

RAJYA SABHA

LIST OF BUSINESS

Friday, March 17, 2017

11 A.M.

#QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS entered in separate lists to be asked and answers given.

(FROM 2.30 P.M. TO 5.00 P.M.)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS (RESOLUTIONS)

1. SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA to move the following Resolution:—

“Having regard to the fact that:—

- (i) from time immemorial, India has been an agrarian economy as the agricultural sector employs 263.1 million Indians, which accounts for 54.6% of the total Indian workforce;
- (ii) agriculture contributed 15.4% of the Gross Value Added in 2015-16;
- (iii) over the years, indigenous breeds of cattle have been the backbone of the agricultural economy as prior to the introduction of modern farm equipments, agriculture would not have been possible without cattle and even today, cattle play an important role in agricultural activities, particularly for the small and medium farmers;
- (iv) bull power is used for ploughing and transportation, which saves electricity and consumption of large volumes of fossil fuel that are harmful to the environment;
- (v) India imported 2.28 lakhs TMT of crude oil and other petroleum products in the year 2015-16, worth Rs. 5.24 lakh crores, 60 lakh tonnes of diesel worth Rs. 4000 crores which can be potentially saved by replacing tractors by cattle for the purposes of ploughing and transportation;
- (vi) cattle manure has been traditionally used in India as fertiliser which helps reduce reliance on chemical fertilisers and pesticides, that have a negative effect on soil quality and harm quality of food crops produced as India consumed 256 lakh tonnes of fertilizers in 2014-15;
- (vii) indiscriminate use of fertilisers and pesticides in agriculture has been linked to spread of diseases through food products but use of dung and urine from cattle has a positive impact on the environment and soil quality, with no negative effects on health;
- (viii) a higher dependence on fossil fuels and chemical based farm inputs significantly raises the cost of farming resulting in higher food prices;

At 12 Noon.

- (ix) by increasing reliance on cattle in agriculture, one can reduce cost of food products and avoid negative effects on environment and health;
- (x) cattle used in agriculture are reared with great care, and are fed a high-quality diet, including grass fodder grown exclusively for the cattle and their health is monitored and taken care of on a periodic basis by qualified veterinary doctors;
- (xi) native breeds of cattle are gradually being phased out due to the onslaught of modern farm equipments and the import of exotic breeds;
- (xii) as per the Livestock Census conducted by the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries of the Government of India, the total indigenous cattle population in India has reduced by 8.94% from 1660.15 lakhs in 2007 to 1511.72 lakhs in 2012, which is a small fraction of the total actual requirement for cattle for agricultural practises;
- (xiii) the population of exotic breeds of cattle has increased by 20.18% in the same period, from 330.6 lakhs in 2007 to 397.32 lakhs in 2012;
- (xiv) owing to the decline in the population of the indigenous bulls, artificial insemination is increasingly being relied upon for breeding of cows;
- (xv) article 48 of the Constitution of India directs that the State shall endeavour to take steps for preserving and improving breeds of animals; and
- (xvi) all possible steps are needed to be taken to preserve, improve and protect the stock of indigenous cattle of the country,

this House urges upon the Government to: —

- (a) suitably amend the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 to exempt bulls from the application of provisions that restrict their utility and training for various purposes by using of various techniques to train them to perform agricultural tasks such as ploughing and transportation;
- (b) include the amended Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, in the Ninth Schedule to the Constitution of India; and
- (c) take steps to encourage and incentivise the use of indigenous cattle for agricultural purposes and improve their health and stock."

2. SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD to move the following Resolution:—

[#]Having regard to the fact that:—

- (a) desperation is growing among farmers in Bundelkhand region due to crop failure because of drought, flood, frost and hailstorm;
- (b) this region consists of seven districts of Uttar Pradesh namely, Jhansi, Lalitpur, Jalon, Banda, Chitrakoot, Mahoba and Hamirpur and seven districts of Madhya Pradesh namely, Chhatarpur, Panna, Sagar, Damoh, Tikamgarh, Datia and Gwalior;
- (c) farmers of Bundelkhand are continuously migrating to other places in search of employment for the last many decades;

[#] Original notice of resolution received in Hindi.

