

Fourteenth Lok Sabha

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**Participants : [Palanisamy Shri K.C.](#), [Aiyar Shri Mani Shankar](#)**

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Title: Further Discussion regarding Report on the State of the Panchayats- a Mid-Term Review and Appraisal, 2006 laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha on 4.12.2006 raised by Shri Basudeb Acharia on 4<sup>th</sup> Dec., 2006 (Discussion concluded).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, the House will take up Item No.24—Report on the State of the Panchayats—A Mid-Term Review and Appraisal.

SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY (KARUR) : Sir, Mahatma Gandhi said, “India is living in its villages”. Saying so he was highlighting the ways and means to attain self-sufficiency in the lives of our countrymen. When our late lamented Leader and former Prime Minister of India Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi emphasised the need to achieve self-sufficiency in all spheres of life that encompass the lives of our countrymen, he stated that the basis of life of our Indian democratic life are commenced from the truly representative body established in every Indian village.

India is the second most populous country in the World. At the same time, India has got fourth largest chunk of skilled labour in the world. Hence, we have the advantage to convert our population to be our strength. If we are to make our nation a super power, we must take care to involve all the people including those who are in the lower strata of the society and make them come to the main stream of our national life. Local bodies that truly represent all our people form the basis for bringing all people to the main stream. Empowerment of people is in the sharing of power through the Panchayati Raj System by way of ensuring the multi-layer representative local bodies in the form of Panchayats in the villages, Panchayat Unions, District Councils, Municipalities in towns and Municipal Corporations in cities.

We need to make the strength of our population as our foremost important natural resource. In order to achieve this, we must make available the basic needs

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\*English Translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil

and amenities like drinking water, primary health, primary education, availability of foodgrains and essential commodities even in areas where adequate crop cultivation is not there and modern communication facilities like computer and

telephones in all our villages. Only then, we would be able to provide the urban facilities to the rural people by 2020 as emphasized by our visionary President of India. Our Panchayats and local administration bodies have taken upon themselves this basic duty to extend these fundamental needs to the people living in their respective areas. Efficient functioning of Panchayati Raj System would help us to accomplish this goal of ours.

In Tamil Nadu, the local body elections were peacefully conducted recently in four stages. People have voted and elected their representatives who could provide good administration in their local governance. I am happy to point out that the constituents of Democratic Progressive Alliance in Tamil Nadu, which is a part of the United Progressive Alliance at the Centre, have achieved a significant victory winning the majority of the local bodies in Tamil Nadu. Hence, it is befitting and proper to share my views on the mid-term report on the functioning of Panchayati Raj institutions in the country.

As far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, four villages like Keeripatti and Pappapatti are the Village Panchayats in which the Panchayat Presidents' posts have been reserved for Dalit candidates. Unfortunately, no Dalits could be elected as Panchayat Presidents in those villages during the last 3 local body elections. This has been mentioned in this interim report too. I am happy to point out that this trend has been reversed there. The efforts of our Leader and the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Dr.Kalaignar Karunanidhi have yielded fruits and we could hold elections in those Village Panchayats peacefully this time. I would like to point out that this is a victory to us all who believe in taking democracy to the grass root.

Normally, the role of landlords, muscle power, money power and caste equation strength of the majority community could play a major role in determining the election of representatives from village communities. This has been a trend right from the day we won Independence. I am proud to point out that this trend has been changed this time.

When it comes to electoral politics, it is not uncommon to find certain contradictions and unwanted happenings taking place here and there. But still, the DPA led by the DMK in Tamil Nadu has managed to fulfilling aspirations of the people by way of holding elections in a generally peaceful way providing for a representative governance. This mid-term report also refers to some happenings in few villages where the particular dominant caste group or community auctioning the post of Panchayat President from among themselves. I would like to point out that the Government of Tamil Nadu intervened in an appropriate manner at the right time to nip in the bud this kind of aberrations. I would like to place on record the fact that such undemocratic elements have been booked and necessary action is being proceeded against them.

When it comes to Panchayat Administration, the entire village community must be involved in planning for the village, all the people and their representatives must involve themselves in giving shape to those plans, the entire village community must take part in obtaining funds, allocating funds and monitoring the expenditure and implementation. These three functions are necessary to ensure rural development in their respective areas. Our Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Dr.Kalaignar Karunanidhi, has added vigour to this emerging dynamism ushering in true representative form of democracy.

Panchayati Raj System was contemplated when Shri Rajiv Gandhi was the Prime Minister of the country. It was brought before Parliament as a constitutional amendment. Later on, it was referred to the Standing Committee of the Parliament and it has been enshrined in the Constitution through 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Amendment passed by this Parliament. But still this has not been included either in the Union List or in the Concurrent List and it remains in the State List. That is one reason why Panchayati Raj System has not been translated into action in some of our States still. This situation is going through a change. This is what we witness in the recently concluded local body election in the Union Territory of Puducherry.

In the North-East region of our country, in certain pockets, we have certain practical problems in holding local body election because of the tribal rule methods and matriarchal society methods. Even in Tamil Nadu, the popular Government there would prefer to have a two tier Panchayati Raj System than the three tier Panchayati Raj System recommended through the constitution amendment in the form of village, taluk, district bodies. We for one who believes that it is enough we have a district level forum to evolve plans for the district rather than a district council as an administrative unit. Only then, the constitutionally provided for State administration will have its ambit and area of operation in a well defined manner. Hence, I urge upon the Union Government to look into these fundamental questions when a complete report would be tabled in due course.

As far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, the State administration is taking all out efforts to ensure that the farming community and the agricultural labour living in the villages must get remunerative returns for their labour. The Government of Tamil Nadu has ensured infrastructural facility to benefit the farmers in the form of Uzhavar Sandhai (farmers' market) where the cultivators can take their agricultural produce directly to the exclusive market set up for them in the nearby towns and can sell their produce themselves thereby benefiting the consumers as well as their selves. Middle men are removed automatically.

This is a pioneering venture by the Government of Tamil Nadu that shows the way to the entire country at a time when the Union Ministry of Commerce is thinking in terms of creating rural commercial hubs. I would like to point out proudly that our visionary Leader Dr.Kalaignar Karunanidhi has shown the right path to improve the lot of small farmers, especially vegetable growers.

Panchayati Raj System provides a platform to the rural masses to contribute to the growth and development of their locality thereby contributing to the national economy. This can be streamlined and further facilitated by way of rooting out the well established caste system found in the Indian society. This is like an umbra that is the fall out of the eclipsed development. Casteism must be uprooted. Great thinkers like Thanthai Periyar have strived to remove this evil from our Indian society. This must be stemmed out in our rural areas in particular. Are we doing enough in a constructive manner in this regard? As a way of giving a right reply, the Government of Tamil Nadu led by Dr.Kalaignar Karunanidhi has set up Periyar Samathuvapurams (harmony habitations) where people of all castes are provided with houses to live together to contribute to the emergence of casteless society in rural areas. This is a very good measure as appreciated by many to usher in an egalitarian society.

I would like to urge upon the Union Government too to follow suit. Centre must come forward to set up such Samathuvapurams all over the country. This should be taken up as part of our Panchayati Raj System.

Growth and prosperity do not lag behind in a society where women are socially conscious with awareness and imagination. That is one reason why in Tamil Nadu the women self groups are accorded utmost priority. Micro credit facility is extended to them liberally. Women are encouraged to produce and sell goods through their cooperative forums. The proxym that let us come together to gain strength from one another is translated into action. Rural women can improve their home economy, the village economy and rural economy and thereby the nation's economy through this concerted effort in the form of women self-help group. Dr.Kalaignar Karunanidhi at the helm of affairs has ensured that adequate credit facilities are available to women's cooperative societies to get training and machinery to go in for promoting their own cottage industry. The Government machinery has been geared up to meet the needs of women groups in Tamil Nadu. This will contribute not only to the emancipation of women, but also the emergence of true democratic set up gaining strength from the contribution derived from the grass root stake holders.

Implementing Rural Employment Schemes, identifying people living below poverty line, monitoring the on-going Centrally funded schemes carried out by the State administration, ensuring the social audit, operating public distribution system involving women self-help groups are some of the measures of the present Government in Tamil Nadu. Such pioneering ventures from some model States must be noticed and must be mentioned with a recommendatory note in the complete report that will be tabled in this august House in the near future. Expressing my desire that right actions must be rightly recognised to ensure to true democratic form of governance in this country let me conclude my speech.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Minister of Panchayati Raj may reply now.

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ, MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS AND MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, may I begin by extending my deep gratitude to the hon. Member, comrade Basu Deb Acharia and a very large number of other hon. Members who have initiated and

carried on in this debate, and, if I may say so, showered praise on the Report that we have presented to this House on the State of the Panchayats—A Mid-Term Review and Appraisal?

I would, particularly, like to express my gratitude to Prof. M. Ramadass for having drawn attention to the contribution which my officers and other officials have made to the preparation of this Report. He described them as a dedicated band of officials, and indeed they have so proved to be. This is certainly no individual achievement. It is a collective achievement.

My particular thanks to Shri Suresh Prabhu for describing this and complimenting me on a very good appraisal[[MSOffice58](#)].

My particular thanks are also to the hon. Member Shri Kharabela Swain for the full endorsement he has accorded to the social revolution that is recorded in these papers, to Shrimati Sujatha who described this as a landmark document, to Prof. Ramadoss who considers it a first-rate piece of research and in particular, I am sure, you will appreciate this to Chaudhary Lal Singh who considers the Ministry of Panchayat Raj as the most important Ministry in the Government of India. Sir, it is rare for a Minister to receive accolades from all sections of the House and I do wish to express my very deep sense of gratitude to everybody for the welcome they have accorded to this report.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, on the eve of the release of this Report, the hon. Prime Minister addressed a Convention of Panchayat Raj representatives and there he said – “When this report is released in Parliament, hopefully, there will be a serious debate on the state of local self-government in our country”. Therefore, I must express my thanks to the Chair and in particular to the hon. Speaker for having scheduled this debate that the hon. Prime Minister asked for, within just a few days of the presentation of the Report to the House.

The problem, however, of doing so is that when we present a three-volume Report in 1,600 pages to the hon. Members of the House and then schedule the debate within a few days they frankly do not get quite enough time to be able to even seriously glance through it, let alone study it and read it.

और जहां तक इसका हिन्दी अनुवाद है, आप देखेंगे कि यह तीन खंडों में नहीं बल्कि साढ़े तीन खंडों में है। अंग्रेजी में मात्र 16 हजार पृष्ठ हैं जबकि हिन्दी में 2 हजार से भी ज्यादा पृष्ठ हैं। इन सब चीजों को एकदम पढ़ना बिल्कुल असंभव है। हमारा इरादा यह नहीं था कि हमारे माननीय सदस्य एक-एक सफे को बढ़कर हमें बताएं कि उनकी क्या राय है। आज की परिस्थिति में, आज के सूरतेहाल में हमारी पंचायतों की क्या स्थिति है, यदि इसे हम संसद द्वारा पेश करें, तो जो हमारे बहुत सारे विशेषज्ञ हैं, स्कॉलर्स हैं वे इस पर ध्यान दे पाएंगे। हम सब अवगत हैं कि हर साल वित्त मंत्रालय की तरफ से यहां एक इकनॉमिक सर्वे पेश किया जाता है और कोई यह अपेक्षा नहीं रखता है कि कोई एक व्यक्ति भी उस पूरे इकनॉमिक सर्वे को पढ़ेगा। उसी लिहाज से हम उम्मीद रखते हैं कि हमने जो यह शुरुआत की है, यह पंचायतीराज का इकनॉमिक सर्वे बनेगा और सालाना हम आपके सामने इन तथ्यों को पेश करेंगे, ताकि जिन्हें इसकी जांच करने की आवश्यकता है या जिनमें ज्ञान है, वे इसको देखकर बताएं कि हमने क्या किया है। हम चाहते हैं कि हमने क्या सही किया है, यह नहीं बताएं बल्कि हम चाहते हैं कि हमारी गलतियां और खामियां क्या हैं, उन्हें बताएं ताकि उन्हें दुरुस्त करने का हमारी तरफ से प्रयास हो।

Because it has been difficult for people to go through it all, I went to, very quickly, make a summary of these three volumes before you. The first volume, this relatively slim one, relates to a

kind of general overview of what Panchayat Raj looks like as of today in the country. It begins with about, a third of this having been written by me as an overview, and then we have several chapters on the history and background of Panchayat Raj, our objectives and the action plans we have devised, the kind of policy reforms required at the Union Government level, Panchayat Raj in the States, grassroots planning, innovative measures in Panchayat Raj, our attempt to change rural life by using local people as the change agent, meeting the challenges to Panchayat Raj and the way ahead, making reality of a dream. So, I would not recommend to hon. Members that they do anything more than glance through this first volume.

