

RAJYA SABHA

*SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE

(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

Thursday, March 16, 2017/ Phalguna 25, 1938 (Saka)

MATTERS RAISED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIR

1. Plight of Farmers Due to Inefficient System of Procurement of Wheat and Pulses by the Government

SHRI SHARAD YADAV: This year's season has been favorable for crop and bumper crop has been registered throughout the country. The procurement by the Government takes place only in limited areas and that will lead to large scale distress sale throughout the country. The MSP of wheat announced by the Government is Rs.1625 per quintal whereas it is being sold at the rate of Rs.1550 per quintal in the market. Our previous Governments had put so much efforts to increase the production of pulses by 30 percent. But despite the increase in production, the MSP announced by the Government for Pulses is very meager which is resulting into distress sale of pulses by the farmers. The Government is importing Pulses and Wheat at Zero Duty, which is not a good move.

PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV: The sufficient quantity of pulses is available in the country and yet the Government is importing

*This Synopsis is not an authoritative record of the proceedings of the Rajya Sabha.

the same. Instead of importing it you should encourage the domestic production as well as the farmers of the country.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: This Government assumed office by promising to pay one-and-a-half times the cost of production as the Minimum Support Price. Instead of doing that they are importing from outside at a higher price giving our farmers less than the MSP. This leads to farmers' suicide. So, they must immediately stop the zero duty imports.

LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): We want a discussion on this issue.

(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: We have no problem in discussing this issue. This Government has increased the MSP of pulses. A Group of Ministers is discussing this issue and we will take appropriate action at an appropriate time.

2. Surcharge on Digital Payments after Demonetisation

SHRI NARESH AGRAWAL: This Government has taken the decision of Demonetisation and Digital India. The Government had told that no fuel surcharge would be charged on the payments made on the petrol pumps through cards but in spite of that two percent surcharge was imposed on those consumers. Now the banks have issued an order that rupees 50 to 150 would be charged on more than three to five withdrawals in a month. The owner of the Chinese Company *Paytm* earned a profit of millions of rupees with the support of the Government. The Government on one side is talking about Digital India and imposing this kind of surcharges etc. on the other side. The policy of the Government in this regard should be clarified.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: I associate myself with this issue. This month, I got a notice from the State Bank of India,

deducting Rs.144 as charges for use of the ATM card. This is happening without any announcement whether you use it or not.

(Several Hon'ble Members associated.)

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI), responding to the matter, said: The "Digital India-Develop India" is an important and revolutionary move of the developed India. The allegation made by the hon. Member that Government is promoting that company, is totally baseless. We are ready for discussion on this matter if the notice is given.

3. Need to regulate Medical Healthcare in Private Hospitals

SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: In the absence of doctors and dissatisfaction with quality standards at Government hospitals, an increasing proportion of people are using private healthcare facilities. In the last decade, the cost of treatment has more or less doubled. Private hospitals lack transparency, often resulting in an increase in medical negligence, amounting to severe injuries, and even, death. In a recent case a person Sanjay Roy, sadly died in a world famous private hospital in Kolkata due to alleged medical negligence. The hospital authorities refused to release his dead body unless the hospital dues were cleared. On the lines of a legislation passed by the West Bengal Government, there ought to be a Central law regulating private hospitals in terms of over-pricing of medical treatment, cancellation of licences and payment of compensations in cases of medical negligence.

(Shri D. Bandyopadhyay, Shri Sukhendu Sekhar Roy, Shri Vishambhar Prasad Nishad, Shri Alok Tiwari and Shri Javed Ali Khan Associated.)

4. Hardships being faced by Employees of the Hindustan Paper Corporation

SHRI VIVEK GUPTA: The employees of a public sector undertaking, Hindustan Paper Corporation are having a grievance

that the headquarters of this Corporation, located in Kolkata, is being shifted to Guwahati. The MD of the said undertaking has told that they have been offered some incentives to shift by the Central Government. I don't understand why it is being done. Is it just because the political colour in Assam has changed or is it because of something else? I would like to know this from the Government because Hindustan Paper Corporation is a very prestigious company which manufactures paper used for textbooks for school children. This company can be revived through a little bit of cooperation from the Central Government and all the workers will start getting their dues. There will be no use of shifting to Guwahati.

