker, I would like to urge you that the Parliament of the country engage in an honest discussion on this, and a comprehensive sports policy be formulated. Through you, I would like to raise one question on this issue. I have been a wrestler and I know the difficulties faced by wrestlers, the many challenges they have to overcome. This is not a political issue; it is a matter of national dignity. Initially, it is not even clear which sport yields a medal.

Madam Speaker, I am not opposing cricketers, but it seems that cricketers are treated like deities, while rural sports players are treated as their subordinates. We are wrestlers, Hon. Mulayam Singh Ji is a wrestler, and our Home Minister has also been a wrestler. They

understand that rural sports are not merely about producing athletes; they cultivate harmony in society and strengthen the social fabric.

HON. SPEAKER: You may either ask a question or request a half-hour discussion.

SHRI VIRENDRA SINGH: I would like to request a half-hour discussion on this matter.

HON. SPEAKER: Please submit it in writing.

. . . *(Interruptions)*

AN HON. MEMBER: Madam Speaker, I would like to ask about Sarita Devi, the boxer ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: I understand the sentiments of all Members. You may request a discussion on Indian sports in writing, and it will be granted.

(Q. 225)

[Translation]

SHRI RAM MOHAN NAIDU KINJARAPU: Madam Speaker, the Government of India earns a revenue of Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 25,000 as tax from every acre of sugarcane field. In our country, there are approximately 640 sugar industries, out of which only 570 were operational last year. If we look at their condition, only 20 industries are running in profit. Madam Speaker, as of 1st April, the payment due to the farmers stands at Rs. 14,000 crore. In view of this, I would like to ask the Hon. Minister whether it can be made mandatory for every sugar industry to produce renewable energy from sugar waste. I have a small suggestion as well, through this, we can promote renewable energy, and if the Government provides some support to the farmers, it will benefit both the farmers and the industry. I would like to know what the Government's view is on this matter.

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT, MINISTER OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): Madam Speaker, the entire House should appreciate that a young Member from Andhra Pradesh is speaking such good Hindi.

HON. SPEAKER: This is a very good thing.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Madam Speaker, with regard to the question raised by the Hon. Member about the pending payments, I would like to inform the House that during the year 2013-2014, the total amount due to the farmers was Rs. 58,269 crore. Out of this, Rs. 54,621 crore has already been paid. Now, only Rs. 3,648 crore remains pending. Out of this, Uttar Pradesh has arrears of Rs. 1,157 crore, Karnataka has Rs. 1,725 crore pending. We have the figures for all States, Maharashtra has Rs. 40.13 crore pending, Tamil Nadu Rs. 363 crore, Bihar Rs. 98 crore, Uttarakhand Rs. 199 crore, Gujarat Rs. 2.26 crore, Andhra Pradesh Rs. 36 crore, Telangana nil, Madhya Pradesh nil, Puducherry Rs. 15 crore, Odisha nil, West Bengal Rs. 4.92 crore, Punjab nil, Haryana nil, Goa nil, and Chhattisgarh nil. ... *(Interruptions)* In Uttar Pradesh, among those who have outstanding payments, Bajaj Mills owes Rs. 224 crore, Modi Mills Rs. 299 crore, Mawana Rs. 364 crore, and Simbhaoli Rs. 155 crore.

As far as the Government is concerned, it is equally concerned for both the mill owners and the farmers. When this issue came up, the situation in Uttar Pradesh was particularly grave. We convened a meeting attended by Shri Kalraj Mishra, Shrimati Maneka Gandhi, Shri Nitin Gadkari, Dr. Sanjeev Balyan, Shri Radha Mohan Singh,

and Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman. We deliberated upon the matter seriously and, as stated in our reply, we considered the four suggestions put forward by the mill owners. The first suggestion was to raise the import duty from 15 to 40 percent. We increased it to 25 percent, because even when the duty was 10, no imports had taken place, and there was no import even at 15 or 25 percent. Therefore, the question of raising it to 40 percent did not arise. The second suggestion pertained to export incentives. The export incentives had been enhanced for the years 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. The year 2013-2014 concluded in September, and we are reviewing the matter afresh. The third point related to soft loans. An amount of Rs. 6,600 crore was sanctioned, out of which Rs. 6,400 crore has already been disbursed. The fourth was regarding ethanol. The blending ratio, which was earlier at two percent, has been approved for enhancement up to ten percent, and we have already initiated steps in that direction.

As regards the Hon. Member's suggestion concerning the use of sugar mill waste for renewable energy generation, we shall duly consider this proposal.

SHRI RAM MOHAN NAIDU KINJARAPU: Madam Speaker, my question is that, in his reply, the Hon. Minister stated that a five percent blending of alcohol has been made mandatory. However, if

we look at the ground situation, this is not being implemented. The Oil Marketing Companies are not honouring the Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Scheme, due to which the sugar industries are facing severe difficulties. I would like to know the Hon. Minister's views on this matter.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Some mill owners are blending only one percent, while others are not blending at all. Therefore, we have made it compulsory to ensure a five percent blending, and if overall blending does not reach that level, another mill may go up to ten percent. In our view, ethanol is the most beneficial product for the mill owners. The day ethanol blending in petrol reaches ten Percent, it will prove to be highly advantageous. At present, most of the ethanol is being diverted towards liquor production and chemical industries, as the liquor manufacturers and chemical producers directly purchase it. However, for petrol blending, Government regulations require tenders and a formal process. Hence, the issue of ethanol is of great significance, and the Government is prepared to encourage its wider use within the industry.

09. 12. 2014

*WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Starred Question Nos. 226 to 240

Unstarred Question Nos. 2531 to 2760

* **For Questions, please visit** https://sansad.in/ls/questions/questions-and-answers .

12.00hrs

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: Now, Papers to be Laid on the Table.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI THAAWAR CHAND GEHLOT): Madam Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table a copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub section (1) of Section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956:-

(1) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation, New Delhi, for the year 2013-2014.

(ii) Annual Report of the National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation, New Delhi, for the year 2013-2014, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(Placed in Library, See No. LT 1039/16/14)

(2)(i) Review by the Government of the working of the National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation, Delhi, for the year 2013-2014.

(ii) Annual Report of the National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation, Delhi, for the year 2013-2014, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(Placed in Library, See No. LT 1040/16/14)

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI KIREN RIJIJU): Madam, on behalf of my colleague Shri Prakash Javadekar, I beg to lay on the Table:

(1) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) issued under Sections 3, 12 & 13 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986:-

(i) S. O. 1680(E) published in Gazette of India dated 2nd July, 2014, making certain amendments in Notification No. S. O. 1174(E) dated 18th July, 2007.

(ii) S. O. 2003(E) published in Gazette of India dated 6th August, 2014, making certain amendments in Notification No. S. O. 1174(E) dated 18th July, 2007.

(iii) S. O. 1880(E) published in Gazette of India dated 22nd July, 2014, making certain amendments in Notification No. S. O. 93(E) dated 29th January, 1998.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1041/16/14)

(2) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under Section 26 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986:-

(i) The Environment (Protection) (Fifth Amendment) Rules, 2014 published in Notification No. G. S. R. 612(E) in Gazette of India dated 25th August, 2014.

(ii) The Ozone Depleting Substances (Regulation and Control) Amendment Rules, 2014 published in Notification No. S. O. 1033(E) in Gazette of India dated 4th April, 2014.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1042/16/14)

(3) A copy of the Forest (Conservation) Second Amendment Rules, 2014 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G. S.

R. 713(E) in Gazette of India dated 10th October, 2014 under sub-section (2) of Section 4 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1043/16/14)

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI HANSRAJ GANGARAM AHIR): Madam Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table, a copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of Section 619A of the Companies Act,1956:-

(1) (i) Review by Government of the working of the Hindustan Insecticides Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2013-2014.

(ii) Annual Report of the Hindustan Insecticides Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2013-2014, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1044/16/14)

(2) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Hindustan Organic Chemicals Limited, Mumbai, for the year 2013-2014.

(ii) Annual Report of the Hindustan Organic Chemicals Limited, Mumbai, for the year 2013-2014, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1045/16/14)

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI G. M. SIDDESHWARA): I beg to lay on the Table a copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of Section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956:-

(1) (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Heavy Engineering Corporation Limited, Ranchi, for the year 2013-2014.

(ii) Annual Report of the Heavy Engineering Corporation Limited, Ranchi, for the year 2013-

2014, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1046/16/14)

(2) (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Andrew Yule and Company Limited, Kolkata, for the year 2013-2014.

(ii) Annual Report of the Andrew Yule and Company Limited, Kolkata, for the year 2013-2014, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1047/16/14)

(3) (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the National Bicycle Corporation of India Limited, Mumbai, for the year 2013-2014.

(ii) Annual Report of the National Bicycle Corporation of India Limited, Mumbai, for the year 2013-2014, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1048/16/14)

(4) (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Sambhar Salts Limited, Jaipur, for the year 2013-2014.

(ii) Annual Report of the Sambhar Salts Limited, Jaipur, for the year 2013-2014, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1049/16/14)

(5) (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Hindustan Salts Limited, Jaipur, for the year 2013-2014.

(ii) Annual Report of the Hindustan Salts Limited, Jaipur, for the year 2013-2014, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1050/16/14)

(6) (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2013-2014.

(ii) Annual Report of the Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2013-2014, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1051/16/14)

(7) (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Engineering Projects (India) Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2013-2014.

(ii) Annual Report of the Engineering Projects (India) Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2013-2014, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1052/16/14)

(8) (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Hindustan Cables Limited, Kolkata, for the year 2013-2014.

(ii) Annual Report of the Hindustan Cables Limited, Kolkata, for the year 2013-2014, along with

Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1053/16/14)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI KIREN RIJIJU): I beg to lay on the Table:-

(1) A copy of the 44th Annual Assessment Report (Hindi and English versions) regarding Programme for accelerating the spread and development of Hindi and its progressive use for various official purposes of the Union and its implementation for the year 2012-2013.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1054/16/14)

(2) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under Section 77 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005:-

(i) The National Institute of Disaster Management Employees (Recruitment and Other Conditions of Service) Rules, 2014 published in Notification No. G. S. R. 600(E) in Gazette of India dated 21th August, 2014.

(ii) The Disaster Management (Term of Office and Conditions of Service of Members of the National Authority and Payment of Allowances to Members of Advisory Committee) Second

Amendment Rules, 2014 published in Notification No. G. S. R. 669(E) in Gazette of India dated 18th September, 2014.

(iii) G. S. R. 668(E) published in Gazette of India dated 18th September, 2014, containing corrigendum to the Notification No. G. S. R. 544(E) dated 30th July, 2014.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1055/16/14)

(3) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) issued under Section 389 of the New Delhi Municipal Council Act, 1994:-

(i) S. O. 2238(E) published in Gazette of India dated 5th September, 2014, relating to the dissolution of the New Delhi Municipal Council.

(ii) S. O. 2239(E) published in Gazette of India dated 5th September, 2014, constituting New Delhi Municipal Council and consisting of Members, mentioned therein.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1056/16/14)

(4) A copy of the Central Reserve Police Force, Pioneer Cadre (Group B Combatised Posts) Recruitment Rules, 2014 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G. S. R. 639(E) in Gazette of India dated 9th September, 2014 under sub-section (3) of Section 18 of the Central Reserve Police Force Act, 1949.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1057/16/14)

(5) A copy of Notification No. S. O. 2648(E) (Hindi and English versions) published in Gazette of India dated 16th October, 2014, exempting the 'International Union for Conservation of Nature and natural Resources' an international organization from the provisions of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 issued under sub-section (1) of Section 2 of the said Act.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1058/16/14)

(6) A copy of the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation (Removal of Difficulties) Order, 2014 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G. S. R. 725(E) in Gazette of India dated 15th October, 2014 under sub-section (1) of Section 108 of the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1059/16/14)

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (DR. SANJEEV BALYAN): Madam Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table :-

(1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under Section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956: -

(a) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Haryana Agro Industries Corporation Limited, Hyderabad, for the year 2012 2013.

(ii) Annual Report of the Haryana Agro Industries Corporation Limited, Hyderabad, for the year 2012-2013, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1060/16/14)

(b) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the M.P. State Agro Industries Corporation Limited, Bhopal, for the year 2011-2012.

(ii) Annual Report of the M.P. State Agro Industries Corporation Limited, Bhopal, for the year 2011-2012, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1061/16/14)

(c) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Maharashtra Agro-Industries Development Corporation Limited, Mumbai, for the year 2011-2012.

(ii) Annual Report of the Maharashtra Agro-Industries Development Corporation Limited, Mumbai, for the year 2011-2012, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1062/16/14)

(d) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Himachal Pradesh Agro Industries Corporation Limited, Shimla, for the year 2011 2012.

(ii) Annual Report of the Himachal Pradesh Agro Industries Corporation Limited, Shimla, for the year 2011-2012, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(2) Four statements (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1063/16/14)

(3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Institute of Plant Health Management, Hyderabad, for the year 2013-2014.

(ii) A copy of the Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) of the National Institute of Plant Health Management, Hyderabad, for the year 2013-2014, together with Audit Report thereon.

(iii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the National Institute of Plant Health Management, Hyderabad, for the year 2013-2014.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1064/16/14)

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI RAOSAHEB PATIL DANVE): Madam Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Provisioning of Funds to State Governments for Short Supply of Foodgrains Rules, 2014 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R.743(E) in

Gazette of India dated 27th October, 2014 under sub-section (3) of Section 39 of the National Food Security Act, 2013.

(Placed in Library See No. LT 1065/16/14)

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Vijay sampla -- Not present.

09. 12. 2014

12.02 hrs

MESSAGES FROM RAJYA SABHA

[English]

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Madam Speaker, I have to report the following messages received from the Secretary-General of Rajya Sabha:-

(i) "In accordance with the provisions of Rule 127 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to inform the Lok Sabha that the Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 8th December, 2014 agreed without any amendment to the Textile Undertakings (Nationalisation) Laws (Amendment and Validation) Bill, 2014 which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 1st December, 2014. "

(ii) "In accordance with the provisions of Rule 127 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to inform the Lok Sabha that the Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 8th December, 2014 agreed without any amendment to the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Orders

(Amendment) Bill, 2014 which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 27th November, 2014. ”

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09. 12. 2014

12.03 hrs

STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR

Statements

[Translation]

DR. VIRENDRA KUMAR (TIKAMGARH): Madam Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table: -

(1) Statement showing further action taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in the Forty-fifth Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in the Thirty-second Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on "Welfare of Glass and Bangle Workers of Firozabad".

(2) Statement showing further action taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in Thirty-ninth Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in the

Thirty-sixth Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2013-14) of the Ministry of Textiles.

(3) Statement showing further action taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in the Forty-first Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in the Thirty-fifth Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2013-14) of the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

(4) Statement showing further action taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in the Forty-third Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in the Thirty-first Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on "Absorption/regularization of temporary drivers of Allahabad Bank".

(5) Statement showing further action taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations

contained in the Forty-sixth Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in the Thirty-eighth Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on "Welfare of Small Weavers of Mau and Adjoining Areas-A Case Study".

12.04 hrs

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Status of implementation of the recommendations contained in the 57th Report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture on National Institute of Food Technology, Enterpreneurship and Managment (NIFTEM), pertaining to the Ministry of Food Processing Industries*

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRY (SADHVI NIRANJAN JYOTI): Madam Speaker, I beg to lay a statement regarding the status of implementation of the recommendations contained in the 57th Report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture on National Institute of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship and Management (NIFTEM), pertaining to the Ministry of Food Processing Industries.

I would not like to take the valuable time of the House by reading all the content given in the Annexure. I would request that it be deemed as read.

* Laid on the Table and also placed in Library. See No. LT 1067/16/14

09. 12. 2014

12.05 hrs

ELECTION TO COMMITTEE

Welfare of Other Backward Classes

[English]

SHRI RAJEN GOHAIN (NOWGONG): I beg to move:

"That the Members of this House do proceed to elect, under sub-rule (3) of rule 254, two Members from amongst themselves to serve as Members of the Committee on Welfare of Other Backward Classes for the unexpired portion of the term of the Committee *vice* Sarvashri Bandaru Dattatreya and Hansraj Gangaram Ahir appointed Ministers. "

HON. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Members of this House do proceed to elect, under sub-rule (3) of rule 254, two Members from amongst themselves to serve as Members of the Committee on Welfare of Other Backward Classes for the unexpired portion of the term of the Committee *vice* Sarvashri Bandaru Dattatreya and Hansraj Gangaram Ahir appointed Ministers. "

The motion was adopted.

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09. 12. 2014

12.06 hrs

CALLING ATTENTION TO THE MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Abduction of and harassment meted out to Tamil Fishermen by Sri Lankan Navy and steps taken by the Government in this regard

[English]

DR. P. VENUGOPAL (TIRUVALLUR): Madam, I call the attention of the Minister of External Affairs to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that she may make a statement thereon:

"The problem regarding abduction of and harassment meted out to Tamil Fishermen by Sri Lankan Navy and steps taken by the Government in this regard"

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): Madam Speaker, with your permission, I would like to respond to the Calling Attention Motion moved by Hon. Members Dr. P. Venugopal, Shri P. Kumar, Dr. Satyapal Singh, Dr. Jayakumar Jayavardhan and Dr. K. Gopal regarding the issue arising out of the abduction and harassment of Tamil fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy and the steps being taken by the Government in this regard.

At the outset, I would like to state clearly that the safety and welfare of Indian fishermen is accorded the highest priority by our Government. We consider this matter to be a humanitarian issue, directly linked to the livelihood of our fishing communities. Whenever incidents of attacks on our fishermen occur, or whenever Sri Lankan authorities apprehend them, the Government immediately takes up these matters with the Government of Sri Lanka through diplomatic channels. The Government also ensures that Sri Lankan authorities exercise restraint, treat our fishermen humanely, and release them at the earliest.

Our Government has taken up this issue on priority at the highest levels with the Government of Sri Lanka. The Hon. Prime Minister

raised this matter during his very first meeting in May 2014 with the President of Sri Lanka, Hon. Mahinda Rajapaksa. Both leaders reiterated during their subsequent meetings in New York in September 2014 and in Kathmandu in November 2014 the need for a permanent solution to this problem. I too held extensive discussions on this matter with the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister, Hon. G. L. Peiris, during his visit to New Delhi on 11th July, 2014.

Hon. Members would be aware that when 5 Indian fishermen were recently sentenced to death by the Colombo High Court on 30th October, 2014, our Government, through sustained efforts, succeeded in resolving the matter. On 19th November, 2014, the President of Sri Lanka completely remitted the sentences of all five fishermen. I would like to inform the House that the Hindi translation had a minor discrepancy from the English version, and therefore I read out the correct version; I shall now read it in English.

[English]

"On 19th November 2014, the President of Sri Lanka granted full remission of the sentence to all five fishermen. These five fishermen have since returned back to their families in India. "

[Translation]

On November 19th, 2014, the sentence of all these 5 fishermen was completely abolished by the President of Sri Lanka and these five fishermen have now returned to their families in India.

Hon. Members would kindly note that in October 2008, India and Sri Lanka had reached a mutual understanding to address the issues arising from fishermen of both countries crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL). Following the practical measures implemented thereafter, incidents of this nature have reduced significantly. Since April 2011, no incident has been reported in which any Indian fisherman has lost his life in Sri Lankan waters. Due to the continuous efforts of our Government, a total of 706 Indian fishermen have been secured and released from Sri Lankan custody in the year 2014 so far. As of today, 38 Indian fishermen and their 82 boats remain in the custody of the Sri Lankan authorities on charges of fisheries-related violations. We are actively pursuing the early release and repatriation of all of them.

The fourth meeting of the India–Sri Lanka Joint Working Group on Fisheries Management was held in Colombo in January 2012. In this meeting, both sides, on behalf of their respective Governments, accorded high priority to the safety and security of fishermen of both countries. Both nations agreed that the use of force cannot be justified

under any circumstances. Both sides also emphasized the need for humane treatment of all fishermen. Recently, the first meeting of the newly constituted Joint Committee on Fisheries Management was held on 29th August, 2014 in New Delhi. In addition to this, discussions have also taken place twice at the level of fishermen's associations in 2014, first in January 2014 in Chennai, and then on 12th May, 2014 in Colombo.

I would like to highlight the impact of the steps taken by the Government through an incident that occurred on 26th November, 2014. On this day, three fishermen from Nagapattinam district of Tamil Nadu, who had drifted due to bad weather, reached the Sri Lankan coast in their damaged boat. These fishermen were rescued by the Sri Lankan Navy, and assistance was also provided for the repair of their fishing vessel. All three fishermen returned to India on 8th December, 2014, that is, yesterday.

I would like to assure the Hon. Members of Parliament that the Government is also working, in cooperation with all concerned parties, towards a long-term solution to this issue. An important step in this direction will be encouraging our fishermen to undertake deep-sea fishing. In this regard, I would like to inform the House that the Government has issued clear and simplified guidelines for fishing in

the EEZ, so that our fishermen may carry out their activities with greater ease.

With regard to ensuring the safety of our fishermen, a proposal has been made to develop a National Automatic Identification Network. Under this initiative, AIS transponders will be installed on small fishing vessels to facilitate monitoring. Along with this, the possibility of establishing an early-warning mechanism along the International Maritime Boundary Line is also being explored.

The Government of India remains in continuous discussion with the Government of Sri Lanka so that fishermen of both countries may pursue their livelihood in a secure and peaceful environment.

[English]

DR. P. VENUGOPAL: Hon. Speaker Madam, I want to raise some queries about this statement. The highhandedness of the Sri Lankan Navy with brutal and violent attacks our Indian fishermen on the high seas around our coastal areas of Tamil Nadu are on the increase. It has become a sad tale continuing unabated.

The small boats and trawlers are captured and are taken away by the Sri Lankan Navy personnel every now and then.

Recently five fishermen against whom false cases being foisted were sentenced to death by a higher court of Sri Lanka. From November 2011, the legal case of these five innocent Tamil Nadu fishermen from Rameswaram is being attended to by the compassionate Government of Tamil Nadu led by our beloved leader, Amma. At every stage during the proceedings, financial assistance was extended for both legal expenses and survival of their families. Totally, a sum of Rs 63. 85 lakh has been spent on these fishermen families. All the five families were paid Rs. 7,500 per family and in 2012, Rs. 2 lakh was given to every family of these five fishermen who were languishing in the Velikada prison, Colombo. The gracious

Government of Tamil Nadu released Rs. 20 lakh at the time of appeal before the Sri Lankan Supreme Court, arguing for the cancellation of the death sentence. At the instance of our leader, Amma, the Centre took it up with the Sri Lankan Presidium to get our innocent fishermen freed finally.

So far, there had been more than 500 attacks and 50 instances of capturing of boats of fishermen in the last two decades. More recently, 38 fishermen with 82 fishing vessels have been taken into custody by Sri Lanka from our international waters. Every time, the Government of India is doing a lip service that they are taking up the matter with that friendly country. Only when a lasting solution is found, in the form of retrieving Katchatheevu, the fishermen can freely go for their traditional occupation of fishing in and around our coastal areas.

I know that the matter of getting back Katchatheevu is before the courts of law. It is time for the Government of India to earnestly place before the supreme judicial body of the country, all the relevant documents pertaining to the original rights vested with the local rulers of Ramanathapuram at the time of Independence and for many years before that. The previous Governments have erred in judgment and they are shying away now, as they have handed over that small island without getting it ratified in the Parliament of India.

In the name of maintaining friendly relations, our Government must not lose sight of the strategic importance of that small island. When Shrimati Indira Gandhi was in the national scene and when our founder leader Bharat Ratna Dr. MGR was a tall statesman in the south, our security concerns were attended to properly. For instance, we opposed the setting up of a naval base of a super power in the Indian Ocean from Diego Garcia to Trincomalee. Now also, our visionary leader, Amma has pointed out to the presence and movements of the Chinese men in uniform in the coasts of Sri Lanka. The threat perception has been brought to the notice of the Union Government.

So, I would like to know from the Union Government whether they would try to understand the true feelings of the Tamils and try to find out a permanent solution to the vexed problem of our fishermen being attacked time and again. Will it not be possible to set up our own naval base in the vicinity of Palk Straits and the Gulf of Mannar after retrieving Katchatheevu?

I call the attention of the Government to the urgent need to save our fishermen and our country, and I would like to know whether any concrete action would be taken now to put an end to the sorry plight

of the fishermen and whether the traditional fishing rights would be restored to our fishermen. Thank you.

SHRI P. KUMAR (TIRUCHIRAPPALLI): Madam Speaker, just now my leader has explained in detail, the problems that the Tamil fishermen are facing.

So, without going into all the details, I would restrict myself to say that the attacks on Tamil fishermen have become very frequent, and has become a regular feature.

HON. SPEAKER: You have to put only one clarificatory question.

SHRI P. KUMAR: Okay, Madam. I will come to the question. In the statement of the Hon. Minister, there was no mention about Katchatheevu.

It is already said that Katchatheevu was originally owned by the Raja of Ramanathapuram. Historically it belonged to India and it is a part of Indian Territory. The island always had a strategic importance and a special significance to Tamil Nadu fishermen for fishing operations in that area. But over the years, Sri Lanka started claiming the territorial rights over the island, without any justification. Notwithstanding their claims, it continued to be a part of India.

But through two agreements in 1974 when Shri Karunanidhi was the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, and in 1976, the Island was ceded and it is unconstitutional. In the Berubari case, the Supreme Court made it clear that if any part of Indian Territory is to be ceded to any other country, it should be ratified by the Parliament by way of Constitutional Amendment. But nothing like this was done in this case.

Madam, the Tamil Nadu Assembly, under the leadership of Hon. Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, passed a Resolution for retrieval of Katchatheevu. Hon. Amma had filed a case in the Supreme Court in this regard. Hon. Amma has also made the Revenue Department, a party to this dispute. When Tamil Nadu Government under the able leadership of Amma, is taking very good efforts in this regard, there seems to be no action from the Centre.

Only retrieval of Katchatheevu will give a permanent solution to the problems that the Tamil Fishermen are facing frequently. So, will the Government take steps to retrieve the Katchatheevu Island so that Tamil fishermen, without fear of being captured and harassed, go for fishing in the seas? Thank you.

SHRI SATYAPAL SINGH (SAMBHAL): Thank you Madam for giving me the opportunity to speak.

At the outset, I would like to congratulate and compliment our Hon. Prime Minister and Hon. External Affairs Minister for their laudable efforts to redress the grievances of Tamil Nadu fishermen.

We, as a nation, as a Party and as a Government, are deeply committed to the welfare, safety and security of our fishermen whether on Tamil Nadu coast or elsewhere. There are two-three main issues. My friend was mentioning about the Katchatheevu Island. We have had Agreements with Sri Lanka in 1974, 1976 and 2008 but there appears to be some confusion in these Agreements. I would like to submit that perhaps, there is a need to revisit these agreements so that no confusion is left.

Our two friendly neighbours are increasing their influence in the region of Bay of Bengal, especially near Sri Lanka. The Hon. Minister has already mentioned it but there is a need to identify not only our boats but also to have transponders, smart cards for the crew and registration of the boats. There is a need to use our remote sensing agency to identify the exact locations of the known Indian ships and boats in that area. There is a need to do more homework to have better forensic analysis because there have been allegations of Sri Lankan Navy assaulting our fishermen. Can we find out the make, mode and

origin of the ammunition and bullets used as it will help us to identify and pinpoint the culprit?

As it is a question of livelihood of thousands of fishermen in that area, can the Government think of allowing our fishermen and their fishermen to fish at least 25 km. deep in our waters and their waters? Thank you.

DR. J. JAYAVARDHAN (CHENNAI SOUTH): Hon. Speaker, Madam, five innocent Tamil Nadu fishermen were arrested under false charges of drug trafficking by the Sri Lankan Navy. The Government of Tamil Nadu, under the dynamic leadership of Hon. People's Chief Minister Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, provided relief measures and court expenses totaling Rs. 63,85,000. However, no relief measures were provided by the Central Government.

