

RAJYA SABHA

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***SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE**
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(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)
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Thursday, February 02, 2017/ Magha 13, 1938 (Saka)
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**MATTERS RAISED WITH THE PERMISSION
OF THE CHAIR**

**1. Alleged Illegal Construction of Check Dams
across River Bavani by Government of Kerala**

SHRI A.K. SELVARAJ: I wish to raise a matter of illegal and unauthorized construction of six check dams by the Kerala Government across River Bhavani which is a major tributary of River Cauvery. It will affect the natural flow of River Bhavani to Tamil Nadu. The entire matter is sub-judice before the hon. Supreme Court. This is also against the Order of the Cauvery Tribunal. Several lakhs of people along River Bavani, who are entirely dependent for drinking water and irrigation on Rivers Bhavani and Cauvery, are affected. Therefore, I urge upon the Union Government to direct the Kerala Government to stop immediately such illegal and unauthorized construction.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

2. Serious Threat to the Environment, Marine Life and Livelihood of Fishermen due to Oil Spill near Chennai Kamarajar Port

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI : On the 29th of January, an oil spill has happened near Kamarajar Port in North Chennai. Different organisations of the Government are not coming together when a damage like this happens. There are reports which indicate that around 35 kilometres of the Chennai Coastline has been polluted and the ecosystem has been irreparably damaged. The livelihood of fishermen, their health and safety are of concern. The news reports have also shown that lack of trained personnel and specialized equipments have slowed down the efforts. Citizens, local fishermen and volunteers are trying to help. This situation demands an urgent intervention by the Union Government.

(Shri D. Raja, Shri Neeraj Shekhar, Shri Ritabrata Banerjee and Shri Tiruchi Siva associated.)

3. Concern over Suicide by Students Taking Coaching Classes in Kota, Rajasthan

SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: It is a question of life of students as Coaching Centres across India and particularly in Kota, Rajasthan are putting so much stress on the students in the name of coaching for entrance to the medical, management and computer science courses. Even parents are compelling their children for getting first division and children are committing suicide under stress and ambitions of parents. We should take note of this. Law should be enacted for reviewing their functioning, courses offered by them and the study methods of these coaching centres.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT, THE MINISTER OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING(SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU), responding to the matter, said: I will convey the concerns expressed by the hon. Member to the HRD Minister.

4. Situation of Severe Drought in Southern States

SHRIMATI JHARNA DAS BAIDYA: Southern States of India are facing severe drought. Both the Monsoons, South-West and North-East, failed. Lakhs and lakhs of acres of cultivable lands remain fallow due to scarcity of water. The Government of India should immediately release the amount of additional assistance requested by the respective States from the National Disaster Response Fund relaxing the norms of additional assistance. Special Assistance Package for agricultural and animal husbandry sectors should be declared.

SHRI T.K. RANGARAJAN: Severe drought situation in Tamil Nadu has caused crop failure in the entire State. Farmers losing their lives either due to heart attacks or by committing suicides. The State has a deficit of 41 per cent rainfall which is the lowest in the last 140 years. Tamil Nadu Government has declared all the 32 districts as drought hit and the compensation declared by them is inadequate. Therefore, I request the Central Government to immediately release substantial amount to the Government of Tamil Nadu so that they can pay compensation to the affected farming community.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

5. Need for Justice to Cargo Handling Private Pool Workers at Visakhapatnam Port

SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY: I would like to bring to the notice of the Government the apathy towards the private pool workers

engaged by the Visakhapatnam Dock Labour Board. In 1985, the import of coal had gone up then Dock Labour Board had decided with the concurrence of the Ministry of Shipping to engage private workers to handle the unloading requirement at the Port. It was decided to form an Association with an understanding between the Union and Stevedores Association. In 2002, some of the members of the Stevedores Association have formed a Trust and Dock Labour Board had decided that engaged private employees have to be entrusted to the Trust that had been formed by the Stevedores Association. Here the problem has started.