(Shri Tapan Kumar Sen, Shri Sukhendu Sekhar Roy, Shri Mukul Roy, Shri Md. Nadimul Haque and Shri D.P. Tripathi associated.)

5. Concern over Steep Hike in Prices of LPG Cylinder

SHRIMATI JHARNA DAS BAIDYA: This Central Government has made a historical increase in the cost of unsubsidized gas cylinders in the country. The average Indian household will now have to pay Rs. 737.50 for a single cylinder of gas. Women's ability to manage the household budget has come under severe strain as the fuel costs have gone up dramatically over the last six months. Therefore, the Government should roll back this unprecedented hike in the price of LPG cylinders and provide relief.

(Shri Tapan Kumar Sen, Shri Ripun Bora, Shri K.K. Ragesh, Shri Vishambhar Prasad Nishad and Shrimati Kahkashan Perween associated.)

6. Need to include Bhojpuri in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution

SHRI ALI ANWAR ANSARI: The Government has promised a number of times to include the Bhojpuri language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. At the same time, I will also say that primary education be imparted in the mother tongue of the child. We have also requested the Government for inclusion of Bhojpuri

language in the Schedule as there are more than twenty crores of people who can understand and speak this language across globe. Like other languages, this language also reflects our mixed culture.

(Several Hon'ble Members associated.)

7. Concern over the Pendency of Reimbursement of Medical Bills of Private Hospitals Empanelled under CGHS

SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: I wish to bring to your notice that certain private and corporate hospitals are exploiting the CGHS beneficiaries. Even these hospitals advise these beneficiaries to undergo treatment with their own expenses and later submit the claim for reimbursement. I, therefore, request the Government to thoroughly scrutinize and audit all the pending medical bills by obtaining information from individual beneficiaries about the expenses incurred by them for the treatment outside the package cost and also confine the bills to the extent of package rate prescribed by CGHS.

(Dr. K. V. P. Ramachandra Rao, Shri Ananda Bhaskar Rapolu and Shri Ranvijay Singh Judev associated.)

8. Concern over Trafficking of Humans, Particularly Girls in Various States

SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL: It is the duty of the Government to provide protection and facilities to the children and create a fearless atmosphere. There are many NGOs who are working for the children and engaged in the related work. As per a report, human trafficking is largely rampant in bordering States, especially in Assam and West Bengal. There is a NGO running in Jalpaiguri, where children are being sold in violation of rules. The Central Adoption Resource Authority has also played a role in it by sanctioning money.

(Several Hon'ble Members associated.)

9. Rampant Female Foeticide in Maharashtra

SHRI HUSAIN DALWAI: Female foeticide is taking place on a large scale in the country. Private hospitals are involved in this practice. Nineteen cases of foeticide happened in Sangli district in

Maharashtra. Despite having strict rules in this regard, these are not being followed. There should not be any bias between a boy and a girl. Though Maharashtra is a developed state, but the sex-ratio of the state is far below as compared to the one in underdeveloped states. The strict action should be taken against hospitals involved in such acts.

(Several Hon'ble Members associated.)

10. Proposed Strike by Central Government Employees on 16th March, 2017

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: Today more than a million Central Government employees are on strike throughout the country. They are protesting against the massive non-filling up of vacancies in the Central Government offices, the National New Pension Scheme, the betrayal of the Government in implementing the commitment given by the Government to all the Trade Unions of the Central Government employees, etc. I request the Government to respond to their just demand.

(Several Hon'ble Members associated.)

11. Need to take up the Matter of Killing of an Indian National in Kansas, USA with the US Government

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: An Indian engineer from Andhra Pradesh was shot dead and another injured in Kansas, USA in a apparent act of racial hatred. The attacks on Indian nationals, racial discrimination and human rights' violations in the United States of America is a very serious matter. Such a big country, with high technology and modern civilization, has not been able to detect who killed them and the reason behind this. These incidents have sent shockwaves across the country. After the new President has taken over the reins of Administration in the USA, the hate crimes against Indians are increasing. I want to know what diplomatic effort has been taken by the Government.

(Several Hon'ble Members associated.)

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) responding to the matter, said: I will make a detailed statement in this regard on Monday.