Let us look on the other side. According to the Marine Products Export Development Authority of India (MPEDA) Tamil Nadu fishermen contribute several thousands of crore in terms of foreign exchange to the Government of India through export of marine products. Has the Government of India done anything in return to the Tamil Nadu fishermen who contribute so much of revenue to our country?

While replying, the Hon. Minister mentions about migration of our fishermen to deep sea fishing. In this context, it is necessary to accentuate the fact that a number of issues have been highlighted by our former Hon. People's Chief Minister Puratchi Thalaivi Amma in a Memorandum submitted to Hon. Prime Minister, namely:

1. Comprehensive special package of Rs. 1,520 crore and a recurring grant of Rs. 10 crore per annum for maintenance and dredging

2. Diversification of bottom trawlers into Deep Sea Tuna Long Liners at a cost of Rs. 975 crore over three years

3. Rs. 80 crore for assistance for Mid Sea Fish Processing Park

4. Reimbursement of central excise duty on high speed diesel for mechanised boats

5. Rs. 9 crore per year to ensure motorisation of traditional crafts

6. Rs. 420 crore for creation of infrastructure deep sea fishing facility at Mookaiyur, Rameswaram and Ennore Fishing Harbours.

7. Rs. 10 crore per year for dredging of harbour and bar mouths but all of these things are still pending before the Government of India.

In regards to the capsized boats of TN fishermen by Srilankan Navy, they are kept off shore. They are damaged by wind and rain and

on return they are in an unusable condition? Is there something on the mind of the Government of India to provide relief measures for repair of these boats?

Lastly, Hon. Speaker Madam, can't a clear, unequivocal, unambiguous message be sent to the Sri Lankan side that these hostile acts against Tamil Nadu fishermen will not be tolerated and that this should cease forthwith? Why can this message not be sent?

DR. K. GOPAL (NAGAPATTINAM): I would like to ask the Minister to take stringent action against the Sri Lankan Navy to stop the harassment and abduction of the Tamil fishermen who are fishing near the Katchatheevu.

It was originally under the ownership of the Raja of Ramanathapuram, for which there is sufficient documentary proof, that the Indian fishermen enjoyed traditional fishing rights in and around the Island of Katchatheevu. As per the agreements entered into in 1974 and 1976, Katchatheevu was ceded to Sri Lanka and the fishermen of Tamil Nadu were deprived of their fishing rights around Katchatheevu ever since then.

As per the order of the Supreme Court of India in the Berubari case of 1960, a part of any territory owned by India can be ceded to

another country only through a constitutional amendment. However, Katchatheevu was ceded to Sri Lanka without a constitutional amendment and hence the ceding is unlawful and it is not valid. The unconstitutional ceding of the Island and the fishing grounds in the vicinity have emboldened the Sri Lankan Navy to resort to frequent attacks on our innocent fishermen who fish in their traditional fishing grounds.

Hence the Government of India should take active steps to abrogate the 1974 and 1976 agreements and retrieve Katchatheevu and restore the traditional fishing rights of the fishermen of Tamil Nadu.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Madam Speaker, five of our colleagues had given the Calling Attention Notice, and all of them have placed their views before the House. Out of these, four Hon. Members have raised almost identical issues. Dr. Satyapal Ji has added only one additional point regarding GPS. Therefore, I will respond to all of them together. As Shri P. Venugopal mentioned, under the leadership of Amma Ji that means Madam Jayalalithaa ji considerable assistance was extended to the fishermen. Financial support was provided for their legal assistance. An amount of Rs. 63.8

lakh was given. The fishermen themselves acknowledge this, and we too acknowledge what she has done. However, the truth remains that despite all this assistance, they could not secure an acquittal for them, and the fishermen were awarded the death penalty, sentenced to be hanged. Even after providing legal assistance and funds for that purpose, they received the death sentence. Today, I can stand here and state with confidence that it was due to efforts made at the highest level on our part that the death sentences were pardoned and they were released. Therefore, while you are rightly thanking Amma Ji for providing legal assistance, at least offer some thanks to the Government as well, which brought them back home safely.

[English]

DR. P. VENUGOPAL: Madam, Tamil Nadu Assembly has passed a resolution thanking the Hon. Prime Minister in this regard.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Thank you. The second point was raised by Dr. K. Gopal. He said that though so much money was spent, the Government did not provide them with any kind of financial assistance. In this regard, I would like to state that this case has been ongoing since the year 2011. From 2011 to 2014, the present

Government was not in office. Therefore, if financial assistance was not provided during that period, the previous Government is responsible for it, not the present Government. As far as our Government is concerned, even after the death sentence was pronounced, we saved them and secured a complete remission of their sentence.

I would like to make another point. It is correct that the word ‘frequent’ is appropriate. Frequent incidents are indeed occurring. Even after our Government assumed office, 22 such incidents have taken place. However, there is now a very significant difference. Earlier, when they were arrested, they were released after 50 days, sometimes after 60 days, sometimes after 68 days. Today, I stand before this House to inform you that after our Government came, these incidents are being resolved within 3 days, 5 days, 7 days, and 12 days.

Madam Speaker, I would only like to say this much: the tone and tenor that we earlier maintained towards Sri Lanka and towards the Sri Lankan Navy has undergone a change, and I can state today that after the coming of this new Government, there has been a significant shift in Sri Lanka’s attitude towards India. I have cited two examples of this change in my statement. The first example is that all five

fishermen were freed from the death sentence, and their entire sentence was commuted by the President of Sri Lanka. The second example is that whenever our fishermen drifted and reached their shores, they could have apprehended them. Just as before 2011 they used to shoot them, they could have done the same now, but instead, on humanitarian grounds, they saved those fishermen from drowning. Those fishermen were drowning; their boat had broken. They even had their broken boat repaired and sent them back. They returned yesterday morning. In view of this changed attitude on their part, there should also be a slight moderation and a slight change in our own tone and tenor towards them.

Madam Speaker, with regard to the matter of Katchatheevu, four of our colleagues have spoken on it and our colleague Shri Satyapal Ji has also raised it. However, through you, I would like to state that this matter is presently pending before the Hon. Supreme Court. A writ petition filed by Madam Jayalalithaa herself is before the Court. You are aware that on any subject which is already sub judice, making any comment would be contrary to the rules. Therefore, I will not be able to offer any remarks on this issue.

Apart from these four Hon. Members, the point raised by Shri Satyapal Singh regarding GPS has already been addressed in my statement. I have mentioned that we are going to implement the National Automated Identification System. This is an excellent system, which will be installed on the fishing vessel itself, and through a transponder we will be able to track our fishermen up to a distance of 50 kilometres. Not only this, when they approach our maritime boundary, the transponder will trigger a siren that will serve as an early warning, indicating that they are about to cross the Indian maritime boundary and enter Sri Lankan waters, and that they should not proceed further. This will function as an alarm to prevent them from leaving our territory and will caution them before they cross into Sri Lankan waters. I would also like to inform the House that this system is already installed on the Gujarat coast and is functioning very effectively there. We intend to introduce the same system here as well.

As far as the matter of deep-sea fishing is concerned, I am pleased to inform the House that the procedures for deep-sea fishing were earlier extremely complicated, far too complicated. Shri Radha Mohan Singh Ji is present here; under his Ministry comes the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries. On 12th November, several meetings were held, a meeting at my level, a

meeting at the Prime Minister's level, and a meeting at his level as well. On 12th November itself, we simplified the entire process to such an extent, and made it so transparent, that now only two requirements are needed for obtaining a Letter of Permit: the registration number - meaning your boat must be registered, and a fitness certificate. With just these two documents, you can now obtain a permit for deep-sea water fishing. All the activities related to registration, which were earlier under the Ministry of Shipping, have now been delegated by them to the State agencies. As a result, fishermen of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry can now avail themselves of this new simplified procedure and proceed for deep-sea fishing. This will provide a complete solution. What I am stating here is an immediate solution, but it will also serve as a long-term solution.

I would also like to inform my colleagues that I have been holding repeated meetings with the fishermen, and I was pleased that in my last meeting all the representatives of the associations attended. They all stated that they, too, believe the final solution lies in deep-sea fishing and that they are prepared for it. They said they themselves would prepare a package and submit it to me within 45 days. Once their package is received, we will, on that basis, and on the basis of the memorandum referred to by Dr. K. Gopal, which has already come

to us, formulate a new policy. We have made the process of deep-sea fishing so simple and so transparent that, for our fishermen, deep-sea fishing will become a permanent solution to the issue that troubles us repeatedly.

[English]

DR. M. THAMBIDURAI (KARUR): Madam, I know the rules and I know that it is against the rules. But still I want to say something, on this issue.

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: I am giving you special permission.

DR. M. THAMBIDURAI: As it relates to Tamil Nadu fishermen, I want to raise certain things. Some contradiction is there in what the Hon. Minister of External Affairs has said. As regards the release of fishermen who were given death sentence, our Hon. Prime Minister intervened in the matter and we are thankful for that. At the same time, my leader Puratchi Thalaivi Amma put in a lot of efforts to see that they are released. Our Ministry of External Affairs also took up this matter with Sri Lanka and told them that the cases against five fishermen of T. N. are false cases. . . . *Sri Lankan Government also

* Not recorded.

knew that they are false cases and Mr. Rajapakshe President Sri Lanka somehow managed to give some kind of exemption. That is why, he did it.

Even though he was persuaded, yet our Embassy said that this was a false case and therefore the death sentence was not at all necessary. The President of Sri Lanka has done this because elections are approaching in Sri Lanka and he is contesting for the third term and to get the Tamil votes he has done this. The President of Sri Lanka has not shown any sympathy for our fishermen. Legally it was not correct.

The second point is about Katchatheevu issue. Parliament is the supreme body and it has the right to discuss this matter. Therefore we cannot escape by saying that this matter is in the Supreme Court and hence we cannot discuss this issue. Katchatheevu is part and parcel of the Indian territory. My leader Hon. Amma has written so many letters to the Hon. Prime Minister about this. When the agreement took place it did not strictly follow the rules and regulations of the Parliament. Now, for handing over a territory to Bangladesh, the Government is proposing to bring in a Bill for seeking approval of the Parliament. When an area is being ceded to Bangladesh from the Eastern region, the Government of India proposes to bring in a Bill but I would like to know if such a Bill was brought before Parliament when

Katchatheevu was ceded to Sri Lanka. That is why I am saying that still that area is part of the Indian territory. Our fishermen traditionally went for fishing in that area because fishes were available there. Knowing that well and knowing that Katchatheevu is a part of Indian territory, Sri Lanka somehow managed to get it under their control. First they agreed that our fishermen can go for fishing in that area but the present Sri Lankan President has violated all the terms of the agreement. Therefore, it is a serious issue and the Government should see that serious action in the matter is taken. That is what the people and especially, the Tamil Nadu fishermen there are demanding… *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: No names should be taken. [Translation] Nothing goes on record by naming anyone.

… *(Interruptions)*

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE (GULBARGA): Madam Speaker, I would like to speak during Zero Hour.

HON. SPEAKER: One item still remains. Zero Hour will be taken up after that.

(Placed in Library, See No. LT 1068/16/14)

12.37 hrs

MOTION RE: EIGHTH REPORT OF THE BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): Madam, I beg to move:

"That this House do agree with the Eighth Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on 8th December, 2014 subject to modification that the recommendation regarding item at serial number 2 already disposed of by the House be omitted. "

HON. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That this House do agree with the Eighth Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on 8th December, 2014 subject to modification that the recommendation regarding

item at serial number 2 already disposed of by the House be omitted. ”

The motion was adopted.

[English]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE (GULBARGA): Madam, on last Friday I wanted to raise this question but the House was not in order. We were also not present in the House because of the past incident, which I do not want to raise here, I could not raise the matter.

At present, on 2nd December, 2014, Government raised Excise Duty on petrol by Rs. 2. 25 per litre and diesel by Re. 1 per litre. Oil firms decided to absorb the duty change for the time being and retail pump rates has not been increased thereby there is no impact on the consumers. The oil firms are absorbing the Excise Duty increased for now. They are keeping track of the changing scenario and will take appropriate steps as the situation warrants at the next revision.

Madam, as you know international prices of crude oil have come down from 120 US dollars to 65-70 US dollars. As per deregulation rules you have to pass on the benefits whatever is due owing to reduction of prices. So, instead of passing it on to the consumers, the Government is raising the excise duty and keeping it with them. They are going to get a benefit of nearly Rs. 15,000 crore to Rs. 16,000 crore out of this. This amount of Rs. 15,000 to Rs. 16,000 crore has to go to all the consumers who are using crude oil, petrol, diesel, etc.

[Translation] You speak of deregulation on the one hand, saying that if international market prices fall, domestic prices will also be reduced. Yet, when international prices rise, you increase the prices here, but when those prices fall, you are not reducing them correspondingly, this is something I am unable to understand. Secondly, when there is no shortage of ten to fifteen thousand crore rupees, and if you use this mechanism merely to fill the budget deficit, then tomorrow you will try to collect money by imposing indirect taxes and increasing excise duty on everything, which is not appropriate. The benefit should be passed on to the consumers. They should receive a total benefit of Rs. 3.25 per litre, but that benefit is not being passed on.

Another kind of publicity is also being circulated that after the new Government has come to power, the prices of all commodities have come down. ... *(Interruptions)* When prices fall in the international market, there is automatically a reduction here as well. ... *(Interruptions)* It is also being propagated that the Hon. Prime Minister visited many countries. ... *(Interruptions)* He went to America, Australia, Japan and several other nations. ... *(Interruptions)* It is being said that he convinced people across the world, and therefore the prices have fallen. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: Everybody will not be allowed to speak on this issue. You can associate with him, if you want. I know that your name is there in the list. You can associate with him.

… (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE: If such things are happening, then they are not proper. ... *(Interruptions)* The benefit should go to the consumers. ... *(Interruptions)* If any oil company takes away the consumers' due benefit, it is not proper. ... *(Interruptions)* A clear statement from the Government on this matter should be made. ... *(Interruptions)* They should inform us what they propose to do. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Shri S. P. Muddahanume, Shri B. V. Naik, Shri B. N. Chandrappa, Shri D. K. Suresh, Shri R. Dhruvanarayana, Shri P. Karunakaran, Shri Gaurav Gogoi, Prof. Saugata Roy, Kumari Sushmita Dev, Shri Mullappally Ramachandran, Shri P. K. Biju, and Shri Jose K. Mani are permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri Mallikarjun Kharge.

... (Interruptions)

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: I have allowed him to speak in the 'Zero Hour'. Whosoever wants to associate with him, they can give their names.

… *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA (DARJEELING): Madam Speaker ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Please give a notice for discussion, then I will allow it.

... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: You may associate yourself. When you give a notice for discussion, we will consider it at that time.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Madam Speaker, I have been elected from Darjeeling Parliamentary Constituency in West Bengal. I would like to raise a serious matter before this House. … *(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN (KOLLAM): Madam Speaker, I am on a point of order. … *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Kharge ji, there is no Point of Order during Zero Hour.

… *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: I have already given you the opportunity to associate. We are not holding a discussion right now. [English] I am sorry, everybody cannot speak.

[Translation] … *(Interruptions)*

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Madam Speaker, on every platform in West Bengal, in the name of the current Prime Minister, Hon. Shri Narendra Modi ji. … *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: If and when a discussion is taken up, I will certainly give you an opportunity to speak. I have already given you an opportunity, but it is not possible to allow everyone to speak at this moment.

… *(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE: His voice should be heard, Madam. … *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: This is not a discussion.

. . . *(Interruptions)*

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE: Please allow him to speak for just two minutes. … *(Interruptions)* Had you heard him by now, the matter would already have concluded.

[English]

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN: Madam Speaker, I am on a different point. I fully endorse and associate the views expressed by Hon. Kharge Ji but I am raising a point of order also in this respect. Or it may be a point of clarification.

The point is, two notifications have issued. One was issued on 12th November, 2014 and another one was issued on 2nd December, 2014. Madam, you may kindly peruse the record.

The first notification which has not been laid before this House and increasing the excise duty, without getting the knowledge and

concurrence of Parliament, taking the Parliament for granted, it is not fair as far as rules and procedures are concerned. … *(Interruptions)*

Secondly, this enhancement of excise duty is under Section 5(a) of the Central Excise Act. Section 5(a) is for exemption or reducing the duty but the Government is deliberately using Section 5(a) so as to enhance the duty but limiting within 14 per cent. It has to be enhanced under Section 3 of the Central Excise Tariff Act, 1985. For this, I am seeking a clarification from the Government. Without submitting and placing the notification before the House, two consecutive notifications, enhancing the excise duty, have been issued. This benefit has to go to the consumers. Unfortunately, this has not been done. Parliament is being taken for granted. It is the right of the Members and Parliament to know as to why it is being enhanced and what is there in notification. I am seeking clarification on these from the Government. … *(Interruptions)*

09. 12. 2014

12.43 hrs

SUBMISSION BY MEMBER

Re: Derogatory remarks made by a Member during a public rally in Kolkata

[Translation]

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA (DARJEELING): Madam Speaker**,** as I mentioned, I am a Member of Parliament from West Bengal. In West Bengal, day after day, on various platforms, Members of Parliament belonging to the ruling party there have been using indecent and objectionable language in the name of the present Prime Minister, Hon. Shri Narendra Modi ji, and also in the name of the former Prime Minister, Hon. Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri ji, and members of his family. Some Members, emboldened by encouragement from their leadership, have on several occasions, only the day before yesterday, while addressing a rally, used such indecent language with reference to his family and with reference to the present Prime Minister. This practice must end. Through you, Madam, I demand that the Members of Parliament of the ruling Trinamool Congress in West Bengal tender an apology to this House and, through this House, to the nation. Otherwise, a resolution should be passed by this House stating that no

one has the right to use such indecent language in the name of the present Prime Minister or in the name of the former Prime Minister, Hon. Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri ji, and his family members, as is being openly done on streets, at crossings and from public platforms. What message do we want to give to the youth of our country and to future generations, that anyone may rise and speak anything in the name of Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri ji, the embodiment of 'Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan', and that such behaviour will be tolerated? The nation will not tolerate this.

Madam Speaker, through you I would like to demand that the Member who made these remarks in Kolkata the day before yesterday should apologise to this House and, through this House, to the nation; otherwise, it becomes necessary to bring a resolution of condemnation against him in this House. … *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: No clarification.

… *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAMMAD SALIM (RAIGANJ): Madam Speaker, I would like to associate myself with this matter. This is a very serious issue. It has been the tradition of this House that whenever the conduct or misconduct of any Member is found to be [English] unbecoming of a Member of Parliament, [Translation]either the Speaker issues a reprimand, or the Leader of the House or the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs brings a motion before the House. If such matters are allowed to remain pending, then acts of defiance only increase. First, people begin by making remarks about someone's name, then about someone's father's name, and then about someone's grandfather or grandmother. Ultimately, this diminishes the dignity of the entire House. From time to time, our Hon. Minister, in the course of his address, makes reference to the fact that …* has acted in such a manner, and has spoken of alleged acts of wrongdoing against members of the CPM. We had written a letter to you regarding this, but it remains pending till today. You will have to show resolve and ensure that a decision is taken in this House on such matters; only then can such acts of audacity be curbed. Otherwise, it will reflect poorly on all of us that we sit in this House alongside such individuals. … *(Interruptions)*

* Not recorded.

HON. SPEAKER: On this matter, every Member will not be allowed to speak. I request all of you to cooperate.

... (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: Such language ought not to be used, but unfortunately it is happening repeatedly.

... (Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT, MINISTER OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): Madam Speaker, I would like to request through you to the entire House and the Concerned Member that the kind of language that was used about the present Prime Minister was said --- [English] "in 2019 people would slap Modi and send him to a jail in Gandhi Nagar, from where he would never be able to come out". … *(Interruptions)* [Translation] This is indeed a matter of utmost seriousness. The Prime Minister of our country who is held in such high esteem, admired both nationally and internationally, cannot be spoken of in such a manner. Using such language for any Prime Minister is inappropriate and objectionable. Likewise, speaking in this manner about a former Prime Minister, whom we all deeply respect,

who gave the inspiring slogan ‘Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan,’ and who served the nation as an exemplary leader, is equally unacceptable, [English] If Lal Bahadur Shastri was alive, and now he had a grandson like him, then, he would have never married. this man has never participated in any political movement, and has come this far, riding….. I am not here to score political points against anybody or try to corner any particular party. It would be better in the interest of that party, and that Hon. Member to rise, and express unconditional apology so that the image and prestige of the house will go up. [Translation] I was being told by Salim-bhai that some courage should be shown. To show courage, to bring a proposal, and to pass a proposal to expel someone is very easy. I can do that. But I would prefer that the said Member of Parliament and the others who are using such language express their regret. That would set a good precedent and we can move forward. If they do not do so, then later we shall decide what needs to be done. This would constitute a healthy tradition. Through you, Madam Speaker, I would like to request Shri Kalyan Banerjee, in whose name these statements have appeared in the newspapers not once, not twice but thrice, that he may kindly accept this and express his regret. If he does so, it will be good for the countrymen and the people of Bengal will also be pleased. In Bengal there is a tradition [English] we always used to

respect all the traditions and culture of Bengal, which are very great. Keeping that in mind, I would appeal to the Member, Shri Kalyan Banerjee to understand the sentiments of the people and also the house, and please express regrets so that we can leave this matter, and move forward.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Why are you seeking a discussion on this? This is not an appropriate matter for a debate. Please do not pursue it further.

… *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Why are you speaking? There are no allegations against you. Please, you need not respond.

… *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: What statement?

PROF. SAUGATA ROY (DUM DUM): I am referring to the statement made by the Parliamentary Affairs Minister. … *(Interruptions)* Please Madam, give me two minutes. He mentioned the Member by name.

HON. SPEAKER: No, he has not mentioned the Member by name.

… *(Interruptions)*

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: Shri Venkaiah Naidu mentioned the name of Shri Kalyan Banerjee. He has mentioned Shri Kalyan Banerjee's name. It is the custom of this House that if you want to make any allegation against the Member, then you have to give the Member previous notice. This House has been exercised over the comments made by the Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti. . … [English] *(Interruptions)* We have resolved that problem. … *(Interruptions)* He has not given any notice to Shri Kalyan Banerjee and above a statement,

[Translation]

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: If you want me to follow the procedure, I will follow the procedure, I will give notice and then bring a resolution. Are you prepared for that? I do not wish to do so… *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: [English] I am not allowing all this.

… *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Please sit down, Saugata Roy ji. This is not as per any rule, and no motion of censure has been moved against anyone.

Please sit down; no such proposal has been given by him. Please be seated.

… (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: I would like to submit only this much to all of you, repentance is not something that can be brought about by an order. No one can be made to repent through an instruction from the Chair, nor can I direct anyone from here to say that they must express remorse. I would like to say just this: these practices have become far too frequent nowadays. Whether Members speak in Parliament or outside, much more is said outside. Let us all try to observe some restraint. We represent lakhs of people, and by sitting here, we represent the entire nation. I would like that all of us observe a certain dignity. If we place our views before the House with a little thought and care, it would be far better. To ask someone to repent or demand that someone apologise, no such compulsion will be exercised. If someone, on their own, feels that an error has occurred and chooses to say so, that becomes far more acceptable both for them personally and for everyone else.

. . . (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Madam Speaker, Hon. Saugata Roy ji has taken objection and quoted Kaul & Shakdhar's Practice and Procedure Book for my taking the name of the Member. If he wants to proceed in that manner, I will definitely give notice or our Members will give notice. … *(Interruptions)* Madam, I agree with the suggestion of Saugat Royji. Our Members will give notice and we will proceed further.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Let nothing of this sort happen.

… *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: I would like to request all of you that if we ourselves act with understanding and restraint, it will be better from the point of view of the nation's progress.

… *(Interruptions)*

[English]

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: After the Speaker has spoken, why did you speak? … *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Prof. Saugata Roy Ji, such discussions do not take place amongst members.

… (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: Please keep quiet. You said that you would give it, so you may give it, but giving a notice, then discussing something and compelling someone to apologise is not appropriate. That is why I said that an apology is something that comes voluntarily. If one feels within oneself that a mistake has been made, then one can move towards correction. I believe such things should not happen.

… (Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): Madam Speaker, generally the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs has requested, and he has put forward the view that if the Member tenders an apology before the House, we have no difficulty. But it appears. … *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: If he does not apologies, he cannot be compelled.

… *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: The Member is listening to the entire matter in the House and, out of sheer obstinacy, remains firm on his stand. … *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: No one can be forced.

… *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Therefore, it will become a compulsion for the Government in the House ... *(Interruptions)* to bring a proposal against them. ... *(Interruptions)* Madam Speaker, this is our compulsion. ... *(Interruptions)* Even now, we would request him to apologise for the words he has used for the Prime Minister of India; otherwise, we shall be constrained, on behalf of the House, to proceed with action against him. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: There cannot be any compulsion in this matter.

... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet again at 2.00 p.m.

09. 12. 2014

12.58 hrs

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Fourteen of the Clock.

14.03 hrs

The Lok Sabha re-assembled at Three Minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

(Hon. Deputy Speaker *in the Chair*)

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

[English]

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, Matters Under Rule 377; Shrimati Kirron Kher.

(i) Need to allocate a coal mine for setting up of a dedicated power plant for Chandigarh

SHRIMATI KIRRON KHER (CHANDIGARH): Hon. Deputy Speaker, the Union Territory of Chandigarh has no power generation of its own. Currently, the power availability from firm share and unallocated quota from Central Generating Stations is about 200-270 MW. But the demand is ever increasing. In peak summers, it goes up to 275 to 350 MW, and the Chandigarh Administration is buying power from the open market to meet the demand supply gap. Per

capita consumption of power in Chandigarh is also expected to increase.

To fulful the demand of the domestic and commercial sectors, Chandigarh needs to have its own power generation system. The Government of India must allocate a Coal Mine to Chandigarh, so that the UT Administration can set up a captive power plant of about 330 MW at Pithead. I request the Government to make the allocation through competitive bidding, so that the people of Chandigarh don’t have to face power outages in future.

(ii) Need to set up parking fee collection cabin within the Parking Area of vehicles at Ahmedabad Airport

[Translation]

SHRI D. S. RATHOD (SABARKANTHA): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, at the Ahmedabad Airport (both domestic and international terminals), passengers generally use their private vehicles for arrival and departure. At both places, there is a system of 'pay parking'(paid parking charges). Earlier, the parking fee collection cabins (at the entry and exit points) were located within the designated parking area. Some time ago, new contracts for parking were awarded at both terminals. Under the new arrangement, the parking contractor has placed the parking fee collection cabins nearly one kilometre ahead of the actual parking zone, that is, at the 'Key Airport' entry point. A time limit of 15 minutes has been prescribed for exiting, and because of this, passengers are facing great inconvenience.

Therefore, through this august House, I would like to request the Government to ensure that, at the Ahmedabad Airport, the parking fee collection cabins are installed within the actual parking area itself, in a manner that is convenient for drivers.

(iii) Need to run Garib Rath Express (Train No. 12211/12212) between Delhi and Muzaffarpur (Bihar) daily and also provide a stoppage of the train at Bagaha in Bihar

[Translation]

SHRI SATISH CHANDRA DUBEY (VALMIKI NAGAR): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to place before the Parliament a matter of public importance relating to my Parliamentary Constituency, Valmikinagar (Bihar). Train No. 12211/12212, the Garib Rath Express, runs from Anand Vihar (Delhi) to Muzaffarpur. It operates only once a week. Due to the very high number of rail passengers from this region, they face considerable difficulties. Therefore, it is necessary to increase the frequency of this train and run it on a daily basis so that the passengers may benefit. Further, I would like to submit that this train does not halt at Bagaha station, causing substantial inconvenience to passengers from the area.

Therefore, through this House, I would like to request the Government to kindly permit a halt for the above-mentioned train at Bagaha station.