The second volume is really designed for making a detailed study of how Panchayat Raj is operating in each of the States and the reason why it is so thick is that there is no one system of Panchayat Raj running throughout the country. [\[MSOffice59\]](#)

There are virtually as many panchayati raj systems in operation in the country as there are States and Union Territories and it is inevitable that there would be differences among them and perhaps it is desirable that there should be some differences because after all, there is an enormous difference between the mountains of Himachal Pradesh, the deserts of Rajasthan and the thickly populated lush coast of Kerala or Tamil Nadu. So, inevitably there are going to be differences in panchayati raj and it is important for us to consider panchayati raj not only at the national level but to regard it at each State's level and in doing so, to remember that while I would welcome any criticism or suggestion that I receive from hon. Members about the way panchayati raj is operating in any given State, at the end of the day, you have to turn to the State Governments themselves and persuade them to mend their ways. There are things, of course, that the Union Government has to do and we would welcome suggestions with regard to how we might mend our ways.

I have heard here some of the suggestions. For example, the hon. Member, Shri Kharabela Swain pointed out that Gram Sabhas have become Contractors' Sabhas. This is a charge that would be seriously refuted in some other States of the Indian Union. I rather doubt, for example, that hon. Member, Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan, would accept that Kerala's Gram Sabhas are Contractors' Sabhas or comrade Basu Deb Acharia would accept that West Bengal's Gram Sansads are Contractors' Sansads. Well, it is true that there are States of the Indian Union where we need to improve the functioning of the Gram Sabhas. So, I would urge that this document should not be read in its entirety by anyone, but if, for example Shri Swain wishes to know how panchayati raj is operating in the State from which he has been elected, Orissa, then perhaps he could look at Orissa Chapter. When he looks at the Orissa Chapter or Shri Suresh Prabhu looks at Maharashtra Chapter, then they may discover that they do not agree with what is written here. That would not surprise me because in writing this, we heavily depended on the States' assessment of themselves. We had not attempted to correct, except perhaps in a minor way, what we have received from the States. It is based on the information received from the States that we have prepared this document. Sometimes, our own personal assessment or rather the boastful assessments of the State Governments may not correspond, but we believe that it was our duty to bring this document as conceived by the States to the attention of the House and scholars in the country so that after they looked at it, they could convey their criticisms either directly to the State Government or to us.

In the third volume here, what we have attempted to do is to try to put together all the statistics, all the declarations, all the statements, all the different plans and programmes that we have been promoting in panchayati raj and, above all, to reproduce here the document that is at the base of the panchayati raj, namely, Part IX of the Constitution, what is generally referred to as the 73<sup>rd</sup> amendment, and the relevant segments of Part IXA of the Constitution, in particular those relating to district planning, and the XI Schedule, and from there, to move to the compendium of all the agreed consensus conclusions of the seven Round Tables attended by all the Panchayati Raj Ministers of India and subsequent to that, the proceedings of the Council of Ministers of Panchayati Raj held first at Kochi in August, 2005 and then at Bhubaneswar in June, 2006 and the proceedings of the Empowered Sub-Committee of the National Development Council, which I chair, which also deals with the question of local Government. So, you will find every document that we think is relevant for the understanding of panchayati raj in this very thick Volume III.[\[s60\]](#)

If we look at all these three together, I think that we have a fair view of the state of the Panchayats in India at this mid-term point. Indeed, the deadline that we were trying to meet was of 22 November 2006, which marked the exact mid-point of the five-year mandated term of the UPA Government. There were some editorial errors in meeting that deadline, which were left behind in this. We are correcting them, and the corrected editions will come out in due course. But I am glad that my officers have put in as much efforts as they did to meet the deadline.

Actually, we had the document well on time. I wanted to lay it on the Table of the House on that day itself, but we had to postpone the physical laying of these papers on the Table of the House to the following day owing to the developments in the House. These documents have been presented to you, and I would request the Members to look at it from time to time, and ask question or seek further discussion in the House. As far as my Ministry is concerned, we would greatly welcome any opportunity of discussing this matter further or in detail.

The Prime Minister on the occasion of the eve of the release of this Report expressed the hope that :

“...States and Union Territories will soon follow up with their respective Reports. I hope that this will set an example...”

I would certainly hope that the hon. Members will persuade their respective State Governments to try to follow this example. If we do this, then maybe the State Reports would also match the assessment of the Prime Minister about this Report. The Prime Minister said on the same occasion that :

“...This Report is a measure of the successes we have achieved so far and the road we still have to travel...”

I would like to sum-up my remarks under these two heads, that is, the successes we have achieved so far, and the road we still have to travel. In so far as the successes are concerned, I believe, the single biggest success that we have accomplished in the 14 years that have lapsed since the House passed the 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment is that we had institutionalized Panchayati Raj. There are institutions of Panchayati Raj in every eligible State of India, and in every Union Territory without exception. The one exception is Jharkhand where the matter is *sub judice*. The Supreme Court has decided that there should be an early hearing, and they have said that within less than six weeks they are going to take the final hearing. Once we have a judgement there, then we should be '*inshah allah*' having Panchayati Raj institutions in the near future in Jharkhand also. I hope that by the time I next address this House, I can say with pride that we have Panchayati Raj absolutely everywhere in the country.

**16.59 hrs.**

(Mr. Deputy-Speaker *in the Chair*)

It is not only the existence of Panchayati Raj, which is a success. I believe that we can sum-up the success of institutionalization in three words. Firstly, we have made Panchayati Raj ineluctable, and they cannot be avoided. You cannot bypass Panchayati Raj anywhere anymore, and you cannot but have Panchayati Raj. Secondly, we have made it irremovable. I find it impossible to believe that any Government, ever in the future, will be able to muster a 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority in this House to substantively or significantly get Panchayati Raj removed from our system of governance. Thirdly, I think that we have made it irreversible, and we will never go back to those bad old days when there was no Panchayati Raj.

I do not know how fast we will go towards fully achieving the dreams of Mahatma Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, but we will not slip backwards in any significant institutional sense, and that is assured. Therefore, making Panchayati Raj ineluctable, irremovable, irreversible constitutes in itself a major institutional success. Moreover, we have ensured that there shall be regular elections.<sup>[61]</sup>

**17.00 hrs.**

Professor Ramadass drew our attention to the horror of a situation where for 38 years Puducherry had not had any election. I remember Shri Rajiv Gandhi referring to Bhagalpur not having any Corporation elections for 18 years. I also remember in the 1980s a classmate of mine from St. Stephens College who gloried in the role of Chief Executive Councilor of Delhi and had a car with a red light to prove it but did not have a Council to preside over. So, he drove in his car with a red light all around the Capital complaining that he had no work to do because there was no Council over which he could preside. That situation has been definitively ended.

We can be even more reassured by the Supreme Court judgment of October, 2006. I will only read one sentence. Referring to the state of Election Commission they said - these State Election Commissions "shall complete election before the expiration of the duration of five-year period and not yield to situations that may be created by vested interests to postpone elections from being held within the stipulated time." I really believe that this is a truly historic pronouncement of the highest



court of the land, it certainly fulfills the objectives of the Constitution-makers, ourselves. We can be sure that there shall be regular elections held apart from a continued and permanent existence of our Panchayati Raj institutions.

The State Election Commissioners have also banded themselves into a kind of trade union of State Election Commissioners. They formed a platform on which they get together from time to time. They share their experiences. They inform us of the conclusions they have come to. They have been to the Election Commissioner of India with the conclusions that they have arrived at. They participated in one of our Round Tables, and they have even got the Election Commission to send out instructions about at least two very important matters. One is that since the Indian voter is one and indivisible, there should be a common electoral roll for all elections – local body elections, State elections and Union elections. Secondly, they have secured the right to use EVMs (Electronic Voting Machines) in local bodies' elections. There are some problems about the numbers of these machines and who will pay for them if they get stolen or lost. These are matters of administrative detail which will be dealt with as we go along. But we are moving towards setting up of proper infrastructure for free and fair election that cannot be easily rigged.

The consequence of this kind of institutionalization is that today in India we have close to two and a half lakh elected local body institutions in rural and urban India. Two and a half lakhs! The total number of village panchayats - I am giving this figure because often people want to know what it is exactly - as of today is 2,33,251. The number of intermediate panchayats - which are known by different names like blocks, mandals, union in Tamil Nadu, Panchayat Samitis, there are lots of different names for it – we have 6,105. The District Panchayats are 519. You will find the details of all this in Volume 1, pages 29 to 32.

In these elected institutions we have close to 32 lakh representatives in all local bodies and approximately 28.30 lakh representatives in our panchayats. Of these 28.30 lakh panchayat representatives, there are 12 lakh women in the local bodies as a whole and marginally over 10 lakh in our village panchayats. [\[r62\]](#)

This was described most appropriately, I thought, by our friend, the hon. Member, Shri B. Mahtab, as momentous. I cannot think of a more apt word to describe the situation where in this House there is a shameful situation of something like eight per cent of the Membership being women and out there, among the most illiterate people of India, among the most poor people of India and among the most oppressed people of India, willing acceptance of something like 10 lakh elected women in our village panchayats.

I am even prouder to say that as against 33 per cent quota provided for in Part A of the Constitution, the national average in India as of today – in some way, I wish I could have given the figure as of last month because there has been a change due to the most recent elections that have taken place – is 37 per cent as against 33. In other words, four per cent more women have been elected to our Panchayati raj institutions that prescribed strictly within the term of the constitutional reservations. Actually, the figure was till recently 41 per cent. There are changes of jurisdiction and so forth which have caused this. There is a very staggering achievement. I used to repeatedly explain to the Members of the House, Members of the Joint Parliamentary Committee that where in

India are you going to find so many women. But the fact today is, there are more women contesting and winning than are entitled to purely by reservations. But even more impressive than this is, if you go down to the State level. In Bihar, the reservations have been raised to 50 per cent and the number of women elected in Bihar जिस देश में गंगा बहती है is 55 per cent. They have done even better than the national average. In Karnataka, where the percentage of women in the Panchayat is 43 per cent compared to 33 per cent reservation, the basic reason for this outstanding performance is that, among the Scheduled Tribes reserved seats where one-third of the Schedule Tribe representatives are supposed to be women; 65 per cent of the Scheduled Tribe representatives are women. It is double the quota nearly. Among the Scheduled Caste women, the percentage of representation in reserved Scheduled Caste seats is 46 per cent as against 33 per cent reservation. So, we have an extraordinary phenomenon that women are represented significantly higher than their reserved quota because Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe women, who in our conventional wisdom are the most oppressed of those oppressed segments, are doing so outstandingly well in Panchayat elections. No wonder that the Prime Minister on the eve of the release of this report made the following statement, which I think, ought to be written in letters of gold so as to remind ourselves that this House is still to achieve what the poor of India have already achieved. Please listen to this carefully. He has said:

“I think, it would be fair to say that there are now more women in India in positions of elected authority than in the rest of the world put together.”

That is the extent of our institutionalization and achievement. There are more women elected in our democracy than in the United States, the whole of the European Union, Australia, New Zealand and every democratic country in the world put together and you add it up and there are a fewer women elected in the whole world than in India. There, the Prime Minister added actually - I thought I should have brought that sentence also with me - where he hoped that this House would follow the example that has been set by our panchayats. [r63]

When you look at Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes representation as a whole, I am not talking about women alone, the total Scheduled Castes representation is 19 per cent and the total Scheduled Tribes representation is 12 per cent. So, together the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes constitute 31 per cent of our elected representatives, which is much-much higher than their share in the population.