12. Alleged Harassment of Farmers by Bank Managers and Farmers Suicides in Tamil Nadu

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: I want to mention a tragic incident which happened in Tirunelveli District where a person died out of the verbal attack of the Manager of a Bank from where he had taken loan. I would like to know why there is this harassment by all the Bank Managers who deal with all these poor farmers. Sir, regarding educational loan, a student from Sathankulam village, attempted suicide yesterday only because of the Bank Manager's harassment. All these incidents bring forth the insane attitude of the bank managers towards these poor farmers.

(Shri D. Raja, Shri Tiruchi Siva, Shrimati Kanimozhi, Shri Harivansh and Shrimati Jharna Das Baidya associated.)

Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways) 2016-17

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): I lay on the Table, a statement (in English and Hindi) showing the Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways) 2016-17.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTERS

I. Killing of Indian Fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy off the Coast of Tamil Nadu

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): I rise to respond to the issue regarding an incident of firing on Indian fishermen in Palk Bay. At the outset, I would like to reiterate that our Government attaches the highest importance to the safety, security and welfare of Indian fishermen. Government, through diplomatic channels, has consistently taken up issues relating to apprehension of our fishermen with the

Government of Sri Lanka to ensure that our fishermen are treated in a humane manner.

According to our information, the referred matter relates to the incident in Palk Bay at around 2230 hrs on 6 March 2017, in which a fishing vessel from Tamil Nadu was fired upon, allegedly by the Sri Lankan Navy, leading to the death of an Indian fisherman. Another fisherman was also injured. After the incident was reported, the Government, through diplomatic channels, took up the matter urgently with the Government of Sri Lanka and expressed our strong concern over the incident. The Sri Lankan side has, however, denied the involvement of their Navy in the firing incident.

Our High Commissioner personally spoke to Sri Lankan Prime Minister and Navy Commander on this matter. The Sri Lanka Navy, however, maintained that their patrol boats are not authorised to open fire at any point on Indian fishermen even if they are transgressing into the Sri Lankan waters. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka, in a separate statement, conveyed their deep concern over the firing and loss of life, reiterating the commitment of the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure that all Government agencies treat Indian fishermen in a humane manner at all times. The Sri Lankan Government has further reassured us that all possible action will be taken in cooperation with the relevant Indian authorities to investigate the incident.

President of Sri Lanka also conveyed to our Vice President in their meeting in Jakarta on 7th March, 2017 on the sidelines of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Leaders' Summit his regret at the unfortunate incident and the loss of life. He emphasized that he has ordered a full investigation. We will be pursuing this matter with the Sri Lankan Government.

It is because of the priority attached to this issue by our Government that the fishermen issues were raised at the highest level, including by our Prime Minister in his meetings with the Sri Lankan President in the last two years. We consider the matter as essentially humanitarian in nature, involving the livelihood and socio-economic

practices of our fishermen community. Both leaders had called for finding a permanent solution to the matter. I have also discussed the matter, in great detail, with the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister during my visit to Colombo in February 2016, when we co-chaired the 9th meeting of the India- Sri Lanka Joint Commission. We have since then steadfastly worked towards finding a permanent solution to the matter.

Last November, based on the feedback, I, along with our Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, held a bilateral ministerial meeting with Sri Lanka in New Delhi to discuss the issue in a comprehensive manner. I also had a meeting with the Fishermen's Associations on this issue. I would like to share with the august House that an agreement was reached at the meeting to set up a Joint Working Group (JWG) on Fisheries as a bilateral institutional mechanism to help find a permanent solution to all fishermen issues. It was also agreed that Ministers of Fisheries of the two countries meet every six months to review the progress. The first meeting of the JWG on Fisheries was held in New Delhi on 31 December 2016 and the first ministerial meeting was held on 2 January 2017 in Colombo. The JWG agreed to a set of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) which included "an understanding to ensure that there was no physical harm or loss of life while apprehending fishermen by Navy and Coast Guard of the two countries."

The Government, as a result of its consistent efforts, has secured release of 1045 Indian fishermen, in custody of Sri Lanka in 2014, 375 fishermen in 2015, 333 fishermen in 2016 and 51 fishermen in 2017. While 85 Indian fishermen along with 136 fishing vessels were in custody of Sri Lanka, I am glad to inform the House that all the fishermen have since been released. Seventy seven fishermen returned to India day before yesterday and as I speak, rest of the 8 are on their way back to India. We are also pursuing the release of the fishing boats in Sri Lankan custody.