(iv) Need to run Amritsar Express (Train No. 11057/11058) from Dadar, Mumbai

[Translation]

SHRI A.T. NANA PATIL (JALGAON): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, despite requests from the general public and public representatives of Maharashtra, the Government has decided to operate the Amritsar Express, Train No. 11057/11058, which used to depart from Dadar Railway Station for Amritsar, from Lokmanya Tilak Railway Station. The public has been consistently opposing this decision for several days. Considerable correspondence has been addressed to the Government in this regard, yet the Government has not examined the matter with due seriousness.

We had, in public interest, requested that this important train should not be operated from Lokmanya Tilak Railway Station, because whether it is the general public, public representatives or Government officials, all travel by this train. This train, apart from maintaining punctuality, also passes through Dadar Railway Station, which is considered the central point of Mumbai. Poor farmers and labourers from Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, who come to Mumbai in search of livelihood, travel by this train. With its departure shifted from this location, these passengers are facing great

difficulties and their livelihood has been adversely affected. Every day, people encounter considerable inconvenience in travelling from Lokmanya Tilak Railway Station to Dadar or Mumbai stations. At night, poor farmers and labourers from Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh face severe difficulties in reaching Dadar station due to the crowding in trains starting from Lokmanya Tilak Railway Station. At present, no trains are available from Mumbai or Dadar that connect small villages of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh during this period. Taking all these matters into consideration, we have been raising this issue continuously.

Therefore, through this House, I would like to request the Government to shift this train from Lokmanya Tilak Railway Station and start it from Dadar or Mumbai Central Station.

(v) Need to enhance the rate of honorarium to Accredited Social Health Activists engaged under the National Rural Health Mission.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI REKHA VERMA (DHAURAHRA): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, an ASHA worker is a domestic social woman. Under the NRHM programme, one ASHA is selected by the Health Department for every minimum population of 500. Their work involves providing information on various programmes to children and women in society, assisting in immunisation, distributing iron tablets, supporting cataract operations, deliveries and other such activities that help improve health services for domestic women as well as enhance social living standards. In return, the remuneration they receive for their work is very low, being Rs. 50, Rs. 100 or Rs. 200, which lowers their morale.

Therefore, through this House, I would like to request the Government to take immediate steps to provide ASHA workers with a fixed honorarium, keeping in view the above circumstances, so that their enthusiasm, self-confidence and morale are maintained.

(vi) Need to provide relief and compensation to farmers whose land has been utilized for fencing the border in Rajasthan, particularly in Barmer Parliamentary Constituency

[English]

COL. SONARAM CHOUDHARY (BARMER): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, after India-Pakistan partition following freedom of the country, the boundary was demarcated by erecting pillars. Therefore, in the year 1994-95 onwards, keeping in view, the security considerations, the Government of India installed barbed wire fencing at a distance of 150 yards, e. g. , 450 feet away from the pillars on the Indian border. After the partition in the year 1947 and till the fencing in the year 1994-95, the concerned land owner peasants were cultivating their lands. As per the need of land for fencing, the Ministry of Defence, Government of India and Revenue Department acquired the requisite land. The peasants of Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Haryana, Ganganagar, Hanumangarh in Rajasthan, who were vigilant and literate, were able to get the right of passage at a distance of every three to four kilometers for cultivating their lands with the permission of the Army and the Administration. However the peasants of Bikaner, Jaisalmer and Barmer districts who were

illiterate, did not take any initiative to get the right to cultivate their ancestral lands.

When the farmers became alive to their hardships, they approached all concerned in the State Government, Home Ministry of the Government of India, BSF, etc. , through letters as well as personal meetings but unfortunately, they did not get justice. In this connection, I would especially draw your kind attention to several families, whose entire ancestral lands have been utilized for fencing. Having failed to get justice, at last, after 20 years, 10 peasants approached the Hon. High Court. While terming the demand of the farmers as justifiable, it gave its judgment on 28. 01. 2013 stating that the Home Ministry of the Government of India, Revenue Department of Rajasthan Government and BSF to take decision on the demand of the farmers within two months. However even after the lapse of about two years, no action has been taken in this regard. The peasants also protested during this period.

Sir, I submit the demands of those peasants whose lands fall between the pillars and the fencing as under:

(a) They should be provided passage/gates at a distance of one kilometer each to cultivate their lands like the permission granted to the farmers of Hanumangarh and Ganganagar; or

(b) They should be given alternative land in the same revenue village/nearer village; or

(c) They should be given compensation on market rate.

Sir, therefore, I urge upon the Hon. Prime Minister through your good offices to allow the affected farmers to cultivate their lands who have been deprived of their sole source of income for the last 20 years.

Thank you.

(vii) Need to expedite payment of arrears of wages of labourers engaged in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in Madhya Pradesh

[Translation]

SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE (MANDLA): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in Madhya Pradesh, the payment of wages to lakhs of labourers working under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Scheme (MNREGA) has been pending for almost eight months. Most of them belong to the SC, ST and OBC categories, and they have been repeatedly visiting post offices for the payment of their wages.

Therefore, through this House, I would like to request the Government to kindly issue directions for the early release of the long-pending wage payments of lakhs of labourers working under MNREGA in Madhya Pradesh.

(viii) Need to restore the land of widows, military personnel and people belonging to weaker section allotted to them in Delhi under 20-Point Programme

[English]

DR. UDIT RAJ (NORTH WEST DELHI): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the Scheduled Castes, widows, OBCs, military personnel and poor people were allotted land for housing and agricultural purposes under 20-Point Progremame in NCT of Delhi U/S 74(4) of D. L. R. Act, 1954 in the year 1970 and 1976. They have been deprived of their legitimate rights of Bhumidhari for the last 38 years. To make it specific, a case in point is that between 1987 and 1989, 27 people of Daryapur Kalan, Delhi – 39, were allotted land for housing from Khasra No. 63 (1/2) but they were deprived of the land; and in 1996, the land was used for construction of a park. These beneficiaries have all relevant documents like map and other papers and yet their grievances have not been redressed; and the authorities are trying to falsify their claim.

(ix) Need to provide adequate compensation for injury and loss of human lives as well as damage to crops by wild animals in Kheri Parliamentary Constituency, Uttar Pradesh

[Translation]

SHRI AJAY MISRA TENI (KHERI): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Dudhwa National Park, the only National Park in Uttar Pradesh, is situated in my Parliamentary Constituency. Villages in Lakhimpur Kheri are located around it, and thousands of acres of land adjoining the forest are used for agriculture.

The loss of crops and the loss of human life caused by elephants and other wild animals is compensated by the Forest Department at the rate of Rs. 3,000 per acre for sugarcane, Rs. 2,500 per acre for paddy, wheat and oilseeds, and Rs. 1,200 per acre for all other crops. In cases of death caused by wild animals, only Rs. 1 lakh is given; for serious injuries, Rs. 20,000; for simple injuries, Rs. 10,000; and for the death of animals, only Rs. 2,500 per animal is provided, which is extremely inadequate.

Earlier, to protect the crops and human life of farmers, a trench 2 metres wide and 3 metres deep used to be dug along the forest

boundary, which prevented wild animals from coming out of the forest. However, this practice is no longer being followed.

Through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Government to this matter and would like to request that compensation for damage to sugarcane crops be fixed at Rs. 30,000 per acre; for paddy, wheat and oilseeds at Rs. 25,000 per acre; and for other crops at Rs. 20,000 per acre. In cases of human death, Rs. 20 lakhs should be provided; for serious injuries, Rs. 5 lakhs; for injuries, Rs. 1 lakh; and for the death of animals, compensation should be based on market value. I would like to also request that a trench 2 metres wide and 3 metres deep be dug in the forest border area so that the lives, property and crops of people can be protected, and effective compensation can be provided in case of damage.

[English]

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Ramesh Bidhuri – Not present.

(x) Need to accelerate the pace of construction of broad gauge railway line from Macherla to Nalgonda

[English]

SHRI GUTHA SUKENDER REDDY (NALGONDA): I would like to draw the kind attention of this august House to a matter regarding the dire need to complete the new railway broad gauge line from Macherla to Nalgonda having a stretch of more than 80 kilometres, which pertains to my Nalgonda Parliamentary Constituency in Telangana. The project cost amounts to Rs. 481 crore.

This new railway line project has been pending since 1997-98 and less funds were allotted to complete this project, that is, Rs. 1 lakh every year, which leads to slow pace of work. It would not be out of place to mention that the detailed estimate was sanctioned by the Railway Board and also notified as Special Railway Project two years back within the ambit of the Railways (Amendment) Act, 2008. The then Hon. Minister of State for Railways also inspected the project on 30. 3. 2012 accompanied by railway officials and he also said that Rs. 410 crore was allotted for this purpose by the Centre. During the last year and in the current year, Rs. 5 crore each was released. A portion of land is available for this project and tenders should be called for without further delay. Even though there is a huge demand from the

local people since long, this project has been neglected and also running at a snail's pace for the reasons not known to me. If this line is executed, the Railways would generate additional revenue.

In view of the demand of the local public for train connectivity, I request the Hon. Minister of Railways to complete this new railway line immediately.

(xi) Need to implement the One Rank, One Pension scheme for ex-servicemen

[English]

SHRI DEEPENDER SINGH HOODA (ROHTAK): The One Rank One Pension (OROP) Scheme for the ex-servicemen of our country was approved by the UPA Government in February 2014. This scheme has widespread support from all political parties including from our Prime Minister, who has repeatedly promised to implement this scheme. Yet this One Rank One Pension Scheme is yet to be implemented, despite nine months having passed since it was announced in February. I am told that one of the sticking issues remains the 'exact definition of OROP'. In February, while announcing the scheme, the UPA Government had accepted the Koshiyari Committee's recommendation on the definition of OROP. The Koshiyari committee, which was a Petition Committee of Rajya Sabha, had Members from all parties. It had unanimously agreed on the definition of OROP, which was then accepted by the UPA. To implement this definition around Rs. 9,500 crores allocation was estimated. But now it seems that some Government bureaucrats are trying to change the definition of OROP itself, causing grave concern

amongst 32 Lakh ex-servicemen awaiting the implementation of this scheme. The ex-servicemen fear that it was due to this bureaucratic hurdle that the present Government provided only Rs. 1000 crore as budgetary allocation in the final Budget under the scheme for the whole year as against over Rs. 9000 crores estimated as per Koshiyari Committee definition of OROP. The Government must clarify its stand at the earliest and must not delay in implementing the OROP Scheme in the name of either falling into a bureaucratic trap or wanting to maintain the fiscal deficit target of 4. 1% of the GDP. … *(Interruptions)*

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let the Matter under Rule 377 be finished. Only two-three persons are left.

… *(Interruptions)*

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE (GULBARGA): I want to say that instead of only raising and leaving this issue here, it is better you have Half an Hour Discussion for this. … *(Interruptions)*

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can give notice in this regard.

… *(Interruptions)*

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE : Around 32 lakh soldiers are concerned about this. A notice is already given. … *(Interruptions)*

Some time should be fixed for it. It is important that some response should come from the Government. … *(Interruptions)*

(xii) Need to continue National Agriculture Insurance Scheme beyond the Financial Year 2014-15

[English]

SHRI G. HARI (ARAKKONAM): Agriculture is the mainstay of our economy and Tamil Nadu goes about in a big way as it has got traditional cultivation methods since time immemorial. The Government of Tamil Nadu takes keen interest in promoting agricultural production and ensuring protection to farmers affected by various factors. As far as the Centre is concerned, crop Insurance is the only protection made available to crores of our farmers. Under this scheme, both the Governments, Centre and States, are paying the insurance premium so far either fully or partly. As far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, our Hon. Chief Minister is in favour of taking the burden of premium payment by the State Government itself. The Hon. chief Minister of Tamil Nadu had also written to the Union Government that National Agriculture Insurance Scheme (NAIS) must be continued and it was approved by the Union Government for 2014-15. Now contrary to it, Union Agriculture Ministry has indicated that a new Crop Insurance Programme based on crop yield and income would be rolled out shortly. I urge upon the Union Government that the Government of Tamil Nadu may be permitted to continue with the

implementation of NAIS during next year also on the existing pattern of sharing premium subsidy and compensation.

(xiii) Need to provide separate fund for Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana

[English]

SHRI V. ELUMALAI (ARANI): Hon. Prime Minister has recently announced 'Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana' as an integrated development programme to be taken up by the Members of Parliament adopting a village in their respective constituencies.

Union Government may note that a similar scheme is being implemented in Tamil Nadu as envisioned by our Hon. Chief Minister, right from 2011 as 'Tamil Nadu Village Habitation Improvement (THAI)' scheme. This flagship programme is aimed at providing minimum basic infrastructure.

For implementing this scheme, Rs. 680 crores was spent in 2011-12 to benefit 25,335 habitations in 2020 villages. It was 750 crores in 2012-2013 to benefit 2,250 villages and a similar sum in 2013-2014 to benefit 2,500 villages. Now, the Hon. Prime Minister wants the Members of Parliament to take up this adoption programme from the MPLADS funds.

It is needless to say that MPLADS funds need to be spent on various development works for the entire constituency, and the

amount allocated for the purpose needs to be enhanced. While this being the ground reality, expecting MPs to adopt villages to develop them as model villages without separate fund allocation will be difficult. Hence, I would urge upon the Union Government to provide extra funds to carry out this ambitious programme, which is being taken up by the Government of Tamil Nadu in a big way.

(xiv) Need to provide adequate funds under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, particularly, in West Bengal

[English]

PROF. SAUGATA ROY (DUM DUM): The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) is a demand-driven, but instead of responding to rural demands for work, the Union Government wants to make it allocation based. As opposed to a demand for Rs. 60,000 crores for implementing MGNREGS in 2008, the UPA Government allotted Rs. 40,000 crores, which it reduced to Rs. 33,000 crores in 2010. The Union Government propose to further restrict who gets work and where by restricting it to only 200 districts. They propose to change the labour and material ratio from 60:40 currently to 51:49, which will cut funds for wages.

In response to an RTI, we have got the information that the Central Government has denied MGNREGS funds to Bihar, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal despite demand for work under MGNREGS. Secretary, Rural Development, Bihar had written to Ministry of Rural Development in August saying that the State had received Rs. 256. 4

crores against the State's request for release of Rs. 1,082. 4 crores. Earlier this year, in March, West Bengal Minister had written to the Ministry pointing out that though West Bengal had achieved, over 11 crore person days between January and March, the State received Rs. 2,394 crores instead of its request for Rs. 3,838 crores.

I, therefore, urge the Government to take remedial steps in this regard. Earlier this week, rights groups at a gathering of 15,000 people have demonstrated in the capital. They demanded that the rights earned under Food Security Act, Forest Rights Act and MGNREGA should be preserved. The Central Government should take note of this.

(xv) Need to allot land for construction of the building for Paradip Marine Police Station in Paradip Port, Odisha

[English]

DR. KULMANI SAMAL (JAGATSINGHPUR): Sir, after completion of the first phase of the Coastal Security Scheme, the second phase was started from April 2011. In the first phase, the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Union Government had sanctioned five Marine Police Stations for Odisha including one in Paradip. I would like to mention that all the Marine Police Stations except Paradip were made operational in their own State Government buildings. But Paradip Marine Police Station has been functioning in the accommodation provided by Paradip Port Trust Authority on rent. In this regard, the State Government had requested Paradip Port Authority to handover one acre of port land to the State Government for construction of the building in respect of Paradip Marine Police Station. The Board of Trustees of Paradip Port Trust, keeping in view the requirement of the State Government, decided to allot the land of Paradip Port in favour of the Home Department (Police), Odisha at a concessional rate of 25 per cent of the cost. However, the decision of the Central Government is still awaited.

Hence, I urge upon the Ministry of Shipping to kindly look into the matter and expedite allotment of one acre of land of Paradip Port for construction of the building of Paradip Marine Police Station in order to strengthen the marine security along the seacoast of Odisha.

(xvi) Need to improve BSNL mobile service and fill up the vacant post of General Manager in Parbhani and Jalna districts of Maharashtra

[Translation]

SHRI SANJAY HARIBHAU JADHAV (PARBHANI): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in the districts of Parbhani and Jalna in Maharashtra, the mobile services of BSNL have not been functioning smoothly for several years in rural areas. Due to the shortage of towers in these districts, mobile services are not operating properly. With the increase in the number of mobile subscribers, there is an urgent need to expand the number of towers in these districts. The posts of General Manager in BSNL offices are vacant, and due to the shortage of other staff and inadequate managerial arrangements, customers' grievances are also not being resolved.

Therefore, through this House, I would like to request the Government to appoint personnel to the vacant posts of General Manager in these districts at the earliest and to install new mobile towers so that mobile services in these districts may function smoothly.

(xvii) Need to start operation of flights from Kolhapur Airport in Maharashtra

[Translation]

SHRI DHANANJAY MAHADIK (KOLHAPUR): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to request the Union Government to take necessary and expeditious steps to commence air services at Kolhapur Airport, Maharashtra.

[English]

HON. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Hon. Member, the approved text only will go on record and there are only two lines in the approved text. You are reading some other things, but you cannot say anything more than what is in the approved text.

(xviii) Need to take urgent steps to start the ESI Medical College at Parippally in Kollam, Kerala

[English]

SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN (KOLLAM): Sir, ESI Corporation invested about Rs. 500 crore for infrastructure development of ESI Medical College at Parippally in Kollam, Kerala. MCI conducted inspection for the academic year 2014-15 and found certain deficiencies. The deficiencies are the non-appointment of teaching and non-teaching staff and infrastructure development of departments essential for 1st year MBBS course as per norms. November-December is the time for inspection by MCI for 2015-16. No effective steps have been taken by the ESI Corporation to rectify the deficiencies. If the deficiencies are not rectified before the inspection of MCI, the admission during the next academic year is also not possible. There will be delay in availing of the opportunity by ESI beneficiaries in terms of better treatment and medical education of their children. The huge amount spent on this will not serve any purpose.

Hence, I would urge upon the Government to initiate urgent action to rectify the defects and start the ESI Medical College at Parippally in Kollam, Kerala immediately

(xix) Need to permit rearing of milch animals in Delhi

[Translation]

SHRI RAMESH BIDHURI (SOUTH DELHI): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, after 1970, following the historic success of the White Revolution, the Indian Dairy Development Corporation significantly increased milk production. However, despite achieving self-sufficiency in milk and this substantial growth, the illegal production of synthetic milk has been steadily increasing. The dairy industry plays a crucial role in the rural economy of India. According to medical experts, consumption of synthetic milk can cause inflammation in the liver, kidneys and eyes. This milk is a “sweet poison” that gradually makes the body susceptible to diseases and is particularly dangerous for heart patients and pregnant women. In Delhi, the majority of the population, approximately 85 percent, does not have access to pure and nutritious milk. Cow’s milk contains Vitamin A, which is essential for the body’s immunity. Similarly, buffalo milk contains whey protein, which is resistant to heat-induced degradation. Today, rearing cows and buffaloes in the capital has become extremely difficult. In Delhi, while citizens are permitted to keep dogs and cats, they are not allowed to rear milch animals.

Government departments, including the Veterinary Department, do not capture stray animals, but they seize cows and buffaloes from people's homes and land. At present, the price of a single buffalo ranges from Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 1.5 lakh, which is the livelihood source for many families.

Therefore, through this House, I would like to request the Government to promulgate an ordinance for the National Capital, granting citizens the right, outside the NDMC area, to rear one cow and one buffalo on land measuring 100 square yards or more. This will help make pure and nutritious milk accessible to a larger population, promote a healthier India, and support the livelihood of numerous families.

14.37 hrs

PAYMENT AND SETTLEMENT SYSTEMS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2014

[English]

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, we will take item No. 17.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY (DUM DUM): May I raise a point of order at this stage.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, first I will call the Minister, then you raise your point of order.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE, MINISTER OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Payment and Settlement System (Amendment) Bill, 2014 be taken into consideration."

Sir, I have gone through the provisions of the Amendment and I have a written note which is ready and I could read out to explain what the amendment is about. But on the first reading, it looks like

somewhat complex. But upon a simplistic explanation and I think I am going to be in Hon. House in simple language to explain what this subject matter is entirely about?

Sir, the Payment and Settlement system in commercial transactions is the backbone of all financial transactions. I issue a cheque in favour of somebody. It goes through a clearing house from my banker to the recipient bankers and therefore, there is a payment and settlement system involved in this. Prior to 2007, this was all being managed through an executive notification and authorities created under that. In 2007, the Government at that time, and rightly so, enacted the Payment and Settlement Systems Act 2007. I would just read from the preamble of that Act one sentence. It will be clear as to what the purpose of that Act was.

"An Act to provide for regulation and supervision of payment systems in India and to designate the Reserve Bank of India as the authority, for that purpose and for the matters connected therewith and incidental thereto. "

So, the payment systems are to be regulated by the Reserve Bank of India. Now, what does the Act say? The principal Act after definition say that it is only Reserve Bank and whoever has an authorization from the Reserve Bank, he can run a payment system.

In a payment system, you can have two kinds of actors involved. One is a system participant. My bank will be a system participant. In a private transaction, just as for instance today, this radio taxi service controversy is going on, how does a consumer pay for these radio taxies which are currently in controversy? These are not governmental transactions or banking transactions. Earlier, the system was that he would register himself with the private taxi company and he would come on their Whatsapp. He would give his credit card number. Once he gave his credit card number, every time he wanted to hire a taxi, he would just press the Whatsapp of that taxi. They would locate where the passenger is and then they would pick him up. When he would leave the taxi, he would not pay, but it will be credited to his account. Now, a violation was discovered that the payment gateway was outside India. So, the Reserve Bank told them to bring it within India. So, from 1st December this year, it appeared in the newspapers that Paytm, a local wallet has been created by one of these companies which is in controversy. The payment is deposited in advance through a credit card or cash into that wallet. Every time you use the service, you have already paid in rupees. So that wallet becomes the service provider.

When this original Act was enacted, there is a provision that under Section 7, the Reserve Bank will permit an authorisation to any person. It could be a State agency; it could be a non-State agency. But without authorisation of the Reserve Bank, you cannot become a service provider. That is a designated authority. That is how, the commerce in this area is evolved. If you default, what are the consequences etc., the Act provides for it.

There is a provision under Section 23. Section 23 says and since Prof. Saugata Roy was raising a point of order, I could quite anticipate what he wanted to say. The amendment is very simple, though it is couched in a very complicated phraseology and unless you understand this commerce, it looks a little complicated. I myself yesterday had spent a lot of time before I could understand it simply. … *(Interruptions)*

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE (GULBARGA): If we read the Objects and Reasons, we will not be able to understand it.

[Translation]

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: That is why I will explain it in simple terms.

[English]

So far, I think, I am putting very simply. Our lady colleague and I just discussed along with Shri Deepender Singh Hooda. It took them two and a half to three minutes to follow as to what it is all about. Section 23 says: “What if the system participant…” That is, suppose, I have to give money to somebody. What happens if either the recipient or I become insolvent? now the sanctity of commercial transaction is to be respected. so, either of us becomes insolvent under ordinary law of the land and those for whose behalf we are transacting, that is, the bank becomes insolvent. Then under the banking regulations act or the companies act, they owe money to me. I will have to stand in a queue. the old companies act had a provision under section 529. first, the taxation authorities get the money after insolvency and liquidation. thereafter, the workmen will get the money; thereafter, the secured creditors will get the money and in the last, the unsecured creditors will come. so, they are holding my money but I will stand last in the queue. so, the original act has a provision under section 23. if a system participant became insolvent, then companies act and the banking regulations act will not apply. under this act, you first pay to the person on whose behalf you are holding the money. if anything else is left, then that procedure for the rest of the land will apply. at

the cost of repetition, I would just translate it in. [Translation] If any system participant becomes insolvent or bankrupt, under normal Indian law, whether the Banking Regulation Act or the Companies Act, the sequence of payment is first to the taxation authorities, then to the labour, followed by secured creditors, and finally to unsecured creditors. However, Section 23 of this Act states that this procedure will not apply. The participant on whose behalf the transactions were conducted, so that commercial transactions could continue, will receive the payment first, and only after that will the rest be distributed according to the normal provisions of Indian law.

[English] So, the Act in 2007 envisaged this. But the Act did not envisage a situation where not the participant but what if the system provider itself becomes insolvent. If the system provider becomes insolvent, the Companies Act will apply; if the system provider is a bank, the Banking Regulation Act will apply. So, we go back to the same problem. This amendment entirely is that even if the service provider, which is the clearing house, becomes insolvent, then first pay the money to those whose money you were clearing, and if anything is left, then the rest of the procedure will apply. This is entirely the amendment in simple language.

There are some editorial corrections in the original Bill in the language of this section. And then Section 23 is being replaced with those editorial language corrections to say that the procedure of insolvency which applies to the system participants will also apply to the system provider. That is entirely the Bill.

With these few comments, Sir, I commend this Bill to this House for consideration.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That the Bill to amend the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007, be taken into consideration."

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: Sir, I am on a point or order.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Under what rule?

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: I am raising the point of order with reference to Rule 31(e)

The functions of each of the Standing Committees will be (a) to consider the Demands for Grants etc., (b) to examine such Bills pertaining to the concerned Ministries/Departments as are referred to the Committee by the Chairperson, Rajya Sabha or the Speaker as the case may be and make report thereof.

Ever since this rule has been brought in, it has been the practice in this House to refer any Bill that is important to the Standing Committee. Sometimes for small amendments, minor amendments, we overlook this clause.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Bill was already introduced yesterday, discussion has started now, and you are also going to speak during the discussion. On referring this kind of things to the Standing Committee, yesterday also many Members spoke. These issues could be raised during the discussion and not in the form of a point of order.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: Sir, let me complete my statement and then you give whatever ruling you wish to.

All I want to mention is that I agree that this Bill was placed in the Business Advisory Committee and the Business Advisory Committee included it in the Business of the House. The name of the Bill was mentioned and two hours were allotted by the Business Advisory Committee for discussion. But what happened in the Business Advisory Committee was that a copy of the Bill was not given. So, the Business Advisory Committee Members thought that it is a minor Bill and the Finance Minister wanted it to be passed. But after it was decided, the BAC Members did not realize that this is such a complicated thing.

A lawyer of Mr. Jaitley's eminence had to spend hours to understand the implications of it. How do you expect such a complicated Bill to be discussed and passed in this House within two hours? He is introducing two new concepts – trade depositories and legal entities. My point of order is simple. There can be several motions after a Bill is placed, a Bill can be taken into consideration and it can also be referred to the Standing Committee.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is that your point of order?

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: Sir, my suggestion is that the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Finance so that we can go through it thoroughly and submit a report to the House. This is a serious Bill. You also study it; it will take you hours.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is correct that the Hon. Finance Minister said that he took a lot of time. But he said it is a simple thing and that is what he explained to you. If you are not satisfied, in the discussion you can speak and the Minister will reply to your points.

Hon. Minister, do you want to say anything?

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Let me say that this is not a kind of Bill which has any kind of partisan character between previous Government or this Government or next Government. Because of the

global financial order, in various international forums including G-20, to add to the credibility of the global financial system these negotiations started during the UPA Government and they concluded under the UPA Government. They felt that to maintain the sanctity of the financial system, the backbone of the financial system has to be strengthened. One of the gaps that they noticed in some of the countries including India is that if the central counter party, which is the service provider in this case, becomes bankrupt or insolvent, the whole transaction will collapse. Therefore, most countries are making their laws up-to-date.

It is literally a one-section amendment and the practice has been that if it is a significant amendment, it shall go to the Standing Committee; if it is a marginal amendment, and in one sentence the only amendment is that the original law envisaged insolvency of the system participant, it did not envisage the insolvency of the service provider. As per the amendment, what applies to the insolvency of the participant will also apply to the insolvency of the service provider. Therefore, as I am saying it, initially when you read this, it does take time to understand the commercial nature of transactions in the first instance, but translated in simple language this is the entire Bill.