Dr. Ambedkar is often quoted as having had his serious reservations about the Panchayati Raj because he felt that our villages are cess pool of social oppressions. But by this device which Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi devised of bringing in reservations not only for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes but more importantly quota within the quota of Scheduled Caste women within the Scheduled Caste quota and Scheduled Tribe women within the Scheduled Tribe quota. We have achieved remarkable result of nearly a third of the elected Members in the Panchayats being from the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes and thus we accept that Dr. Ambedkar's fears were real. We also ought to accept that Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi succeeded in allaying these very real fears.

Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi often used to say that we may be the world's largest democracy but we are also the world's least representative democracy. It is a fact that in the United Kingdom where the size of the electorate is about one-fifth of the size of the Indian electorate, they have 630 Members in the House of Commons and we, here, have 100 less with the population that exceeds 100 crore. Now, I think we can say because the number of elected representatives has been raised from about 5000 in Parliament and the State Assemblies to well over 30 lakh in the country as a whole, India is not only the world's largest democracy but also that it is the world's most representative democracy. This, Sir, is an achievement without parallel in the world and without precedent in history. I think this House should be very-very proud of this remarkable achievement and which is why I regard the Panchayati Raj in India as the greatest experiment in democracy ever, in history or anywhere in the world.

Again, as the Prime Minister said, the task that remains is to transform the political and social empowerment that we have achieved through Panchayati Raj into effective administrative and economic empowerment. अफसोस की बात है और बहुत से माननीय सदस्यों ने इस पर हमारा ध्यान आकर्षित किया है कि पंचायती राज संस्थाएं तो हैं ही, चुने हुए प्रतिनिधिगण तो हैं ही, महिलाएं तो हैं ही, अनुसूचित जाति और अनुसूचित जनजाति के लोगों की कोई कमी नहीं है, लेकिन साधन कहां हैं, काम क्या है, वे अधिकारीगण कहां हैं, करने के लिए क्या काम है? यह बहुत ही आवश्यक है कि हम इस पर ध्यान दें कि हमें कहां पहुंचना है और इससे न संतुष्ट रहें कि हम यहां तक पहुंच चुके हैं। What is the road still to travel? हमारे मित्र श्री शैलेन्द्र कुमार जी ने यहां एक शब्द इस्तेमाल किया जिसे मैं यहां दुहराना चाहता हूँ। उन्होंने कहा कि हमारे जनतंत्र की आधारशिला पंचायतीराज है, that the foundation stone of our democracy is Panchayati Raj. और माननीय सदस्य श्री गणेश प्रसाद सिंह जी ने हमें यह याद दिलाया कि महात्मा गांधी जी का कहना था कि राष्ट्रीय विकास तब तक नहीं हो सकता है जब तक कि गांवों का विकास न हो

गांवों का विकास तब तक नहीं हो सकता, जब तक कि पंचायती राज संस्थानों का विकास नहीं होगा। तो क[R64]रें क्या, कैसे उस मुकाम तक पहुंचे, जहां हम कह सकें कि आर्थिक लिहाज से और प्रशासनिक लिहाज से हमारे पंचायती राज संस्थान वाकई सशक्त हो चुके हैं। Immediately I come up against a constitutional conundrum that I would request the Members of the House to carefully consider and bear in mind. If Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan says that back in 1952 when he became the President of a Village Panchayat, the Panchayats were only petitioning authority. Very unfortunately, in many parts of the country, if not in Kerala Panchayats are still only petitioning authorities. Bearing this in mind, Shri A.V. Bellarmin drew the attention of the House to the fact that the Panchayat Raj seems to vary so much from one State to another. Prof. Ramadoss regretting that the Panchayat Raj across the country is not on an even keel demanded that Panchayat Raj be brought to the Concurrent List and Shri Raghunath Jha said that let there be a model law. Now I can see immediately from the reaction of our Left Front friends that they would never allow the transfer of Panchayat Raj from the State List to the Concurrent List. In fact, this was very seriously discussed when Prime Minister, late Rajiv Gandhi was preparing the constitution amendments and he said that if we try to shift the position of Panchayat Raj out of the State List, this whole discussion will de-generate into one on Centre-State relations and we will forget the third tier of governance, the Panchayat Raj. So, let us leave the Panchayati Raj in the State List and instead try to see how we can create a constitutional framework for Panchayati Raj and leave it to the good sense of the States to bring this into implementation. Therefore, when I became the Minister, I was faced with this constitutional conundrum that my main duty was to ensure respect for letter and the spirit of the Constitution. But that very same

Constitution said that I should have nothing to do with Panchayat Raj. This is the State subject. So, how was I to proceed forward? I could not follow the Raghunath Jha model. I could not follow the Ramadoss model and so I decided to follow the Mani Shankar Aiyar model. What I suggested was that all the Panchayati Raj Ministers of India could get together and discuss how to move forward, and because I was associated from the sidelines or from outside with what had been happening over the previous 12 years, I knew that the Panchayat Raj is too complicated a subject to deal with within one or two days at a meeting in Vigyan Bhawan. So, I made an appeal to my colleagues who immediately accepted the appeal that within a space of 150 days between July 2004 and December, 2004, we should meet seven times in seven different parts of India and discuss the 18 identified dimensions of Panchayat Raj to arrive at some conclusion. So, in July, we met in Kolkata in Eastern India; in August, we met in Mysore in Southern India; in September, we met in Raipur in Central India; in October, we met early in Chandigarh in North-West India; and then in Srinagar, truly North India; and then for our sixth round table, we went to Guwahati, North-East India and our final round table, the seventh was in Jaipur in West India. In consequence to this intensive interaction, we succeeded in producing a compendium which you will find inside this Volume 3 of the report. A compendium of conclusion with respect to 18 dimensions of Panchayati Raj which extends to approximately 150 agreed subjects to be taken.<sup>[R65]</sup>

Having prepared this document, which was unanimously accepted by everybody, I sent the compendium to every Chief Minister of India and no Chief Minister raised any objection. I do not know whether it was because they did not read it, or whether because they agreed with it. Either way, there was acquiescence or agreement and since there was no objection to a single line, I decided that by April 2005, that now we have a national road map and that the Constitution says that the responsibility for Panchayati Raj is that of the States, but the States themselves have sat with me and agreed that this is the national road map, we are now engaged in talking to the States to fulfill, not my programme but their programme because after all this document has been accepted by the States themselves. We, now, have a national road map. I am reinforcing it by going to every State of the Indian Union and every Union Territory, where Part IX applies, and after visiting the Panchayats in that State to sit with the Chief Minister and sign a document with him or her which sets out the State level road map to reinforce the national road map.

अब तक मैं 17 विभिन्न राज्यों में, तकरीबन 75 ग्राम-सभाओं में अपनी जनता से मिलकर आया हूँ। इसके अलावा 75 मध्यम-स्तरीय जिला पंचायतों का आयोजन करके लोगों से मेरी मुलाकात हुई है। हिमाचल प्रदेश से लेकर, तमिलनाडु, मणिपुर से लेकर राजस्थान तक, मेरी मुलाकात हमारी पंचायतों के प्रतिनिधिगणों से हुई है। केवल उनसे ही नहीं, बल्कि जहां कहीं भी हम जाते हैं, हम आम जनता से भी बात करते हैं। इस सब के कारण अंत में जो सामने आया है, यह न केवल मंत्रियों का विचार है बल्कि जनता भी यही चाहती है। अभी मुझे चार-पांच राज्यों में और जाना है। अभी कुछ दिनों बाद हम मध्य प्रदेश, गुजरात और त्रिपुरा जा रहे हैं और उम्मीद करते हैं कि आने वाले दो सालों में एक भी यूनियन टैरेटरी और एक भी राज्य हमसे न छूटे और हम सब जगह पहुंचें। तीन दिन का दौरा करके हम उनको समझा आये कि उनको क्या करना है? यदि आपके पास एक राष्ट्रीय स्तर का रोड-मैप है, राज्य-स्तर का मार्ग-दर्शक मैप है तो दोनों को मिलाकर आप जोड़ें तो पंचायती राज की मंजिल हम सभी के लिए एक ही बनेगी और वहां पहुंचने का रास्ता सभी को पता होगा। हम जानते हैं कि मंजिल पर पहुंचने के 18 ऐसे मुकाम हैं जिनको पार करके हम अपनी मंजिल पर पहुंच जायेंगे। इस यात्रा को पूरा करने के लिए 150 ठोस कदम उठाने पड़ेंगे। मंजिल और रास्ता दोनों साफ हैं। किन-किन मुकामों को पार करके हमें जाना है, कौन-कौन से कदम उठाने हैं वे भी हम जानते हैं लेकिन सवाल यही है कि उन कदमों को हम उठाएं, उसमें आप सभी के सहयोग की आवश्यकता है। आप अपने राज्यों में प्रभावी व्यक्ति हैं। मैं चाहता हूँ कि आप भी हमारा साथ दें। हम सभी इकट्ठा मिलकर उस मंजिल पर पहुंचें, जहां हम पहुंचना चाहते हैं।<sup>[R66]</sup>

Now, [\[MSOffice67\]](#) what do we do? What are the chief things which we have to do to travel in this road? Comrade Acharia has summed up rather well and he said that the change in the balance of power in rural areas brought about by the 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment needs to be made a reality by moving from mere discussion to real action. He has said it very well. But how? That really is the key question which I think the Union Minister has to answer and, fortunately, the Union Minister is at the help of Shri Kharabela Swain of the Opposition, for he has emphasized that to get there, we have to “enable people to take their own decisions”. And this is re-enforced by Shri Mahtab stressing the need for participatory democracy. If we have participatory democracy in which people can take their own decisions, then Shri Acharia’s dream of moving from a dream to a reality will become a reality.

In India, the problem is no more that of lack of resources. There was a time when there was a severe financial constraint. Now the hon. Finance Minister and the hon. Prime Minister have again and again said that there is money available and we can do the job. What is not available as yet is the instrument of governance that will ensure devolvability . The instrument of governance which late Prime Minister thought of, merely taking his inspiration from Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru, was Panchayati Raj.

In this context, he made a statement which every time, whenever Panchayati Raj or rural development is discussed in this House or elsewhere, is brought up again and again. I tried to clarify it in the past and since it is brought up once again, I am obliged to clarify it once again. This is the statement. For every rupee that is set aside for rural development, only 15 paise reaches the grassroots. What he meant was this. श्री राजीव गांधी जी ने कहा था कि आज की परिस्थिति में जो एक रुपया हम ग्रामीण विकास के लिए भेज रहे हैं, उसमें से 85 पैसे प्रशासनिक खर्च में निकल जाते हैं। उन्होंने यह नहीं कहा था कि भ्रष्टाचार के कारण वह 85 पैसे आम आदमी तक नहीं पहुंच पाते हैं। उन्होंने कहा था कि हमारा ऐसा प्रशासनिक ढांचा है कि जब हम एक रुपया दिल्ली से भेजते हैं तो उसमें से आई.ए.एस. की तनखाह पर, मकान पर, चपरासी पर तथा और भी आवश्यक कार्यों पर खर्च करने के बाद अंत में 15 पैसे ही गांव के स्तर तक पहुंचते हैं। यह बात उन्होंने अपने मन से नहीं कही थी। उस जमाने में श्री अजीत भट्टाचार्य की रिपोर्ट के अनुसार किसी एक राज्य के बारे में या किसी एक योजना के बारे में, उन्होंने जो तफसीली जांच की थी, उससे निर्का निकला कि प्रशासनिक खर्च 85 पैसे का होता है और 15 पैसे ही गांव तक पहुंचते हैं। अगर 85 पैसे में थोड़ी कमी करके 70 पैसे तक पहुंच जाएं तो गांव में भी 15 पैसे की बजाय 30 पैसे विकास कार्यों पर खर्च होंगे और दोगुना समाज कल्याण होगा। Panchayati Raj system of governance does not produce more efficient results than bureaucratically or technocratically delivered [\[MSOffice68\]](#) device.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: If the House agrees, we shall take up Half-an-Hour Discussion after the reply of the hon. Minister.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, thank you.