I would again like to reassure the hon. Members that the Government of India accords the highest priority to promote the well-being, safety and security of our fishermen. We have strongly

conveyed to Sri Lanka that the use of force cannot be justified under any circumstances.

The Government continues to remain engaged with the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure that the rights of the detained Indian nationals are protected and that the fishermen on both sides can continue to pursue their livelihood in a safe, secure and sustainable manner.

II. Apprehension of Indian Fishermen by Pakistan

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): The Government has been regularly taking up the matter of consular access, early release and repatriation of the apprehended Indian fishermen in the custody of Pakistan's authorities at various levels. We have institutionalized the mechanism of sharing information about the prisoners, including fishermen, in each other's custody through a Bilateral Protocol in 2008. Under this, lists of prisoners, including fishermen, are exchanged on 1 January and 1 July, every year. Last such exchange of lists took place on 1 January 2017.

Due to the persistent efforts of the Government, we have been able to secure the release and repatriation of 1261 fishermen since 2014. In fact, the release of 438 of these Indian fishermen was secured in the last three months only. As per available information, presently there are 301 Indian fishermen in Pakistan's custody. However, Pakistan has confirmed custody of only 77 fishermen so far. We continuously seek consular access to the Indian fishermen in custody and distribute to them the items of daily necessity, as required.

It has been brought to our attention that many incidents of apprehensions take place beyond the international waters. In this context, under the Community Interaction Programme, regular awareness campaigns are conducted by the Indian Coast Guards in coordination with the State Fisheries Department, to educate "the fishermen about the limits of the International Maritime Boundary Line.

Emphasis has also been laid on the need for fishing in safe, secure and sustainable environment. The Indian Coast Guards have also been undertaking enhanced patrolling in the Indian waters, including to safeguard the interests of the Indian fishermen and keep them out of harm's way.

The Government continues to monitor the status of the Indian fishermen in Pakistan custody with a view to secure their early release and repatriation.

III. National Health Policy, 2017

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA): The Cabinet has approved the National Health Policy 2017. It is a huge milestone in the history of health sector in the country. The Health Ministry has formulated the National Health Policy 2017, under the guidance of hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modiji. The last National Health Policy was framed in 2002. So, this Policy has come after a gap of 15 years to address the current and emerging challenges necessitated by the changing socio-economic, technological and epidemiological landscape.

The Government of India adopted a highly participative and consultative approach in Policy formulation process. The Draft National Health Policy was placed in public domain. Over 5000 suggestions were received. This was followed by consultations with the State Governments and other stakeholders for further fine tuning of the Policy. The Policy was placed before the Central Council for Health and Family Welfare, the apex Policy-making body and was unanimously endorsed by it.

The Policy informs and prioritises the role of the Government in shaping health systems in all its dimensions -- investment in health, organization, and financing of healthcare services, prevention of diseases and promotion of good health through cross-sectoral action, access to technologies, developing human resources, encouraging

medical pluralism, building the knowledge base required for better health, financial protection strategies and regulation and progressive assurance for health. The Policy is aimed at reaching health care in an assured manner to all, particularly the underserved and the underprivileged.

The Policy aims for attainment of the highest possible level of health and well-being for all at all ages, through a preventive and promotive health care orientation in all developmental policies, and universal access to good quality health care services without any one having to face financial hardship as a consequence. This would be achieved through increasing access, improving quality and lowering the cost of health care delivery. The broad principles of the Policy are centered on professionalism, integrity and ethics, equity, affordability, universality, patient-centered and quality of care, accountability and pluralism.

The Policy seeks to move from sick-care to wellness, with thrust on prevention and health care promotion. While the Policy seeks to reorient and strengthen the public health systems, it also looks afresh at strategic purchasing from the private sector and leveraging their strengths to achieve national health goals. The Policy looks at stronger partnership with the private sector.