- (d) farmers in Bundelkhand are getting frustrated because of huge loss of crops due to wild animals and *Nilgais*;
- (e) Bundelkhand is mainly rain-fed agricultural region and the production of crops depends mainly on the monsoon, which causes an irregularity in production and income that makes the life of farmers uncertain and difficult;
- (f) due to persistent severe droughts in Bundelkhand, crop production is continuously decreasing as a result of which farmers are not even able to recover their cost price;
- (g) the financial income in the region is meager because of dearth of agro-based and cottage industries; and
- (h) agriculture has become a vocation of loss because of undervaluation of cash crops and wide spread exploitation of trade which is the prominent reason for burden of debt and desperation prevalent amongst the farmers of Uttar Pradesh;

this House is of the opinion that-

- (i) small scale and cottage industries should be established in the region;
- (ii) a training centre for central police force must be commissioned in Chitrakoot, Banda and Satna area of Bundelkhand, so that farmers in the area may get some security;
- (iii) loan recovery from farmers in Bundelkhand be stopped and waived off besides providing fertilizers, seeds and electricity free of cost to them;
- (iv) the farmers of Bundelkhand should be awarded a package of fifty thousand crore rupees, which will cater to completion of various incomplete works of the region and help in sustainable crop enhancement, macro-micro irrigation projects and other schemes related to development of infrastructure in the region;
- (v) a separate fund with the corpus of Rs. 500 crore should be established to provide financial help to elderly wives of old farmers and to provide facilities related to higher education for their children as thousands of elderly women and widows have high expectations of a relief and rehabilitation package;
- (vi) as the Finance Minister had promised in his budget speech, the Government should establish a price stabilization fund and a national market for agro products, start micro-irrigation and watershed projects in drought prone areas, new and increased NABARD fund to restore the credit and steps should be taken to increase the storage capacity;
- (vii) useful information should be provided regarding reasons for drought and forecast of appropriate time for sowing the crops to lessen the effect of it and there should be proper rain water management and crop monitoring;
- (viii) a survey of all poor and labourers of Bundelkhand should be conducted and on that basis BPL cards, free accommodation and toilet facilities be provided;
- (ix) the Central Government should take steps to stop the loss of crops due to wild animals and *Nilgais*;
- (x) the Central Government should provide free fertilizers and seeds in order to promote production of pulses and oil seeds;
- (xi) Yamuna Canal should be built by making a dam on Yamuna river near village *Augasi* of Banda district so that the problem of irrigation in Bundelkhand may be solved;

- (xii) besides the existing ponds in Bundelkhand region, concrete ponds should be constructed at places in the fields for rain water harvesting so that the farmers can use the water of these ponds when needed for irrigating their respective fields and reap the harvest and the Central Government should provide interest free loan for this purpose;
- (xiii) to curb migration from this region, the schemes like MNREGA should be amended and consideration be made for giving more than 100 days employment throughout the year under such scheme;
- (xiv) for plantation of fruit bearing trees in this region, a time-bound systematic action plan should be initiated under a Central Scheme;
- (xv) for irrigation in the region, irrigation of crops of the farmers should be ensured by laying pipes in the fields, so that the production can be increased to improve the conditions of farmers;
- (xvi) there is a need to roll out schemes to encourage farmers of Bundelkhand to do cultivation with modern equipments;
- (xvii) for all round development of Bundelkhand, there should be a guarantee of employment to all the groups of persons above 18 years of age which will stop migration and totally curb the suicides committed by farmers;
- (xviii) since this region is extremely backward in education, there should be a separate special provision in Education Policy for this region;
- (xix) keeping in view the electricity problem in the Bundelkhand region, electricity should be supplied on concessional rates by the Central Government; and
- (xx) in order to protect crops of farmers from wild animals and *Nilgais*, the Central Government should make arrangement in every *Nyaya Panchayat* for an Animal Shelter Centre and a *Gausala* (Public Cow Shelter).

3. SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK to move the following Resolution:—

“Having regard to the fact that:—

- (i) the Government has proposed to nationalize 111 waterways in the country;
- (ii) the National Waterways Act, 2016 enacted by the Parliament for the purpose includes six rivers of Goa, which are mentioned in the Schedule to the Act at Serial Nos 25 (Chapora river), 27 (Cumarjua River), 68 (Mandovi River), 71 (Mapusa/Moide River), 88 (Sal River) and 111 (Zuari River);
- (iii) if the intention of the Union Government was to develop transport through these rivers, proper course to achieve the objective would have been to give Goa Government sufficient funds for the purpose;
- (iv) the Central Government does not possess adequate funds for the purpose, and the private companies which the Government proposes to rope in for the purpose of developing these rivers would insist on possession of vast areas of precious land on both sides of the rivers; and
- (v) in case of State of Goa, the Government has limited area of land in its possession for allowing the same for any development on the sides of the rivers,

this House unanimously urges upon the Government to delete the names of six waterways of Goa from the Schedule to the National Waterways Act, 2016 and give necessary financial assistance to the State for the development of the rivers.”