Therefore, if as Comrade Shri Basu Deb Acharia emphasized, we must bridge the rural-urban divide and we must ensure inclusive growth, then, to my mind, using the instrument of Panchayati Raj, we have four specific priorities before the country.

The first is the devolution of functions through activity mapping. कार्यों और अधिकारों के सुपुर्दीकरण को हम कार्य चित्र बना कर आश्वस्त करें। Unless and until every single tier of the Panchayati Raj system knows what is expected of it, there will be confusion and there is confusion in most States, because it is stated that such and such a subject has been devolved, but nobody says which are the activities to be undertaken by the village panchayat, which are the activities to be undertaken by the intermediate panchayat and which are the activities to be undertaken by the district panchayat. So, all the members of all the three tiers try to do the same work and compete with each other and cause confusion. The foundation stone of successful Panchayati Raj is the preparation of activity maps on the principle of subsidiarity which set out clearly and unambiguously what work is to be done at which level of the Panchayati Raj system.

Once such an activity map is ready and only if it is ready, can you have the second priority, that is the devolution of finances patterned on the same activity map. It is because you cannot have a disjunct between the work to be done at the village level and the money that exists at the village level. It all has to be meshed in together. The same activity map to indicate the activities and the same activity map to indicate the finances.

The third follows. By matching the devolution of functions and finances, you have the devolution of functionaries. So, the activity map is the beginning not only of the devolution of functions but also of the devolution of finances, and, therefore, the devolution of functionaries.

The fourth priority is the district level planning in conformity with relevant constitutional provisions in parts 9 and 9 (a), namely articles 243 (g) and 243 (z) (d) read with the Eleventh Schedule. All these constitutional provisions have been spelt out in Volume III at pages 1 to 9 and I commend them to the attention of the House.

I would take up each one of these four priorities in some detail. With regard to these activity maps, where Shri Prabodh Panda called for time-bound devolution, Shrimati Sujata for clear-cut devolution of functions and finances and Thirumati Bhavani Rajenthiran for more power and more finances, there the Prime Minister had said:

“The key to the effective devolution of the functions is the activity map. ”

So, we have to get the activity map ready. In all the States I have been to, they all promised me that they will do the activity map. Many of them have given the date by which that activity map is supposed to be ready. In most States the technical work is ready, but the Cabinet is yet to pass it or the Government is still to notify it. That is where all my hon. friends come into the picture. If they could just lean upon their respective State Governments, I am sure we can get this fundamental work

of activity mapping completed. Obligation is not only at the State level. The Prime Minister also said in the same speech:

“Equally the Ministries at the Centre also need to prepare activity maps so that their schemes ensure centrality of panchayats in our system of governance.[\[MSOffice69\]](#)”

Now, the hon. Prime Minister wants to do the same work here in Delhi as we are asking the States to do it in their respective States. As an earnest of this, there is a circular which has been issued through the Cabinet Secretary to all relevant Ministries asking them to coordinate with mine on working out activities map for their Centrally sponsored schemes. Then, the Minister of Finance in his Budget Speech for 2005-06 announced ‘the Centrality’ of the panchayats in all Bharat Nirman Scheme. In the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, it is specifically provided for that the panchayati raj institutions shall be ‘the principal authorities for planning and implementation’. In the process of following these instructions, we have succeeded in recasting the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and the total literacy campaign in concert with the hon. Minister of Human Resource Development, Shri Arjun Singh. We have also worked in a similar way on the National Mid-Day Meal Scheme. We have done it in respect of the Rajiv Gandhi Drinking Water Mission. We have done it with respect to the total sanitation programme. We have done it in the national e-governance policy. We have done it in the Horticulture Mission. The list would become too long if I were to read all of it out, but in practical terms, we are moving at the Central level.

In new Schemes like the Rajiv Gandhi *Grameen Vidyutikaran* Yojana and the Rural Electrification Policy, again the panchayats have been brought in as key institutions empowered if the State Government so wishes and if the panchayats themselves pick up this initiative to perform a major role. We are working on the ICDS with the hon. Minister, Shrimati Renuka Chowdhary. We are working with the hon. Minister, Shrimati Meira Kumar on social empowerment. So, all along the line, the Union Government is moving forward. We, the Panchayati Raj, would like to move forward much faster. But it is understandable that there are problems in changing systems that already exists. But, altogether, I think, there is a measure of success.

The House would also be happy to know that the Planning Commission is undertaking a major exercise in the context of the Eleventh Plan to rationalize our Centrally sponsored schemes. At the moment, we have nearly 300 Centrally sponsored schemes. A huge majority of which are either unfunded or under-funded or do not really serve their purposes. So, in this context, we are rationalizing it and in the process of rationalizing, I think, we will also be able to clarify the role of the panchayati raj institutions and that should enable us to move forward. माननीय सदस्य श्री शैलेन्द्र कुमार ने, जितनी सेवाएं उपलब्ध करानी चाहिए, उनका जिक्र किया है और बहुत सक्षम तरीके से किया है। मैं उन्हें आश्वासन देना चाहता हूं और उम्मीद करता हूं कि आने वाली 11वीं पंचवर्षीय योजना में काफी हद तक, क्योंकि मुकम्मल तौर पर कुछ नहीं होता है जब तक स्वर्ग न पहुंचे, इन सेवाओं के सिलसिले में पंचवर्षीय योजनाओं के जरिए सेंट्रली स्पॉन्सर्ड स्कीम को हम सही दिशा दिखाएंगे।

I also need to say that both Shrimati Sujatha and Prof. M. Ramadass expressed some concerns about how it was necessary to recast additional Central assistance and CSS to strengthen panchayati

raj institutions. We are actually doing so and we would like to move further forward...  
(Interruptions)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : क्या आपका रिप्लाइ समाप्त हो गया है?

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: I have got a considerable amount more to say. I think the House is interested. ... (Interruptions)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : आप रिप्लाइ जारी रखें।<sup>[a70]</sup>

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Since these activity maps have such a critical role to play, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the national profile of activity maps at pages 72 to 74 of Volume-I. With regard to the States, activity maps for each State and then status is provided in Section-II of Volume-II at pages 2 to 437. With regard to activity map at the Centre, you will find the details at pages 11 to 12 of Volume-I and pages 202 to 230 of Volume-III. To sum up this very quickly, the States in which activity maps have been completed and notified include Kerala, West Bengal, Karnataka – I am not sure about Orissa – Haryana, Goa, Maharashtra and Gujarat. Now, this does not mean that activity maps have been prepared for all the 29 subjects mentioned in the Eleventh Schedule. It reveals to the extent to which activity maps have been prepared and they have also been notified in these States.

There are many States which are revisiting their old maps. For instance, Kerala has done so. Karnataka has done so. West Bengal has done so. So, they are trying to keep on improving the activity mapping. There are some States including Orissa where the activity mapping has been completed but it has not yet been notified for one reason or another. These include Sikkim where I have actually released the map but they still need to get some kind of a Cabinet clearance before they Gazette it. Regarding Punjab, I have been holding it up because the hon. Prime Minister himself is so impressed with the activity map prepared by Punjab that he wants to release it. We are trying to schedule it. Regarding Andhra Pradesh, and Assam, it is supposed to be done by early January. Regarding Chhattisgarh, it has been pending for some time. In respect of Himachal Pradesh and Lakshadweep, work has been completed but the Union Home Ministry is still to do, still to complete its work. Regarding Daman and Diu, again, it has been done. It is so for Dadra and Nagar Haveli also. In respect of Rajasthan, as I said earlier, it was to have been issued by April 2006 but it is still pending after the completion of all technical work. Regarding Uttaranchal and the following States, activity maps are still under preparation. They are Bihar, Arunachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and Puducherry. Of course, there is no action in Jharkhand. It cannot be done until they have the Panchayati Raj institution. Chandigarh appears to have decided to withdraw from the Panchayati Raj System. So, my visit there was a bit of a waste.

डा. करण सिंह यादव ने राजस्थान के बारे में बताया है कि इस रिपोर्ट में जो उनके कार्य क्षेत्र के बारे में बताया गया है, वह सही नहीं है। हकीकत यह है कि हमने जो रिपोर्ट हिन्दी में छापी, उसमें एक पंक्ति छूट गई थी, जो अंग्रेजी में है। हमने कहा कि हालांकि उन्होंने तैयार किया था लेकिन अब तक वह अमल में नहीं लाया गया है। यही कारण है कि वहां काम काफी आगे नहीं बढ़ पाया है। अभी अभी एक गैर-सरकारी संस्था प्रिया ने एक रिपोर्ट मुझे पेश की है। पिछले साल दिसम्बर में एक साल पहले जिस समझौते पर मैं मुख्यमंत्री राजस्थान के साथ आया था, उसमें उन समझौतों पर बहुत कुछ करने को है।



उपाध्यक्ष जी, दाह्याभाई पटेल ने प्रश्न उठाया था कि दमन तथा दीव में काम पूरा नहीं किया गया है। हालांकि दमन दीव का शासन केन्द्र के हाथ में है और हम लोग यहां बैठे सोच रहे थे कि सब ठीक है। वहां परिस्थिति इतनी बुरी है, जैसा माननीय सदस्य ने कहा लेकिन मैं यही कहूंगा और एक प्रश्न के जवाब में उन्हें बताया भी है कि केन्द्र शासित राज्यों में सब से ज्यादा अच्छा काम दमन दीव में चल रहा है। फिर भी मैंने वायदा किया है कि मैं शीघ्र ही दमन दीव जाऊंगा। जो काम हमने दो साल पहले तैयार कर रखा है, देखेंगे कि वह पूरा क्यों नहीं हो रहा है? [871]

Sir, I now come to the devolution of finances. Shri Jaiprakash of Hissar drew attention to the shortage of funds for Panchayats, so did Shri Ram Kripal Yadav and Thiru Karventhan avargal. Shri L. Rajagopal said that every department should have a share for the Panchayats. Shri Francis George called for funds to be allotted without political bias. Kunwar Manvendra Singh ji sought objective criteria that take into account both population and area in determining allocations. Shri Shailendra Kumar ji asked for specific allocations for all subjects mentioned in the 11<sup>th</sup> Schedule and the direct transfer of funds to Panchayats, so did Shri Mitrasen Yadav. Shri Dahyabhai Patel pointed to the financial plight of Panchayati Raj institutions in the Union Territories.

The Prime Minister of India, emphasizing the importance of finances said the following which, I think, we need to carry to every single State Government. He said:

“That to secure effective devolution of finances, budgets of all line departments must open a Panchayat sector window through which Panchayats have the necessary financial resources to undertake the duties entrusted to them and the best Panchayati raj States have already opened such windows. I hope others will follow.”

Sir, it is very essential that the devolution of finances be patterned on the activity maps for functions. So, if you have decided that a particular activity is to be undertaken by a Panchayat, then the money cannot remain with the line department. From the line department's budget, the money must reach the Panchayat at the appropriate level. We have given you the full details of fiscal devolution in the States in Volume II – State Profiles and a National Overview in Volume I, Chapter III, pages 61-64 and Chapter IV, page 75. Since so many of you are interested in the financial strengthening of the Panchayati Raj institutions, I would request you to kindly look through the relevant section for your particular State and then you can take it up with your respective State Governments.

Sir, there were two or three points that were specific. One was made by Shri Francis George who wanted to know as to why the 12<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission's shares are not reaching all the States and, through the States, the Panchayats. The 12<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission have set aside Rs. 20,000 crore for a five-year period, virtually untied and earmarked only for the Panchayats and they are to be released by the Finance Ministry. But there are some States that have allowed a whole year to pass without even applying for their shares and many other States have taken the first installment, but not yet collected the second installment because the problem is that if they start collecting the second installment, then they have to provide Utilization Certificates that say that the money they have collected had actually gone to the Panchayats and the Panchayats have decided how they are going to be spent. The reason, therefore, that the 12<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission's grants are still pending

in Delhi is that either States have not adequately applied to get their installments or are unable to fulfill the basic conditionality of the 12<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission grants that the money should reach the Panchayats and the Panchayats should decide how they should be spent.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, please wait for a minute.