As a crucial component, the Policy proposes raising the public health expenditure to 2.5 per cent of the GDP in a time-bound manner. The Policy advocates a progressively incremental assurance-based approach. It envisages providing larger package of assured comprehensive primary health care through the 'Health and Wellness Centers' and denotes important change from very selective to comprehensive primary health care package which includes care for major NCDs, mental health, geriatric health care, palliative care and rehabilitative care services. It advocates allocating major proportions (two-thirds or more) of resources to the primary healthcare. It aims to ensure availability of two beds per 1,000 population distributed in a manner to enable access within the golden hour. In order to provide

access and financial protection, it proposes free drugs, free diagnostics and free emergency and essential healthcare services in public hospitals.

The Policy has also assigned specific quantitative targets aimed at reduction of disease prevalence/incidence under the three broad components, viz., (a) health status and programme impact, (b) health system performance, and (c) health system strengthening, aligned to the Policy objectives. Some key targets that the Policy seeks to achieve are:-

1. Life Expectancy and healthy life:

(a) Increase Life Expectancy at birth from 67.5 to 70 by 2025.

(b) Establish regular tracking of Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALY) Index as a measure of burden of disease and its trends by major categories by 2022.

(c) Reduction of Total Fertility Rate to 2.1 at national and sub-national level by 2025.

2. Mortality by Age and/or cause:-

(a) Reduce Under Five Mortality to 23 by 2025 and Maternal Mortality Rate from current levels of 100 by 2020.

(b) Reduce infant mortality rate to 28 by 2019.

(c) Reduce neo-natal mortality to 16 and still birth rate to "single digit" by 2025.

3. Reduction of disease prevalence/incidence:-

(a) Achieve global target of 2020, which is also termed as the target of 90:90:90, for HIV/AIDS, that is, 90 per cent of all people living with HIV know their HIV status, 90 per cent of all people diagnosed with HIV infection receive sustained antiretroviral therapy, and 90 per cent of all people receiving antiretroviral therapy will have viral suppression.

(b) Achieve and maintain elimination status of Leprosy by 2018 -- We commit ourselves that by next year, we will be eliminating leprosy -- Kala-Azar by 2017 and Lymphatic Filariasis in endemic pockets by 2017.

(c) To achieve and maintain a cure rate of >85 per cent in new sputum positive patients for TB and reduce incidence of new cases, to reach elimination status by 2025. The MBG for tuberculosis is 2030, but we have ourselves committed that we will be ending tuberculosis by 2025.

(d) To reduce the prevalence of blindness to 0.25/1,000 by 2025 and disease burden by one-third from current levels.

(e) To reduce premature mortality from cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes, or chronic respiratory diseases by 25 per cent by 2025.

This Policy focuses on tackling the emerging challenge of non-communicable diseases. It supports an integrated approach where screening for the most prevalent NCDs with secondary prevention would make a significant impact on reduction of morbidity and preventable mortality.

The policy envisages a three-dimensional integration of AYUSH systems encompassing cross referrals, co-location and integrative practices across systems of medicines. This has a huge potential for effective prevention and therapy that is safe and cost-

effective. Yoga would be introduced much more widely in schools and work places as part of promotion of good health.

To improve and strengthen the regulatory environment, the Policy seeks putting in place systems for setting standards and ensuring quality of healthcare. The Policy is patient centric and empowers the patient for resolution of all their problems. The Policy also looks at reforms in the existing regulatory systems both for easing manufacturing of drugs and devices, to promote Make in India, as also for reforming medical education. The Policy, has, at its centre, the person who seeks and needs medical care.

The Policy advocates development of cadre of mid-level service providers, nurse practitioners, public health cadre to improve availability of appropriate health human resource.

The Policy also seeks to address health security and Make in India for drugs and devices. It also seeks to align other policies for medical devices and equipment with public health goals.

The Policy envisages a time-bound Implementation Framework with clear deliverables and milestones to achieve the policy goals.

The Union Budget, 2017-18

General Discussion - *Contd.*

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN, Continuing his unfinished speech dated 09.02.2017, said: I had raised some points. Firstly, the government had made a statement in this House, had the economy made through reducing expenditure, it would lead to further recession. So, it is important to avoid contraction measures. This Budget is a decline of the size in terms of GDP, if other steps are not taken. My second point that why a huge amount of direct tax is

lying unrecovered. Thirdly, what is the logic behind putting the expenditure in the single basket and showing that there is increase in absolute terms. Why have many of cesses like cesses for labour welfare, bidi worker, mine worker and construction workers been stopped which were established by an Act of Parliament.

