

RAJYA SABHA

*SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE

(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

Monday, March 20, 2017/ Phalguna 29, 1938 (Saka)

OBITUARY REFERENCE

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, I refer with profound sorrow to the passing away of **Shri Pyarimohan Mohapatra**, a former Member of this House, on the 19th of March, 2017, at the age of 77 years.

Born in January, 1940, in Angul District of Odisha, Shri Mohapatra was educated at the Ravenshaw College, Cuttack, the Allahabad University and the London School of Economics.

Shri Mohapatra started his career as a civil servant and served in various capacities for 35 years. He was actively involved with the voluntary sector for more than four decades and made valuable contributions to the enhancement of public life as well as championed the cause of women, children and tribals. He was the Chairman of the Tagore Society for Rural Development, instrumental in implementing Integrated Village Development programmes on the Gandhian model. He also served as the Director of the National Aluminium Company and Steel Authority of India and as Chairman of the Council of Analytical Tribal Studies.

Shri Mohapatra represented the State of Odisha in this House for two consecutive terms - from July, 2004 to July, 2010 and again

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

from July, 2010 to July, 2016. He served as the Chairman of the Committee on Government Assurances, Rajya Sabha from September, 2010 to May, 2013.

In the passing away of Shri Pyarimohan Mohapatra, the country has lost a noted civil servant, a distinguished parliamentarian and a dedicated social worker.

We deeply mourn the passing away of Shri Pyarimohan Mohapatra.

(One Minute's silence was observed as a mark of respect to the memory of the departed.)

MATTERS RAISED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIR

1. Need to withdraw the Decision of SBI regarding Penalty for Non-maintenance of Minimum Balance in Saving Accounts

SHRI K.K. RAGESH: The State Bank of India has decided to increase monthly average balance from Rs.500 to Rs.5,000 and to impose penalty for non-maintenance of monthly average balance. All other commercial banks are going to follow SBI's decision, hence, it is going to affect the whole economic system in a big way. The Government is asking for opening accounts and digital transactions. But, at the same time, the Government is penalising the poor. The Government is not taking any stringent action against corporate defaulters. I request the Government to intervene and direct the SBI to withdraw the decision taken by it.

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: This step is anti-social and dangerous. From SBI this will go to all other banks. We demand a discussion on this issue.

(Several Hon'ble Members associated.)

2. Concern over Suicide by Farmers due to Non-remunerative Procurement Prices of their Produce

SHRI PRAMOD TIWARI: During the last two months, 117 farmers have committed suicide in Maharashtra only. These deaths are not due to natural calamities rather the reason of these deaths is non-remunerative procurement prices of their produce. The Government have promised to waive off farmers' loans. Had this promise been fulfilled, these deaths would not have occurred. Also in other parts of the country, farmers are committing suicide due to their burden of loans. I urge upon the Government to waive off the loans of farmers.

(Shrimati Rajani Patil, Smt. Chhaya Verma, Shri Husain Dalwai, Shrimati Renuka Chowdhury and Shri B. K. Hariprasad associated.)

3. Need to give Protection to Doctors on Casualty Duty in Wake of Recent Attack on a Doctor in Maharashtra

DR. VIKAS MAHATME: On 14th March, in Dhule District of Maharashtra, in a Government District Hospital, one of the doctors working in Emergency was beaten up brutally. This has also happened in other parts of Maharashtra. Doctors are not ready to work in Emergency Wards. Hence, it would be difficult for us to get doctors to serve the society. We must create an environment by enacting stringent laws having non-bailable warrants against those who attack doctors and medical professionals. Everybody should feel that the doctors would not intentionally cause any harm to patients. It is my appeal that stringent laws should be made in this regard.

(Dr. V. Maitreyan, Smt. Chhaya Verma, Shrimati Rajani Patil and Shri Husain Dalwai Associated.)

4. Need to take Steps to prevent Incidents of Forest Fire

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Forest fires are increasing in the country, with the pace of global warming. Lots of flora and fauna are destroyed and rare species are burnt to ashes. In Karnataka, about 715 sq. km of green cover in Bandipur National Park reported to have burnt down in fires since February, 2017. Environment and Physical

attributes are the main reasons for such fires. According to environment and ecology expert, Mr. Sidappa Setty, all forest fires in India, are man-made. 'Lantana Camara', shrub has badly affected forest cover. Shortage of forest staff is another factor. I urge upon the Central Government to order enquiry into all such forest fires, including this Bandipur National Park forest fire. I also urge the hon. Minister of Environment and Forests to frame a national policy on managing forest fires and to implement the recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee on Science and Technology, Environment and Forest.