Hon. Members, I have received a request from the Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs that the Half-an-Hour Discussion may be postponed for some other day and after this we will take up another Discussion under Rule 193 regarding problems being faced by unorganized labour. I think the House agrees. [R72]

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI (KUTCH): Sir, then postpone it to tomorrow... (*Interruptions*) We should take it up tomorrow... (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The hon. Minister cannot decide on that. Only the hon. Speaker will decide on that.

... (*Interruptions*)

श्री देवेन्द्र प्रसाद यादव (झंझारपुर): उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, आपने जो रूलिंग दी है, उस पर हम लोगों की सेंस ली जाए। आप पार्टी के सब लीडर्स से पूछ लीजिए। माननीय मंत्री जी का कितनी देर तक भाण होगा, यह भी बता दीजिए, चूंकि आगे बहुत महत्वपूर्ण वि-  
याय है। पूरे देश में 93 परसेंट अनआर्गनाइज़्ड लेबर है।... (व्यवधान)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय: इसके बाद लेंगे।

श्री देवेन्द्र प्रसाद यादव : उसे रात को आठ-नौ बजे लेंगे, क्या मतलब होगा। जब सभी माननीय सदस्य चले जाएंगे, तब आप इस वि-  
याय को लेंगे। डिबेट में हमेशा अनआर्गनाइज़्ड लेबर को पीछे धकेल दिया जाता है, बराबर यह परम्परा रही है। कभी इस पर डिबेट  
हुई ही नहीं, पहली बार संसद में डिबेट हो रही है। इतना महत्वपूर्ण वि-याय है और उसे बाद में लिया जाएगा। इस पर हाउस का सेंस  
ले लिया जाए।... (व्यवधान)

श्री थावरचंद गेहलोत (शाजापुर): मैं भी इस पर यादव जी का समर्थन करता हूं, इसे कल लिया जाना चाहिए।... (व्यवधान)

श्री देवेन्द्र प्रसाद यादव : इसे आज छोड़ दिया जाए, कल लिया जाए।... (व्यवधान)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND  
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K.  
HANDIQUE): Sir, the hon. Minister will take another 5 to 10 minutes... (*Interruptions*)

श्री देवेन्द्र प्रसाद यादव : पंचायत का रिप्लाइ कंटीन्यू रहेगा।... (व्यवधान) अगर अभी दो घंटे तक माननीय मंत्री जी का रिप्लाइ  
होगा तो सब माननीय सदस्य चले जाएंगे। मंत्री जी का रिप्लाइ दूसरे दिन कंटीन्यू रहे।... (व्यवधान) इसके लिए हाउस का सेंस  
लिया जाए, सब पार्टी का सेंस ले लिया जाए। ... (व्यवधान) आपको रूलिंग देने से पहले हाउस का सेंस लेना होगा, हम इस पर प्र-  
पोटेस्ट करते हैं। हाउस का सेंस सुप्रीम होगा, आपका रूलिंग जरूरी है, लेकिन हाउस का सेंस लेना भी उतना ही जरूरी है। हाउस  
सुप्रीम है, हाउस जो कहेगा, वही होगा, यह परम्परा है।... (व्यवधान)

श्री लक्ष्मण सिंह (राजगढ़): पंचायती राज भी अनआर्गनाइज़्ड लेबर से संबंधित है, इसलिए इसका उत्तर हो जाने दीजिए।... (व्यवधान)

श्री मणि शंकर अय्यर : माननीय उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, श्री मित्रसेन यादव ने इस पर खास जोर लगाया कि जो पंचायती राज संस्थान को पैसा पहुंचाना चाहिए, उसका या तो विलम्ब हो जाता है या किसी अन्य मामले के लिए इस्तेमाल किया जा रहा है। हमारे अरुणाचल प्रदेश के माननीय सदस्य, श्री खीरेन रिजीजू जी ने हमारे सामने कुछ आंकड़े पेश किए कि जो पैसा गांव तक पहुंचना था, वह राज्य के एकाउंट में स्टेट बैंक ऑफ इंडिया में पड़ा हुआ है, ऐसे इल्ज़ाम यहां लगाए गए थे।

Sir, in our National Common Minimum Programme, it is a commitment that funds meant for the Panchayats should reach Panchayats without delay or diversification. हमारा प्रयास यह है कि इस मकसद को हम पूरा करें। To do this, our Ministry of Panchayati Raj set up a Task Force, which has prepared a highly technical report on the electronic tagging and tracking of funds. So, when we send money from Delhi, whether it is through banking channels or through treasury channels, by pressing a button on a computer here, we should be able to tell whether any particular sum of money which has been sent to the State has moved from the State to the Panchayat; if so, to which level of the Panchayat and whether it has been utilized or is still pending. You will find the Expert Committee Report on Volume III, pages 286 to 292.

I would urge that if we are able to persuade our State Governments and Central Ministries to accept electronic tagging and tracking, then the kind of problem, which particularly Shri Kiren Rijju has raised, might perhaps be solved.

We are working with the State Governments on this. We are working with the Central Ministries on this. But until everybody joins hands with us, I am afraid our technical solution will remain somewhat on paper.<sup>[73]</sup>

As regards the devolution of functionaries, I think it should be accepted by everyone concerned that where the function is to be performed and the finances have been devolved, there the functionary must be posted. We cannot have a situation continuing where a work is to be done by the panchayat and the officer is sitting in the line department. That, as Shri Suresh Prabhu told us, is the only way of meeting quality standards to get our panchayats an adequate complementary staff.

Shrimati Bhavani Rajenthiran referred to the need for training of not only elected representatives but also of the officials, and so did Shri Prabodh Panda. Shrimati Sujatha laid very important stress on capacity building, and in this context referred to the Kerala Institute of Local Administration which has carved out a very special place for itself in the nation's training programmes for local administration. महोदय, शैलेन्द्र कुमार जी ने हमें बताया कि महिला सशक्तीकरण हेतु चुनी गई महिला प्रतिनिधियों के लिए हमें खास प्रशिक्षण के इंतजाम करने चाहिए। Dr. Meinya of Manipur made a very important point that there is an exploitation of inexperienced women members by male members of their family. He could perhaps have also added that lower orders of the bureaucracy also tend to make victims of these innocent ladies.

मैं अपनी तरफ से, सबसे ज्यादा प्रशंसा माननीय गणेश सिंह जी करना चाहता हूं और उनके प्रति आभार व्यक्त करना चाहता हूं जिन्होंने हमें बताया कि जो चुने हुए लोग हैं, वे गांव और ग्रामवासियों की समस्याओं को नौकरशाहों से बेहतर जानते हैं।

इसलिए हमें यहीं से शुरू करना है और प्रशिक्षण का इंतजाम करना है। इसे करने के बाद आप देखेंगे कि पंचायती राज संस्थान खुद-ब-खुद बेहतर होते जाएंगे। इसलिए हमने दो-तीन कार्यक्रम तैयार किए हैं जिनका जिक्र इसमें है, I would like to draw your attention to Volume III, Pages 360 to 369 in which we have set out the Expert Committee Report on the capability building framework and training. That will partly answer Shri Tapir Gao's point that we need a national training institute. So far, all the training has been undertaken in the National Institute of Rural Development and the State Institutes of Rural Development. I do not think, we should give them up; they are very very valuable institutions. But we need to put the training of panchayati raj representatives, whether in Rural Development Institutes or separate institutes within a larger framework. This Expert Committee's report addressed itself to these issues, and I sent it to a very old friend of mine who is a Pakistani, who is now heading for Asia and the Pacific, the UNDP, Dr. Hafeez Pasha. I met him about a month ago in New York. He said that he never ever read a more thorough report on how to do the training and capacity building of our panchayati raj representatives. Therefore I am hoping that we will get considerable UNDP financial support provided, of course, the Government of India itself is happy with this scheme and asks for the money. If we get that done, it will be part and parcel of what we call the Gram Swaraj Programme. Under the Gram Swaraj Programme, we are concentrating on three major issues. One is panchayat *ghars*. Somebody from Kerala will be astonished that this is a problem. Somebody from Sikkim will be even more astonished because in Sikkim they are setting aside Rs. 16 lakh for every single gram panchayat ghar. Yet, there are States of India, much bigger States, much richer States, States with much older Panchayati Raj, who have not even a panchayat *ghar*. कहां जाकर बैठें और कितने सालों तक हम चौपाल पर बैठे हैं या किसी दरख्त के नीचे बैठे हैं। पंचायतघरों की बड़ी आवश्यकता है। अगर भारत सरकार को साथ और नॉर्थ ब्लॉक के बिना नहीं चला सकते हैं, [r74]

### **18.00 hrs. [R75]**

यदि मध्य प्रदेश की सरकार को वल्लभ भवन के बगैर नहीं चला सकते हो तो लाजिमी है तो ग्राम सरकार चलानी है तो ग्राम सरकार का कोई स्थान हो, जहां हम ग्राम सरकार को देखा सकें और वहां आपकी ग्राम सभा की मीटिंग्स हों, ग्राम समिति की उ पसमितियों की मीटिंग वहां हों, तभी हम एक सशक्त पंचायत प्रणाली देख पाएंगे।

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please wait a minute. Now, it is six o' clock. I would like to know the opinion of the House. We have the following businesses:

1. Reply of the hon. Minister, Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar;
2. Further Discussion under Rule 193 regarding the problems being faced by the unorganized labour in the country;
3. Half-an-hour Discussion; and
4. Urgent Matters of Public Importance.

हाउस जो कहेगा, हम वही लेंगे।

SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE: Sir, I have a submission to make. At 5.30 p.m. today, there was a half-an-hour discussion, and the hon. Member, Shri P.S. Gadhavi has been kind enough to agree to shift it some time tomorrow. ... (*Interruptions*)

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (AJMER): What about the 'Zero Hour'? ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE: There are not many speakers for the next Discussion under Rule 193 on Unorganized Labour. Eight speakers are there and the Minister will give the reply. After that, we shall take up the Urgent Matters of Public Importance.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: What is the opinion of the House?

श्री देवेन्द्र प्रसाद यादव :मंत्री जी का जवाब चलता रहेगा, जवाब को ही जारी रखा जाये। SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE: Definitely we will take up the 'Zero Hour' at the end.

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय:जीरो ऑवर तो लास्ट में होगा।

SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE: After completing the Discussion under Rule 193 on Unorganized Labour, we will take up the 'Zero Hour'. It has already been decided that the House would continue to sit up to eight o' clock every day. It is the decision of the House.

श्री पी.एस.गढ़वी :लास्ट में कल जीरो ऑवर नहीं लिया गया।

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (BALASORE): Sir, you can carry on as per the wishes of the hon. Minister. Let the hon. Minister complete his reply, and then we can take up the Discussion under Rule 193 on Unorganized Labour. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please listen to me. We have the following businesses:

1. Reply of the hon. Minister, Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar;
2. Further Discussion under Rule 193 regarding the problems being faced by the unorganized labour in the country;
3. Half-an-hour Discussion; and
4. Urgent Matters of Public Importance.

... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN : Sir, the hon. Minister, Shri Handique has said that the Half-an-Hour Discussion would be taken up tomorrow. After completing the Discussion on Unorganized Labour, we can take up the 'Zero Hour'. ... (*Interruptions*)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय: क्या हम हाउस 8 बचे तक बढ़ा दें?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House is extended up to eight o' clock.

SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE: It is the decision that we have already taken.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar, you can continue your speech.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the first requirement is the physical space in which the Panchayats can undertake their activities. The second is adequate complement of staff. और यहां मैं खास जो माननीय सदस्य श्री शैलेन्द्र कुमार जी ने प्रस्ताव रखा कि नौकरशाही जो है, जो पंचायतों की सेवा करती है, वह नौकरशाही पंचायतों के डिसिप्लिन के अन्तर्गत, उनके अनुशासन के अन्तर्गत आनी चाहिए। इस सिलसिले में जबकि हम अपनी गोलमेज़ का आयोजन कर रहे थे, तब बताया गया था कि इस पर हर राज्य विचार करेगा कि आई.ए.एस. और पी.सी.एस. के अलावा हर डिस्ट्रिक्ट में एक डिस्ट्रिक्ट पंचायत एडमिनिस्ट्रेटिव एण्ड टैक्नीकल सर्विस स्थापित की जाये। अब चूंकि इस सिलसिले में कुछ गलतफहमियां हमारे मित्र जो हमारे ऊपर बैठते हैं, उन्होंने फैलाई हैं, मैं यह स्पटीकरण देना चाहता हूं कि यह कोई केन्द्रीय सेवा नहीं होगी और यह कोई राज्य सेवा भी नहीं होगी।[\[R76\]](#)

हमारा इरादा यह है कि हर जिले में, जिले के पंचायती राज संस्थान इकट्ठे होकर, वे उन लोगों को चुनकर निकालें, जो तकनीकी काम और प्रशासनिक काम को करवायें। यह तो हमने हर राज्य पर छोड़ दिया है। लेकिन मुझे खुशी है कि इसी विषय में माननीय सदस्य श्री शैलेन्द्र कुमार और उनके साथीगण सोच रहे हैं और उम्मीद है कि आप इसे कहीं न कहीं शुरू करा पायेंगे।

Then, now I come to district planning which is the fourth priority. Now, one cannot help but agree with Prof. Ramadass that participatory planning is the only way of ending what he called the legacy of poverty. पिछले साठ साल से हम जो देश के सबसे बड़े बुद्धिमान लोग हैं, जो आईएएस और फारेन सर्विसेज में पहुंचते हैं, मेरे जैसे, इनका इस्तेमाल ... (व्यवधान) हमने देश को बरबाद कर रखा है। क्योंकि कहां विकास हुआ है? जब मैं नौजवान था, तब मैंने सोचा कि हम सार्वजनिक सेवा करें, तो हमारे इन मामलों में दखल देने से जो देश का गरीब है, उसका उत्थान होगा, लेकिन आज हम देखें कि जो अमीर है, वह और ज्यादा अमीर हो रहा है, लेकिन जो गरीब है, वह वहीं का वहीं नहीं रुक रहा है, लेकिन उसकी प्रगति की रफ्तार उससे बहुत ज्यादा कम है। इसका एक उदाहरण है, जो मैं बेझिझक सदन के सामने रखना चाहता हूं। अरबपतियों के संख्या आप लें, तो विश्व में आठवीं जगह हिंदुस्तान की है। In the world, the eighth largest number of millionaires is to be found in India. लेकिन साथ ह्यूमन डेवलपमेंट इंडेक्स को देखें, तो हमारी प्रगति इतनी हुयी है कि हम जहां पिछले साल 127वें नंबर पर थे और इस साल हम 126वें नंबर पर पहुंचे हैं। हमें इसको बदलना हो कि जो देश की गरीब जनता है, गरीब आवाम है, उनकी भी प्रगति हो, तो मुझे लगता है कि अपने ही विकास में उनकी भागीदारी बनानी चाहिए।

जहां तक बैकवर्ड रीजन गारंटी फंड की बात है, उसमें बताया गया है कि जहां डिस्ट्रिक्ट प्लानिंग होती है, वहीं हम पैसा उपलब्ध करेंगे और जहां की डिस्ट्रिक्ट प्लानिंग हमारे संविधान के अनुसार नहीं होती है, तो वहां उनको कुछ मिलने वाला नहीं है। चूंकि हमें कार्यक्रम को शुरू करना है, इसलिए थोड़ा-बहुत हमने छूट दी है और कुछ पैसा हम बिना सही मायने के डिस्ट्रिक्ट प्लानिंग के उपलब्ध करा रहे हैं, लेकिन एक साल छूट के बाद, हमें बड़ी सख्ती से कहना पड़ेगा कि बैकवर्ड डिस्ट्रिक्ट्स में मुकम्मल तौर पर हमारे संविधान के अनुसार डिस्ट्रिक्ट प्लानिंग न हो, तो माफ कीजिए आपको एक कौड़ी भी नहीं मिलने वाली है। प्रधानमंत्री जी जब हाउस को संबोधित कर रहे थे, तो उन्होंने कहा कि “The district planning is the *sine qua non* of the Backward Regions Grant Fund”, and he added, “Once we get effective district planning going in the most backward districts, the rest would follow.” So, we have to get this district planning done. There are very detailed provisions in the Constitution in Article 243G and in Article 243Z(d).

Article 243Z(d) explains how a District Planning Committee is to be constituted. It also says that the District Planning Committee will not prepare the district plan but consolidate the district

plan. Consolidation requires that there should be a village plan, an inter-mediate Panchayat plan, a district plan and a municipal plan by the *Nagarpalikas* and the town Panchayats. They will all be consolidated at the level of District Planning Committee and the District Planning Committee cannot and must not be headed by a Minister of the State Government.

You cannot have a parallel body where there is a District Planning Committee or something and a Minister from Calcutta or somewhere arrives and runs the show. If you want district planning, it has to be done by the local people. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Do not disturb him.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: I am not saying that. You are running altogether a peaceful India. But it is different in your State.[\[MSOffice77\]](#)

I suggest we follow the Kerala example. But what we need is, we need to follow the constitutional example. The Constitution has prescribed how the DPC is to be constituted, how it is supposed to do its work and its work begins by consolidating the Plans made by others. Having consolidated it, the Constitution says that it shall only be a draft District plan.

लोग कहते हैं कि अनपढ़ लोग क्या प्लानिंग करेंगे। ठीक है, वे नहीं जानते हैं, लेकिन भूखा ही है जो भूख जानता है और जिसके पास आवास नहीं है, वही जानता है कि आवास न होने का क्या नतीजा होता है और वही पढ़ाई-लिखाई का अर्थ समझता है जो कम पढ़ा-लिखा हो या जिसको पढ़ाई नहीं आती हो।

We have to rely on the people and planning should be a response to their perceived priorities and their perceived requirements. In that sense, I am afraid, Shrimati Sujatha as also Shri Prabodh Panda were a bit worried about how this Planning Commission which for ten Plans has been planning from above, will suddenly now agree to plan from below. But I am very happy to inform them that in fact, there is no need for concern. The Planning Commission under the Deputy Chairmanship of my friend, my college friend Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia and the hon. Prime Minister who is also the Chairman have given such a big push to grassroots planning that I would draw your attention at Volume 3, pages 527 to 701 and particularly to pages 614 to 638 where we have reproduced the circulars of the Planning Commission, the letters written by the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, the supporting letters which I, as a Minister, have sent and the detailed expert committee report on grassroots planning. We have put it all together and we have given this information to you.

So, please do not worry. The Planning Commission is entirely behind us. But, I am afraid, the State Governments are not that far behind us. We need to push them and I hope that over the course of the next few months we will be able to get State Governments' support to get proper district planning done and to make district plans the building blocks of the national plan.

Now, the Approach Paper to the Eleventh Five-Year Plan is going to be brought for discussion before the House and my earnest plea to all of you, and I am saying this because I am not the Planning Minister, is that you read these documents here which I have mentioned with specific

pages to you and bring up this question of district planning for the Eleventh Five-Year Plan in the discussion on the Approach Paper.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, we also need to incentivise. We need to incentivise the lagging States to empower the Panchayats and we need to incentivise the Panchayats to become accountable to the Gram Sabha. So, we have thought up a scheme called the Panchayat Empowerment and Accountability Incentive Scheme. We want to incentivise empowerment to the Panchayats by the States and incentivise accountability to the Gram Sabhas on the part of Panchayats. To do this, we need an objective measure because nowadays when we do the incentivisation we are immediately told that 'you are not giving it to us because you are a Congressman or because they tell me, you are giving this to Kerala because you are really a secret Communist'. So, we need to get out of the political prejudice or the political bias.

To do that we have asked the National Council for Applied Economic Research to prepare for us a devolution index, completely objective and completely scientific. They have already given me an interim report; their final report is expected by the end of December and we will circulate this to the State Governments. The State governments themselves will see how well or badly they have done on the devolution index and then the NCAER evaluates it and on that basis we will know not only the ranking of the States – which I do not like to do because only the Minister of Sport is supposed to do ranking, the Minister of Panchayat Raj is supposed to be a little more intelligent; I am much more interested in the progress that is made on a devolution index. [\[MSOffice78\]](#)

If Kerala is right on top, it does not matter whether it remains on top. It would matter if it slips to the fourth place. Then, they should be incentivised to go back to where they were. If some other State is at the bottom of the ranking and comes up even to the tenth position, they should be rewarded for the progress that they have made. It is in this sense that we are conceiving PVAIS. We will do it on the basis of an objective scientific devolution index. I have approached the World Bank to get us a substantial amount of money to be able to genuinely incentivise the States to empower the panchayats.

At the same time, we need to inform each other about what is the best practice. Now, Shrimati C.S. Sujatha suggested that we should be distributing information about best practices. I want to draw her attention to Chapter 7 of Volume I pages 99 to 107 as also to the State Profiles in section 1 of Volume II, that is, pages 1 to 372 where they have set out a large number of best practices followed in different States of the Indian Union. I am hoping that by doing this, we will be able to get the laggard States to move forward and to prevent the States that have done well from slipping backwards.

Sir, I also mentioned to you the Gram Swaraj Programme. I mentioned the panchayat ghars, which was raised by Shri Jai Prakash of Haryana, by Shri Tapir Gao and Shri Rijiju of Arunachal Pradesh, but several other States have concerns in this regard. I mentioned the question of staff also.

Now, I want to come to the question of connectivity that is stressed by Kunwar Manvendra Singh in particular. Connectivity is not, these days, only road connectivity or rail connectivity. Cyber space has become the space where each of us can encounter each other. Now, there is a remarkable



work that has been done at Mysore in Karnataka where they have a studio. You can get the best teacher, the Minister or the Secretary of the Department to come in and when he or she speaks, it simultaneously reaches all the blocks and all the panchayat members can gather at the block headquarters. Any question anyone asks is heard by everybody else and any answer given is also heard by everybody else. It is an interactive form of connectivity. So, we have in mind, in terms of the national e-governance policy, connecting up through computers, cyber space. By use of satellite as well as by use of computers, we wish to provide connectivity to all the village panchayats of India, all the intermediate panchayats, all the district panchayats with the State Governments as well as with the Central Government.

Indeed, through video-conferencing, my own Ministry is today in a much better contact with State Panchayati Raj Secretaries than it has ever been before. So, I believe that with panchayati ghars, staff and connectivity, we will really be able to get infrastructure required to make for an effective panchayati raj. Hence, I would like to quote the Prime Minister who said :

“This Report highlights the lack of basic resources, facilities, connectivity and staff in many panchayats..... The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has prepared a Gram Swaraj Yojana which aims to supplement State efforts in this regard, .... but the primary responsibility remains that of the States and I hope, they give high priority to ensuring this.”

So, I am afraid that my hands are tied. I cannot help any State that does not help itself. But if the State takes one step, I can go a mile. Therefore, it is for the States to work up their own plans for panchayati ghars, for staff, for connectivity and put in their contribution, and we will try and back them.

Sir, there are some States, nine in number, which have Fifth Schedule areas incorporated within the boundaries of the State. For these, the Constitution has obliged this Parliament to enact an Act called The Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, which was enacted in 1996.<sup>[§79]</sup>

I am deeply convinced that it is only by implementing this Act that we will be able to roll-back the wave of naxalism that is now sweeping down from Nepal through so much of Central India and licking at the corners of even Southern India; extending towards Western India; and engulfing parts of North. This is apart from the problems that we have in the North East. Therefore, we have to assign the Fifth Schedule areas to empower the people there -- through their Panchayat -- to build their own destiny.

Shri Bapu Hari Chaurse spoke in the House and made a number of allegations about how rural development and rural welfare programmes including the identification of beneficiaries under the tribal sub-plan is not being done in accordance with PESA provisions, but being done otherwise. This is very deeply disturbing. I am not in a position to certify whether all that has been stated here was accurate or not, but I do assure the hon. Member that I will bring it to the attention of the Government of Maharashtra. I am hoping to make a visit there fairly soon. ... (*Interruptions*)

I am coming to you also. How can one forget you, Shri Bwiswmuthiary? You are my client in two ways, that is, in PESA as well as in the DoNER. I will come to you in a minute.