SHRI D. RAJA: Economics and Politics cannot be divorced. This Budget doesn't have adequate measure to contain inflation and create jobs. The Government talks about banking reforms but nothing is visible. There is less allocation on health and education. Now, the GDP of India are being determined more by the foreign investments. Our Current Account has always been in a deficit. The Government talks a lot about the agricultural sector, but the 'Fasal Beema Yojna', eludes majority of the farmers. The Scheduled Castes Component Plan and Tribal Sub Plan, were conceived way back in 1970s. NITI Aayog does nothing but transferring public assets to the private sector and promoting private sector. The Government intend to go for reckless massive disinvestment of Public Sector Undertakings. Even the best Public Sector Undertakings are being disinvested. The Government is doing fiscal statistical jugglery and it is trying to mislead the people. In fact, their allocations for Scheduled Castes Component Plan and Tribal Sub Plan have gone down. The amount given under these plans is not to the tune of amount according to the Jadhav guidelines or the Planning Commission guidelines. That is where I question the mandate of NITI Aayog. The Government should agree for a Central legislation on the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Sub-Plans. The Government is confronting the issue of unprecedented inequality where poor people are becoming poorer. They create wealth. But their share in the country's wealth is not appropriate. There is manual scavenging on the one side and Mangalyaan on the other side. This Budget will have to address such fundamental issues. I would like to know from the Government, what does it do for the upliftment of poor people through its economic policies?

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: I would like to talk about the economic situation, demonetization, black-money, Aadhaar and some

philosophical underpinnings of this year's Budget. It is no exaggeration to say that growth is very subdued. My request to the Finance Minister is to use three indicators as being used in China, namely, bank credit, electricity consumption and railway freight. If you use these three indicators, you get a completely different picture than what the GDP growth numbers give you. It is an economy in which the investor confidence has come down very significantly. For the first time in 14 years, the Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) has fallen. There is a need to restore that sentiment and confidence of investors. It is beyond doubt that demonetization was a psychological shock. Demonetization is based on spurious and dubious economic logic. Barring a few, there is no country in the world that adopted demonetization as a strategy. Till today, the Finance Minister has not told us how much money has actually come back to the banks after demonetization. In his Budget speech, he said that roughly 1.8 lakh accounts have been opened and about 4.9 lakh crores has been deposited in these accounts. He did not say whether these are individual accounts or corporate accounts. Many people have made the assumption that this money is black money. I would request the Finance Minister to please give us a number which will help us to understand what is the economic impact of demonetization. The motivation for demonetization was to curb black money. On Mr. Ram Jethmalani's petition, the Supreme Court passed an order on the 4th of July, 2011 that an SIT should be constituted for black money. The former Finance Minister took a conscious decision that fighting black money is the job of the Government of India. This is an Executive function and there is no role for an SIT. After the Supreme Court order, the Government of the day set up a multi-agency task force and on the 21st of May, 2012, Shri Pranab Mukherjee presented a White Paper on black money in the Lok Sabha. After the White Paper the Government of the day started anti-black money operations. From 26th May, 2014 till the 8th of November, 2016, the NDA Government unearthed a certain amount of black money. In the last two years of the previous UPA Government, a certain amount of black money was unearthed which was higher than that of NDA Government. It is simply going contrary to facts. The last two years of the UPA

Government unearthed more black money. NDA Government created a propaganda that they came and they set up the SIT. They had no option but to set up the SIT where the Supreme Court had given them less than one week to do so. The UPA said unearthing black money is the job of the Government but the NDA said that it is the job of the SIT. The previous Government had better results than the pre-demonetisation results of the NDA. Aadhar is going to be the anchor for the delivery of all social welfare programmes. I am glad that the Prime Minister has changed his views on NREGA and GST. I am very worried at the manner in which the Aadhar initiative is being implemented. On the 11th of August, 2015, the Supreme Court said that Aadhar will be used only for PDS and only for distribution of LPG and kerosene.