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: Although the Central Government is taking affective steps in this direction alongwith State Government yet I will apprise the concerned minister of the issue raised by Hon'ble Member.

(Several Hon'ble Members associated.)

5. Need to form A Village Voluntary Force to counter Infiltration of Terrorists in Punjab Borders

SHRI PARTAP SINGH BAJWA: In the last couple of years, we have seen a number of terrorist attacks on our country, particularly in six districts from Pathankot to Fazilka. The peculiar aspect about these terrorist attacks is the modus operandi, of the terrorists. Pakistan-origin terrorists crossed over from the international border and attacked local people, police stations and Army establishments. Deadly cross-border terrorist attacks on Gurdaspur-Pathankot-Jammu axis in the last fifteen years has taken place. It is relatively easy to infiltrate from Punjab border stretch as compared to the Jammu and Kashmir border. My suggestion is that, we must create a Village Volunteers' Force from zero line to five kilometers of the border. We can train young boys and provide them weapons as well as an honorarium. Like that, young boys of that area can work in second

line of defence behind Army and BSF. An attention should be paid towards this.

6. Need to bring a Resolution in the U.N.H.R.C. Meeting on 22nd March, 2017 for an Independent Investigation into the Genocide of Eelam Tamils in 2009

DR. V. MAITREYAN: Eight years have elapsed since the planned and systematic genocide of Eelam Tamils in Lanka in 2009. No investigation has been undertaken and not a single guilty has been punished. Lankan army in large numbers is still occupying Tamil areas. Lakhs of Tamils who have disappeared have not been found till date. Thousands Tamil widows are suffering and thousands of Tamils are detained in prisons. Thousands of Hindu temples have been razed to ground and Budha Vihars have been built in their place. I, on behalf of ten crore Tamils across the world, urge the Government of India to oppose the Resolution in the UNHRC in the voting to be held on 22nd March, 2017. I also urge the Government of India to take initiative to see that an international independent investigation is ordered.

SHRI A. NAVANEETHAKRISHNAN: I humbly request hon. Prime Minister, to take up the issue and oppose the Resolution to be moved by the USA and the UK and the investigation must be conducted in a fair manner.

SHRI T.K. RANGARAJAN: I request the hon. Minister of External Affairs or the hon. Prime Minister to come before the House and reply to those points.

SHRI D. RAJA: The Government of India will have to spell out its stand. The Government of India will have to play a pro-active role.

(Several Hon'ble Members associated.)

7. Problems being faced by Farmers in Various Parts of the Country, Particularly in Maharashtra due to Unseasonal Rains

SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL: Recently, there was heavy hailstorm and untimely rain in many parts of Maharashtra. Due to that there was a heavy loss of human lives and animals. Situation was so bad that, even potable water was brought by the trains. After that, many farmers loss their lives due to demonetisation. The people and the farmers of that area suffered a great loss due to untimely rain and hailstorm. There should be loan waiver for all the farmers of the country including Maharashtra. There should be insurance cover for people, animals and crops.

(Several Hon'ble Members associated.)

8. Alleged Neglect of Forts of Shivaji and Demand to include them in World Heritage List

SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: There are 350 forts, directly or indirectly, associated with Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. The people of Maharashtra are emotionally attached to everything which is associated with Shivaji Maharaj. Therefore, they all desire that the forts associated with him are preserved and developed as invaluable heritage of the country. The forts of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, including those under the control the ASI, are in a state of neglect. The Raigadh fort, the magnificent and massive fort, where he was coronated as 'Chhatrapati', does not even have the basic facilities. I request the Government, that immediate steps must be taken to submit a proposal for including the forts of Maharashtra in the World Heritage List of UNESCO. I request the Government, not to forget the forts which have 'Living History' of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj 's royal legacy.

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 issue raised by Hon'ble Member is not only emotionally related to the

people of Maharashtra but important for the people of the whole nation. I will apprise concerned minister about this.

(Several Hon'ble Members associated.)