4. SHRI RAM NATH THAKUR to move the following Resolution:—

&“Having regard to the fact that:—

- (i) the problem of poverty both in rural as well as urban areas is getting worse day by day;
- (ii) untrained youth, farm labourers, medium and marginalized farmers in the rural areas have access to work only for four months and they remain jobless during the remaining period of the year due to paucity of job opportunities; and
- (iii) a large number of educated and trained youth in urban areas is roaming in search of employment;

this House urges upon the Government to-

- (a) launch an Assured Employment Guarantee Programme so that the problem of poverty prevalent in rural and urban areas can be done away with;
- (b) add such appropriate provisions in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme to ensure that employment for at least six months in a year can be provided to the people of rural areas; and
- (c) make necessary constitutional provisions to provide reasonable unemployment allowance, if the people in the rural and urban areas cannot be provided with employment."

5. SHRI BHUPENDER YADAV to move the following Resolution:—

“Having regard to the fact that:—

- (i) in the absence of simultaneous elections to Lok Sabha and State Assemblies, there is hardly any year without election in the country which is highly time-consuming and monumental wastage of financial, manpower and other resources;
- (ii) separate elections affect stability, governance, administration and stands as hurdle in attending to peoples' grievances simultaneously bringing down economic growth because of enforcement of Model Code of Conduct during elections;
- (iii) Central Election Commission and the State Election Commissions have separate electoral rolls which results in duplication of voters, electoral malpractices resulting in considerable expenditure in holding this democratic exercise;
- (iv) many defence personnel, certain categories of Government employees, displaced Kashmiri Hindus, etc., are deprived to exercise their right to franchise due to their geographical locations;
- (v) in the absence of public funding, which otherwise is being allowed in many countries, there is huge flow of black money into the electoral system which is also paving the way for entry of unscrupulous elements into electoral politics;
- (vi) even though Election Commission puts limit on campaign expenditure, depending upon the nature of election, such ceilings practically remain only on paper and the actual cost of running an election campaign is often much higher than the prescribed limit;

& Original notice of resolution received in Hindi

- (vii) the Election and Other Related Laws (Amendment) Act, 2003, which aims to control expenditure of every candidate in election, has little impact at the ground level since the existing system lacks transparency;
- (viii) the lack of strong legislative backing with effective implementation machinery and absence of legally acceptable public funds resulting in leaving candidates to fend for themselves during each election without any steady support to ensure continuation of their respective campaigns which otherwise has the obvious consequence of proliferation of black money into politics and the institutionalization of corruption;
- (ix) the absence of effective measures to ensure transparency and accountability in funding of political parties exacerbates present situation by creating authoritarian power structures, which are hard to relinquish for those who enjoy their benefits and tend to impose themselves in the scheme of national politics as well; and
- (x) the high cost of elections prevents those with modest financial resources from being competitive in elections resulting inevitably in biased policy decisions,

this House urges upon the Government to—

- (a) amend the election and other related laws forthwith to hold Lok Sabha and Assembly elections simultaneously which gives a period of clear five years to the incumbent Government to focus on governance;
- (b) amend laws and rules in such manner which facilitate reforms in electoral cycle in order to limit election expenditure and avoid wastage of time in electioneering;
- (c) ask Election Commission to have single electoral roll in the country to weed out duplicate voters, check electoral malpractices and bring down the cost of holding the democratic exercise;
- (d) amend the Constitution and other relevant Acts and rules to introduce e-ballot/ e-voting system in order to enable all voters, who may be away from their place of residence for different reasons, to exercise their right to franchise online;
- (e) implement State funding of elections;
- (f) enact or suitably amend the relevant laws to regulate utilization of funds by political parties;
- (g) take steps for strengthening democracy, transparency in political funding and take other necessary reforms;
- (h) link Aadhaar Number with Election Card issued to every eligible citizen of the country; and
- (i) permit NRIs and Indians staying abroad to cast their vote in elections."

NEW DELHI;
March 14, 2017.

SHUMSHER K. SHERIFF,
Secretary-General.