The Supreme Court on 14th September, 2016 had directed the Government for dropping of Aadhaar number as a mandatory condition for a number of schemes like the scholarship scheme. Aadhaar was meant for the delivery of social welfare programmes and elimination of fake identity. But making it mandatory means of identification in the last couple of months is a complete mockery of the entire Aadhaar Scheme. Hence, Aadhaar Act needs some modification for ensuring that fake identity does not lead to wastage in subsidy programmes, pension programmes, scholarship programmes and in distribution of foodgrains. Sharing norms between centre and states have been changed from 75:25 to 60:40. Abolition of the Plan and the Non-Plan has led to winding up of Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan and Tribal Sub-Plan.

SHRI AJAY SANCHETI: The focus of this Government is on making continuous improvement in the old system and benefitting neglected sections of society. More money is being pumped into various sectors like infrastructure, agriculture, education, women empowerment, automobile, power and finance. Insurance coverage has been widened for farmers to fight natural calamities. Growth of infrastructure and highways in the country is on the rise. Much allocation has been made for multi fold growth of sectors like

Railways and Shipping. Slashing of tax rates from 30 to 25 per cent for medium and small industries is a major step taken in this direction. Demonetisation was a big check on corruption and reduction of terror and cross border funding. This Government does not desist from taking harsh decisions.

SHRI HARIVANSH: You have thrown a challenge to yourself by adopting a policy of making populist promises. It is my firm belief that there is nothing concrete in this budget to tackle graving economic scenario in the country. Agitation by various communities on roads for reservation in government jobs shows unrest among unemployed youth of the country. This budget is silent on solution to this problem. This Government has not taken any step at least for the economic sector of the country. Widening economic disparity in the country is a matter of great concern. In our country due to liberalization the rich are becoming richer and the poor are becoming poorer. In our society the disparity is increasing. Regional disparity is also increasing as rich states are becoming richer and poor states are lagging behind. Today due to economy disparity the problem of unemployment is increasing. Population is also increasing rapidly but no new job opportunities are available. This Government had promised to create employment for the people but nothing concrete has been done in this regard. Today the system of economic development model on the basis of globalization is in danger. Now even the developed countries are not considering it as a beneficial. America and other developed countries are not in favour of globalization. IT industry has changed scenario of this country but now it is in danger. Because in this industry the opportunities are decreasing and competition is increasing. New policies of America will put serious impact on our economy but in this context nothing has been mentioned in the Budget. Government should think over it and should try to find options in this regard. In our country the entrepreneurs are taking benefit of Government policies. If this trend is continued like this then condition of our country will not change. In Bihar many commendable welfare programmes like reserved employment, electricity to all, construction of toilets and ban on liquor

have been initiated. Government should try to fulfil basic needs of common people. We have seen the situation of banks during demonetization. Many competent officers of banks and influential people did wrong things. The Government should see that what types of people are working in banks and what types of people are being given importance in the banks. The banking sector is a very challenging sector. So some steps should be taken to make the banking system a better system.

SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY: It is historic because both the Railway Budget and the General Budget have been merged and it has been presented post-demonetization. The objective of TEC India is to transform the quality of governance. The Finance Minister was trying to maintain the fiscal prudence, contain inflation and bring down the current account deficit. Vote on Account could be avoided by clearing the Budget before 31st March. Therefore, I advise the Government of India to adopt the calendar year as fiscal year as it is prevalent in many countries. I hope that it also suits India. We don't know what exactly the GDP figure is because various agencies are giving different figures.

There are three methods of calculating the GDP. First is Value Added method and the second is Expenditure method. In fact, the amount of discrepancy or difference between the two methods works out to about Rs.1.18 lakh crore for 2016-17 which is really significant. Therefore, which method to be relied upon leaves a question mark. It is true that the Gross Fixed Capital Formation has been consistently coming down since 2010-11. The CSO estimates reflect that the growth in GDP in 2016-17 was largely due to growth in the Government's final consumption of expenditure. Therefore, it is very much necessary for the Government of India to concentrate more on capital expenditure than operating expenditure or revenue expenditure. It really contributes to the growth of GDP. Gross Fixed Capital Formation to GDP ratio is very important. It is estimated to be 26.9 per cent in 2016-17 vis-à-vis 29.2 per cent in 2015-16.