PESA is the only Panchayati Raj Act in the country that provides for three things to be done by a Gram Sabha mandatorily with the help of the law. One is the identification of beneficiaries. Second is approval of all plans, programmes, or projects prepared by the Panchayat. The third and the most important of all is that only the Gram Sabha, under PESA, can authorize the issue of a utilization certificate.

If you want to end corruption, the only way of doing it is by empowering the Gram Sabha mandatorily to either say that a bus stand has been built. If they claim that a bus stand has been built, then they have to explain the reason for the same bus stand being built in the next village for Rs. 20,000. Why does it cost Rs. 40,000 here? Is the reason for this not that it was the nephew of the *Sarpanch* who got the contract here? It is only the Gram Sabha, and it is only through social audit that this kind of work can be done on the spot. This is provided for in PESA, and it is not provided for in most State legislations. Hence, it would be fair to say that the best Panchayati Raj Act anywhere in the country is the Act, which our House had the pride to pass 12 years ago. But is it being implemented in conformity with its provisions everywhere? I am afraid that the answer is not a very happy one. Therefore, I have to quote the Prime Minister once again on the question of PESA, and he said that :

“PESA is the single most important instrument in our armory for dealing with the economic and emotional alienation of our tribal brethren, which lies at the root of the growing menace of naxalism. Its effective implementation would, I believe, generate a deep sense of effective participation among our tribal people in the conduct of their own affairs...”

Only the Members of this House can ensure that the Act, which they have passed, is actually being implemented in the different States. I ask the Members from those nine States -- which are in the Fifth Schedule -- to ask themselves, and to ask their Chief Ministers whether this work is being done honestly or not. If it is being done honestly and sincerely, then I do not see any reason for naxalism to spread. If you want naxalism to be stopped and rolled-back, then the only way is to give respect to PESA, and subsequently to the Forest Rights Bill of the Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers, which is coming before the House shortly. Please, let us take this seriously. It is not by guns alone; it is not by police forces alone; and it is not by intelligence alone that we will be able to combat the internal menace of naxalism. It is only by democracy.

This country has a proud record of having Communist Parties, who have participated in our democracy continuously from the beginning. They got elected by the people to power, and gracefully left office when that vote has been withdrawn from them.[\[r80\]](#)

In that way we have converted so many different parties, including the party of my friend Shri Bwiswmuthiary to whom I am coming, from a non-democratic to a democratic path by giving them

opportunities inside the mainstream. PESA does that. If we respect PESA, I think we will be able to win this war. If we go against our own legislation, then the prospect for the future is very dim indeed.

With regard to the Rural Business Hubs and the self-help groups, I draw the attention of the House to Volume I, pages 24 to 26, to Chapter 6 pages 89 to 90, and to the State Profiles in Volume II, as well as pages 861 to 869 of Volume III. These pages show how we are trying to fulfill Shri Suresh Prabhu's demand that we mobilize local entrepreneurship.

When Shri Basu Deb Acharia tell us about lac in Purulia or potteries, bell metal and bronze work in Bankura; when Shri Revati Raman Singh talks about the fisheries programme in Andhra Pradesh; when Shri Rajagopal tells us about Jatropa; when Shri Suresh Prabhu draws attention to how panchayats can be made the economical entities for electricity distribution; then my mind goes to the Prime Minister who, talking about the Rural Business Hubs said, and I quote him, "It is not till the output of village enterprises goes beyond the village *haat* and reaches out to the hypermarket that we will see real signs of our prosperity". That is what the objective of the RBH Scheme is.

We have so far prepared, with the help of the States, 846 blocks in India and the product or the skill which we wish to leverage in those blocks. We have already entered into 55 memoranda of understanding between business houses and Panchayati Raj institutions. There is a vast potential. We have a Rural Business Hub National Council which is co-chaired by Shri Sunil Munjal of the Confederation of Indian Industry and myself with Shri Jairam Ramesh among us as Vice-Chairmen, probably the first example of independent India of a Government Minister, a Cabinet Minister, agreeing to co-chair, not to be above a private sector representative, and for a Minister of State to agree to be the Vice-Chair to a private sector representative. It is a Constitutional innovation with immense, I think, implications for the future.

We have also got eight RBH Councils in the States. But I have to emphasise that I am very disappointed with the results we have obtained from the business community. They have not been as forthcoming as I would have hoped that they would be. Therefore, I again quote the Prime Minister, "I urge the National Rural Business Hubs Council to mobilize our business community to make their contribution to bridging the widening rural-urban divide and ensuring inclusiveness of our growth processes."

Shri Revati Raman Singh drew attention to the Bangladesh example of self-help groups. I would urge him to go beyond Bangladesh. In Bangladesh they undertook the revolution of bringing in micro finance that enables the sustenance of livelihood. We in India are moving from micro finance to micro enterprise which enable us to go beyond mere livelihood support to actually having a more comfortable economic life. But if we are to move from micro enterprises to genuine rural prosperity, we will have to use the Rural Business Hub route for going from the village *haat* to the hypermarket.

Please, let us not be scared of multinational corporations. Provided the production remains decentralized, the marketing and other forward linkages as well as subsequent backward linkages on the supply of raw materials can be looked after better by larger business houses, whether they are Indian or whether they are multinational.

श्री देवेन्द्र प्रसाद यादव : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, मेरा पाइंट ऑफ इंफार्मेशन है। हमें मंत्री जी के जवाबपर कोई आपत्ति नहीं है। मंत्री जी जितनी देर चाहें, जवाब दे सकते हैं। यहां पर संसदीय कार्य मंत्री श्री दासमुंशी बैठे हैं। मैं यह कहना चाहता हूं कि लगभग दो घंटे से जवाब चल रहा है और मंत्री जी काफी अच्छा जवाब दे रहे हैं। यह हिस्टॉरिकल विषय है और जवाब भी हिस्टॉरिकल दिया जा रहा है। इसलिए जवाब को कल के लिए डैफर कर दिया जाए और कल 12 बजे से अच्छा जवाब हो। ... (व्यवधान)

आज दूसरे विषय को लें।... (व्यवधान)

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI): I appreciate the concern of the hon. Member, Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav. He himself was present in the meeting of the hon. Speaker where a decision was taken to complete this debate and that of the unorganized sector today. Therefore, I am compelled to take two more legislations tomorrow. I have only one day left. How can I complete the business? We shall continue the debate in the next Session. I do not mind. ... (Interruptions)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : यह अब रिप्लाय खत्म करने वाले हैं।

श्री देवेन्द्र प्रसाद यादव : माननीय संसदीय कार्य मंत्री जी ने मेरी बात को समझा नहीं।... (व्यवधान)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : आप कितना समय लेंगे।

श्री देवेन्द्र प्रसाद यादव : एक घंटा और जवाब चलेगा तो 8 बजे तक तो जवाब होगा, 9 बजे तक डिस्कशन होगा तो 10 बजे असंगठित क्षेत्र आयेगा। जवाब के बारे में मुझे कुछ नहीं कहना है, विस्तार में जवाब आ रहा है।... (व्यवधान)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: He is going to complete his reply.

... (Interruptions)

श्री देवेन्द्र प्रसाद यादव : जवाब के लिए मैं कुछ नहीं कह रहा हूं, जवाब होना चाहिए। लेकिन यदि दो घंटे जवाब होगा तो दूसरे कार्य जो कार्य-सूची में अंकित हैं... (व्यवधान) संसदीय कार्य मंत्री जी कहते हैं कि आज ही खत्म करना है तो इसे डैफर कर दीजिए। दो घंटे से पहले जवाब पूरा नहीं होगा, अच्छा जवाब आ रहा है, एक-एक बिंदु पर जवाब आ रहा है, इसलिए जवाब में दो घंटे लगेंगे ही।

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, all the parties including the Left parties have decided before the hon. Speaker where I was also present. They have all agreed that today, we have to conclude the debates on Panchayati Raj and the unorganized sector and to accommodate other important business for tomorrow. Two days are left. After coming back to the House, they are changing their views. BAC allots the time, not me. In the BAC meeting, the time allotted for this debate is four hours. You can calculate as to how many hours are over. The debate of Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav is pending and the hon. Minister is waiting to reply. I am left with only one working day, tomorrow, in this week. On 18<sup>th</sup>, we would be taking up debate on nuclear deal, which would

take one full day and on 19<sup>th</sup>, planning debate would take place. How can I do justice to the business? Otherwise, you drag the debate to the next Session. I do not mind and get another reply. If you just do like this, agree something before the hon. Speaker and convert the whole thing here, it becomes painful to the Parliamentary Minister to do justice. ... (*Interruptions*)

श्री देवेन्द्र प्रसाद यादव : हाउस की सेंस ले लीजिए, हाउस जो कहता है वह करिये।

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR : Sir, it is simply that I was answering the points made by the hon. Members. I will try to hurry up for the rest. I will try and speed up my response.... (*Interruptions*)

DR. SUJAN CHAKRABORTY (JADAVPUR): I believe when this meeting was there, what I could understand is that it will continue for two or three hours and then, only the reply would be there. If that is so, there is no problem. ... (*Interruptions*)

श्री मणि शंकर अय्यर : सर, हमारे मित्र श्री शैलेन्द्र कुमार जी ने युवा-शक्ति और महिला-शक्ति पर बहुत जोर लगाया, मैं उनसे सहमत हूँ, क्योंकि जब हम अपने प्रतिनिधिगण की तरफ देखते हैं जो पंचायती राज संस्थानों में हैं तो उनकी उम्र 35 साल से कम है, उन्हें हम युवा समझ सकते हैं। जहां तक महिलाओं का प्रतिनिधित्व का प्रश्न है तो मैंने आंकड़े दिये हैं। कोई भी संस्थान ऐसा नहीं है जहां महिलाओं की भागीदारी इतनी हो, जितनी हम पंचायतों में देखते हैं। इसलिए पंचायतों को युवाओं से जोड़ने के लिए हमने एक पंचायत युवा शक्ति कार्यक्रम शुरू किया है।<sup>[r81]</sup>

उसमें नेहरू युवा केंद्र संगठन के यूथ क्लब को जोड़ कर, हमारी पंचायतों में नौजवानों को जोड़कर हम इस प्रयास में लगे हैं कि दोनों को मिला कर हम युवा शक्ति को देश को संभालने के लिए ग्रामीण इलाकों में लाएं। ऐसे ही महिलाओं के लिए नेशनल कमिशन फार वीमेन के जरिए प्रोत्साहित करके जो महिलाएं पंचायतों में हैं, उनके साथ जोड़ कर हम कोशिश कर रहे हैं कि महिलाओं की पहचान पंचायती राज संस्थानों में बने। हमारे देश की महिलाएं अणु जैसी हैं। जब वे अकेली होती हैं, तो अपने आपको बहुत ही बलहीन समझती हैं, लेकिन जब दो एटम जुड़ जाते हैं, फ्यूजन हो या फिशन हो, इतना बड़ा विस्फोट होता है कि उसका असर दुनिया भर में दिखाई पड़ता है, वातावरण पर पड़ता है। इन अणुओं को जोड़ने के लिए पंचायत महिला शक्ति अभियान एक प्रयास है। बहुत कामयाबी के साथ हमने राजस्थान में, पंजाब में और अन्य राज्यों कर्नाटक आदि में इसे शुरू करवाया है और आने वाले सालों में मैं उम्मीद करता हूँ कि हर राज्य में मैं पहुंच पाऊंगा और इसे हम चला सकेंगे।

खेल मंत्रालय की तरफ से हम एक पंचायत युवा खेल अभियान के श्रीगणेश के बारे में सोच रहे हैं। मैं जब खेल मंत्री के रूप में आपके सामने आऊंगा, तब पूरी तफसील दूंगा, लेकिन इसके बारे में पूरी सूचना आप खंड-एक, पृष्ठ 23-24 में और फिर तीसरे खंड में अध्याय-6, पृष्ठ 87 से लेकर 89 तक प्राप्त कर सकते हैं।