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: In other ports also, this is a chronic problem being suffered by the contract and casual workers so, the Government must seriously intervene.

(Shri Ananda Bhaskar Rapolu associated.)

6. Alleged Lathi -Charge by Delhi Police on Marathi Youth Demanding Reservation in Railways

SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL: I would try to bring forth the incidence of lathi-charge yesterday on apprentice children working in Railway and the injustice done with them . Day before yesterday, there was Presidential Address and it was committed to create 50 Lakh skill-employment every year. But the ground reality is that children working in Railway as apprentice have also been sacked from their jobs. And while going to meet the Minister of Railways with the request to undo this injustice, they were lathi-charged upon. Though they are skilled, they are facing unemployment. Lathi- charge was resorted to against girls also. An apprentice boy who hailed from the village of Prime Minister was also made a victim of the lathi-charge. I would like to request through you to dispense justice to the children.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

7. Serious Situation in Ration Distribution in Kerala

SHRI C.P. NARAYANAN: I want to bring to the notice of the House a very difficult situation that is faced by the Kerala people because Kerala is deficient in the production of foodgrains. In 1960 statutory rationing was introduced in the State of Kerala, and then, we used to get more than 20 lakh tons of foodgrains per month for distribution. Later, when the Food Security Act was introduced, it was reduced to 16.4 lakh tons. Now, it has been reduced by another 2 lakh tons. We are getting only 14.4 lakh tonnes. This is not sufficient. Because of this, the price of rice has gone up. Our Chief Minister and the concerned Minister of Civil Supplies had represented to the Prime Minister and the concerned Minister to make available the necessary quantity of grains so that there can be price stability in the open market and those below poverty-line can be given at least five kg. of food grains per month. This is not being made available. I request the Government to immediately make available two more lakh tonnes of food grains to the State every month.

SHRI A.K. ANTONY: It is a very serious issue for Kerala. I request the Government of India to take it seriously and find a solution to the representation made by the Kerala Government.

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI ANANTHKUMAR), responding to the matter, said: It is a very important issue, raised by our friends from Kerala. I will bring this to the notice of the hon. Minister of Public Distribution and will see to it that Kerala gets adequate quantity.

8. Country-Wide Strike on 3rd February by Medical and Sales Representatives

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: About a lakh medical and sales representatives of the country are going on strike tomorrow, the 3rd February. In the name of regulation, don't leave the medicine price to be determined by the market. It must be based on cost plus

reasonable return. On that basis, the medicine price should be fixed. That is the first demand of the striking one lakh medical and sales representatives. Then, the tax or excise duty burden on essential medicines must be made nil and the aggression of the multinational companies to monopolise the supply of essential medicines must be contained and controlled. No rules have been made to define the service conditions of the medical and sales representatives. They have been pursuing this since the last two years. A tripartite committee is in place. But, the committee is not doing anything. So, this is also one of the major issues for which one lakh workers are going on strike tomorrow. I urge upon the hon. Minister to intervene in this matter.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

9. Need to confer *Bharat Ratna* on Dr. J. Jayalalitha, Posthumously and to install a Bronze Statue in Parliament House Complex

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: We lost Amma of Tamil Nadu people. Ten crore people called her and now calling her as Amma. Amma cannot be replaced. She is a personification of love and compassion and emotionally connected to people. She worked endlessly till her last breath for the upliftment of poor people and brought all round development in our State, Tamil Nadu. I am by the people and I am solely for the people was her strong conviction and she sacrificed her whole life for the upliftment of women and poor. A personification of complete motherhood, Amma introduced several welfare measures like free 20 kgs of rice for every household, women upliftment programmes, girl child protection scheme and Thalikku Thangam Thittam which gives gold and family assistance, etc. A leader of firm decision, her intelligence and governance cannot be compared to any other leader in this world. Her loss has caused an irreparable loss to the people of India. Even her arch rivals said that they never ever wanted her to die. This shows her greatness. We request that the highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna, be conferred posthumously on Amma to recognize her exemplary 32 years of public service. We urge upon the Centre to install her life-size bronze

statue in the Parliament complex and also recommend her name for Nobel Prize for Women and Child Upliftment.