Andhra Pradesh, after bifurcation, is on the brink of bankruptcy and the Union Government does not come to the rescue of my State. In the case of TEC India and other issues, this Budget is in the positive direction. But, in so far as Andhra Pradesh is concerned, I have no hesitation in saying that it has received a raw deal in this particular Budget. The figures given by Andhra Pradesh are very important because these figures are adopted by the Central Statistical Organisation for calculating the GDP. Therefore, this has got a reflection and bearing on calculation of GDP. The share of State excise has also gone down substantially from 10.2 per cent to five per cent.

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK: It is the responsibility of every Constitutional authority to play the role in consonance with the provisions of the Constitution. Budget is one part. Compliance of Budget and Budget provisions and implementation is another part. During UPA regime, we used to follow Constitution. But, what is happening today? We have thrown an idea called 'Make in India'. But what is it, nobody has told us. Because nobody knows what is 'Make in India'. Not a single agreement with a foreign country has been conceived where 'Make in India' has been incorporated. The concept was that from the countries where we used to import machinery, we will tell those countries that you come here, prepare, manufacture the items and pass on technology. Has such a contract ever been executed or even signed? Let the Government explain. Then, comes 'Start up'. The rules which have been put in place for 'Start up', especially, the banking regulations, are such that nobody will dare to come forward to make a 'Start up'. Then comes the demonetization. What about 30 to 40 lakhs of people who have been thrown out of job in private sector, unorganized and organized sectors? Has the Prime Minister conceived any plan to give them jobs? Nobody is bothered about that.

Then, the question is, why is the National Education Policy not forthcoming for the last more than a year? The document which your Government has put on the website, all have misunderstood it as draft Education Policy. It is not the draft Education Policy. Please do

it properly. You have got the responsibility as far as the Real Estate Bill is concerned. How are you going to implement the subject which, primarily, belongs to the States? If you have got a plan for that purpose, you can also tell us about that. You have totally captured the Reserve Bank of India. There is no independence which was there earlier. The autonomy of Reserve Bank of India was finished at the time of demonetization. Many people have talked about the payments due to the banks from various sources. There is not only Mr. Mallya, but there are so many people who have defrauded the banks. Whether the Government is approaching or has approached the U.K. Government? Let us know about the status of that case. This is very important because transparency is required.

SHRI RANGASAYEE RAMAKRISHNA: This year, we have abandoned generations of old practices in three things. One is a Vote on Account. The second thing is a separate Rail Budget. Then, a very important thing is that the Planning Commission has been taken away. So, I think, we are moving in the right direction in the entire process of the budget-making. The emphasis of our concerns both in the Budget Speech, as well as, in the President's Speech was towards poor, downtrodden, exploited, deprived, farmer, labourer, youth and woman.

The ground reality of a parallel economy depriving the State of its legitimate revenues compelled us to demonetize. Since this Government assumed power, it has been consistently striving for empowering the disadvantaged. Digital India was perceived not as a luxury, but, as a dire necessity. It facilitated the direct transfer of benefits to the targeted individuals. One big advantage of the Jan Dhan accounts is that large sections of the non-bank sector can now resort to bank credit. Our Government has also mobilised Jana Shakti through programmes such as Ujjwala. We are enabling all the housewives to move from the smoky chimneys to smokeless LPG. This is a very big relief. The hon. Finance Minister has referred to the paucity of human resources in Panchayati-raj institutions. Merely placing some outlays in the hands of Panchayats without the

manpower and without any particular accountability will not make them effective. One other major problem is that of the jobless growth. There is a dire need for repositioning the education sector so that it becomes skill-oriented.

Budget 2017-18 has earmarked Rs.11,640 crore for employment generation programmes which includes PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana, ATUFS, PMMUDRA Yojana, PMEGP and ASPARE. What is needed is that there is a job assurance after skilling. I think we should improve on apprenticeship and upgrade the apprenticeship scheme. Now, let us turn focus on infrastructure. The decision to do away with the Railway Budget, which I mentioned a little while back, is a bold initiative. Investment of Rs.3.96 lakh crores in 2017-18 generates high hopes for early resolution of our infrastructure woes. We can perhaps structure scheme-wise Committees of Members of Parliament to review and monitor some of the complex inter-Ministerial programmes, which will help in formulating meaningful Budgets in future.

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