न्याय पंचायतों के बारे में शैलेन्द्र कुमार जी, गणेश प्रसाद जी और खास तौर पर हमारे मित्र लक्ष्मण सिंह जी ने जिक्र किया। इसके लिए मैंने प्रोफेसर उपेन्द्र बक्शी साहब, जो कि हमारे दिल्ली यूनिवर्सिटी के भूतपूर्व कुलपति थे और आज इंग्लैंड में वार्विक यूनिवर्सिटी में पढ़ा रहे हैं, उनसे अनुरोध करके एक समिति का गठन किया। बक्शी समिति की रिपोर्ट हमारे सामने है। उसे हमने लॉ मिनिस्ट्री को भेज रखा है। मैं इस मुकाम पर ज्यादा कुछ नहीं कहना चाहता हूँ लेकिन मैं माननीय सदस्यों का सुझाव मान लेता हूँ कि पंचायतों के साथ हमें न्याय पंचायतों को भी जोड़ना है और जब यह मसौदा तैयार हो जाएगा, तो हम दोबारा आपके सामने अवश्य आएंगे।

जहां तक भ्रष्टाचार की बात है, किसी ने अभी यहां की भ्रष्टाचार का विकेंद्रीकरण पंचायती राज में हो रहा है। मुझे कोई ऐतराज नहीं है कि भ्रष्टाचार का विकेंद्रीकरण हो रहा है। मेरा ऐतराज भ्रष्टाचार पर है और हमें भ्रष्टाचार को रोकना है। भ्रष्टाचार को रोकने के लिए यह कहना कि हर सरपंच अपना बंगला बना रहा है, तो मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि बहुत से ऐसे मंत्री हैं जो इस देश में महल बना रहे हैं। मैं नहीं समझता हूँ कि ऐसा कहने से किसी रचनात्मक नतीजे पर हम पहुंच सकते हैं। What we need to

understand is how do we end corruption in the Panchayati Raj Institution so as to set an example for the rest of the levels of the Government; us in Parliament and the State Assemblies to follow. To do this, we had a very-very serious discussion at the Sixth Round Table in Guwahati. If you look through the result of the Sixth Round Table you will find; for elections and making elections clean what are the steps that we should take. We decided those steps in consultation with the State Election Commissioners. In the 64<sup>th</sup> amendment moved by Shri Rajiv Gandhi, it was provided for that the framework would be established by the Election Commission of India. But by the time we passed the legislation the full responsibility for election was given to the State Governments. So, if elections are costing too much, it is for the State Governments to look into how to do better. But happily, we have a forum of State Election Commissioners. They are in touch with me. They are, in fact, in touch even with the Prime Minister. They are in touch with the Election Commission of India. They are giving us suggestions. If we follow them, we can have cleaner and less expensive, therefore, freer and fairer elections.

At the same time, I think we need to realise that the stress which Shri Kharabela Swain laid on proper Gram Sabhas is the key to solving the problem.[\[R82\]](#)

If a Gram Sabha is a Contractor Sabha, then it would not work. But fortunately, the Gram Sabhas in many States are Gram Sabhas. They are not Contractor Sabhas. So, we need to see State by State how to empower the Gram Sabhas. Somebody asked me why do you not make fixed dates for the Gram Sabha meetings. Well nearly seven to eight years ago, the Ministry of Rural Development issued instructions that Gram Sabhas must be held on Republic Day, the 26<sup>th</sup> January; next then should be held on May Day, the 1<sup>st</sup> of May; third they should be held on Independence Day, the 15<sup>th</sup> August; and fourth they should be held on Mahatma Gandhi's birthday, the 2<sup>nd</sup> October and if there are States where this is not being followed, the question has to be addressed to the State Minister and not to me.

We would like to see not only the Gram Sabhas but also the Ward Sabhas. In West Bengal, they call them Gram Sansad. In other places they call them Ward Sabhas. I think in Kerala, it is called Ward Sabha. Whatever may be the name, we need to get both the constituency of the Ward member as well as the whole of the village to be together from time to time to discuss issues and all the officials should be present when this happens. Strong Gram Sabha preferably empowered by the State Legislature with perhaps the rights that this Parliament has given under PESA to the tribal village Panchayats for approval of plans and projects and authorization of Utilization Certificates will make a Gram Sabha useful. If a Gram Sabha is not going to be useful, why should people waste their time attending it? So, when people say that nobody attends the Gram Sabha, it is because you are not having useful Gram Sabha meetings. If you have useful Gram Sabha meetings, there will be a huge attendance. I do not know whether I am useful or not but every Gram Sabha that I have attended – I have attended 75 of them in 17 different States of India – is overflowing with the local people. Maybe, because they think that a Union Minister has come and we make something out of it. But I do not think people of India are uninterested in Panchayati Raj. It is only that our State Legislatures and State Governments need to make Gram Sabhas meaningful.

Following the advice of Sushri Sujatha, I am willing to circulate to everybody what is the system by which they effectively run Gram Sabhas say in Kerala so that everybody can learn from that example and do better. Equally, I think what the hon. Member, Rajagopal told us is very important that Panchayats are Panchayats. They should be run by five or ten or fifteen people and not by one Sarpanch and not by one Adhyaksha. When it is run by one person, it is bound to be corrupt. You need the whole of the Panchayat to sit together to take decisions. You need sub-committees of the Panchayat which actually look at different subjects. If you have a directly elected Sarpanch which many people have advised who is not controlled by any of his Panches and who is to bother about standing in the elections only five years from now, by which time it may become women reserve or Scheduled Caste reserve, then you are creating conditions for the most intense form of corruption. The Presidential system of America works on the basis of checks and balances from the Congress. So, unless you have Congress in every village Panchayat, you cannot have directly elected people functioning effectively. You need the Gram Sabha as a people's Parliament which checks the work of the Gram Panchayat and you need committees in each of the intermediate and district Panchayat to which the work and all decisions should be taken by the Panchayat as a whole including the appoint of contracts and the payment of moneys for contracts.

So, the Prime Minister has said with regard to eliminating corruption that mechanisms for social audit and formal audit will go a long way towards mitigating the evil of corruption in Panchayats. Strong and empowered Gram Sabhas and Ward Sabhas which meet frequently and regularly to keep the elected executive authority under continuous check and watch can also guarantee clean Panchayati Raj. So, I do not despair. मुझे नहीं लगता कि पंचायती राज का मतलब मात्र भ्रष्टाचार है। मुझे लगता है कि पंचायती राज संस्थानों के जरिए ही हम भ्रष्टाचार के पाप को इस माटी से हटा पाएंगे।<sup>[a83]</sup> भारत माता को भ्रष्टाचार से बचाना है तो इसका एक ही रास्ता है, और वह यह है कि ग्राम सभाओं को सशक्त बनाएं, पंचों को वास्तव में परमेश्वर बनाएं और सरपंच को सही निगरानी में रखें। अगर हम यह सब करेंगे तब ही बिना भ्रष्टाचार के पंचायती राज को चला पाएंगे।

There is need for independent evaluation. Both Shri A.B.Belarmin and Sushree Sujata made this suggestion. It is the fundamental goal of this Report that we have such an independent evaluation. Devaluation index through the NCAR is one method of independent evaluation.

For role of women in Panchayat, I have made a request to Prof. Nirja Gopal Jayal of the Jawaharlal Nehru University to set up a study which will, of course not entirely but satisfactorily, look through the 12 lakh women who are in our local bodies and find out how they are playing their role, see whether they are doing their job effectively and find out what are the problems that they face and suggest solution to it because now that we have got the women in, we really need to make them empowered and also we need to get the best out of them. It is true of all the Panchayati Raj representatives and so the independent evaluation is a very useful suggestion.

Sir, with regard to KILA (Kerala Institute of Local Administration), I will look into the suggestion made by Sushree Sujatha that we make this an international institute. I have to first make it a national institute. Let me try and do that before we reach out to the world. It is a good suggestion and one that certainly bears emulation.

Sir, now I come to the exempted States and regions, the problems that has been bothering Shri Bwiswmuthiary and a few others. यहां चौधरी लाल सिंह ने जम्मू-कश्मीर का जिक्र किया और वहां डब्ल्यू वांग्यू

साहब ने नागालैंड के बारे में बताया। अब हम बैसिमुथियारी साहब से सुन चुके हैं कि हमारे इलाकों में क्या होगा। भाग 9 में बताया गया है कि पंचायती राज सिक्सथ शैड्यूल इलाकों में लागू नहीं होगा। इसके साथ यह भी बताया गया है कि दार्जिलिंग गोरखा हिल काउंसिल में कुछ एक्जम्पशन दिए गए हैं। वैसे भी जम्मू-कश्मीर में जब तक धारा 370 के अंतर्गत संशोधन को स्वीकार नहीं करेंगे तब तक हम इस प्रकार का पंचायती राज वहां लागू नहीं कर सकते हैं।

As far as the BRGF is concerned, Kokrajhar and districts like that are included, I have set up an Expert Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri V. Ramachandran, the former Vice Chairman of the Kerala State Planning Board to prepare a report, which I am hoping to get well before the end of this month, in which he will tell us how we can have an effective grassroots planning in those areas which are exempted. So, the exempted areas are, by and large, are the whole State of Mizoram; the whole State of Nagaland; the hilly areas of Manipur; large parts of Tripura and certain areas of the State of Assam. These are all within the Sixth Schedule. We have also excluded the Autonomous Hill Council area of Ladakh and indeed the whole of Jammu and Kashmir and the Gorkha Hill Council. It applies only with modifications. In all these exempted areas we will have to see how we are going to run the District planning system.

Puducherry is going to cause a particular problem because they do not have a District Panchayat. They have a village Panchayat and a commune Panchayat. So, we will have to work out some system that is applicable specifically to that State. We are looking after the States and the Constitution provides that if Bodoland, or if Tripura, or if Mizoram wishes to adopt the Panchayati Raj system, they are welcome to do so. I forgot to add that Meghalaya is also exempted under the Sixth Schedule.

Shri Meinya from Manipur asked me a question that since the population of Manipur now has exceed 21 lakhs, can they have a three-tier system? Well, they are going to have State Assembly Elections there shortly and so my request is that this question may be postponed until the State Assembly elections. [R84]

Coming to the end, to Shri Prabodh Panda, I am grateful for bringing up the point on media and publicity. I am afraid there is a huge silent revolution taking place there. It is the most important systemic change in India since the proclamation of the Constitution. There is nothing on this scale taking place anywhere, but you would not know it if you have read our newspapers or saw the television. What can I do to co-opt the media in this exercise? I hope they will listen to the Prime Minister who said that there is a silent revolution that is taking place in the countryside. It is silent only because the media and the urban political opinion are not giving adequate attention to it.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I have abused your time because this is a golden opportunity to try and get the message about the most important thing happening in India out to the knowledge of the people of India.

I end by drawing your attention to the figures given to us by Comrade Acharia demonstrating the huge divide which is there between the India which is proud of Ratan Tata taking over Corus and the reality in rural India, between the IT flat world and the very mountainous world in the valley of which bulk of our people live. On every index, as indicated by Comrade Acharia, rural India is



miles behind urban India and the rich of India are streets ahead of the poor of India. We are probably the country with the largest number of rich people in the world. About 300 million is equal to almost the population of North America and European Union. But we also have got 700 million or 800 million people who may not live below the poverty line but are poor by any national standard, leave alone international standard. And they cannot take advantage of globalization without localization. We can have this globalization to sustain 8 to 9 per cent growth. But it will not reach down to our people unless localization gives them this power over their own destiny. That is why, the Prime Minister ended his speech by saying that Panchayati Raj is the harbinger to new home for eradication of rural poverty and promotion of rural prosperity. He said that he has every confidence that Panchayati Raj will truly blossom within the next few years so that even as our economy gallops forward, rural India sees the blossoming of the dreams of Gram Swaraj that has inspired our leaders from Mahatma Gandhi to Shri Rajiv Gandhi.

So, perhaps the last word in this debate should not be in my mouth but in the mouths of Mahatma Gandhi and Shri Rajiv Gandhi. Shri Rajiv Gandhi, when he ended his presentation of 64<sup>th</sup> Amendment to this House on the 15<sup>th</sup> May, 1989 said, "To the people of India, let us ensure maximum democracy and maximum devolution. Let there be an end to power brokers. Let us give power to the people." Mahatma Gandhi said, "The greater the power to the panchayats, the better for the people."

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I think, since a detailed reply has been given by the hon. Minister, no clarification is required.

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