Therefore, we have to bring our law at par with the international community. After all this affects our credibility in the global financial system as to when payments are promised from India, there has to be some credibility of that promise itself, there has to be some legitimacy. Therefore, there is an element of urgency. I would urge the Hon. Members to consider this so that the Bill can be passed right away. There are no trans-party different opinions with regard to a proposition like this.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE: Of course this is the amendment to the previous Bill of 2007. You are amending nearly 3 sections- Section 2, 23 and 34A. As you have explained to this House, this is also going to affect the workers' dues and also your own taxes. Government will not have first priority to recover it. These two priorities will go and the service provider will get the first priority as per your amendment.

[Translation]

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have understood the question raised by Shri Kharge Ji and I also understand

your concern. Regarding the three sections in question, the first provision, Section 2, involves only an amendment to definitions. Only two definitions are being added. As for Section 23 in the earlier provision, it stated that if any participant becomes insolvent, the Companies Act and the Banking Regulation Act would not apply, but the payment would first go to the creditor. For example, if a bank is a participant and it goes bankrupt, and if my money is deposited in that bank, I would receive my money first. If this were not ensured, people would be reluctant to transact within our financial system. Now, the system has been restructured, and the definition added specifies that if a system provider becomes bankrupt, the same process will be followed. That is all.

[Translation] Furthermore, Section 34 provides that, for example, the Reserve Bank has established a Clearing Corporation of India, which is a subsidiary of the Reserve Bank and handles clearings. If any difficulty arises with it, those whose cheques or payments are being transacted through it will have the first right to receive their payments. Only after that will the procedures under the Companies Act and the Banking Regulation Act apply.

[English]

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN (KOLLAM): What is Clearing Corporation of India?

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: it is a subsidiary of the reserve bank of India, through which commercial transactions take place. it is a clearing house, in a simple language. [Translation] Section 34, which originally stated that this Act would have overriding consideration, has been incorporated in restructured language.

[Translation]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE: Instead of explaining so much, refer this to the Standing Committee. At least there, discussions will take place, and only after that will it come here. … *(Interruptions)* There is no objection to that. … *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will give my ruling.

Hon. Members, as you are aware, referring or not referring a Bill to the Standing Committee under the Rules falls within the jurisdiction of the HON. SPEAKER. I may inform the House that the HON. SPEAKER, on a request made by the Hon. Minister of Finance, and in view of the reasons cited by the Minister, has agreed to the

request for not referring the Bill to the Standing Committee of Finance.

Now, Shrimati Sathyabama.

[English]

SHRIMATI V. SATHYABAMA (TIRUPPUR): Thank you, Mr. Deputy-Speaker.

At the outset, let me thank the Chair, most of all, our beloved leader, Amma and the people of my constituency, known for its global economic activity as a knitting town for having enabled me to speak on this important legislation.

In the globalized economic sense, accepting international norms has become necessary. That necessity has necessitated our Government now to propose certain amendments to the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007 to increase transparency and stability of the Indian financial markets.

Based on the principles of safety, security, soundness, efficiency and accessibility, the RBI has been authorized to establish ordered growth of payment systems. Whether they are Government bodies of other countries or multi-national corporations and organizations or individual customers, their payments and receipts must be transparent and at the same time, safe and secure. In 2007-08, the global economy witnessed a meltdown and there was a huge global financial crisis which had its cascading effect on economies of many countries.

Though India witnessed the negative impact a bit late, it became a great uphill task to overcome. The ill-effects are affecting our economic growth rate even today. We cannot claim right now ‘India is shining’. That is why, we are inviting foreign investors to come and ‘make in India’. Such financial transactions have been reformed time and again. That is why, originally in 2007, this Act was enacted to regulate and supervise payment systems. After waking up to the reality that globalized economy has changed payment systems and mechanisms. The G-20 nations took measures to reform Over the Counter derivatives markets. This led to certain new initiatives like bringing about Trade Repositories that emerged as a new type of financial market infrastructure. These are growing in importance in the Over the Counter derivatives market.

15.00 hrs

The Reserve Bank of India has no specific legal provision to supervise the trade repositories in India. As these trade repositories are to comply with international norms, there needs to be a regulator with appropriate legal powers. India is a party to the G-20 commitment and has taken note of the global developments. So, the Reserve Bank of India has made a trade repository, the Clearing Corporation of India Limited. This was necessary because of our bad experience in facing difficulties when our banks and regulatory agencies were not able to identify the complicated business ventures. We need to establish connections between issuers and securities efficiently. This gave rise to the need for a standard uniform code. That is why the Legal Entity Identification System is brought forth as a new initiative. The G-20 countries have recognised the importance of a global identifier. This can be a key component of necessary improvement in financial data system. Now, through these amendments we want to give more powers to the Reserve Bank of India and the regulatory mechanism it may put in place as the globally compatible Legal Entity Identifier.

Clearing Corporation of India Limited has been selected by the Reserve Bank of India to act as a local operating unit to issue Legal Entity Identifier.

The amendments sought to be made in section 23 of this Act also calls for insertion of a new section 23A relating to protection of funds collected from the customers by the payment system providers. This is necessary because the participating banks have to run the risk of exposure of its other operations when the Clearing Corporation of India function take up its role as central counter party. A sound and enforceable legal basis for "netting' of bank exposures to the said Corporation is required to reduce the banks' exposure significantly.

All these amendments will provide financial protection in the event of insolvency, dissolution or winding up of a central counter party. This will also help individuals and various bodies to overcome legal difficulties in securing the customers interests held in bank accounts in the event of insolvency or bankruptcy or prepaid instruments.

The LEI system is to be dependent on a vast computer network. I forewarn this Government that we must be beware of the computer hackers. Otherwise, country may have to face a huge financial loss as suffered by the Bank of America only recently. Even the Defence

Ministries of the Governments all over the world are not free from hacking. Hence, we must ensure a viable security system while contemplating central counter party in India.

Thanking our Hon. leader, Amma for enabling me to speak on this important Bill which has become necessary in the globalised economic sense, let me conclude. Thank you, Sir.

[Translation]

SHRI JAGDAMBIKA PAL (DOMARIYAGANJ): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am extremely grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to speak on The Payment and Settlement Systems (Amendment) Bill, 2014, presented by the Hon. Finance Minister. The Hon. Minister has made an effort to explain to the Hon. House, in very simple terms, the purpose of presenting this Bill and the amendments it contains.

15.05 hrs (Shri Anandrao Adsul *in the Chair*)

[Translation]

If we look at the amendments in this Bill, it is clear that the amendment made to Section 23 has a specific purpose, which is the [English] protection of funds collected from customers. [Translation] Providing security to the funds being deposited is a necessary requirement for the banking system and the economy of any country, and this has been presented by the Hon. Finance Minister through this Bill. I sincerely congratulate her for this. As far as the amendments in the Bill are concerned, I understand that she has also highlighted the context of the global recession in 2007 and 2008, during which major banks in Japan and the US collapsed, resulting in layoffs. Customers

who had deposits in those banks had no security for their money because there were no legal provisions in place. Not only India, but the world at large, during the G-20 discussions, recognised the need for reforms to ensure that people in India would have security in the future. You will observe that this is why Section 23 (A) has been introduced –

[English]

"The Reserve Bank may, in public interest or in the interest of the customers of designated payment systems or to prevent the affairs of such designated payment system from being conducted in a manner prejudicial to the interests of its customers, require system provider of such payment system to - …"

[Translation] This makes it clear that the purpose behind introducing this Bill is to ensure that the transactions currently taking place in banks and financial institutions are secure, and efforts are being made in this direction. Until now, payments and settlements used to happen in two ways -- One was a centralized system, which involved Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS), and the other was the National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT). In the decentralized system,

individual banks transacted with each other, but even then, there was no legal sanctity. In 2007, to regulate National Electronic Funds Transfer under the centralized system, the National Payments Corporation of India was established. This has made regulation easier, while Real Time Gross Settlement continues to be regulated by the RBI. Previously, the RBI could regulate RTGS only through executive orders, but now, through mandatory legal provisions, depositor security can be formally ensured. This is the effort being made in this direction. Additionally, in the over-the-counter market, two amendments have been made. First, a global Legal Entity Identification System has been introduced so that identities can be verified worldwide. Today, those who are concerned about black money, I understand that this will certainly ensure that when large borrowers are given identification, a twenty-digit code will be assigned, so that the entire world will be aware, and it will also be known that the person to whom the code is assigned, what their identity is and how much fairness exists. Work has also been done in this direction.

Regarding the Clearing Corporation of India that was mentioned, it will function in a manner similar to a trade repository, because until now, in the new type of financial market infrastructure, there was no

legal provision. Today, a provision has also been made to establish the Clearing Corporation of India. As the Minister said, it will operate like a cheque or clearing house. Certainly, its inception has taken place, and some Hon. Members have raised objections. They consider it an escrow account. Whether we are referring to Section 23, Section 34, or the upper paid card, for protection, if we carry out any transactions with companies, financial institutions, or banks, this will provide world-wide information. The amendments made allow that the accounting of such financial transactions can be maintained in this paid repository. Until now, there was no accounting mechanism, and there was no clearing corporation. Today, such laws are being amended worldwide to bring transparency. How will transparency be ensured? There will be an identification system, which will certainly help in controlling black money. The greatest concern is over-the-counter transactions, and transparency will be introduced there as well. Since the Government of Modi Ji came to power, whether on the global stage, in Parliament, or at the G-20 Summit, we can certainly congratulate that serious attention has been given by India at the G-20 to curb black money, and a part of the note has also been formulated. Certainly, our Government deserves congratulations. If we do not implement such a system, then we will surely not be able to achieve

the goals we aspire to. You are aware that large financial institutions, banks, and borrowers engage in transactions worth thousands of crores of rupees. The purpose of bringing this Bill is to ensure that everything is transparent, and with transparency, every sector will naturally become more accountable. This Bill will not only curb irregularities but will also bring reforms. Across the world, the RBI regulates such matters whether money is being transferred from one bank to another, from one institution to another, from within the country or abroad, whether by borrowers or others, all these were regulated solely by the RBI. Through the amendments proposed in this Bill, these processes will certainly gain additional safeguards. With regard to bankruptcy, as the Hon. Minister has stated, it is clearly mentioned in sub-section 23 that [English] Where a system participant is declared by a court of competent jurisdiction as insolvent or is dissolved or wound up. If you go through the Bill, I think you will reach the conclusion [Translation] that, this Bill will prove to be a milestone in economic reforms, and you will appreciate it. At the very least, please read the Bill. This reflects the graciousness of the Hon. Minister, who mentioned that the Bill appears very complex to read; that is why I went through it. He did not have to say this, for the manner in which he explained it was simple enough for everyone to

understand. Even if the Minister has said that it appears quite complex to read, regardless of its complexity, this Bill is one that provides safeguards for economic reforms. This Bill too ... *(Interruptions)* If you had read the Objects and Reasons of the Bill, perhaps you would have understood its intent. Jyotiraditya-ji will certainly attempt to explain it to everyone. I only wish to highlight a few points: [English] The G-20 endorsed the development and maintenance of a global Legal Entity Identifier (LEI) system. The Legal Entity Identifier is a twenty-character unique identity code assigned to entities that are parties to a financial transaction, and it is unique across the globe. [Translation] A 20-character code will be issued for the entire world, what is also referred to as a 'twenty-character' identifier. This code will not only be applicable in India but will be recognized globally, enabling an exchange of information from one jurisdiction to another.

[English]

"The use of the Legal Entity Identifier numbers is likely to be mandated for Over the Counter derivative transactions and large borrowers in a phased manner."

[Translation] I believe that this Bill is very clear and simple. Naturally, all financial transactions today whether they involve individuals transferring funds from one bank to another, institutional financial transactions, or cross-border dealings, require a regulatory framework, and this Bill seeks to establish exactly that. I consider this a very simple amendment. The original Bill had already been passed in 2007, but what we are doing today is giving it proper legal codification and legal authority so that our Government can at least safeguard the rights and interests of our customers. If the Government is taking this step, then Shri Kharge Sahab should offer congratulations and state that we will pass this Bill unanimously.

Just now Prof. Saugata Roy raised a question regarding the Clearing Corporation of India Limited. Of course, he understands it well, but it is his compulsion that his words should reach far; therefore, he stands up and raises a Point of Order as well. He knows very well that when a Bill is introduced, the opportunity to raise a Point of Order, to oppose its introduction, or to send it to a Standing Committee is only at that very moment, yesterday. He is a Professor, and we all learn from him. Yesterday, when that opportunity existed, he did not make use of it. Now, when the discussion on the Bill is underway, he is raising a Point of Order. Even so, the Chair and all of

us respect him, and you have kindly given him an opportunity to speak. I believe that the Clearing Corporation of India Limited should also be examined in this context.

[English]

"The said Act, though providing for netting protection and settlement finality in the event of insolvency or dissolution of system participants, does not expressly contemplate a situation which may warrant netting on account of insolvency or dissolution of the central counter party itself."

[Translation] I believe that the matter of settlement is also being amended. This is being done because earlier, whether settlement occurred through a centralized system or a decentralized system, in both systems, that is, even in the decentralized system, whenever one bank undertook any financial transaction with another bank, it was done through the RBI, but there was no legal entity for it. Today, at the very least, when a legal entity and an identified code are issued, it will become a legal entity, and when an individual is given a code, it will certainly provide security.

I believe that in the year 2007-08, a situation arose, which the Hon. Finance Minister mentioned, where a global financial crisis

occurred. I would say that even in those circumstances, we are taking the initiative today. India is taking the initiative, India's banking sector is taking the initiative, and the Government of India is taking the initiative. Perhaps this will serve as an example for others, because when we present a matter at an international forum ... *(Interruptions)* I shall conclude my remarks in a minute or two. I am taking a little time so that matters are clarified, especially those points that may remain even after the Hon. Minister has spoken. After this, there will be no need for the Opposition to say anything further, and this Bill will certainly be passed. Therefore, I believe that the matters regarding this Bill stand clarified. Regarding the three amendments that were discussed, I believe that Shri Kharge Sahab mentioned a title and referred to Section 23. I believe that he must have now seen the Bill. He also referred to Section 34 (a). I believe that he should examine the entire Bill. I would like to request Shri Kharge Sahab and all Hon. colleagues from the Opposition to pass this Bill unanimously and to extend congratulations to this Government. Thank you.

[English]

PROF. SAUGATA ROY (DUM DUM): Sir, I rise to speak on the Payment and Settlement Systems (Amendment) Bill, 2014.

This Bill seeks to amend the original Bill, the Payment and Settlement Systems Bill, 2007. As our Hon. Finance Minister said, it mainly seeks to amend Clause 23 of the Bill. Amendment to clause 23 has different parts. There are also some amendments to clause 2 and clause 34. With my limited knowledge I felt that it could have been referred to the Standing Committee. In the Committee we could call the representatives of the Reserve Bank of India and the Clearing Corporation of India and then we would be able to study positive and negative aspects of the earlier payment system, which has been continuing since 2007. But since the Finance Minister felt that it was not necessary, I bow to his superior wisdom and I am taking part in the discussion over this Bill.

I have little knowledge of financial matters. I used to teach physics. I can understand difficult principles of quantum mechanics. I am not brilliant like Hon. Shri Jagdambika Pal, who has been a former Chief Minister for three days and has been the ruling party Member both in the UPA as well as in the NDA regimes. Now, I do not have

that superior wisdom and intelligence. He said it is very simple. But I still do not consider it to be simple.

The question that I want to raise in the House is that, why is the Finance Minister in a hurry to pass the Bill. He has stated in the Statement of Objects and Reasons that the G 20 countries feel that this system should be introduced in this country. Our Finance Minister attended the G 20 Finance Ministers' Conference before he fell ill in Cairns, if I am not mistaken. There they must have pressurised him saying, "Finance Minister of India, why don't you pass the Bill?" [English] So, I can understand that there is an international pressure on him in this matter. But this is what is special about the First World countries. … *(Interruptions)*

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: I have respect for my friend Prof. Saugata Roy. I always call him 'Dada'. He knows it. But I want to make just a point of correction, which may alter his argument. I never attended the G 20 Conference, but the UPA Finance Minister did. What you are saying applies to them.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: I made a slight mistake. The Cairns meeting was attended by Shri Chidambaram. But the Prime Minister attended the G 20 meeting in Australia. The pressure from there must have come to the Finance Minister.

Now, this is what is special about the First World countries. They first pollute the world as much as they can, emit all the carbons and then they pressurise, in the international fora, India to follow their emission norms. First, they totally botch up the system. Then, they pressurise us to follow their norms. See what has happened to America in 2008. They had this sub prime mortgage system. Sub prime mortgage system was a system due to which financial services firms like Lehman Brothers collapsed. They have not yet recovered fully from the meltdown of 2008. Now, they are after us, pressurising us to follow the G 20 norms. The Finance Minister is following their foot steps. I think, basically our financial system is stronger. Our regulator, the Reserve Bank of India, has looked after the financial system, especially the banks, better. There was no collapse of Indian banks during 2008. So, while we should follow international norms, the pride in the solidity of our financial system should also be there in the Finance Minister's mind. I find that missing because three times in the Statement of Objects and Reasons he has mentioned G 20 countries want it. We will do what is good for our country. We want to participate in the international trade. But because of the hurry that the G 20 countries have, we should not take recourse to any legislation or pass any legislation.

Basically, what is settlement? Shri Jagadambika Pal while reading from his note mentioned about different types of settlement. There can be two types of settlement. One is centralised and the other is decentralised. Decentralised settlement is, I buy something from you and you pay me money. But there can be centralised settlement, which is of two types. One is real time group settlement – you present a whole bunch of cheques from one bank to another, they pay you back. So, this is real time settlement. Settlement can also be in virtual world, electronic fund transfer system. That is more common and prevalent in these days. In both sorts of settlements, ultimately the controlling authority is the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The Bill in 2007 also stated this. Here, there is a new concept. New concept is to set up trade depository. They have designated Clearing Corporation of India which as the Minister explained is a subsidiary of the RBI as the trade depository. Trade depository basically will deal with all tradings in the financial sector.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: There is a slight slip on my part. So, I would like to correct it since you have repeated it. I said that it is authorized by the RBI. I wrongly used the word `subsidiary'; it is authorized by the State Bank under Section 7 of this Act, its shareholding comprises essentially of financial institutions – State

Bank, ICICI, Bank of Baroda, HDFC, STC, LIC, IDBI – it is these kinds of banking institutions which collectively hold it. It is not directly a subsidiary.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: I thank the Minister for correcting himself. That is the sort of boldness and directness that we expect from Shri Jaitley.

As I was saying that this trade depository will basically keep the history of any instrument. Why is the trade depository necessary? It is necessary as it is mentioned for over the counter derivatives markets. I went to ask Shri Jyotiraditya Scindia, who was a finance man, worked in Mumbai, who explained to me as to what exactly derivatives mean. He explained to me in simple terms like Shri Jaitley did. He said that if I have a foreign equity or foreign shareholding, and I want to take the risk of the foreign exchange part out. So, I would take a derivative. Once you take a derivative on an equity holding, then, you can trade the derivative over the counter. This new trade depository will act as the clearing corporation Am I right, Shri Jaitley?

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Yes.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: Clearing Corporation will keep the history of all the instruments. Any time somebody wants to refer they can

come to the Clearing Corporation and see as to what is the history of this instrument of this transaction. The new thing that is being added which is truly an international thing is what is called the legal entity identification system, that is, for any big transaction, you will get a 20 character unique identity code. Like in Aadhar Card, you get an identity code; here, for any transaction you would get a 20 character identity code. This is entirely a new thing. Immediately a transaction can be identified with this 20 character legal entity identifier issued. The same Clearing Corporation of India will issue this 20 character identity code. For any future transaction, you will have to refer to that identity code, if I am right.

Now Mr. Jaitley has already mentioned as to what happens in such cases. Previously in 2007, we had taken precaution against possible liquidation of the system participant. If the Clearing Corporation of India goes bust, what happens in that case? Then this law provides for that eventuality. Earlier we had Clearing Houses. The local Reserve Bank was the Clearing House and different banks used to send their instruments. They were divided and then the money was given. Now, the Clearing House has become the Clearing Corporation of India. With electronic fund transfer, the whole process has become very easy and even passing of actual instrument is not necessary. The whole

thing can be done electronically now. So, the Bill takes care of the possible collapse.

This Bill takes care of another important thing. These days, we have, what is known, as the Gift Card. You may have a Gift Card for Rs. One lakh. With that, you can go and shop at various places. You may have paid for it and so you have got a Gift Card. Now, what happens if the bank, which has issued you a Gift Card, collapses? There will be an escrow account and the escrow account will refund the Gift Card holder for whatever losses he has suffered. The whole idea is to make the whole payment and settlement system easier, more transparent and international. With a 20-character identifier, you make it international so that international transactions can take place very easily.

So, I hope, with the passing of this Bill, when our present Minister goes to attend the next meeting of the Finance Ministers of G-20 countries, he will be lauded that he has done what they wanted him to do and say that India is now compatible with international norms. In that respect, I would like to commend the Minister of Commerce and Industry that against pressure in the WTO, she held out against the pressure to release our food stocks. Sometimes we should hold up

against the big countries and not go by whatever they would like us to do.

Finally, since I have this great opportunity of speaking in the presence of the Finance Minister, I would like to know from him about the progress that has been made in the unearthing of black money stashed abroad. We are waiting with bated breath to know when we will know the names of black money holders. As we asked Mr. Jaitley in the last debate, when will the amount of Rs. 15 lakh come to our accounts?

With these words, I conclude my speech.

[English]

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (CUTTACK): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for permitting me to participate in this debate on the Payment and Settlement Systems (Amendment) Bill, 2014.

At the outset, as has been explained by the Finance Minister, this Bill seems to be a bit complex and complicated and as Mr. Kharge, Leader of the Congress Party, has mentioned because of the Statement of Objects and Reasons it has become more complex and complicated. I hope the ruling dispensation has taken his suggestion in good spirit and henceforth the Statement of Objects and Reasons would be explained in a simple manner so that it becomes easier for all of us to understand, especially financial matters. I would say, there are specifically, as has been said, two specific amendments that are being brought into. Amendment to Section 23 is in two parts and there is amendment to Section 23A where an insertion is taking place. Then it is to substitute sub-Section (4) of Section 23 of the Principal Act where a system participant is declared as insolvent or is dissolved or wound up, then the liquidator or receiver or assignee are going to play a role. But, before that, there is another sub-section (1) after the words "to a payment system" occurring at the end, the words "under section 7, or, such gross or netting procedure as may be approved by it under

any other provisions of this Act" shall be inserted. I fail to understand, this first part of the insertion which is being made. I think, it needs a little bit of clarification in the first part of sub-section of Section 23.

Regarding the other two, there is very little issue to be understood. I would say, as there is no legal provision in any of the law administered by the Reserve Bank of India to regulate and supervise the trade repositories in India, it has become essential to bring this type of amendment. Currently, there is no legal provision under any of the laws administered by the Reserve Bank of India for regulation and oversight of the legal entity. Therefore, this amendment is essential.

I would say, the consumer banking frauds are on the rise. A Reserve Bank of India Group had suggested the use of public key infrastructure in order to ensure a safe and secure payment system in the country. The Central Bank has announced a series of initiatives to improve technological infrastructure to support payment and settlement system which are termed as PKI such as Real Time Gross Settlement, National Electronic Fund Transfer.

I remember in 2006-2007, when this Bill came up before the Standing Committee for deliberation, the basic question that was posed to RBI and also to other stakeholders who were witness before

us is that electronic transfer is taking place. Plastic card has become the call of the day. As my friend Mr. Ahluwalia was telling me some days back, if somebody is going to rob you when you are walking on the street, they are not picking up your wallet; they are snatching your mobile telephone. It is because your wallet does not carry much money, much hard cash. It carries plastic cards. So that card cannot be used by robber or whoever who takes your wallet. He robs you of your mobile phone because it fetches him Rs. 500 or Rs. 3000, whatever may be the market price. But the question that arose there was, with this transaction of money, when I am giving a cheque, how long does it take to get reimbursed? In different States there are different clearing houses and are recognised by RBI. How long does it take? I come from Cuttack. Cheques are delivered to me or to certain institutions or firms from Bhubaneswar. It takes minimum three days with a distance of only 22 kilometres. The question that had arose in 2007 was that why should it take three days? If it is with Mumbai or with Delhi, the minimum time is eight days. Why should it happen? You are talking of electronic age. It should happen instantly. If I can do RTGS; if I can send money to my family Members from the Parliament House Branch of the State Bank of India in Delhi, it

reaches them within two or three or four hours and I get it confirmed that, yes, they have got it.

If I give a cheque, why can it not be transacted within a minimum time span? Why should it take seven or eight days' time? That is a question.

When we are discussing on this aspect, I think, it is necessary that we should also deliberate on the payment structure. The Payment and Settlement System Bill is getting amended today. Though it was passed in 2007, it came into operation, actually, in 2008. This new Bill seeks to amend certain parts of the Act to provide that if a system participant is declared as insolvent or is dissolved or owned up by an order of a court or an authority, it will not affect any settlement that has become final prior to such order or immediately after it. It also seeks to insert new sections including one on protection of fund collected from the customer by the payment system provider.

Sir, what is this term called 'payment system'? It is a term used by many but understanding the true depth is perhaps left to a few like Professor Saugata Roy and Jagdambikaji who directly come into contact with payment systems. A peep into the vast amount of literature available on this subject leaves one either stunned or confused depending on what one's perception had been earlier

regarding this subject. It could be viewed, at the simplest level, as a means to transfer funds or a ‘system’ with all the accompanying connotations. Going by the latter, a comprehensive understanding of payment and settlement systems can be had by its definition. The definition says;

> “Payment and Settlement System refers to a set of rules and regulations, processes and procedures, instruments and institutions, and including the legal framework, which facilitate transfer of financial assets between the sender and the receiver”. Our own Payment and Settlement Systems Act 2007 defines a payment system as ‘a system that enables payment to be effected between a payer and a beneficiary, involving clearing, payment or settlement service or all of them, but does not include a stock exchange’. ”

Again, the perception about payment and settlement systems and its complexity depends on whether one is just a user of the payment system or a participant in the system or both. The instruments of payment itself may vary from being cash-based or non-cash based. An efficient functioning of payment system in any country is reflected by the ability of its financial sector, reduced cost of transaction, optimum utilization of financial resources and increased market liquidity. A

safe and efficient payment system facilitates the smooth transmission of the Central Bank's Monitory Policy signals. Globally, payment systems have been undergoing a sea change in tune with the changes in technology.

Therefore, I would say on what Professor Saugata Roy said: "Do not go into the dictates of G-20. " We are invited to G-20. We participate in the deliberations of G-20. We cannot keep our system away from the processes and the agreements that G-20 has agreed upon. To recover black money, it was G-20, who took the best steps forward. In that respect, I would agree and also support what has been mentioned here that we have to take up those methods which the developed countries have accepted and that is the right direction which we should proceed with.

In any system, its rules and procedures should be enforceable, simple and clear; and their consequences predictable. Illegal system would pose dangers to its participants if these things are not that clear.

Generally, contract law is the basic bedrock of any legal structure on which the enforceability of agreements that are used to establish the rights and obligations of system operators and participants that participate in a payment system are built. Such contractual arrangements must be enforceable and inviolable to ensure smooth

conduct of operations under normal circumstances as well as during financial crisis.

Sir, with this Act in place, all these payment systems would be regulated by the RBI under the legislative framework. The Act has been effective from 12th August, 2008, as I had mentioned earlier. I would say that the term 'payment system' is defined in Section 2(1) of the PSS Act. Before I conclude, I would just mention here that this Act is, indeed, a very positive legislation for the smooth conduct of the payment system as it recognises the concept of netting, gives finality of settlement to the transactions and protects the netted transactions settled through recognised and payment system from adverse impact of insolvency, recognition of loss allocations, etc. This piece of legislation not only imbues the system with a sense of protection but will also go a long way in promoting a healthy financial payment system in India.

I would say that with these two amendments, the Act is getting more strengthened; and it is expected that it would be a benchmark in the Indian payment system against international standards.

Thank you.