(Shri A. K. Selvaraj, Shri K. R. Arjunan and Shri T. Rathinavel associated.)

SPECIAL MENTIONS

1. Need to give Permission to the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to resume Excavations at Keeladi in Sivaganga District of Tamil Nadu and Provide Adequate Financial Assistance for the Purpose

SHRI T. K. RANGARAJAN: The excavations at Keeladi, a small village in Sivaganga district near Madurai in Tamil Nadu, have successfully brought out the evidence of urban settlement of a flourishing civilization. The civilisation dates back to third century BC and third century AD. Two years of excavations in 2015 and 2016, unearthed 1800 antiquities in first year and 4000 antiquities in second year. More than 70 Tamil-Brahmi inscribed shreds have been discovered during the excavations. It is noteworthy that the ongoing quarrying activities along Vaigai River pose a major threat to these archaeologically significant sites. Lack of funds and any undue delay in carrying out excavations at Keeladi may only end up missing a golden opportunity to unravel the history. I, therefore, seek the intervention of hon. Minister of State for Culture and Tourism and request him to instruct the Central Advisory Board of Archaeology of India to immediately permit ASI to resume excavations at Keeladi and provide necessary financial assistance to yield desirable result. I also request to establish a Site Museum on the premises to display all the items excavated over the past months.

(Shri Tiruchi Siva, Shrimati Kanimozhi, Shri La. Ganesan and Dr. Subramanian Swamy associated.)

2. Need to grant Adequate Financial Assistance to the State of Tamil Nadu affected by Natural Calamities during the Years 2015 and 2016

DR. V. MAITREYAN: The extremely heavy rains and subsequent floods in Tamil Nadu during December, 2015, have caused enormous devastation to standing crops, property and public infrastructure, besides loss of livelihood and loss of life and cattle. Our beloved leader, late Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, had requested the hon. Prime Minister to release Rs. 25,912.45 crores for complete relief and restoration efforts. But, only Rs. 1940.42 crores have so far been released. In December, 2016, Cyclone Vardah had caused severe damage in Chennai city and districts of Tiruvallur, Kanchipuram and Cuddalore, uprooting several thousands of trees and electric lamp posts, besides damaging the roads and other infrastructure. Tamil Nadu had sought an assistance of Rs. 22,573 crores from the Central Government. But till date, no grant has been released by the Centre towards Vardah Cyclone relief. Therefore, I urge upon the Union Government to consider the demands of the Government of Tamil Nadu, and immediately release the adequate relief grants to Tamil Nadu.

3. Need to expedite the Release of Funds for Centrally Sponsored Schemes to the State of Tamil Nadu

SHRI T. RATHINAVEL: The Government has to release Rs. 9,000 crore to Tamil Nadu as a part of its share for centrally-sponsored scheme. The Government of Tamil Nadu has raised this issue of pending payments with the Union Finance Ministry during a meeting of State Finance Ministers, held recently in New Delhi. Tamil Nadu is yet to get post/ pre-matric scholarship funds meant for SC/ST students. The Centre has to reimburse Tamil Nadu to the extent of Rs. 542 crores for building infrastructure for Judiciary. Likewise, under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen), an amount of Rs. 602.02 crores is still pending from the Government. A total amount of about Rs. 1500 crores is yet to be released. Any delay in the release of funds

sanctioned for the projects, will adversely affect the success of these Centrally Sponsored Schemes. Therefore, I urge upon the Union Government to expedite the release of Rs.9,000 crores due to Tamil Nadu.