9. Hardships being faced by Drivers of App-Based Taxi Aggregators

SHRI VIVEK GUPTA: Because of competition between Uber and Ola, Uber has raised the commission being charged from drivers. They have stopped many facilities being given to drivers. Uber and Ola are commercial companies and they are working arbitrarily. The Government has no control and regulations on them. Taxi drivers cannot approach any office with their grievances since there is no such office of Uber and Ola in India. Uber and Ola have no say anywhere. They work for 20 hours every day and even after that they are not able to earn required money. They have to live on borrowed money. When they would not be able to payback their loan, they would commit suicide. I request to the minister to give an explanation in this regard and solve their problems.

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: A big number of workers who are keeping our transport system on are being squeezed, and ultimately this problem will explode.

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: I will apprise concern minister of the issue raised by Hon'ble member.

(Shri Ranvijay Singh Judev and Shri Basawaraj Patil associated.)

10. Drought Situation in Karnataka

SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Karnataka is reeling under a serious drought situation for the sixth consecutive year. It has seriously affected both the farmers and the livestock. This is the second year in succession where both Kharif and Rabi crops have

failed due to the severe drought. Crop loss due to drought for both Kharif and Rabi has disrupted the farmers' lives and severely affected the socio-economic condition of the State. The State Government is eagerly waiting for the Central Government to release Rs. 1,872 crore, which have been recommended by the High Level Committee in 2016, for the kharif crop. The State is facing a severe drinking water problem, in both Northern Karnataka and Southern Karnataka.

(Prof. M.V. Rajeev Gowda, Shri Tapan Kumar Sen and Shri Ranvijay Singh Judev associated.)

11. Need for Contingency Plan for Drought in Andhra Pradesh

SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY: The State of Andhra Pradesh is staring at a severe drought for the second consecutive year in a row. On account of the failure of the monsoons, there is an average deficit rainfall throughout the State. 10 districts are reeling under severe drought conditions. 30 per cent of the area remained uncultivated this year. The drought in Andhra Pradesh has triggered an agrarian crisis which has led to gross misery. Farmers and farm workers, are migrating to State of Kerala in search of employment. I would urge upon the Government to look into this matter and take necessary action.

GOVERNMENT BILL

The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill, 2016

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): I move that the following amendments made by the Lok Sabha in the Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill, 2016, be taken into consideration, namely:-

ENACTING FORMULA

1. That at page 1, line 1, **for** the word "Sixty-seventh", the word "Sixty-eighth" be **substituted**.

CLAUSE 1

2. That at page 1, line 3, **for** the figure “2016”, the figure “2017” be **substituted**.

I also move that the amendments made by the Lok Sabha in the Bill be agreed to.

The motion for consideration of the amendments was adopted.

The enacting formula and Clause 1 as amended, was adopted.

The Bill, as amended by the amendments agreed to, was passed.

The Union Budget, 2017-18

General Discussion -- Contd.

SHRI SHANKARBHAI N. VEGAD: This Government has proposed to electrify each village of the country by 2019. Allocation of Rs.19,000 crores under Rural Road Scheme is a commendable step taken in this regard. Crop Insurance Scheme will help in fighting weather-related problems of farmers in the country. Soil Health Card Scheme aims at improving productivity. Some amount has been earmarked for organic farming. Transferring of amount directly into account holders of Jan Dhan Yojna has minimised corruption to a larger extent. International skill development centres would be established throughout the country to provide advanced training to youth. All citizens of the country will get new accommodation by 2022. It has been proposed to establish woman empowerment centres at village level. Hence, higher allocation for various schemes is meant to fulfil the dream of 'healthy India and clean India'.

SHRI NARESH AGRAWAL: Farmers are never consulted while drafting Budget. Agriculture's share in GDP has come to 19 per cent from the previous 42. Government should ponder over it. Farmers of the country are unable to bargain for fair prices. The Government had promised that it would take the GDP at the level of 8

percent but at present it has come down to 7 percent and is likely to go down further. We are spending 19 percent of our GDP on paying interest of the loans taken from other countries. It would further worsen the situation in the country as it would lead to more unemployment in the country. Our industrial growth has come down to less than one percent. The NPAs of Banks are on increase. The Government should come forward with accurate figures regarding GDP. We would also like to know the exact number of currency notes of 500 and 2000 denomination which were brought into circulation at the time of demonetization? The figures regarding total notes deposited during that period along with the amount deposited as the black money should also be disclosed. The Government should also disclose that how much black money of our country is deposited in foreign countries and by when it would be brought back as per the promise made by it. It should also be clarified that how come the fake currency notes of rupees 2000 denomination are in circulation despite so many safety features?