[Translation]

PROF. RAVINDRA VISHWANATH GAIKWAD (OSMANABAD): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I support this Bill. I have one request. There are banks in the country, but in the cooperative sector, the amount paid towards shares has not been returned by even a single cooperative society till today. My humble request is that priority be given to this matter as well. Thank you.

[English]

SHRI KONDA VISHWESHWAR REDDY (CHEVELLA): Hon. Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me this opportunity to speak on this important Bill.

With increasing globalization, there is a need to be consistent and to conform with the globally accepted standards as stated in the Objects and Reasons by the Minister. It is, indeed, welcome.

In today's world of commerce, the number of transactions are increasing exponentially so far. But with the implementation of the RuPay card and other things, it would not increase exponentially. It would increase in mathematical terms, hyperbolically, cube of the previous year. There is a need to increase the speed and efficiency of the transactions. Most importantly, Sir, there is a need to bring in a finality through the settlement, which is, again very, very important.

Claims of the previous financial years can crop up this year as ghosts from the past. I think, this Bill can potentially put an end to these claims from the previous financial years. The Bill helps, probably, in also reducing legal litigations in terms of unsettled claims.

The Hon. Minister gave examples of how the Bill will protect unsecured vendors. I think, that is, indeed, welcome.

The amendments to the Payment and Settlement Bill are overdue. The amendments are welcome. On behalf of the Telangana Rashtra Samithi party, I stand to support the amendments to the Bill. However, Sir, I have a few clarifications from the Hon. Minister. As per the proposed amendments, the decision of the court, tribunal or any authority will not impact the settlement which had become final prior to the issuance of the order. Now, I fail to understand and I need a clarification on this that if the matter is already *sub judice*, can an authorised settlement agency make the settlement in finality? [English] That is my question. I have a few other small clarifications. The Minister did give the example of Uber and Paytm. Do they also come under the purview of this? Does Paytm come under the purview of this Bill? Does the Indian Postal System, which offers cash on delivery to our parcels, come under the purview of this Bill? So, I have lot of such minor clarifications.

But I would like to agree with the Minister on one thing. The decisions and opinions on this discussion will definitely not be partisan because every Member here wants to facilitate this and make the transaction system more efficient. But, however, given the time, I,

for one, could have had the opportunity to educate myself better and probably, one or two Members actually might have even given a good suggestion. So, I look forward to the clarification from the Minister. Thank you, Sir.

[English]

DR. A. SAMPATH (ATTINGAL): Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is well said in English that finance is the engine of growth. I would like to appreciate our Hon. Minister of Finance, Arun Jaitley Ji. I can read his lips because he is smiling as he has ensured that this House is in a mood to pass this Bill, I hope, within minutes. I do not know whether just because we are discussing a very simple Bill, this House very barely crosses the minimum number of MPs who should be present here. We are just across the quorum. This is a very serious Bill that we are discussing. Of course, we have quorum. I am not questioning because I cannot interrupt my own speech anyway. But this is an important Bill. Anyway, this is going to affect positively our financial sector. In this, I have certain doubts, maybe, because of my lack of knowledge or because of my ignorance.

The point which I would like to raise is that while we were students of economics, we had learnt about Bills of exchange, the discount houses, clearing houses, etc. But in our nation, the clearing houses and the discount houses are not very strong. That is not in usage very much. Here I understand and if I am correct, the Hon. Minister is intending to amend the principal Act, the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007, in three matters--one is regarding

Section 2, second is Section 23 and third is Section 34. These are the three Sections. Certain doubts have been raised by my colleagues here on these three Sections. I hope the Minister may clarify their doubts.

Sir, with your permission, here I may be permitted to read from the Statement of Objects and Reasons. What the Minister says in paragraph 4 is this.

"The legal entity identifier is a 20 character unique identity code assigned to entities which are parties to a financial transaction and would be unique across the globe. ".

This is necessary in this era of globalization. But at the same time, you also very well know that in our nation, there still exists the barter economy; and there still exists a parallel economy consisted by black money. Now-a-days it has become very easy for the flight of black money from this nation to abroad, to any other nation, and for the import of black money, a flight from abroad to India is also much speedier. We all understand that that happens in this nation. Even whatever the G-20 nations may say and whatever laws we make, always a mouse finds a hold somewhere. And, it happens. At the same time, the money or the legal tender, takes much time to reach to the recipient. So, this happens. How can this be overcome? I ask such a question because this is a very important Bill. Many of our colleagues

have raised that point. We did not get much time to go through this Bill because only yesterday the Hon. Minister introduced this Bill in the House and today the Bill is here for consideration and passing. I would say that they have raised a very pertinent point that this Bill should have been sent to the Parliamentary Standing Committee. The Standing Committee should have taken the initiative to collect evidence and have a discussion with various stakeholders.

Sir, the number of credit card holders is increasing in our country. Of course, it is a symbol of economic growth also. That also we can understand. At the same time, the frauds happen. You see it in the electronic media. That is also in the rise. It is rising disproportionately. I am not talking about any ponzi schemes. If I say something about Sahara, Satyam or Saradha, I am afraid that some of my colleagues may get irritated if not frustrated. But, it is true that behind the Satyam or Saradha or Sahara incident, the element of fraud was there. It was actually a cheating to the depositors, who have deposited their money.

While appreciating the initiative that has been taken by the Hon. Minister, I want to know what measures we can undertake to check the fraud. Even if the Reserve Bank of India entrust these jobs to the Clearing Corporation of India, still these frauds will increase. So, this matter has to be looked into.

Regarding the provisions of the Indian Contract Act, I have a doubt. I do not get much time to speak on this matter. My doubt is that after some of the provisions of this Act get amended, will they not be in contradiction with certain provisions of the Indian Contract Act. If that is so, who is the arbitrator and who will have the last word in that?

Sir, clause 4, section 23 *(1)(a)*, mentions:

"the deposit and keep deposited in a separate account or accounts held in a scheduled commercial bank; or *(b)* maintain liquid assets in such manner and form as it may specify from time to time, of an amount equal to such percentage of the amounts collected by the system provider…. . . "

Anyway, I will support this. But, at the same time, take, for example, a corporate, I mean, a juridic personality. They are not natural personalities. There are always consortiums, subsidiaries and other agencies behind the veil. So, unless and until we have a provision to lift the corporate veil, we will not be able to identify as to who is behind these frauds and irregularities. How will we know about the money, which has been siphoned off? All these legal actions are to be taken by the concerned settlement corporation. How that can

be taken into account; how that can be caught hold of? We cannot allow frauds of lakhs and lakhs of rupees being siphoned off by various companies and a natural person being in pity. When there is a battle between a corporate and a man, who may be a pensioner – sometimes we will also become pensioners like ex-MPs and others – that old man will be at peril. His life will be at peril. He will not be able to fight with the corporate and the corporate, maybe, by the time would have been wound up. Then, all the legal sanctities would be in vain. So, this thing should also be looked into. Thank you, Sir.

16.00 hrs

[English]

KUMARI SUSHMITA DEV (SILCHAR): Thank you, Chairman, Sir. Mr. Jaitley, before we started this debate, very briefly explained on the floor of the House as to why this Bill has been necessitated, and what is the Objects and Reasons of the Bill. He relegated his speech to just one aspect of the Bill, but in a hurry, I have seen the statement, as reported by PTI, where the Hon. Finance Minister has himself stated that the amendment seeks to protect funds collected from the customers by the payment system providers and to extend the Act to cover trade repositories and legal entity, and identify issuers.

A legal entity identifier is a unique ID associated with a single corporate entity. But the main sections that I have seen relate to a proposed amendment where the decision of the court, tribunal or any authority vis-à-vis declaring a service provider insolvent will not be effective retrospectively. But what I would like to understand from the Hon. Minister is that whereas we are trying to protect the customer from an insolvency order so that it will not affect a settlement that has already been finalized. Therefore, if somebody has already collected the owed money from a customer, then we are giving that customer

priority, which the Companies Act, Section 529 is not giving. But the question is that in insolvency proceedings will something remain for that customer because it has already been declared insolvent? This is a query that comes to my mind.

I appreciate the fact that with the global economy merging and with the G-20 coming into the picture, we have to meet the international standards, but I would have been far happier if this Bill had been referred to the Standing Committee because this Bill seems to be significant, which will ensure financial prudence, transparency and accountability, and no one in this House can disagree with it. But the idea is that the Bill that most of the Parliamentarians here have not been able to decipher, I wonder that, as policy makers, are we acting responsibly in allowing this Bill to be debated today and passed where we are showing concern for an ordinary customer not to be deprived, especially, in light of what has recently come in the news.

It was stated in today's '*Indian Express*' about the Uber Taxi Service that they initially had no such system in place. It is only recently that they have submitted to the wallet system.

I feel that, yes, no doubt that this Act is a significant one and it is bound to protect an ordinary customer, but I wish that we had spent a little more time in the Standing Committee discussing this for the

simple reason that as responsible policy makers when we pass a Bill, we become answerable to the people.

I hope that you will enlighten us on the aspect that I had raised, which talks about the order not affecting a settlement that has already been finalized. Thank you.

[English]

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, I am extremely grateful to a very large number of Hon. Members who have spoken on various aspects of this law.

As the title itself indicates, it is a Payment and Settlement Systems Act. Therefore, for any form of financial transaction to be honoured or any form of commerce to have credibility, it is extremely important that commercial transactions are respected and honoured. You cannot have other devious methods or ploys by which commercial transactions are not honoured in the spirit with which they are maintained.

The reference to G-20 which was made by my friend, Prof. Saugata Roy; he is not here. He said that he has been a student of Quantum Physics. Now, Quantum Physics and real politics make a very interesting combination. Therefore, going by the best global practices where the intention of the world at large is that transparent transactions must be honoured, payments which are made must reach the payee, and in case they do not reach the payee, there must be a statutory mechanism to settle those payments. Therefore, the Payment and Settlements Act really came about to be legislated with this objective. If payments are made, payments must be respected,

payments must be honoured and the settlements, in case there is some kind of an intervention which takes place, must be effected.

Now, the entire Act itself enables the Reserve Bank of India, as the functional regulator in this field, to give an authorization to third entities, and those third entities could be Governmental, could be non-Governmental, and they become the clearing agents.

16.07 hrs (Hon. Deputy-Speaker *in the Chair*)

Now, several questions have been raised. The Hon. Member Shrimati Sathyabama from the AIADMK spoke about the technological security to the entire electronic transactions. She is absolutely right. The Clearing Corporation of India has taken particular keen interest on this. Therefore, the international standards have been provided for the technological security by the Bank for International Settlements. It is those standards which are being applied, as far as these clearing houses are concerned.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: Will you introduce encryption?

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: After all, as technology grows, I can check it up and get back to you on the functioning, firewalls around these have necessarily to be created. Otherwise, for anyone to go and

intervene in that and, therefore, the process of commerce is set at naught would be quite easy.

It is not that we have gone and blindly followed what G-20 has been saying. From 2008 onwards, even though India is an invitee, this entire negotiation with the global fraternity has been going on. We cannot afford to live an isolationist existence. We cannot provide a banking system which is inconsistent or a financial system which is inconsistent with global standards. So, right through 2008 to 2010, the finalization of those standards with regard to the service providers was finally decided in 2012, when the UPA was in power. I find nothing wrong with it because that is how the entire financial system has to evolve. Otherwise, if we have an obsolete financial system, the world will not trust us to the level at which the world should if we are to relegate ourselves to a country whose financial system must really have confidence itself.

Now, the question raised by Kumari Sushmita Dev, our Hon. Member from Assam, is what will happen or whether this will override even earlier transactions or subsequent transactions which are taking place. Supposing, I make a payment through a clearing house to any of my learned friends here, and the interim agency is the clearing house, whose face I do not see or none of us sees, but it is an

intermediary. Where did that intermediary bursts? The payment instead of reaching you lands up with the third party. Once insolvency takes place, what is the law that must regulate? Let this payment go to the third party. If that is the law in India, then the world at large or even Indian parties would think twice before transacting through these instruments.

So, the object is that there is an obvious gap. You cannot have a court decree and somebody comes up and say that I have a court order in my favour. So, the payment which is made by Mr. Jaitley to Mr. Roy lands up with Mr. Jagdambika Pal. It cannot happen. I am just referring to the two main speakers who spoke. Therefore, the payment must reach you. Even if the third party has a court order in his favour and if he says under a special law of Companies Act or Banking Regulation Act, I will stand before Mr. Roy as far as the queue is concerned, this law says no. This is for these instruments under the Payments and Settlements Act the person you have paid to, it must reach him and if it does not reach him because of a contingency, the law must provide for a settlement by a process through which it reaches him. This was the gap in the law and that gap is what we are really trying to fill up.

Mr. Mahtab raised a question as to what is the object of section 23(1) in this Act itself. The real object is that the procedure and the priority being given to the payee must be recorded statutorily in this Act and this Act, therefore must have the effect of over-riding other Acts to the contrary. Otherwise Contracts will not be honoured itself. The Hon. Member who spoke towards the later part of the debate wanted to know whether there is a contradiction between the Contract Act and this Act. It is perfectly consistent with the Contract Act and the reason is contracts are to be performed and not to be breached. That is the underlying principle of fairness in any private sector or the Public Sector contract. If we are in an economy which is now a free market economy or at least moving towards that, it also essentially implies fair economy. Unless it is a fair economy where contracts are performed and not breached and if I make a payment for the benefit of somebody and there is an intermediary, the implicit contract is that the payment must reach him. If the law so provides, how can such a law be contrary to any provisions of the Contract Act itself? If bank frauds are taking place, each fraud must be looked at on its merits or demerits. If there is a violation of a statutory provision, people must be taken to task. If there is a gap in law, we must fill up the gap in law. But that cannot be a reason that we allow this obvious gap to continue

that the payment intermediary goes insolvent and the payment does not reach the payee. That is the limited objective of this law.

All other amendments, which are being brought about are consequential to the principal objective and therefore, this being in consonance with the principles of fairness and the best international practices, I would commend to this House while thanking all the Hon. Members who have taken keen interest. But I must end only by saying when I heard Mr. Roy, he is wiser than most of us. So, initially, when he was saying that this is a complicated piece of legislation, after hearing him I understood that he understood this law more than any one of us. Therefore, his elaborate speech itself now establishes that the law can be passed today without a reference to the Standing Committee. Thank you Sir.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Payment and Settlement Systems (Amendment) Bill, 2014 be taken into consideration. "

The motion was adopted.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, the House shall now take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

"That clauses 2 to 5 stand part of the Bill"

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 to 5 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed. "

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed. "

The motion was adopted.

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16.16 hrs

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

(i) Natural calamities in various parts of the country

[English]

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Members, as you are aware, discussion under Rule 193 on "Natural calamities in various parts of the country with special reference to rains and floods in Jammu and Kashmir, cyclone Hudhud in Andhra Pradesh and Odisha and drought in Maharashtra" was deferred yesterday to facilitate reply by the Hon. Minister of Agriculture to certain clarifications.

Hon. Minister is present in the House. I will now call the Members who want to seek clarifications. You can ask only one question each.

… *(Interruptions)*

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE (GULBARGA): The Agriculture Minister is here. Yesterday, it was promised in the House. This subject has come again in the agenda because yesterday the Minister was not here. You had promised that we would get the reply from him. We are waiting to listen to him as to what he is going to say about Maharashtra and other things. … *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV (BANKA): Sir, please give a chance to speak on this. . . . *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member from your Party has already spoken.

… *(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): Here, I would just like to make a small clarification about what Shri Kharge said that the Minister was not here. The fact is that the Minister did intervene and had given a reply on the subject. When he had done that, they were not present in the House. Still we were very generous. We decided to ask the Minister to come back again and reply. So, this should be put on record, instead of saying that the Minister was not there. … *(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE: Sir, if you are convinced, we will sit. You are a senior Member of Parliament. You know that. When the debate is not concluded, discussion is not concluded, how can he give the reply? At the most, he can intervene. It cannot be called a reply. It can be called a reply when the entire discussion is over. After discussion, all those who are connected to the subject, they can reply. You tell us the rule, then I will sit. … *(Interruptions)*

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am not quoting any rule.

… *(Interruptions)*

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE: Yesterday, the House was adjourned because of this. … *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Sir, it is just not a matter of scoring a point. It is a simple matter. We just want to flag an issue. Possibly what the Minister in his intervention said would have been easier for them to understand if they were present in the House. They chose not to be present in the House. Now they are taking a cause to say that the Minister of the Government was at fault, which is not correct. They will have to put the record straight. The Minister was not present because it was listed in a different Ministry altogether. Let us put it on record for the future also. … *(Interruptions)*Let us put the records

correct. If this is going to be the system, it is going to be a problem for any Government. Let me put the record straight. … *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: I am not arguing with him. … *(Interruptions)*

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let him finish.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: The initial discussion was only on Hudhud and Kashmir floods on natural calamities. … *(Interruptions)* Why do you not have the patience to listen? The initial discussion was listed virtually on Natural Calamity which was to be responded by the Minister of Home Affairs. Subsequently, when the Members of Maharashtra raised the issue of drought, then we said, yes, we would take it into account. So, it was not the substantive business of the House. … *(Interruptions)* Then we added. So, there is virtually no Department where two Ministers come to answer one debate. It is generally one Minister who comes to answer one debate. Since this was an additional gesture on the part of the Government, we took up the issue and that should be placed on record.

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (CUTTACK): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, actually a piquant situation has arisen and this House is

supreme to settle this issue. As the Hon. Minister just now mentioned, the original notice for consideration of a discussion under Rule 193 related to cyclone in Andhra Pradesh and Odisha and flood in Jammu and Kashmir. It did not mention the flood in North-East also. The original notice which was moved by Shri Kalikesh Singh Deo was relating to these two natural calamities relating to the Ministry of Home Affairs. There was no mention in that about the drought situation of Maharashtra or any other State which has been affected. Later on we were really surprised because yesterday when the Member from Maharashtra and some other Members from the Congress Party also raised this issue that why not there is a response from the Agriculture Minister. Agriculture Minister had replied, or intervened in between. At that time because of certain other circumstances the Hon. Members from this side were not present.

We have to settle it and you have to give a direction in that respect. Yesterday when I stood up and said, should we say that the Home Minister or the Minister of State for Home Affairs is concluding this issue and Agriculture Minister will intervene tomorrow, there was a direction, that was the question which I asked towards the end of the deliberation that let us conclude what Home Minister has to say. That is why the questions were replied. … *(Interruptions)*

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I allowed Mr. Mahtab to speak. Not all others. Let him conclude.

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: That is why I said it is a piquant situation. It is a piquant situation because agriculture came in, drought situation came in.

I would say, Sir, the Secretariat can help us out, there was no notice relating to drought situation in Maharashtra.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is why he wants to know and he has a right to ask.

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: It was done because of the request of some Hon. Members from Maharashtra. The original notice was relating to flood, relating to cyclone. Our notice was relating to Home Affairs. It had nothing to do with agriculture. If the House could have taken up drought situation, then there are other areas which are affected by drought which could have been deliberated upon.

Therefore, I would say that you take the view of other Members. Let the House deliberate and you take a decision. But as far as I understand with my limited knowledge of Parliamentary practice, yesterday the Home Minister had replied to the deliberation relating

to the notice and partly Agriculture Minister was supposed to reply to the affairs that were relating to Maharashtra.

SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA (GUNA): Mr. Mahtab has tried to enlighten the House. The fact of the matter is that he may be right insofar as his particular party Member's notice was concerned. But as far as this topic of debate is concerned, it was a consolidation of a number of notices that were put together. … *(Interruptions)*

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: That was on the second day, not on the first day.

SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA: I was not interrupting you while you were speaking, Mr. Mahtab. I would appreciate if you did the same.

There were a number of notices that were consolidated together to make this topic. Once a topic is printed in the List of Business and it does include the drought issue in Maharasthra, then it is incumbent on the Government to respond to that issue as well, which you yourself, Sir, had ruled yesterday that the Hon. Agriculture Minister will respond on the issue of the drought situation. The Agriculture Minister is here, we would like to hear his response so that this debate is concluded. But let us not get into the technicalities. The Minister is

here and we should hear his response. Let us not try and score points and dig ourselves deeper in the process. The country requires a discussion and a response from the Government which is what they are willing to offer and we should accept it and go ahead.

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Sir, what Mr. Scindia is saying is absolutely correct. When Mr. Kharge pointed out that the Minister was not present here yesterday, that is our only objection because it was not the substantive business. … *(Interruptions)* This will happen again and again. . . . (*Interruptions*) This debate was to conclude yesterday, but the Government was generous enough to say that we will ask the Agriculture Minister to reply. . . . (*Interruptions*) To say that he was not present yesterday, is a wrong statement and that is what I am saying. . . . (*Interruptions*) The business of the House cannot be changed to the tune of some people who decide it. . . . (*Interruptions*) What you have introduced today has never happened before in this House.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY (DUM DUM): HON. Deputy Speaker Sir, I request you to urge the Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs who is newly appointed, not to be like a Jack in the Box. . . . (*Interruptions*) At every opportunity, he jumps up and says something. He may say something, but he cannot intervene again and

again. . . . (*Interruptions*) Jack in the Box is a parliamentary word. . . . (*Interruptions*)

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are a senior Member, you can speak whatever is right. At the same time, you cannot hurt others. Any aspersion will be expunged.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: Let me complete my submission. I point out to one factual inaccuracy in the Minister's statement. He said that never in this House in a discussion on 193 two Ministers reply. Even in the 15th Lok Sabha, there were six different discussions on price rise issue and on every occasion, two Ministers- Shri Pranab Mukherjee, then Finance Minister and Shri Sharad Pawar, the then Agriculture Minister replied. This is a standard practice. If you take a holistic motion, there is no difficulty, no bar on two Ministers speaking. Secondly, for the first time I am hearing in this House discussion on the history of a motion. I can understand Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab's eagerness to glorify his own party that they had given the motion. … *(Interruptions)*

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: This is not glorification. … *(Interruptions)*

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: Sir, you were here yesterday. What does the motion read? … *(Interruptions)*

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Mahtab, please take your seat

. … *(Interruptions)*

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: We do not discuss the history of a motion. … *(Interruptions)*

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please allow me to run the House.

… *(Interruptions)*

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: It says: Further discussion on the natural calamities in various parts of the country with special reference to rains and floods in Jammu & Kashmir, cyclone Hudhud in Andhra Pradesh and Orissa and drought in Maharashtra. So, drought in Maharashtra is very much a part of the motion.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay, you may please sit down. It is over. Nothing will go on record.

(Interruptions) … *

SHRI ARVIND SAWANT (MUMBAI SOUTH): Thank you very much. I am really hurt. Thousands of farmers are waiting for the relief

* Not recorded

to be given by the Government, but we are scoring points against each other. The late Mahatma Gandhi said: spiritualize politics. But we are politicizing every issue, even the spiritual aspects. I am really hurt. What Shri Rudy said is definitely right. At the same time, I would like to ask Shri Kalikesh Ji, when he has put this issue, it says: Further discussion on the natural calamities in various parts of the country with special reference to rains and floods in Jammu & Kashmir, cyclone Hudhud in Andhra Pradesh and Orissa and drought in Maharashtra. When this issue was incorporated in the motion, why should we debate such issues, when farmers are waiting for the relief?

So, I request that instead of going into technicalities, respecting the sentiments of the farmers, let the Hon. Minister reply now. Kindly permit him to reply.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Since Shri Kalikesh is the initiator of the debate, I am allowing you. What do you want to say now? He is the initiator and he wants to say something.

SHRI KALIKESH N. SINGH DEO (BOLANGIR): With due respect to my colleagues from the Congress, the TMC and of course, the Ruling Party, I had given a notice on cyclone Hudhud and Philain and also flood in Kashmir. I had given a separate notice on drought in Orissa. My objection is that if you include the drought in Maharashtra

– I have full sympathies for my friends from Maharashtra – why did you not include my notice on drought in Orissa also? We could have discussed about drought in Orissa also. I had given both the notices. This is my objection. Since we are discussing an issue of great importance, I would request you to allow the Hon. Minister to give his statement in response to my friend's request.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Whenever a discussion involving two Ministers is there, the reply to the debate is given by only one Minister. The other Minister only intervenes in the debate.

Anyhow, since the Minister wants to say something in response to whatever is raised yesterday, he may please answer.

… (Interruptions)

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: No. It is not allowed. Nothing will go on record, except the Hon. Minister's reply.

(Interruptions) … *

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: After the ruling, I cannot allow; Hon. Minister can reply. I cannot listen to anything else. Mr. Minister may reply now. Hon. Minister may address the Chair.

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* Not recorded

… *(Interruptions)*

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may address the Chair and I will manage the House.

… *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Shri Scindia Ji has said a very good thing, that we should not go into technical matters. Since the Ninth Lok Sabha, I too have been present here; kindly keep that in mind. In between, you may also have been in the other House and not in this one. But whenever there is any principal subject, as Hon. Mahtab Ji mentioned, the last time we were discussing drought, the matter of floods was also added to it. The Hon. Home Minister had intervened, and this time I too was required to intervene, and I did so. We placed our points for about 20 to 25 minutes. We also spoke regarding the drought in Maharashtra. Two lines from what I had said at that time, I would now like to read out.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I commend all the Hon. Members, and since the subject concerns the drought in Maharashtra as well, I would like to place a few points before the House. We are going to discuss several States affected by natural calamities, and Maharashtra too is facing drought; therefore, I would like to make some submissions. The response to the entire discussion will be given on behalf of the Ministry of Home Affairs. In the very first Session of Parliament, we had a four-day discussion on drought. Ordinarily, drought is declared

in the months of July-August. We were not in the Lok Sabha in between, but those who have been Members for the last 25-30 years know very well that July-August is the period for such declarations. At that time, the matter was discussed in great detail, and that discussion yielded benefit. The benefit was that the reports given by the Meteorological Department are area-wise, zone-wise and division-wise. They do not clearly indicate what the situation is district-wise. During the four-day discussion, it came to light that in many districts and areas rainfall was minus 50 percent. At that time, the situation in Vidarbha was somewhat better, but the condition of Marathwada was extremely poor. As a result of that discussion, the Hon. Prime Minister immediately convened a meeting of the Cabinet and sanctioned an amount of Rs. 1,000 crore. There were four points in that decision. First, diesel subsidy would be provided by the State. Secondly, if horticulture suffered losses, assistance at the rate of Rs. 35,000 per hectare would be given. Third, assistance would be provided for the fodder development programme. ... *(Interruptions)* The fourth point was that import duty on de-oiled soybean cake, groundnut cake and sunflower cake would be waived. The benefit of this decision was that Bihar began giving diesel subsidy from the State. The detailed information has not yet been received. Thereafter,

Maharashtra stated that, they required Rs. 12.5 crore for fodder development because of heavy losses. Accordingly, Rs. 6.25 crore was released to them. Madhya Pradesh sent a proposal for Rs. 16 crore and Haryana for Rs. 6.97 crore for fodder. For horticulture, the Government of Maharashtra submitted a proposal for Rs. 553 crore. All these proposals are under examination, and the amount will be released immediately. However, the formal declaration of drought was made later.