4. Need to provide Financial Assistance from the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) to the State of Tamil Nadu to take Relief Measures in the State affected by Drought

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Tamil Nadu received 168.3 mm of rainfall during North-East monsoon as against 440.4 mm. Non-release of water in Cauvery by Karnataka has left a huge shortfall of 112.5 TMC ft. The water stored in Mettur Dam was grossly insufficient. It was not sufficient even to save a single paddy crop in Cauvery Basin. Due to the failure of South-West and North-East monsoons in the current year, the water storage position in all the water bodies is at a critical level. The Government has to provide relief to the farmers for the damages caused to the crops and also to ensure drinking water facilities through various temporary measures. Adequate fodder availability needs to be maintained to protect cattle. We earnestly seek an amount of Rs.39,565 crores from the National Disaster Response Fund. The State is in urgent need of assistance from the NDRF so as to take immediate relief and restoration measures. I urge the Centre to sanction Rs.5,000 crores immediately for relief measures.

(Shri Tiruchi Siva associated.)

MOTION OF THANKS ON THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

**THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE AND THE
MINISTER OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD):** I move
that an Address be presented to the President in the following terms:-

“That the Members of the Rajya Sabha assembled in this Session are deeply grateful to the President for the Address which he has been pleased to deliver to both Houses of Parliament assembled together on January 31, 2017.”

The Hon'ble President has mentioned about two important events in his Address, one is about great Sikh Saint Guru Gobind Singh's 350th 'Prakash Parv' and another one is about completing 1000 years of our great saint of the country, Sri Ramanujacharya. Besides, Champaran Satyagraha is completing 100 years and we are also celebrating the 100th birthday of our thinker and great leader Deen Dayal Upadhyay who gave us the vision of 'antyodaya' and this Government is making policies on this basis for the poor. This Address has highlighted the importance of peoples' involvement in nation's development. This Government wants to bring change in the country and has invited people's participation as it believes in the principles of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas" and "Ek Bharat, Shresth Bharat". We know that Yoga is India's ancient tradition and today an International Yoga Day is celebrated across the globe only because of the Government's efforts and people's movement. The general public has come forward to make Government's 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan' a great success through their active participation. On the Government's initiative in this regard, more than 3 crores toilets have been constructed for desisting people from open defecation.

Another programme of public movement is 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' in which an emphasis has been laid on saving the girl child. The improved sex ratio in Haryana is a fine example of this

programme. Under the 'Sukanya Samridhi Yojna', 94 lac sukanya samridhi accounts have been opened till date and 7,600 crores of rupees have been deposited in these accounts for the safety of the girl child. The representation of women in forces and sports has increased a lot today. We can see a great change in conferring the Padma Awards, 2017 and it is a matter of pride that it is the first time that the Government has recognized the work of numerous common men who are involved in changing the nation. In this way the contribution, quality, accomplishment of common people is being celebrated today. We need to become more generous in recognizing the work and accomplishment of the leaders who have made India what it is today.

Our Prime Minister called upon the bank employees to open Jan Dhan Accounts for poor and 27 crores accounts were opened within a year in which these poor people have deposited more than 45,000 crores of rupees. We have provided Life Insurance cover of 2 lac rupees to 13 crores people till date. Under 'MUDRA' loan scheme, 2 lac crores of rupees have been provided to 5.6 crores people who are engaged in small business or are small vendors. This Government has increased reservation upto 4 percent for Divyangs. The farmers are benefited a lot from Crop Insurance Scheme. For extending cooking gas facility to the poor, 1.5 crores people have given up their gas subsidies voluntarily on the appeal of our Prime Minister. Under the "Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana", electrification of more than 11,000 villages have been completed till date and this number is likely to up by 18,000 by this year. It is a symptom of change which can happen by the public cooperation.

