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Title: Need to amend certain provisions of the National Food Security Act.

DR. J. JAYAVARDHAN (CHENNAI SOUTH): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to bring to the notice of the House an important issue with regard to the National Food Security Act highlighted in the Memorandum submitted by the hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, to the hon. Prime Minister.

Some key suggestions made by Tamil Nadu to safeguard food security were not adequately addressed when the National Food Security Act was passed.

Tamil Nadu seeks a legally binding assurance on the issue price of food grains for the additional assured quantity provided for those States which are drawing food grains over and above the additional assured quantity provided under the Act. Such additional quantities of food grains should be provided to the States at Rs.3 per kg. or at least at the current price applicable for the Above Poverty Line families of Rs.8.30 per kg. ...(*Interruptions*)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Members, please do not disturb.

...(*Interruptions*)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Members, silence please. Please do not disturb. Please be seated.

...(*Interruptions*)

DR. J. JAYAVARDHAN: Preferably, the entire urban population should be covered as households eligible for allocation of subsidized food grains. Alternatively, at least 75 per cent of the urban population should be covered as that of the rural areas. ...(*Interruptions*)

Schedule I of the Act assures the limited allocation of subsidized food grains only for a period of three years from the commencement of the Act. ...(*Interruptions*)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Nothing will go on record except what Dr. J. Jayavardhan says.

...(*Interruptions*)

DR. J. JAYAVARDHAN: The guarantee of supply of subsidized foodgrains with an assured level of subsidy from the Government of India should be for a period of 10 years. A provision to obligate the Central Government to import food in times of scarcity is very crucial...(*Interruptions*)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Mr. Rajesh Ranjan, please do not disturb. I have allowed Dr. Jayavardhan to make his submission. Please do not disturb.

...(*Interruptions*)

श्री अर्जुन राम मेघवाल: सभापति जी,... *इन शब्दों को निकाल दिया जाए। ... (व्यवधान) बाकी सब ठीक है। ... (व्यवधान) कर्प्शन बढ़ा है, यह तो ठीक है, लेकिन ... * यह ठीक नहीं है। ... (व्यवधान)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: I will go through the records and take a decision.

...(*Interruptions*)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Ranjanji, please take your seat.

Dr. Jayavardhan, please continue.

DR. J. JAYAVARDHAN : A provision to obligate the Central Government to import food in times of scarcity is very crucial to make this legislation truly a Food Security Act. "The Provisioning of Funds to State Governments for Short Supply of Foodgrains Rules, 2014" is not an adequate safeguard of the interest of Tamil Nadu.

Extending the time period up to a few months to complete identification of eligible households is not a realistic timeframe, particularly so when the District-wise break-up data under the Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) is yet to be made available. Hence the period should be extended for two years.

Sir, the provision in the Act empowering the Central Government to introduce cash transfer and food coupon scheme is strongly objected to by our State, and this should be amended with a clear indication that any cash transfer and food coupon scheme can be only introduced with the concurrence of the State Government.

Sir, I would request that the Central Government should take effective steps for proper implementation of the National Food Security Act by addressing the lacunae present in the Act. Thank you.