When elections began in Haryana, the declaration was made two days prior to that. The by-election in Uttar Pradesh was about to be announced, and the declaration was made before that as well. Many Members from Maharashtra stated here that rainfall there had been minus 50 percent for a long time. ... *(Interruptions)* No one had declared it. However, once the declaration was made, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana declared drought, and our team immediately visited those States. The team's report has also been received, and it will now go to the NDRF. We all know that there is an SDRF fund which exists with the States. The State Government can declare drought and incur expenditure from that fund. After that, if it issues a notification and sends a memorandum here, then a team from here visits the State to make an assessment. After the assessment,

that report goes to the NDRF. In Maharashtra, we have accepted that the declaration of drought should have been made earlier, but there was a delay. This Government made the declaration. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE (BARAMATI): Sir, there was a Code of Conduct in Maharashtra due to the election. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH: I am stating that two days before the election notification, Haryana had made the declaration. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE: There was a Congress Government there, they had sent the proposal. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH: I am only stating that the election did not come in the way. ... *(Interruptions)* Our team went to Haryana. ... *(Interruptions)* When the declaration of drought is made, the State Government issues a notification. No such notification was issued by the Government of Maharashtra, but the Government of Haryana did so. ... *(Interruptions)* You are creating history because I am speaking again at your request after you intervened. Please read; I had mentioned all these matters. Since you had boycotted, it may not be in your knowledge. I too consider it my duty to ensure that this matter

comes to everyone's attention. Therefore, avoiding technical disputes, I am placing these points before you. ... *(Interruptions)*

The Maharashtra Government made the declaration; we saw the news in the newspapers. We immediately took note of the report and, on the night of the 2nd, obtained the papers through e-mail. We also spoke with the Hon. Chief Minister. I called the Hon. Agriculture Minister here. On the very day we were giving the reply, we had asked the Agriculture Minister in the morning to come with all the papers, because although they had come by e-mail, some additional information was required. During the discussion here, we announced that our team would go the next day. The following day, our team went. The oath-taking ceremony was taking place there, yet our team held meetings with the officials and met the Hon. Chief Minister the next day. Since the State Government officials have to accompany the team to visit the districts, a schedule was prepared to cover all districts from the 14th. The State officials prepared their plan, and we prepared ours. Our team members stayed there for two days.

If you look at the history of Maharashtra, we had informed you even that day that in 2013-14, the NDRF had provided assistance of Rs. 1,269 crore, and in 2012-13, assistance of Rs. 1,800 crore. When

a disaster strikes, there is no politics involved in it. You may certainly have created history by intervening in the Minister's reply and then compelling him to speak again, but there is no politics in disaster relief. Here, you and we may engage in politics, but in times of disaster neither your government has done politics, nor is the government going to do politics. There is no politics at the time of a disaster. ... *(Interruptions)* I would also like to state that in Maharashtra, Rs. 567 crore was allotted to the SDRF in 2013-14, but it was not fully utilized. This time too the allocation is Rs. 403 crore. I spoke to the Relief Commissioner there. I accept that the expenditure must have been incurred, but there is usually delay in sending the report. We spoke to the Hon. Chief Minister about this last night; it is possible that the report may arrive today. ... *(Interruptions)* Please try to understand; you speak without understanding. ... *(Interruptions)* This year, Rs. 3 crore of the SDRF is lying unutilized; we want to release the next tranche quickly. We are continuously pursuing the matter. I want to assure the House that once the report is received, full assistance will be provided. There will be absolutely no politics in this; I assure you of that.

[English]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE: I am not seeking any clarification or anything but the record should be straight.

Yesterday, Naiduji himself agreed that the Minister of Agriculture will come and he will intervene about Maharashtra drought. According to that, we requested him to reply on the drought. The Hon. Minister is telling that we are doing politics on the issue. We are only seeking relief. What relief are you going to give to Maharashtra as also to flood-affected areas like Jammu and Kashmir, Odisha and other places. We are not against anything. You should not say that you had boycotted the House and that you were not present here. Yesterday, it was clarified and according to our request, the Minister himself agreed to reply. Therefore, he should not say that he is doing some great obligation to us. It is his duty to reply whenever this House needs.

[Translation]

SHRI ASHOK SHANKARRAO CHAVAN (NANDED): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to speak. Today, I felt that the Hon. Minister would make some statement regarding what transpired in the House yesterday. The issues raised here by the Members of Parliament from Maharashtra, unfortunately, did not receive any reply from the Hon. Minister's side.

He only stated how much money had been given and responded merely on theoretical points. I would like to know about the specific issues I had raised yesterday. I had said that every day at least ten to twenty people are committing suicide there. My question to the Hon. Minister is: more than four hundred people have committed suicide so far, what steps will he take to prevent these suicides? The money that they have borrowed from the banks, they are unable to repay. Therefore, around 15 to 20 people are committing suicide in the State every day. The figure has now crossed even four hundred. This is a matter of grave concern. We, too, do not wish to make any politics out of this. All parties from Maharashtra Shiv Sena, BJP, all Members from Vidarbha and Marathwada are concerned about this issue. My humble request to you is that you kindly clarify whether the loans they have taken from the banks will be waived or not. We expect a clear answer from you on this.

[English]

SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE: Sir, I thank you and I appreciate the Hon. Minister's intervention where he says that there is no politics in drought. I respect that and I appreciate the packages which the Hon. Minister is suggesting for our Government. I think, the whole

discussion is centered around humanitarian grounds and not about who is on which side. My only request to you is to take Ashok ji's point ahead. A delegation from Maharashtra met the Hon. Minister two weeks ago regarding the milk prices in Maharashtra as well as the drought situation. Specifically if you see what kind of intervention the Government of India is doing to help the basic farmers in the drought situation and the milk growing farmers for whom the prices are rock bottom now. As usual Maharashtra has a wonderful production whether it is cotton, sugarcane or milk.

[Translation]

SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH: Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Hon. Member of Parliament has just spoken about suicides. As to what questions were raised yesterday, as I had mentioned, I had intervened yesterday, and the primary reply to the discussion was to be given by the Ministry of Home Affairs, which must have responded to it in detail. ... *(Interruptions)* However, since you have now raised the issue of suicides, I am giving a detailed reply to that. I would like to bring to your attention that in the year 2008, 694 farmers committed suicide due to agricultural reasons. ... *(Interruptions)* In the year 2008, a total of 3,802 farmers committed suicide. As per the report of the State Government, 694 farmers committed suicide due to agricultural

causes. Similarly, in the year 2009, 3,141 farmers committed suicide, out of which 572 suicides were due to agricultural reasons. I am not stating this on my own; at that time, I do not know whose Government it was. ... *(Interruptions)* If you do not wish to hear much, then at least listen to the figures for one year. ... *(Interruptions)* Your concern is the same as mine. Therefore, I am strengthening your concern further. Let us both, together, take this concern more seriously. That is why I am placing so many figures before the House and before you, so that the entire House considers this matter with seriousness. For the year 2013, till now only the figures of 2013 have come, the figures of 2014 have not yet come. In the year 2012, 3,786 people committed suicide, out of which 642 committed suicide due to agricultural reasons. This information is provided by the State Government. In the year 2013, 3,145 people committed suicide, out of which 407 committed suicide due to agricultural reasons. Now, whether 400 people committed suicide due to agricultural causes or the remaining 2,700 people committed suicide due to other causes, whatever the reasons may be, all suicides must be a matter of concern. The causes may be different: about 400 due to agricultural reasons and about 2,700 due to other reasons. Certainly, I am not saying that the House has not expressed concern about this till today. The House has expressed concern and

this phase has continued; therefore, now you and I must jointly express deeper concern so that this phase stops and suicides decrease. For this, all of us must make efforts, this is my humble request. You may discuss this matter for the entire day. ... *(Interruptions)* We all must take this seriously. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, we will take up item No. 19.

… *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE: Sir, we are asking what steps you are taking? ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister has already replied on the issue. If you are not satisfied, then it is a different issue. What can I do for that?

… *(Interruptions)*

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE: Sir, they are not going to take any step in this regard. We are not satisfied with the reply of the Hon. Minister. So, we are walking out. … *(Interruptions)*

16.52 hrs

At this stage, Shri Mallikarjun Kharge, Shri Rajesh Ranjan and some other Hon. Members left the House.

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT, MINISTER OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): Mr. Deputy-Speaker Sir, umpteen number of times, this issue was discussed in the House at length. … *(Interruptions)* Sir, you have allowed them and what they have said has gone on record. … *(Interruptions)* [Translation] Such comments should not be made. ... *(Interruptions)*. Whether they want to return or do not want to return, or whether they will return after ten years, why are you worried about it? My point is … *(Interruptions)*

[English] Sir, an issue was raised and it is a very important issue. Please recall as to when this discussion was admitted, how much time we have spent on it, what was the practice earlier and how many hours

we have spent on this issue. The Members who had given notice were not there and they came subsequently. Even then they made a suggestion yesterday that some Members including a former Chief Minister of Maharashtra wanted to make some valuable comments. So, the Government had agreed, the Hon. Minister was here and he has responded to them. This reply may not be to their satisfaction. Sir, if they are going to be fully satisfied, then they will not be on that side, they will be joining this side.

My point is, the Government have sent a team. The Hon. Minister has given the figures. They quoted some figures about the suicide of farmers. When the Minister started quoting figures of 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012, it is unpalatable to them. When they raise a point, they must be able to hear the other side also as well as the Government's reply. They cannot just say whatever they want, then accuse the Government, then walk out and then make slogans while walking out. This is not the way to do it.

They have been in power all these years. While they walk out, they may say something as they definitely have the right to say something but at the same time, going on repeating and then saying that they are not allowed to speak is not fair. I hope that they will realize it in future. If there is a debate, let it be a meaningful debate.

Let there be a constructive debate. We do not want to politicalise it. In Maharashtra, till yesterday, their Government was there. Today, our Government is there. The Central Government and the State Government must join together and work together to address the problems of the farmers. That is the stand of the Government. There is no question of not taking the views of the Hon. Members seriously.

16.55 hrs

(ii) Reported dilution of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme

[English]

HON. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, the House will take up item no. 19.

Shri Sankar Prasad Datta.

SHRI SANKAR PRASAD DATTA (TRIPURA WEST): Respected Deputy-Speaker, Sir, all of us know that in the year 2005, after a long struggle by our country's downtrodden people, a new Act was brought in. On 5th September, 2005 the new Act known as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act came into force. Though this Act was implemented poorly, this has brought some relief to the unemployed and the under-employed people of our country.

In a statement, our present Finance Minister said that under this legislation, 4. 5 crore households have been provided an average of 45 days' work in 2013-14. So, now the downtrodden people of our country are getting food and work from this Scheme. But now-a-days we are seeing that MGNREGA is now being linked to how national

resources should be used. The MGNREGA, however inadequate it may be, was a step in the right direction. It provides a share of national resources to create employment opportunities to the people of rural India, thus directly increasing the purchasing power of the rural poor of our country.

The aim of planning these projects is to meet the requirements of the village people, unlike plans to build infrastructure which primarily helps corporates. There is a wider impact which prevents wages from coming down below the legal level, thus preventing, at least in theory, gross exploitation of rural labour through dismal wages by the various sections of the rural elite. That is why the plan to scrap the Act has the backing of the representatives of the rural elite, the landlords and the big contractors.

In the year 2012-13, for MNREGA, an amount of Rs. 33,000 crore was spent. But in the beginning, Rs. 40,000 crore was spent towards MGNREGA. So, in the beginning the amount was Rs. 40,000 crore, but in the year 2012-13, it came down to Rs. 33,000 crore. From the period 2005, when it was started, to 2012-13, the number of people covered gradually increased. But the initial allocation of Rs. 40,000 crore was brought down to Rs. 33,000 crore in 2012-13. That is why

we are saying that the UPA Government was not at all sincerely interested in implementing the MGNREGA.

Now, we have to see what is the NDA Government talking about this Scheme. We heard that on 4th August a meeting was held under the leadership of our Minister of Rural Development.

17.00 hrs

We know that under the MGNREGA at least 100 days work should be provided to the people of our country. It was not necessary that the people who have the quality to do better work, and the people who have the quality and technical efficiency are not required for the purpose of MGNREGA work. MGNREGA work can be done by any person. If I would like to do MGNREGA works, I may register my name, I would get the work and the MGNREGA guaranteed that at least 100 days work would be given. Now a days, this Act has now been diluted.

17.01hrs (Dr. Ratna De (Nag) *in the Chair*)

On 4th August, in a meeting, our Hon. Minister of Rural Development has proposed that MGNREGA will no more be an Act but it would be a Scheme like other schemes. Today in the newspapers, I read that we have 60 schemes in our country. Our

Government is thinking of bringing it down to 10 schemes. Is it a fact or not? I don't know. The MGNREGA was an Act but the Government is thinking of make it as a scheme.

We have 676 districts in our country. The Government is thinking that MGNREGA works will be executed in only 200 districts. It will be restricted to only 200 districts. Our Government is thinking that these 200 districts consist of Scheduled Castes people, downtrodden people and the other districts are in good position. So, in those districts, MGNREGA works are not necessary. So, the Government is thinking about only 200 districts.

In 4th August meeting, our Minister of Rural Development proposed that - in the South, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, in the North, Rajasthan and Punjab, and in the West, Gujarat and Maharashtra – these six States do not needed MGNREGA works. If it is required later on, the same can be taken up. Those six States will go out from MGNREGA works. How would the poor people of those six States and 476 districts of our country live?

You can remember that some days back in many newspapers of our country, 28 eminent economists suggested and appealed to our Hon. Prime Minister that MGNREGA works should not be diluted or curtailed because the downtrodden people of our country will be

affected. Those 28 eminent economists are not from India; many economists are from abroad who love the people of our country written a letter to our Prime Minister. What is the actual position in our country? Madam, in these 200 districts, which have been chosen by the Central Government, maximum number of poor people is living. What is the exact percentage? [Translation] If we see the share of India's poor people in these 200 districts, the share is 31. 40 per cent. But in other districts, 68. 60 per cent poor people are living. In those districts, are MGNREGA works not needed? The percentage of Dalit population in those 200 districts is 26. 10, but in the other 476 districts, 23.50 percent Dalits are living. In households with no education, 30 per cent people are living in those 200 districts, but in the remaining 476 districts, 26 per cent of illiterate people are living.

What is the position of ST population in those 200 districts? The Government is saying that they will protect the ST people. But in those 200 districts, 11. 70 per cent ST people are living and in the remaining 476 districts, 9. 60 per cent ST population is there.

In respect of participation of households in rural employment guarantee work, only 28.40 per cent people are participating in 200 districts, but in the balance 476 districts, 22. 80 per cent people are participating in this work whereas the Government is saying that this

programme is not needed in those districts because no poor people are living there.

In respect of share of income, 12 per cent income is coming from those 200 districts and 14 per cent income is coming from the remaining 476 districts. There are five categories of poor people in our country. The lowermost category is the poorest of the poor and 22 per cent of such people are living in 200 districts and 19 per cent are living in 476 districts.

So, why is the Government thinking of diluting MGNREGA? From the figures that I have quoted here, it is crystal clear that there are so many poor people, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and illiterate people are living in the remaining 476 districts and they are in need of this rural employment guarantee work. In the month of February this year, it was finalised by the Government that in the year 2014-15 around 227 crore man days of work would be there. This is slightly higher than the figure of 219. 72 crore man days of work created in 2013-14. This 227 crore man days of work required an allocation of Rs. 61,000 crore. But what exactly was allocated in the Budget? The Government allocated only Rs. 33,000 crore in this year’s Budget. What is the reason for this?

The Government is giving statements again and again that they are not going to dilute MGNREGA and they are in favour of the poor people of our country. The Prime Minister is saying that the Government is in favour of the poor. But what exactly is required for the poor people of our country? The Government finalised that Rs. 61,000 crore is required, but only Rs. 33,000 crore has been allocated in the Budget for MGNREGA work. I am from a tiny State of Tripura. In our State, in the last three years, a record has been established. In the last three years, throughout the country, Tripura stood first in doing MGNREGA work. In our State 86 to 88 days work has been done under MGNREGA. Madam, 98 per cent expenditure has been placed before the Central Government. But here, it is a sad of affairs that in the year 2012-13, in the labour budget, the Central Government approved Rs. 1204. 88 crore. But in that year, the Centre's share was Rs. 768. 90 crore; the State's share was Rs. 153. 85 crore in our State. Tripura could manage 87 days' work in that year. But, what was the national average in that year? In that year, our national average was only 42 man-days. In the year 2013-14, the approved labour budget was Rs. 1354. 66 crore. The Centre's share in that budget was Rs. 943. 66 crore and State's share was Rs. 163. 72 crore. In that year also, that in the last year, 88 man-days was created by the State Government

under MGNREGA. But the national average was 44 man-days so that Tripura could stood first in 2011, 2012 and in 2013 also. It is a sad of affairs that though in the last year Tripura has done a good job to give work to the poor people and 98 per cent expenditure has been done but this year the labour budget approved by the Central Government is Rs. 1406. 94 crore but till 31st October, near about Rs. 200 crore have been allocated and some days ago Rs. 373. 77 crore has been sanctioned for the State Government. This year, up to the month of November, only 22 man-days could be created in our State. But, the national average is 31 days. So, why is this being done by the Central Government with the State of Tripura? Is it a correct path for the Central Government?

While we are doing a good job in our State, it is necessary for the Central Government to provide money, to provide jobs to the downtrodden people of the State, but the Central Government has failed. I would say that the Central Government is not interested to run this scheme, to provide jobs to the people of the State and the people of the country. Not only Tripura, we have seen that in the case of other States also. Last year, Bihar got Rs. 624 crore at one time and at another time they got Rs. 532 crore. But this year, up to November, they got only Rs. 256 crore. But in some cases while Tripura

Government is getting less than 40 per cent from the earlier year from the Labour Budget that was finalised in the month of February. But in the case of other States this percentage is comparatively good. Till 20th October, the Government of Tripura got Rs. 180 crore up to that time it was 27 per cent. Now, it is below 40 per cent. But in case of other States it is quite good. The State of Andhra Pradesh received up till now 87 per cent; Madhya Pradesh received 84 per cent; Chhattisgarh received 82 per cent; West Bengal received 75. 6 per cent; and Kerala received 46. 58 per cent. We are happy that they are getting this money. But why is it not happening in case of Tripura? Why the Central Government is not interested in giving sufficient money to Tripura, Bihar and other States? So it is clear that the Government is interested to dilute MGNREGA. A proposal is being coming from the Ministry of Rural Development to make MGNREGA a Scheme and not an Act.

I would like to say here that if BJP led NDA Government sincerely wants to bring good days in this country, they should keep this Act as an Act and not as a Scheme. I would further like to say that the amount under the MGNREGA should be increased.

With these words, I conclude. Thank you.

[Translation]

SHRI HUKMDEO NARAYAN YADAV (MADHUBANI): Madam Chairperson, Hon. Members were speaking, giving figures, they were saying more about a state and also giving examples in respect of other states. I would like to thank the leaders of my party that they have given me an opportunity as the first speaker.

"Pandit bonche pothin lekha.

Kabira bonche onkhin dekha"

(At the time of Pandit, Pothine wrote.

at the time of Kabir, I saw the eyes.)

In India, there are two kinds of people some who speak on the basis of what they read in books, and others who speak on the basis of what they see with their own eyes and learn through experience. Knowledge that is based on experience alone is perfect knowledge; bookish knowledge can never be considered complete. Therefore, when I speak on this subject, I would like to request all Hon. Members to remember this saying: "If you wish to behold your reflection, keep your mirror clean; if the mirror is covered with grime, how will you see anything?" When we sit in this Parliament and speak, we must

remember that this India belongs not only to the labourer, not only to the farmer, not only to the trader, not only to the industrialist, not only to the learned, nor only to the unlettered. This country belongs equally to every person who resides upon this soil, from the lowest to the highest. This is the nation of India. When Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji says "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas," it means that we need the cooperation of everyone, the development of everyone, and thinking in a truly inclusive manner. We must think in totality and act in totality.

Just now, the Hon. Member from Tripura was speaking. In the 15th Lok Sabha, the distinguished leader of the Marxist Party, the leader of the party in the 15th Lok Sabha, the veteran Marxist leader Basudev Acharya Ji, was the Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Agriculture. I had the opportunity to work with him as a member of that Agriculture Committee for a continuous period of five years. We travelled across the entire country. All farmers' organisations, belonging to every political party, were invited. Non-governmental organisations were invited. Those NGOs working in the field of agriculture were invited. It is on record that all the farmers' organisations of India, with one voice, had demanded that if we truly wish to safeguard the interests of farmers and advance the progress of

agriculture, then the MGNREGA scheme should be discontinued. This is the farmers' perspective. I am stating this because I myself am a farmer. I am not speaking without basis. I have not come to this Lok Sabha merely by contesting an election. I have served twice as the Pradhan of a Gram Panchayat. I have served once as the President of a Block. I have served once as the Chairperson of a Zila Parishad. I have been elected three times to the Legislative Assembly, and now I am a Member of Parliament for the fifth and sixth time. I have walked through the lanes of villages; I have walked along the ridges of fields. I have ploughed with my own hands; I have worked with the spade, the hoe, and the sickle. I have uprooted paddy saplings, transplanted paddy, harvested the crop with my own hands, carried bundles of paddy on my head and taken them to the threshing yard. I have witnessed the pain of the farmer; my forefathers too were farmers. That is why I said: "If you wish to behold your reflection, you must keep the mirror polished; if the mirror is covered in grime, how will you see clearly?" Why was the MGNREGA scheme created? We must evaluate this. Today, in India, will our colleagues ever review the fact that, according to the 1951 Census, the proportion of agricultural labourers was 28.01 percent, and by 2011 it had reached 54.09 percent? Why did this number rise? Who caused it to rise? Those who

were farmers were compelled to become agricultural labourers. The percentage decrease in the number of farmers, 26 percent, is matched exactly by the 26 percent increase in the number of agricultural labourers. This clearly shows that as the number of farmers declined, they became agricultural labourers. And what is the meaning of an agricultural labourer? The Marxist ideology calls them the proletariat, the [English] “dictatorship of the proletariat.” [Translation] What does proletariat mean? I often sit with saints and sages and analyse words proletariat means one who has lost everything. One who is defeated in body, in mind, in wealth, in knowledge, in intellect; whose stomach does not have enough to eat; whose body does not have proper clothing; whose family does not have a roof under which all can sleep with their legs stretched, such a person is the proletariat. I would like to ask, in the states ruled by those who raised the slogan of the proletariat, how much progress did the proletariat truly make? How many rose upward? And among them, how much leadership emerged at the central level or at the state level? Leadership, policy and intent. A leader may be capable and the policy may be sound, but if the intent is flawed, then no amount of leadership or policy will yield anything. Today, India is fortunate that the Prime Minister we have is a leader of integrity, with sound policies and a pure intent. “Villages, the poor,

labourers and farmers together will build India”—this is a clear vision. But as I said earlier, what we see depends on the lens through which we look; your vision will show you what you wish to see, and my vision will show me what I see.

Madam Chairperson, everything in this world may be exchanged, but one’s vision cannot be exchanged. Vision arises from within; it comes from the depths of one’s inner being, and such inner perception cannot be given by someone else, nor can it be borrowed from another. A person may become highly learned, may present statistics, may quote extensively from books, but I would like to ask, do books alone determine how work is to be provided in India? India is not only Tripura. India is not only Tamil Nadu, Bihar or Uttar Pradesh. The geographical conditions, the natural conditions, and the social conditions of India vary greatly from place to place.

I come from Bihar, adjoining Eastern Uttar Pradesh. Whether it is the farmer of Haryana, Punjab, or any other region, wherever there is three-crop agriculture, the fields remain fallow for hardly one and a half to two months in the entire twelve months; otherwise, crops stand throughout the year. Where, then, can soil be dug from? And who will even permit soil to be removed? We would willingly allow our harvested fields to be used. But today, in my own area in Bihar, in my

own panchayat, when the MGNREGA workers arrive, they do not allow the farmer to dig soil from his own land. They say that sixty percent of the work must be “earthen work” and forty percent must be “pucca work.” Whether that work actually happens or not, it must appear to be done on paper. Do it on paper, write it on paper, take a thumbprint on paper, receive it on paper, make the payment on paper whether anything actually reaches the hands of the labourer or not. There is no proper record; whatever the MGNREGA agent says becomes completely correct, and whatever the Government officer says becomes absolutely final. This is what is actually happening. What you speak of here, I have seen on the ground: wheat crops standing in the fields, and soil dug out from those very fields and used for the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. The farmer lost his soil, and a road was built in the village, this is indeed a good thing. But today, agriculture is no longer merely agriculture. When my grandfather and my father farmed, they simply practised farming. But when I farm today, or when my children farm, their farming has become commercialized, because it requires capital investment. We use fertilizer, we buy seeds, we invest money and capital, we increase production and productivity. With that, we try to sustain our lives and livelihoods. From whatever little we earn, we educate our children,

marry off our daughters, and perform our fathers' last rites. This crop itself is our capital. Our Reserve Bank is our wheat; our Reserve Bank is our paddy; our Reserve Bank is our jowar and bajra; our Reserve Bank is our mustard. That crop stored in sacks in our home is our Reserve Bank. Whenever we need, we take it out, sell it in the market, bring back the money and run our lives. That, for us, is the Reserve Bank.

Therefore, I make a humble submission before you. If the Planning Commission itself could be transformed, then why can the MGNREGA and the Food Security scheme not be transformed? Are these some divine incarnations, are they manifestations of the Supreme Almighty that their form cannot be changed? When the Planning Commission can undergo transformation, when it can be ruralised, when it can be democratised, when efforts can be made to make it more people-centric then naturally, when the country moves towards a new path, those who continue to walk on the old path will indeed experience some discomfort. This is a matter that concerns the journey from the top to the bottom. Earlier, plans were formulated from the summit and flowed down to the ground. It was as though there was a pipe through which water travelled all the way downward. Alongside that pipe, there was another pipe through which the water

began to return even before reaching the ground, and at various places there were taps attached, from where the water leaked out at different points. Thus, the water that originated at the top, without ever truly reaching the soil, would turn back upward, dripping along the way. Why were such schemes designed? Schemes are launched, the poor are deceived, they are shown Mungeri Lal's rosy dreams, they are told that they will receive everything, votes are collected in the name of these promises and a web of corruption is spread from the top to the bottom. The corrupt at the top will come and carry corruption down to the lowest level, and when elections come, the corrupt will unite. All the corrupt join together, tell the people to vote for them and help them reach power, so that they may also loot, and you may also loot, let everyone share the plunder and push the nation into ruin. These schemes that have been made in India time and again, the time has now come for the nation to be freed from them. The time has come for the transformation of India, the time for a complete change has come. Under the leadership of Hon. Shri Narendra Modi, India is going to undergo a complete change, India is going to be transformed. Therefore, some commotion will certainly arise.

I would like to say to my colleagues that these funds are meant to provide work to the poor. Had all the village lanes been made

permanent, had paving blocks been laid, had they been covered with PCC, the situation there would have been better today. In our Bihar, in Eastern Uttar Pradesh, in Bengal, in Assam or wherever the flood-affected areas are, only those who have experienced the suffering of the women in those villages for four months can truly understand their pain. How will someone understand that pain without having been born as a woman and lived in that area even once? For four months there is knee-deep mud, with no place to walk. If they feel the need to relieve themselves at such a time, where will they go in that knee-deep mud, in which direction will they go for defecation? They hold back their bodily waste inside their stomach for twelve hours, and that is why the mothers of India fall ill. When mothers remain ill, children too are born ill and disabled. Therefore, the number of disabled children in India is high. Why did you not transform rural India? If you wanted to make the villages prosperous, why were these funds not used? You raised a slogan that toilets would be built, toilets would be built. What did you say? Half the funds would be given by PHE and half by MGNREGA. Tell me, what kind of scheme is this? Make khichdi, rice from you, lentils from me. You keep adding rice, we shall not give lentils. How will khichdi be made? Then you may eat it yourself. If the entire amount of MGNREGA had been used for one

task, that of building a Swachh Bharat, under the Total Sanitation Campaign launched during the Government of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, if the MGNREGA funds had been allocated for building a toilet in every house, then today the filth in the villages would have been wiped out. Why was this not done? Why were those funds not used? Because our intention was not right. There were tears in our eyes but no pain in our hearts. There was speech in our mouths but no compassion in our hearts.

Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay imagined the upliftment of the last human being, and Mahatma Gandhi also envisioned the same. Who is this last human being? The one living in the villages of India, the one residing in the cities, the one living in slums and shanties, the one living in narrow lanes, the one earning his livelihood through hard labour. Why did you not formulate a scheme for his upliftment? ... *(Interruptions)* I would like to request you to reflect upon these matters. ... *(Interruptions)* I too travel through the villages, I go among the farmers, I go to the fields and barns, everywhere I see this situation. ... *(Interruptions)* If the Government has the intention and the Government would like to do this, then why will it not happen?