India's economy is growing rapidly. Even the IMF and the World Bank have believed that India's growth-rate would be at the height within coming two or three years. This Government had constituted the SIT in it's very first Cabinet Meeting. Today, we are having a direct exchange of information with America and Switzerland. Our Government have changed its taxation policy and made the 'Benami Act' effective. The Government have taken initiative to make the country strong through demonetization. This

demonetization has curbed human trafficking and enhanced Advance Taxation. To check terrorism and to secure India's borders, the Government had carried out a surgical strike across the border. India has emerged as a big power of the world because of the Government's foreign policy. The Government have allotted Rs. 11,000 crore for "One Rank, One Pension". In this Budget, Infrastructure has seized a major part. Today, millions of people of the country are connected with 'Aadhar', Internet and Smart Phones. This Government have started putting subsidy of Cooking Gas directly into users' account. In this Budget, Digital Payment has been given top priority. This Government desire to make an honest India.

DR. VINAY P. SAHASRABUDDHE: I second the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address. This Government is working with an idea of continuity with change. Changes are visible also due to this Government. This Government is working on the model of 'Participative Democracy'. When a struggler activist becomes Prime Minister from grass root, he recognizes the pulse of the poor and it reflects in his policies also. The major ideologies of the Government are - being sensitive for deprived and welfare and empowerment of the poor. Our Government have initiated development process by reviving North-eastern Council. The slogan 'sabka saath sabka vikas' has been translated into a reality. Camps have been organised for handicap people. Government is sensitive towards railway passengers by responding on social media. Provision for seamless travel for Defence personnel has also been made. Government has taken the decision of receiving online applications for Padma Awards to make the selection process more transparent. This Government shares its views through 'Mann ki Baat.' Significant changes have been made in the passport rules for making the procedure hassle-free. Effective efforts have been made to raise the underground water level in various states. Government is committed to social development.

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): Concerns have been expressed on Kashmir issue in

the Presidential Address. It is a matter of great concern that many security forces have lost their lives and hundreds got injured in the terrorist attacks. This Government has proved a failure in checking incidents of infiltration. Many soldiers have lost their precious lives in the recent avalanches in the valley. Hence, I request for increasing connectivity in hilly areas on the lines of connectivity in the Kutch region.

The Government should concentrate more on the issue of poor condition of roads in Jammu and Kashmir. It is sad that many civilians got killed and injured during the tussle between security forces and people. Many of them are languishing in the jails. Government should take some concrete steps in this regard. It is very surprising that instead of feeling apologetic for demonetization this Government is taking credit for that move. At the outset the Government has said that this move will put stop on black money, counterfeit currency and terrorism. But unfortunately this move has not affected all these things at all. My question is that when all of the money has already been deposited in the banks then where is the black money. In the process of demonetization some of the bank managers have earned a lot by illegal methods. In this connection many cases have been reported by the media also. Actually instead of curbing black money this process has helped to generate black money.

In this Address there is a mention about farmers. But in reality due to demonetization, farmers do not have money to buy seeds, fertilizers and insecticides. The number of farmers being committing suicides is increasing. Still this Government is talking about their welfare. Our party tried to persuade the Government to waive off their loans but nothing has been done in this regard. Now the situation of farmers is very pathetic. Our mothers and sisters always save some money for the adversity. But this move has affected them very adversely. The Government have forced the senior citizens, women and small children to stand in the long queues. Many people have lost their lives also. Still Government is taking credit for demonetization. As a result of this move not only construction industry but the other industries associated with this industry is also

on the verge of closure. A large number of labourers have become unemployed .

All economists including our former Prime Minister have predicted about the fall in GDP as a result of this move. Even the international media has criticized it a lot. It is very strange when we raised our voice against demonetization then this Government termed us as the people having black money. Actually no experts have been consulted for this process and this is the main reason for shortcomings in this planning. People have to suffer a lot due to this move. In our opinion BJP has leaked this information to their people in advance. That is the reason they had deposited crores in the banks and purchased the land also in cash just before demonetization. In the absence of employment opportunities our country will not be able to progress. Today the state of all industries is pathetic. Now the people are migrating back to their respective native places. Its a big question that now how they will feed their families. This Government has proved fail on every front. Instead of moving on the path of progress our country is regressing.

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****Supplement covering rest of the proceedings is being issued Separately.