With folded hands, I would like to make this demand on behalf of the farmers, the poor farmers of the villages, the labourers and the

backward and Dalit communities. All the schemes that have been implemented in independent India must be evaluated. Just as one Bill was brought to repeal ninety or a hundred old Bills, in the same manner one Bill should be brought to repeal all the schemes, and a new scheme should be formulated afresh in India. It should be for the people, for the nation, for India, for the villages, for the poor and for the farmers.

By coincidence, the name of Mahatma Gandhi was attached to it, and NREGA became MNREGA. Among our farmers it is said that the meaning of MNREGA is that the farmers of the country will perish, that is its name, MNREGA. I would like to request you that all schemes should be reconsidered. Should a scheme be run merely so that our name continues, that the name of our family continues, that the name of our relatives continues? Father, son, middleman, and the bull is worth twelve annas. Should a scheme be run for such reasons? A scheme must be meant for the villages, for the farmers, for the labourers, for the backward communities, for the Dalits, for the students, for the youth, and there must be holistic thinking. I would like to request you that this must be considered. There should be a review, an evaluation, reflection on its utility, and transformation

according to necessity. Times will change, and the people of India will continue to move forward.

In the year 1967, under the leadership of Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, we raised the slogan. Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay and Dr. Lohia had walked together, and at that time we had given the slogan: remove the Congress and save the nation. Jayaprakash ji, in 1967 you must have been a child or playing in your mother's lap. What would you know of the struggle of Hukmdev Narayan, for which Hukmdev Narayan has fought? ... *(Interruptions)* Someone else sheds sweat, and someone in Bihar eats the malpua.

In 1967, Dr. Lohia had said: remove the Congress and save the nation. From 1967 until today, Dr. Lohia continued to advocate this. Once Dr. Lohia told me, "Hukm Chand, do not be afraid, keep walking on my path. One day will come when a son from some backward community of India will emerge as the leader of the entire nation. He will receive the support of the whole society, and one day a son from the backward communities will become the Prime Minister of India. On that day, the Congress will be eradicated root and branch." That dream of Dr. Lohia has now been realised. Under the leadership of Hon. Narendra Modi ji, Dr. Lohia's dream has been fulfilled. What have we been doing? We have invoked Lohia's name

but acted against his principles. Therefore, I would like to make a humble request that there should be evaluation, self-reflection and review. Thousands of Rupees have been spent, several thousands of Rupees have been invested, and schemes are created with these funds, such as the Prime Minister's Agricultural Irrigation Scheme. Form one scheme and invest funds in it so that every field receives water. Water for every field and work for every hand, this dream can be realised. If a scheme is created, focus must be on that one scheme. It should not be that we move forward blindly.

Before concluding my remarks, I would like to submit that there are three kinds of people. One looks ahead, the second looks behind, and the third looks sideways. After Independence, all the Governments that came into power in this country kept looking sideways, watching what the neighbour does, how America functions, how England functions, how Japan functions. In India, farmers need water to reach their fields, so we raised the slogan: farm like the Japanese. Therefore, I would like to make a humble request to you that on the MNREGA scheme, the debate that has taken place in Parliament and the debate that is still going on, our colleagues will express their views on it.

In the end, I will only submit that the form of a scheme, the direction of a scheme and the pace of a scheme, all three should be reviewed, evaluated and properly analysed. Who should analyse it? One analysis is done at the top by those who formulate the schemes, and another analysis is done at the ground level. Those who analyse at the ground level, whether on this side or that side, are many. There are many such people in the Bharatiya Janata Party as well. Shri Jayaprakash ji, please understand that those who have come into the BJP from the socialist stream are the socialists who stood with Dr. Lohia, not the socialists who stood with some other leader. They are not the tail-end socialists. What our Dr. Lohia had said is the very basis on which I am speaking here today. At this very place in the year 1963, while debating, Dr. Lohia had initiated the debate of three annas versus thirteen annas. Even Pandit Nehru was astonished by it and the very foundations of his Government were shaken. Today, to realise the dream that Shri Narendra Modi ji has envisaged, for the transformation of India, for making the villages prosperous, for making the poor prosperous, so that every hand in India gets work, everyone gets food, everyone has clothing on their body, and everyone has a house, this is India. In the socialist movement we used to raise the slogan: India demands food, clothing and shelter. Shri Narendra

Modi ji has come, and he too says that India needs food, clothing and shelter. If that dream is to be realised, then one must remove the Congress and save the country. After removing the Congress and saving the country, all the schemes that the Congress had implemented should be bundled together and consigned to the Holi fire, reduced to ashes, and a new India should be built. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: The next speaker is Shri K. H. Muniyappa.

… *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Nothing else will go on record.

(Interruptions) … *

* Not recorded

SHRI K. H. MUNIYAPPA (KOLAR): Madam, Chairperson, thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to speak on the issue of MGNREGA. … *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Member, it is not going on record. Only Shri Muniyappa's speech will go on record.

*(Interruptions) …**

SHRI K. H. MUNIYAPPA: I would like to share that MGNREGA is in the name of Mahatma Gandhiji, which the UPA Government had started with an Act in 2005. In 2006, 200 districts established this programme. Subsequently, in 2007 and 2008, the entire country with more than 650 districts extended the programme. It is being implemented properly. Those who are below poverty line like labourers, small and marginal farmers have no work for their livelihood during the summer time. Keeping this in view, under the able guidance of Shrimati Sonia Gandhi and the then Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, a deep study was done by the UPA Government and we have extended this programme to whole country and it is being implemented well. In 2012-13, a substantial amount of Rs. 30,000 crore was allocated and, before the end of the UPA

* Not recorded

Government, we have provided Rs. 33,000 crore for this programme. Under the programme, every Panchayat can draw up its own plan. The Panchayats and Gram Sabhas will decide the type of works to be undertaken under the programme and, accordingly, when the States formulate the plans and send them to the Central Government, they are sanctioned.

The number of people who are below poverty line and who are without food is more than 37 per cent in the entire country. Keeping the motto, “Live and let live”, the UPA Government has started this programme.

Recently, the BJP-led NDA Government have planned to reduce the allocations to this programme. They have given only Rs. 1,000 crore extra this year as compared to the previous year’s allocation. They are also planning to dilute and dismantle this programme. On one occasion, the Hon. Minister said that they were not diluting this programme. He explained it by saying, “We cannot dilute this MGNREGA programme. NDA will further improve MGNREGA. ” This is what Chaudhary Birender Singh has said, who was earlier on this side and now he is on that side. Practically, they are going to dilute this programme.

I would like to share what some eminent luminaries and economists have said. They have shared their anguish against the steps that this Government was going to take. Mr. Zimmermann of the University of Michigan said, “The programme, when properly implemented, would arrest the distress. ” Similarly, a study done by Clement Imbert of Oxford University shows that the villages with early access to the programme have less temporary outmigration to the urban sector. These important people have mentioned these things. The People’s Action for Employment Guarantee met the Hon. Prime Minister on 8th October 2014 and submitted a memorandum signed by 200 eminent citizens. They have appealed to him that in no case this programme should be diluted and that it should be given more importance. It is because it is the people’s programme. It is the common people’s programme and most of the people are below poverty line and the agricultural labourers, the small farmers and the marginal farmers are below the poverty line. I cannot understand what is behind this Government’s thinking to dilute this programme. I urge upon this Government to increase the job and give more money for this programme for creating the infrastructure. Again, they are planning. Earlier, it was 60:40, that is labour oriented is 60 per cent and the infrastructure is 40 per cent. Now, they are diluting it to 51:49.

More than two crore population are suffering from this. While they are reducing the labour, the affected people are more than two crore.

There is another important area which I want to tell in this House. They have provided work to the 8. 3 crore population in 2014 with a balance of 2. 3 crore population. Unemployment has increased in 2014. The demand is 10. 6 crore households that is who have applied for work. They made the provision only for 8. 3 crore. When our Government was there, the demand was 10. 6 crores. We have provided to the 9. 8 crore households. This is the programme. The left out household is 1. 3 crore and now the left out household is 2. 3 crore. This is the difference between the NDA Government and the UPA Government. I think Hon. Minister will take note of all these things and will try to correct these things. Otherwise, the people of this country cannot tolerate you. Because of magic, you have made to get into the power.

I would like to tell the Hon. Minister this. On the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi that is 2nd October, 2014, our Prime Minister started to clean the nation. I think media has made so much of this well established programme. Where is the money? [English] Where is the programme? Have you given the money to make this one to clean the country? [Translation] The UPA Government has given money for the

purpose of Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewable Mission in the cities and towns. We have given thousands and thousands of crore of rupees. This is the practical thing where we have given the money. This is given to see that to provide drinking water, roads and all other facilities are provided. This is the practical thing that we have done at the time of our Government.

I have another most important thing which I would like to tell. In the name of Mahatma Gandhiji, we have started this programme but they have not given money for any one of the programme which they have announced. They have given only assurance.

There is another thing that is Jan Dhan. Jan Dhan is not a new thing. It was started at the time of Indira Ji's time. Abolition of privy purses, nationalisation of banks, allow the poor people, the small and marginal farmers into the banks are the things done by our Government. This programme was not only for the landlords. After that, UPA Government has started the no-frill account. What is no frill account? Without paying a single paisa, the bankers should go to the villages and rural huts. More than 80 to 90 percent in the villages were enrolled through the Aadhar cards. They are given employment to the people directly in MGNREGA. This is the programme given by the UPA Government. It has been named as Jan Dhan Programme. What

is ‘Jan Dhan’? What is the programme? They have started the programme when more than 80 per cent work is over. … *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude.

… *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please address the Chair and conclude.

… *(Interruptions)*

SHRI K. H. MUNIYAPPA: Under the Aadarsh Gram Programme, the gram will become orphan now. Neither the State Governments nor the Central Government nor the MPs will be able to take care of the village. If you ask an MP to take up a village under Aadarsh Gram Programme, on that day, that village will become an orphan.

I would like to suggest one thing. If they really want to make an Aadarsh Gram, if they want to make improvement in the villages and panchayats, we had started a programme under the Rural Development Ministry. We should not sanction a house without a toilet. That is the programme. If they take care of this programme and implement properly under the rural development, then only we can have an Aadarsh Gram. For this purpose, they can come with another programme.

In 1991-92, when Shri Narasimha Rao was the prime Minister, it was he who started the MP fund for the benefit of the villages, where it is required badly. we had increased this amount up to Rs. 5 crore. if you are to develop the villages and gram panchayats as Adarsh gram, you give extra money for this purpose either in the budget or to the MP fund, then only this program will be implemented. otherwise, it will be difficult to implement it. [Translation] I would like to say one more thing. There are many who speak, many who give assurances, many who make announcements, but those who speak and then act are few in the BJP Government.

[English]

SHRI V. ELUMALAI (ARANI): Madam, I thank you for the opportunity given to me to participate in the discussion on the working of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, which guarantees right to a minimum of 100 days work to rural poor. It aims to ensure livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult Members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

This Programme was launched in 2006 and it had come into force in 200 backward districts of the country. It is a legal entitlement for the rural poor. This System was hailed by the Government as "the largest and most ambitious social security and public works programme in the world". In its World Development Report 2014, the World Bank termed it a "stellar example of rural development". But what is happening on the ground is quite the opposite and there are many problems in the implementation of this scheme.

Poverty alleviation measures in rural areas have a long history in India. During the last three decades, the Government launched major schemes like Jawahar Rozgar Yojana, Employment Assurance Scheme, Food for Work Programme, Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana and Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana that were fore-runners to

Mahatma Gandhi NREGA. Unlike the previous programmes, the Mahatma Gandhi NREGA guaranteed employment as a legal right. MGNREGA is an important step towards realization of right to work. It is expected to enhance people's livelihood security on a sustained basis, by developing economic and social infrastructure in rural areas. One of the most distinguishing features of MGNREGA is that it empowers the citizens to play an active role in the implementation of the employment guarantee schemes.

However, there are various problems reported from the field-level in the implementation of this scheme. To begin with there are complaints about non-issuance of job cards to those who demanded them.

The operational guidelines of MGNREGA detail a household as a nuclear family, comprising of mother, father and their children. In addition, a household refers to a single Member family. There is still a lot of confusion about this definition. Our country has historically followed the system of joint families and the present practice of MGNREGA will put the joint families in a disadvantageous position.

There are reports that the authorities deny registration to single woman headed households and physically challenged persons. There

are also reports that there is a lot of discrimination on the basis of caste. These are to be removed if this Scheme is to be made a success.

There are some States where even now the application forms are being charged in clear violation of the guidelines which state that the application forms can be had even on a plain piece of paper. Another general problem is the absence of the system of issuance of receipts to applications. This happens due to lack of awareness. But receipts are very crucial because this is a proof of having worked which would entitle him to claim wages.

MGNREGA provides for facilities for safe drinking water, shed for children. It assures periods of rest and also provides for first aid box at the worksite. But contrary to this, cutting across all the States what we find is that these facilities are not provided at any of the sites. The familiar site in every place is that small children are left unattended in the heat. As a consequence, women are hesitant to bring their children to worksites.

Another problem is of contractors. Contractors are becoming a threat to MGNREGA. Private contractors are finding their way slowly into the MGNREGA system. But the Act very clearly shows that the contractors are banned and no contractor is permitted in the implementation of the projects.

Seldom have we found muster rolls at the workplaces. Rough notebooks and diaries are being used to mark attendance and to make payments. In the absence of muster rolls there is every chance that people get cheated.

Shortage or lack of staff is having a negative impact on the working of MGNREGA. A survey has found that engineers are burdened with the task of maintaining job cards. This jeopardizes their real work and this implies that their primary task suffers.

Delay in payment of wages is a matter of concern. This continues to plague the system. Wage payments are delayed by months and workers do not get minimum wages as guaranteed. This is making a mockery of the system, which aims to remove poverty amongst the rural poor.

There is a set of demands proposed for improvements in MGNREGA. One demand is that the number of workdays should be increased to 200 with a minimum of assured 100 days, and also the wage should be increased to Rs. 300. Here I would like to say that the Government is thinking of cutting the budget of MGNREGA. But since there is huge demand, it should be increased and not curtailed as is proposed.

18.00 hrs

Another demand is that job card should be issued to those who demand jobs. There is another demand that the scheme should be extended to urban poor also. The other most important demand is that the monitoring mechanism should be strengthened to check corruption and for proper implementation of the scheme. MGNREGA is supposed to give people the fundamental right to live with dignity but the success of MGNREGA will depend on people's realization of the Act.

18.01 hrs (Hon. Deputy-Speaker *in the Chair*)

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can continue tomorrow. Now because it is six o' clock, we start zero hour with item no. 9.

18.02 hrs **PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE ... Contd.**

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI VIJAY SAMPLA): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:

(1) A copy of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under Clause (6) of the Article 338 of the Constitution: -

(i) Report of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes on Reservation in Judiciary, March, 2012.

(ii) Explanatory Memorandum on the recommendations contained in the Report of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes on Reservation in Judiciary, March, 2012.

(2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 1066/16/14]

[Translation]

SHRI AJAY MISRA TENI (KHERI): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, every year the Veterinary Council of India conducts the All India Pre-Veterinary Test at the national level for students seeking admission to veterinary courses. Until the year 2011, the question papers of this examination were available in both Hindi and English. However, after 2011, the Veterinary Council of India decided that the question papers would be only in English. Now, due to the question papers being provided only in English, students studying through Hindi and other Indian languages are facing a very serious problem. Despite having good knowledge of their subjects such as Physics, Chemistry and Biology, they often fail to give correct answers because of the English language of the question paper. As a result, talented students coming from rural areas of the country, who have not received education through the English medium, get fewer opportunities to pursue veterinary education. Earlier, the Veterinary Council of India had taken several decisions due to which many tasks could not be completed during the last ten years. But since the NDA Government has been formed, under the leadership of our Hon. Minister, sweeping reforms have been undertaken in the Veterinary Council of India during the past six months, due to which many issues have now been

resolved. Consequently, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Government and request that the Veterinary Council of India be directed to ensure that in upcoming examination sessions, question papers are provided not only in English but also in Hindi and other Indian languages.

[English]

SHRI P. V. MIDHUN REDDY (RAJAMPET): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am from the temple town of Tirupati. Tirupati is the most visited temple in the country and even in the world. Each day, one lakh devotees visit the temple and Tirupati is the richest temple. Tirupati temple does a lot of charitable works like free food schemes and maintenance of free hospitals, schools and colleges. Of late, there have been aspate of new articles in the media about probable terror attack on Tirupati temple. If any untoward incident happens, it will affect the sentiments of the entire nation. Therefore, I urge upon the Central Government to provide additional security to the temple because the central forces are more equipped and they have better access to intelligence. A combination of Central and State Government security will be the ideal solution for the safety of the Tirumala.

[Translation]

SHRI GOPAL SHETTI (MUMBAI NORTH): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on this very important matter.

Sir, when the Adarsh issue surfaced in Mumbai in the year 2010, the Chief Minister of Maharashtra issued a circular stating that for any development on land adjacent to the Defence Department, an NOC must be obtained and they must be informed. One year later, in 2011, the Defence authorities issued a circular stating that if anyone wants to undertake development work within 500 metres of Defence land, an NOC from them would be required. This is acceptable, but during the last four to five years they have not issued even a single NOC, and for five consecutive years all development works have been kept on hold. During the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, the MoS himself came to Mumbai and assured that this circular would be withdrawn immediately and necessary corrections would be made. But after the new Government came to power, we met the Hon. Minister and we met the MoS. In this House, Shri Kirit Somaiya ji and I moved a Calling Attention. We were given assurances, but the Secretary of the Defence Department …* has still not taken any final decision on the matter. [English] It is a very important issue. I will take only one more

* Not recorded.

minute. [Translation] If an officer of any department issues a circular and stops development work for five years continuously, then I feel that there is no need for a Lok Sabha, a Vidhan Sabha or a judicial system in this country. I would like to thank the Hon. Minister. This afternoon, Shri Kirit Somaiya ji, Shewale ji and I met him. He assured us that this circular would be withdrawn immediately.

Through this august House, I would like to demand that strict action be taken against such officers. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Arvind Sawant and Shri Rahul Shewale are allowed to associate with this issue.

[English]

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN (KASARGOD): Thank you, Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir.

I would like to place before this House a very important issue. The Government has announced that the Planning Commission would be wound up. He has taken this step publicly a day after the Parliament Session ended, without any discussion in Parliament or consultation with political parties or other concerned-entities. The decision is in line with the prevailing neo-liberal view that there is no need even for a discussion on this, in a market-oriented economy.

When the Parliament is supreme and the Prime Minister has made this statement only in public, it is really a violation of the right of the Parliament and itse Members. The role of the Planning Commission has already been curtailed in the last two decades, under liberalization. What our Prime Minister has done is to really give it a final burial.

The Planning Commission has been tasked with certain allocation of resources under the plan, providing for a balanced development, keeping in mind regional disparities and monitoring the important schemes and projects.

The Government claims that the Planning Commission was not in tune with the federal principles. To some extent, I agree with that. That is why, we have been advocating that the Planning Commission should be made an executive wing of the National Development Council so that it becomes truly a federal institution.

But if the Planning Commission itself is dismantled, the allocation of the States will be decided by the Finance Ministry which will only lead to further centralization and bring in political bias as far as the States are concerned. The Government has not spelt out what will be put in place instead of Planning Commission. This is really an arbitrary decision taken by the Government. … *(Interruptions)* So, the Planning Commission should not be an affair of the Central Government. … *(Interruptions)*

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can send slips. If you want to associate, you have to send slips.

… *(Interruptions)*

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri N. K. Premchandran, Shri P. K. Biju, Shri Jitendra Chaudhury and Shrimati P. K. Sreemathi Teacher are allowed to associate with this issue.

[Translation]

DR. YASHWANT SINGH (NAGINA): Thank you, Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir. I represent the Nagina seat of District Bijnor in Uttar Pradesh. A large part of this Lok Sabha constituency is connected with Uttarakhand, and most of the roads leading to Uttarakhand pass through my constituency; therefore, there is heavy traffic pressure there. From the town of Shivhara in my Lok Sabha area, Train No. 12231 Up and 12232 Down, the Chandigarh Express**,** travels towards Lucknow and Chandigarh. Earlier, this train used to stop at Shivhara station, and many passengers used to board the train from there. But for reasons unknown, the stoppage of this train has been discontinued, due to which people who travelled to Chandigarh for medical treatment or to Lucknow for any work are now facing great difficulties. Along with this, in Nagina, which is the main railway station of my constituency, there is no overbridge**.** At the level crossing, traffic jams of three to four hours occur every day. Due to this, people coming onto NH-74 face a lot of inconvenience. Many times, patients lying in ambulances lose their lives because the crossing cannot be cleared in time. Through you, Sir, I would like to request the Government that the stoppages of 12231-Up and 12232-Down**,** which have been discontinued, be restored, and that the

construction of the overbridge, whose approval already exists be completed at the earliest. Thank you.

[English]

SHRI C. MAHENDRAN (POLLACHI): Hon. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, my sincere thanks to the former People's Chief Minister Puratchi Thalaivi Amma for allowing me to represent Pollachi Constituency.

Thanks to the Hon. Prime Minister for announcing SAGY, Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana based on the THAI Scheme introduced by Puratchi Thalaivi Amma in the year 2011-12 itself to overcome the bottlenecks in the uneven distribution of resources and to provide minimum basic infrastructure facilities to all the habitations. The THAI Scheme announced by Puratchi Thalaivi Amma is the role model scheme for SAGY. Tamil Nadu is the only State which is focusing on habitation as the unit of development. No other State in the country is implementing such an innovative scheme.

Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's THAI scheme is presently covering the expenditure to the extent of Rs. 30 lakh to Rs. 50 lakh for each village. Under SAGY the Central Government should extend additional contribution to the extent of Rs. 2 crore to all the villages for speedy

development of infrastructure of all the villages so as to benefit all sections of society as 60 per cent of the population lives in rural India.

The THAI scheme with the aim of extending basic facilities to the grassroots habitations in villages of Tamil Nadu has come as a boon. The scheme covers the minimum basic requirement of water supply, street lights, roads, burial grounds, pathway to burial grounds with additional requirements for Anganwadi centres, Public Distribution Shops, SHG building and play grounds and any other permitted work required by the villages.

I would request the Hon. Prime Minister to kindly consider my request of giving additional fund to villages and allot Rs. 2 crore to each village under this scheme.

[English]

***SHRI P. R. SUNDARAM (NAMAKKAL):** Hon'ble Deputy Speaker Sir. Vanakkam. During the previous minority DMK rule in Tamil Nadu, in order to safeguard his family run TV Channel, the then Chief Minister and DMK leader blocked Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation. In the year 2011, when Hon'ble Puratchithalaivi Amma became the Chief Minister, Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation regained its vigour and started its services. As per the poll assurances given by Hon'ble Amma, this TV Corporation provided 100 Channels for meagre amount Rs. 70/- per month and became very popular among the masses of Tamil Nadu. In this scenario, in the year 2012, the then DMK-Congress Coalition government at the Union brought a new legislation making DAS license mandatory for Chennai and other Metropolitan cities. Due to this effect, an application was submitted to Ministry of Information and Broadcasting for issue of DAS license for Tamil Nadu Cable TV in the year 2012. But the then DMK-Congress Coalition government at the Union kept this application pending. This paved way for encouraging private TV channels like SUN digital group. In this scenario, after BJP came to power at the Centre, Hon'ble Chief Minister Puratchithalaivi Amma

* English translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil

met Hon'ble Prime Minister on 3rd June 2014 and requested for issue of DAS license to Tamil Nadu Cable TV Corporation. Since TRAI has directed not to issue digital license to any State government, the present Union government has also kept this application of TACTV pending. Under the able guidance of Puratchithalaivi Amma 48 MPs from Tamil Nadu of both the Houses of Parliament met Hon'ble Minister for Information and Broadcasting Shri Arun Jaitley and submitted an application requesting for issue of digital license. Hon'ble Deputy Speaker Sir. What I want to say in this august House is that well before the TRAI's direction Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation had applied for issue of digital license on 5 July 2012 and 23 November 2012. After due consideration of facts and respecting the sentiments of the people of Tamil Nadu, and as demanded by Puratchithalaivi Amma, Hon'ble Prime Minister should intervene in this matter. I therefore urge upon the Union government through this august House that service oriented Tamil Nadu Cable TV corporation which runs on not-for-profit basis should be granted Digital Access System (DAS) license immediately. Thank you Sir.

DR. UDIT RAJ (NORTH WEST DELHI): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, under 20 Point Programme, Dalits were allotted housing plots and agricultural lands. Now 38 years have passed but they have not been

given *bhoomidhari* rights which means that they cannot claim their right. In some of the places what happened is that their plots have been converted into parks and village land. As on date, they are not in a position to develop their land because they are in fear that any time it can be taken back by the Government.

So I would like to state that this case is already 38 years old; they are already in possession of and are cultivating the land. The law says that 12 years of continuous possession gives the right of ownership. But till today, they have not been given the right of ownership. Most of these people are Dalits, poor, OBC, and backwards. They live in rural areas of Delhi. They have been fighting for it but yet it has not been sorted out.

So, I urge upon the Government that they should be given *bhoomidhari* rights. Today, they do not have the title rights though they are using it. This is what, I wanted to say.

[Translation]

DR. ANSHUL VERMA (HARDOI): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to request the Government and bring to its notice that in my Parliamentary Constituency, Hardoi, 25 roads under PMGSY Phase–10 for the year 2012-13 were approved package-wise,

and construction work on these roads had commenced. Due to shortage of funds, these works are lying half-finished, causing great difficulty to local farmers, traders, students, and the general public in commuting. In this regard, I myself have corresponded with officials at the district level as well as the State level. Against the sanctioned amount of Rs. 7662.35 lakh for the 25 roads under Phase–10, only Rs. 2243.06 lakh has been received so far. The remaining allocation of Rs. 5419.29 lakh is still pending. I would like to request the Hon. Prime Minister to kindly release the remaining allocation so that the incomplete works may be completed and accountability towards the people of the region may be ensured.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, for road construction, the only scheme available with Members of Parliament is the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, the credit for which goes directly to the Hon. Prime Minister of India. However, senior leaders of the Uttar Pradesh Government announce from public platforms and through newspapers that they have granted approval for the construction of these roads. They claim that the roads will be constructed quickly because they fall under PMGSY. Through you, I would like to bring to the notice of the Hon. Prime Minister that the Government of Uttar Pradesh discriminates against Members of Parliament**.** For development works

in various departments of the Uttar Pradesh administration such as the Mandi Parishad, the Sugarcane Institute, the Lohia Samagra Vikas, and village-related departments, only the proposals of MLAs belonging to the ruling party are approved**.**

[English]

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN (KOLLAM): Sir, my submission is in respect of the Employees' Provident Fund Pension Scheme. The UPA Government had declared that all employees coming under the Employees' Provident Fund Pension Scheme will be eligible for getting the minimum pension of Rs. 1000 per month with effect from 1. 4. 2014. According to the recent Gazette Notification dated 28. 8. 2014, the enhancement of minimum pension of Rs. 1000 per month of the Employees Provident Fund Organisation is not beneficial to the employees. The provisions of the notification are against the interest of the Members of the scheme. The minimum pension of Rs. 1000 is not applicable to a Member who opted for a reduced pension before the age of 58. Also, if a Member had given option for commutation, this amount is to be reduced from Rs. 1000. The children pension is Rs. 250 and orphan pension is Rs. 750. The Government has given it a wide publicity. But the minimum pension of Rs. 1000 is applicable only to a limited number of employees and

moreover certain conditions were also imposed which are adversely affecting a large number of employees, particularly those who opted for commutation. The Gazette Notification very specifically says that the scheme is applicable only for the current financial year. Almost all the Cabinet Ministers have gone to all the States and inaugurated the scheme and openly given a specific commitment that all the workers are eligible for Rs. 1000. So, I urge upon the Government to revise the scheme so as to give minimum pension of Rs. 1000 to all entitled for pension.

HON. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri P. Karunakaran, Shri P. K. Biju, Shri Jitendra Choudhury and Shrimati P. K. Sreemathi Teacher are allowed to associate with the matter raised by Shri N. K. Premachandran.

[Translation]

SHRI BHARAT SINGH (BALLIA): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak. I would like to draw your attention to the Ballia Parliamentary Constituency, as I belong to this region. The people of Ballia played a significant role in the freedom struggle. Mangal Pandey was from Ballia, and Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan was also from Ballia. However, today in Ballia, there is no medical facility for the poor, for women, or for young girls.

There is no heart specialist in the district hospital, no neurosurgeon, no gynaecologist, and even proper oxygen supply is not available. The conditions there are extremely distressing.

Therefore, through you, I would like to urge the Government that if an AIIMS is to be established in Purvanchal, it should be set up in Ballia, and a hospital with AIIMS-level facilities should be provided to Ballia. Along with this, a Trauma Centre should be made operational in Ballia so that poor people may receive timely treatment. Poor patients are compelled to wander from place to place for medical care, sometimes having to travel to Banaras and at other times to Lucknow.

I also would like to make one more submission. I would like to request that my words be conveyed to the higher authorities. Kindly do not disregard the Zero Hour so much. You allow us to speak on every subject, but at least give Members five minutes to express themselves during Zero Hour. With these words, I would like to conclude my submission. Thank you.

[English]

SHRI M. UDHAYAKUMAR (DINDIGUL): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I would like to thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak

in this august House. Kodaikanal, the popular hill station developed by the Britishers is also called the Princess of Hills. It is situated in my Dindigul constituency of Tamil Nadu. Though this hill town has become very popular, the town needs development and infrastructure. The Government of Tamil Nadu led by our leader Puratchi Thalaivi, Amma released Rs. 100 crore to beautify the ancient horticultural garden and to widen and illuminate the roads apart from desilting the natural lake on top of this hill station.

The Union Ministry of Urban Development has identified 100 towns to be developed, with infrastructural facilities, as Modern Smart Cities with an allocation of Rs. 7300 crore. As hill stations are also to be included under the Smart Cities Programme, Kodaikanal may also be included under this Programme. This is an urgent need from the infrastructure point of view as inland tourists and foreigners are visiting this hill station throughout the year in great number.

Modernization of Kodaikanal may provide for a helipad and a Greenfield Airport apart from protecting the eco system and developing a wildlife sanctuary. Linking of the bordering Kerala through Kosan Road may develop Kodaikanal further.

Hence, I urge upon the Centre to include Kodaikanal Hill Station in the Central Government’s Smart City Programme.

SHRIMATI APARUPA PODDAR (ARAMBAG): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, I thank you for permitting me to mention the following matter in the Zero Hour.

With deep regret, I inform the House that Indian Railways, being the world's largest public railway network, has now become the world's first late running network in the country. During the last six months, a number of trains has reached the destination on their scheduled time though they have departed on scheduled time. The number of trains has increased; routes have been extended; fares have been hiked but security, and punctuality and cleanliness of trains have been neglected.

I would like to inform the House that CAG states that the Zones are reporting wrong data in order to show that 95 per cent of the trains were punctual. In addition, the CAG also reports that trains were late on 54 occasions while prestigious trains like Rajdhani Express were late on 53 occasions. Thus, there is a need to take measures and report punctuality from the passengers' perspectives.

I would, therefore, request the Hon. Minister, through you, to inform the House about the last three months statistics of Rajdhani Express and Shatabdi Express and the detailed causes for late running

of the trains and ensure punctuality, cleanliness and security of the passengers and goods trains.

[Translation]

SHRI SHRIRANG APPA BARNE (MAVAL): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the country's first antibiotic manufacturing factory, which is owned by the Union Government, is currently facing severe financial difficulties. When Shrimati Kasturba Gandhi, the revered spouse of the Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi, fell ill and could not receive the essential antibiotic she required, the first Prime Minister of India, Hon. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, established Hindustan Antibiotics Limited at Pimpri, Maharashtra on 10th March, 1954. This was the first company in the country to manufacture antibiotic medicines. Today, numerous companies in India are producing various kinds of medicines, and many medicines are also being imported from abroad. Yet the Union Government's own company, Hindustan Antibiotics Limited, is struggling due to acute financial distress. The situation is so serious that even the employees have not received their salaries for the past 5 months. Despite not receiving salaries, all employees continue to work with complete dedication.

Sir, through you, I would like to urge the Government to extend financial assistance to Hindustan Antibiotics Limited at the earliest so that all employees receive their pending salaries and the Government may take firm steps to ensure the continued functioning of the company.

[English]

***SHRI RANJIT SINGH BRAHMPURA (KHADOOR SAHIB):** Sir, I want to draw the attention of the Central Government towards a problem faced by people of Gehri Mandi, Jandiala Guru, in my Parliamentary Constituency Khadoor Sahib. There is an urgent need for the construction of a railway over-bridge or an under-pass at the railway crossing in this area.

The double-crossing railway line at Gehri Mandi, Jandiala Guru, passes through the G. T. Road. It is the route of North-Western Railway. It is a very busy railway line. However, Punjab's second largest agriculture 'Mandi' is located here where foodgrains in bulk are sold. It caters to the selling of wheat, maize etc. . This is a very busy place as far as trade and business of foodgrains between India and Pakistan is concerned. The Food Corporation of India's and Railway's godowns are also located in this area.

However, Sir, as there is no overbridge or under-pass at this railway-crossing, the commuters on the G. T. Road are suffering. It has also adversely affected the carrying of foodgrains etc. on the trucks. Massive traffic-jams have become the order of the day.

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* English translation of the speech originally delivered in Punjabi

So, I urge upon the Hon’ble Railway Minister to ensure that a railway overbridge or under-pass is constructed at the site of this railway crossing at the earliest.

Thank you.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH (RAJU BHAIYA) (ETAH): Sir, I would like to thank you for granting me the opportunity to speak during Zero Hour.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, before the election I used to enjoy very good health. After the election, however, I have invited upon myself the ailment of persistent headache. The reason for this is that ever since two BSNL SIM cards have been provided to us by the Lok Sabha, whenever we try to make a call, the call simply does not get through. This is not only my personal hardship. I believe all of us here who are Members of Parliament are facing the same difficulty. Not only Members, but anyone who has a BSNL connection would certainly be suffering from this problem.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, ever since we have been given these phones, the first thing that happens is that whenever we dial a number, the call does not connect. When we dial the second time, we are told that the number has been permanently disconnected. When we dial the third time, the response is that the network is busy. On the fourth attempt, the call ends abruptly with a continuous beep sound. On the next attempt, even if the call connects, the voice is extremely low, and if the voice does come, it comes from only one side. If thereafter we

still try to make calls, then during the conversation the call drops twice within a single minute. If all Hon. Members agree with what I am saying, I would like to request them to associate themselves with the subject I have raised.

Sir, I would like to know that BSNL is an undertaking of the Union Government. It does not have to pay any fee or any tax. Besides BSNL, there are Airtel, Idea, Vodafone, Reliance and others, and all of them provide excellent quality service. Wherever one travels, their network is available. I would like to know why, despite the fact that the Union Government need not pay any tax, the services of BSNL are of such third-class quality. I would, therefore, submit that these SIM cards may kindly be taken back and, if possible, SIM cards of another company may be provided to us.

[English]

HON. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The BSNL is also paying money to the Government.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH (RAJU BHAIYA): Sir, through you, I would like to request the Government that the services of BSNL be duly improved.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Sir, we also agree with him. [English]

HON. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please send the slip.

[Translation]

SHRI VINOD KUMAR SONKAR (KAUSHAMBI): Sir, I would like to draw your attention to the health condition of people living in the rural areas of India. The basic healthcare needs of those regions rest upon the ASHA workers.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the manner in which these ASHA workers are appointed and the nature of the work they perform have made them function practically like agents. They charge Rs. 600 for assisting in delivery, Rs. 50 for an eye examination, and Rs. 150 for leprosy-related tests.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the situation in the rural areas is extremely distressing. When, in our country, we speak of premier institutions like AIIMS and large hospitals and of major initiatives in

the health sector, it is truly unfortunate that at the grassroots level basic healthcare is being delivered through an agent-like mechanism.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, their appointment is also made at the Gram Panchayat level by the Gram Pradhan, resulting in considerable discrimination in their selection. Due to this, the services expected from them are not being adequately received by the people. Moreover, the problems faced by these ASHA workers have also not been given due attention by the Governments.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to urge the Union Government as well as the State Government that the appointments of these ASHA workers be regularized and that they be granted the facilities which are available to ANMs. This would enable them to properly discharge the health-related responsibilities entrusted to them. Because they are compelled to work in an agent-like manner, at times they do not take a patient to a Government hospital but, out of greed for money, take them to a private nursing home.

Therefore, through you, Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to request the Union Government that the State Government be directed to regularize their services and that they be paid salaries on the pattern of ANMs.

[English]

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The name of Shri Ashwani Kumar Choubey is associated on this issue raised by Shri Vinod Kumar Sonkar.

[Translation]

SHRI HARISH MEENA (DOUSA): Hon. Deputy Speaker Sir, I would like to thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on this important subject.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in my Parliamentary Constituency of Dausa, the Jaipur–Delhi railway line passes through the region. This railway line is nearly 60 years old. At the time it was constructed, it lay outside the city. Over the years, as the city expanded, the railway line has come to be located in the middle of the city. In my constituency, there are three important places, Bandikui, Bassi and Baswa, through which this line passes.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, children face great difficulty in reaching their schools; patients encounter trouble in reaching hospitals; and traders also suffer considerable inconvenience. Through you, I would like to request the Union Government that Railway Overbridges be constructed in all these three towns so that

the public may be facilitated. Furthermore, Dausa city, which is the district headquarters of my constituency, has a population of more than one lakh, yet not even a single underpass exists in the city. Through you, I would like to request the Hon. Minister of Railways to construct at least one railway underpass in Dausa city so that the public may be provided proper convenience.

[English]

HON. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Hon. Members, some requests have come from the Hon. Members to speak in the `Zero Hour'. The number of matters to be raised in the `Zero Hour' is decided by ballot and the time given is two minutes. If any Member is having any urgent issue to be raised, the same may be allowed but for one minute only. I would not allow the Members to repeat the issue and those who are regularly raising the issue in the `Zero Hour' are not allowed. If I allow it regularly, then ballot would not be of any value. Therefore, only if the issue is urgent, and those Members who have not participated, as a special case, will be allowed, not regular Members.

Only one minute, Hon. Members are allowed to speak. If you exceed one minute, then, the same will not be recorded.

[Translation]

SHRI GANESH SINGH (SATNA): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to thank you for granting me the opportunity to speak. There was a very important matter for which repeated notices had been given, yet I did not get an opportunity earlier. Therefore, through you, I would like to place this matter before the Government.

This subject pertains to including the Right Bank Canal of the Bargi Project of Madhya Pradesh in the category of National Projects. This matter has been under consideration of the Union Government since 2010. Even recently, on 28th October, 2014, in response to my letter, the Hon. Minister has stated that the proposal had been referred to the High Powered Steering Committee, which met on 17th February, 2010. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister what final decision has been taken in that regard. Furthermore, on 5th December, 2014, the proposal was sent to the Ministry of Finance for approval of the EFC. Nearly three months have passed, yet no action has been taken. My request is that the EFC may kindly grant its approval and that the proposal for including the Right Bank Canal of the Bargi Dam as a National Project be accorded approval by the Cabinet.

[English]

SHRI THOTA NARASIMHAM (KAKINADA): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in Andhra Pradesh, as of now, palm oil is being cultivated in 1,37,000 hectares with 76,300 farmers' fields. To protect the interests of palm oil growers, the Government of India has to make amendments in subsidy policy and import policy.

Recently, FFB prices started falling from Rs. 8,441 per MT to Rs. 6,589 per MT since the cost of cultivation like labour cost and input cost had increased but the demand in FFB prices has decreased due to fluctuation of import duty.

Import of edible oil was brought under OGL in 1995. Presently, import duty on CPO is 2. 5 per cent and oil is 10 per cent. Domestic prices of palm oil are significantly affected by cheaper imports from Malaysia and Indonesia because of which there were considerable fluctuations.

Hence, I would request the Hon. Minister that there is every necessity to increase the import duty taking into consideration of palm oil growers' sustainability in Andhra Pradesh.

SHRIMATI P. K. SHREEMATHI TEACHER (KANNUR): I would like to bring a serious issue to the notice of the House. I am not describing the issue. It is reported that the driver who is the rapist has

been arrested but this clearly is not enough. Delhi Police and the Transport Department have clearly not learnt any lessons from last year's incident and such cabs and companies violate all rules like identity cards and verification of drivers. This state of affairs cannot be allowed to continue.

The Delhi Police should immediately file a FIR against this company Uber since it has indulged in a severe breach of public trust.

I demand that in future all cases of sexual assault and rape should be tried in Fast Track Courts.

I would also urge upon the Government to ensure security of women in public places and the Government must send out a strong message of zero tolerance on cases of violence against women.

DR. K. GOPAL (NAGAPATTINAM): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to urge upon the Government to remove salt cess collected by the Salt Department of the Central Government. The Government presently levies salt cess on the salt produced in the land exceeding 10 acres. A majority of people who are engaged in salt trade are very poor farmers and their livelihood runs on their daily earning. In this scenario, it is unjustifiable to levy cess on the salt production which was opposed by the Father of our Nation and it led to a great

revolution during the pre-independent period as Salt Satyagraha. The Varadaraja Committee has already recommended the abolition of salt cess in the year 1980 and even the Exchequer is getting less than Rs. Five crore from the whole country as salt cess levied on thousands of poor salt workers.

Therefore, I strongly urge the Government to abolish salt cess immediately. I would also like to urge upon the Government to remove salt from the Central List as Item No. 58 in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India, in view of the fact that only 10 per cent of the salt land is owned by the Salt Department of the Central Government.

[Translation]

SHRI BISHNU PADA RAY (ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, from the year 1979 to the year 2012, 625 Fire Brigade non-gazetted personnel in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands were being provided one month of extra pay, that is, compensatory pay. Suddenly, this was discontinued from the year 2013. As per the Andaman and Nicobar Police Manual, compensatory pay is granted in the remaining 9 units. Similar compensatory pay is also given in Jammu and Kashmir, Arunachal Pradesh and Delhi. Since these personnel do not have weekly leave and do not get public

holidays, and as they are required to work nearly 84 hours a week, many States provide risk allowance to Fire Brigade personnel. However, in the Andaman Fire Brigade no such allowance is granted. For this reason, compensatory pay used to be provided, but suddenly it has been stopped since the year 2013.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to urge my Government and the Hon. Home Minister that compensatory pay for one month be immediately granted to the 625 Fire Brigade non-gazetted employees along with arrears.

SHRI CHAMAKURA MALLA REDDY (MALKAJGIRI): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, our India belongs to the young people. Out of our population of one hundred and twenty-five crore, 50 crore citizens are below the age of 25 years. For the last five years, AICTE has completely damaged the functioning of engineering colleges in our country. By insisting on online applications and by declaring zero deficiency, it has granted an intake of 120 students per year to each college, resulting in an intake of 800 to 1000 students per college. Five years earlier, the ceiling used to be 360 to 420. Now, across India, each engineering college has an intake of 1000 to 1200 students. There is no control over this. In our State of Telangana, there are 315 colleges with an intake of 1,85,000. However, in the year 2014, one

lakh seats remained vacant. 175 colleges had to be closed. Their infrastructure and faculty have been rendered useless and nearly 30,000 people have been pushed onto the road. AICTE frames guidelines for the whole of India, but it does not frame the fee structure. Different States follow different fee structures. In our State it is Rs. 35,000, in one State it is Rs. 50,000, and in another State it is Rs. 80,000. Yet the engineering curriculum is the same everywhere. How can students pursue their studies with such disparities, at Rs. 35,000 in one State and Rs. 50,000 in another? The fee structure must also be uniform.

[English]

SHRI JOSE K. MANI (KOTTAYAM): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the fall in the price of natural rubber has adversely affected all the rubber growers in India, especially the rubber growers in Kerala. Kerala alone produces about 90 per cent of natural rubber in India and about 1. 5 million small farmers have been adversely affected. All these small farmers have an average holding of 5. 4 hectares of land.

In February, 2011, the price of natural rubber was Rs. 242 per kilogram and now it has come down to Rs. 100 per kilogram.

It has made the cost of production much higher than the revenue. The main reason for the fall in price of natural rubber is basically because in 2010 the Government has decided to reduce the import duty from 20 per cent to Rs. 20. Earlier the price of natural rubber was Rs. 242 per kilo. But we found an indiscriminate import of natural rubber. Take for example, last year alone, the gap between demand and supply was only 1,40,000 metric tonnes. But the Government of India has imported about 3,00025 metric tonnes of natural rubber. The remaining about 2,50,000 tonnes of stock was there during the last year. Cutting across the party lines, we had agitated in front of the Parliament regarding this issue. This is not the issue of any constituency alone.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What do you want? What is your demand?

SHRI JOSE K. MANI: Actually, one particular demand is that the import of natural rubber for the time being, for the period of minimum one year, should be banned. At the same time, Rs. 100 crore should be given for procurement from the Price Stabilization Fund. I hope that the Government will taken immediate action.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri N. K. Premachandran, Shri Jitendra Chaudhury and Shrimati P. K. Shreemathi Teacher are permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri Jose K. Mani.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMCHARAN BOHRA (JAIPUR CITY): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, drinking water supply in Jaipur city is currently being provided from the Bisalpur Project. The demand for drinking water is consistently increasing in the nearby towns as well. There are water-related problems in the towns, colonies, the Bagru Assembly area and the Vidhyadhar Nagar Assembly area adjoining Jaipur, which fall within my Parliamentary Constituency. These areas should be connected to the Bisalpur Project. Earlier, the walled city area of Jaipur used to receive water supply from the Ramgarh Dam. The Ramgarh Dam had great significance for drinking water, irrigation and tourism. Today, due to the construction of anicuts upstream, the inflow of water has stopped, leading to the dam drying up. This situation must be remedied.

I would like to request the Union Government is that the Ramgarh Dam Project be revived by granting a special economic package. This will not only enable drinking water supply to the people of Jaipur, but will also promote tourism. In the past as well, the Asiad

Games rowing competitions were held at Ramgarh Dam. I would like to request that it may kindly be revived immediately to promote tourism.

[English]

DR. SHRIKANT EKNATH SHINDE (KALYAN): Thank you, Deputy Speaker, Sir. Ambarnath is an upcoming town in my constituency where we have the Shiv Mandir constructed 954 years ago. Like many ancient temples of the time, this one was located on the banks of the River Waldhuni.

With industrialization, the river is ruined and is now flowing like a nullah with all the industrial and other wastes released into the same. This pollution has been so drastic that the ancient stone crafted temple is losing grips at some places and some of the carved stones are falling apart. The same Waldhuni River was in news for pollution at Ulhasnagar where more than 1500 people had to be admitted to hospitals.

The point here is that such ancient relics of mythology should be preserved with utmost care, which is not happening, causing further damage to the temple.

First of all, the Waldhuni Development Authority, which was created in 2007, should be revitalized and work should be undertaken for reduction of pollution which is taking toll on ancient Shiva Temple and also on the health of thousands of the people.

I would request the Government, through you, Sir, to take immediate action and send a team of experts for the conservation of this 1,000 year old heritage site and its beautification. Thank you, Sir.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJKUMAR SAINI (KURUKSHETRA): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. In my Kurukshetra Lok Sabha Parliamentary Constituency there are, of course, hundreds of railway crossings, but the most pressing problem is that people are compelled to live a hellish life because of five particular crossings. Thousands of pilgrims visiting the sacred land of Mahabharata, the holy Gita Sthali, also experience the same hardship, as you may well be aware. Sir, three of these crossings divide Kurukshetra city right down the middle into two parts. One is on the Delhi–Ambala Cantt line at Shahabad on Jhansa Road, and another is on the Jagadhri–Ambala line at Uncha Chhanna on Ladwa Road. Both these railway lines are extremely busy. The crossings remain closed most of the time. Hours-long traffic jams cause immense suffering to the residents of the city and surrounding areas, as well as to the visitors coming from outside.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to request the Government is that this problem be resolved immediately and that overbridges or underpasses be constructed at these locations.

[English]

SHRI JITENDRA CHAUDHURY (TRIPURA EAST): Sir, I would like to raise a very important issue. You know that Tripura is situated in one of the remotest corners of the country. Here the air journey is not a luxury but it is a compulsion. Very recently the Air India and two other private airlines, Spice Jet and Jet Airways, have withdrawn their flights. Due to this hundreds of passengers are stranded in Kolkata and Agartala. People have to fly by air, whether they are patients, students etc.

That is why Air India should take immediate initiatives to evacuate stranded passengers from both the places and also normalcy should be brought in by increasing the number of flights. That is my request, through you, to the Civil Aviation Minister.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI ANJU BALA (MISRIKH): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to say something regarding a disabled advocate. Kumari Sangeeta Tukaram Rokde, who is an advocate by profession, was

travelling on 20.06.2013 from Nagpur in Maharashtra Express. She had spoken to the concerned TCO and, with his permission, was seated in the AC Coach, fully prepared to pay the legal charge. However, although the TCO was taking the charge, he was not issuing her any receipt. This led to considerable exchange of words. Thereafter, misbehaviour was committed with the disabled passenger and she was treated in a manner akin to animals. A written complaint regarding this incident was also lodged with the Railways, but no hearing has taken place, and the facilities that are to be provided to a disabled advocate have been discontinued.

Through you, I would like to request the Union Government that the facilities due to a disabled woman be restored to her. A Committee of Inquiry may kindly be constituted to investigate the incident and she may be given proper assistance.

[English]

SHRI S. R. VIJAYA KUMAR (CHENNAI CENTRAL): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw your attention to the requirements of ICF Hospital located in Chennai Central Constituency. This Hospital is an important institution that caters to the medical needs of ICF employees and their families along with the retired staff. However, there are multiple challenges faced by the

people visiting the Hospital. The ICF Hospital meets a daily footfall of 800 outpatients but has only 19 doctors. Out of these 19 doctors, six are contract employees. Similar is the case with the other para medical staff consisting of nurses, lab technicians, pharmacists and others.

In addition to the above, attendants of inpatients have a major challenge because neither there is any accommodation facilities nor canteen services. The Hospital also does not have incubator facilities for newborn babies. They do not have ICU, MRI and other critical equipments because of which patients are suffering from critical diseases and are referred to the Railway Hospital.

Hence, I urge the Union Government to do the needful immediately.

[Translation]

SHRI BADRUDDIN AJMAL (DHUBRI): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, on 4th December there was news in the paper stating that 'Delhi suspends any industrial policy'. In Assam, more than 25 lakh young people are unemployed. If the industrial policy is suspended, you can well imagine how greatly unemployment will rise. There is already a serious shortage of industries in our region. When the Hon. Prime

Minister visited Assam, he had assured that the State would be developed into an industrial hub and that various other facilities would be provided there.

Through you, I would like to urge the Government that this decision be withdrawn and that industries in Assam be further encouraged.

[Translation]

SHRI BHAIRON PRASAD MISHRA (BANDA): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, due to the illegal sale of tobacco-based gutka and other such products, cancer is spreading throughout the country like an epidemic. In every locality and in every neighbourhood, one finds patients suffering from cancer. In the course of their treatment, entire families are ruined and the patient undergoes immense suffering. Cancer treatment is very expensive. As cancer hospitals are not available in every place, major hospitals in important cities are witnessing overwhelming crowds of patients. As a result, for diagnosis, treatment, therapy and operations, they have to wait for a long time, and consequently the disease progresses significantly. Therefore, an immediate ban should be imposed on these illegal gutka products. Since there is no such hospital within a radius of 300

kilometres in my Parliamentary Constituency, patients are compelled to travel as far as Mumbai for treatment.

Through you, I would like to request the Union Government that a cancer hospital be established in Banda–Chitrakoot in my Parliamentary Constituency and that all necessary facilities be provided therein.

[English]

SHRI R. GOPALAKRISHNAN (MADURAI): Sir, Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, the former Hon. People's Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has taken a series of measures for the healthcare of the people of Tamil Nadu. Setting up of AIIMS type Super Specialty Hospital in Madurai is the top priority. Accordingly, proposals have been submitted to the Central Government. The proposed site is K. Puthupatti in Madurai.

Madurai is a major city for the people of southern districts of Tamil Nadu. People from about 12 districts covering a population of about 2. 3 crore would be benefited by the AIIMS type hospital at Madurai. Madurai city itself is having a population of about 15 lakh.

The proposal submitted by the Tamil Nadu Government contains all the details, namely, the site selected, disease profile with the

number of patients per year, NCD Report, prevalence of health hazard diseases in and around Madurai, and water and electricity supply to the proposed AIIMS hospital. Further, the Local Planning Authority and the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board are willing to extend full cooperation to the Health Department as also the District Administration in this regard.

Keeping in view the importance of the Madurai city and the interests of crores of people in and around Madurai, I would urge upon the Union Government to consider and expedite setting up of the AIIMS type Super Specialty Hospital-cum-Teaching Institute in Madurai. Thank you, Sir.

[Translation]

SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY (BUXAR): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am very grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to speak. A nationwide movement was launched to drive out the British, and many people attained martyrdom in that struggle. You are aware that several such martyrs in this country have not received the respect they truly deserve, and great injustice has been done to their memory. In Muzaffarpur, Bihar, Shaheed Khudiram Bose, at the young age of 18, shook the British Empire. He had to embrace the gallows. It is painful that at the site of his funeral pyre, toilets had been

constructed. Although the local people demolished them, neither has the debris been removed till date, nor has any memorial been built at the site of his pyre. ... *(Interruptions)* Similarly, Shaheed Satish lost his life to British bullets while unfurling the Tricolour at the Patna Secretariat. In that incident, seven people were martyred.

Through you, Hon. Deputy Speaker Sir, I would like to urge the Union Government that the Muzaffarpur railway station be named after Shaheed Khudiram Bose and that a proper memorial be constructed at the site of his funeral pyre. Along with this, the Barahat Station (Banka District), located in the village Khadahara, the native place of Shaheed Satish, may be renamed as Shaheed Satish Station. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

***SHRI RAHUL SHEWALE (MUMBAI-SOUTH-CENTRAL):** Hon'ble Deputy Speaker Sir, Government of India confers classical language status to eminent languages in India. Government of Maharashtra is trying to get classical language status for Marathi language.

As of now, Tamil, Sanskrit, Telugu, Kannada and Oriya are six classical languages of India.

On getting this classical status, Central Government provides a huge grant for development of that language and its reputation also enhances. By getting such status a language gets importance and thus paving the way for its further development.

Government of Maharashtra constituted a committee under the chairmanship of Prof. Ranganath Pathare on 10th January 2012 for extensive research and study and to collect proofs to get classical language status for Marathi. This committee, after getting three extensions on 18 June, 2012, 14 August, 2012 and 12 March, 2013, had been asked to submit its report by 31 March, 2013.

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* English translation of the speech originally delivered in Marathi

Accordingly, this committee submitted its report in Marathi on 12 July, 2013 and in English on 16 November, 2013 to the Central Government. Sir, the Central Government norms for conferring classical language status to the Indian language are:

1. Ancientness of the language;

2. Originality and continuity of the language;

3. Established and independent linguistic and literary tradition and

4. The gap as well as connection / relation between the ancient language and its modern form.

Sir, Marathi language fulfills all the necessary parameters for being a classical language. Thank you.

HON. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet again tomorrow, the 10th December, 2014 at 11 a. m.

18.59 hrs

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on *Wednesday, December 10, 2014/Agrahayana 19, 1936 (Saka).*

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