It was being said that the loan of the farmers in Uttar Pradesh would be waived off with the formation of the new government in the state. I am unable to understand that how a state government can waive off the loans given by the Nationalized Banks? Even the CMD of SBI has expressed reservations on this issue. The Government should clear its stand on this issue. The subsidies of farmers are being curtailed and they are not being given the remunerative prices of their produce. The corruption is prevalent in FCI and the produce of the farmers got rotten in absence of proper storage facilities. Today, the agriculture holdings are getting smaller day by day and people are moving towards cities in search of employment. At present the MSP announced for wheat and pulses is lower than the production cost. I would request the Government that at least two members from the agriculture community should also be incorporated in the committee which decides the MSP, so that the point of view of this community could be presented.

Today, the Government is purchasing pulses from other countries on higher prices and that too on zero duty. Import duty on

the edible items should be enhanced by the Government so that the domestic farmers are encouraged and import of edible items could be checked. At least some limit of the poverty should be defined by the Government and it should also be alleviated. Today, we are fortunate enough that 60 percent of the total youth of the world belong to India. This Government had promised to give 2 crore jobs every year. But it is not being done and recruitments in almost all the sectors have been stopped. It is resulting in brain-drain. We talk about Right to Education for all in the country. But in reality, the level of education is degrading day by day. This aspect should also be taken care of.

Why AICTE has made education a source of income. We are here to take decision on behalf of people. Girls education should be made compulsory then family planning will implement automatically. We should consider in this regard. The Government should take strong decisions. Universities should not be made arena of politics. Banks had been nationalised in 1971 for removing poverty, providing bank loans to people on lower rate of interest and to eradicate unemployment but today banks' NPA has become 12 percent. Interest on saving account and fixed deposits are becoming low. Each bank has its own Bank Secrecy Act to cover up the names of big debtors. This act should be repealed and name of big debtors should be published in News papers. It will bring a new revolution in the country. Government should take steps regarding non-payment of interest against education loan by the students. CMDs of banks may be asked to follow the protocols with the Members of Parliament. Many people have run away by taking loans from banks. Petrol and Diesel are being sold for Rs. 70 and 60 per litre respectively while production cost for these fuels is quite low. Why so much tax has been imposed on these products by State Governments? Government are reducing subsidy on kerosene. Even LPG cylinder has become expensive and people forget all this. Government should bring prices of petroleum products down then inflation will automatically come down. There are no doctors in Government hospitals and private doctors are prescribing the branded medicines while there is huge gap between the price generic and branded medicines. How Government will provide medicines free of cost? Government have no control over

the doctors. There is huge crowd of patients and they have wait for longer period for treatment from Government hospitals while poor cannot get treatment from big private hospitals. Government should announce that treatment of poor will be reimbursed by the Central Government and they shouldn't be denied treatment by big private hospitals. Electoral reforms should be discussed in the House. Indian citizens are returning due new visa policy of America. This issue may be looked into.

SHRI R. VAITHILINGAM, making his maiden speech,
said: I would like to pay my tribute to hon. Amma. Following the failure of the monsoon, Tamil Nadu is presently reeling under severe drought. A Central Team also visited Tamil Nadu, therefore, I request the hon. Finance Minister to kindly accord sanction for the immediate release of Rs. 2,500 crores from the National Disaster Response Fund to the Govt. of Tamil Nadu. As a part of the road-map for implementation of GST, The Centre assured that the States would be adequately compensated so, the Tamil Nadu Govt. made a claim of Rs. 13,227.46 crores, but there is still a balance of Rs. 5,571.87 crores to be reimbursed by the Centre. I request the hon. Finance Minister to look into this and release the balance amount immediately. Government of India to nationalize all the Inter-State rivers. I request the Government to ponder over this point, and allocate sufficient funds for intra-linking of rivers so that the country is rid of the water problems, for all times to come. The farmers of the delta areas of Tamil Nadu are dependent on the Cauvery waters for irrigation therefore, I request the Finance Minister to constitute Cauvery Management Board and Cauvery Water Regulation Committee early so that the order of the Tribunal can be effectively implemented, and Tamil Nadu gets its due share of water.

The attack and harassment of fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy is continuing unabated and it is affecting their livelihood. Unconstitutionally, Kachchatheevu had been ceded to Sri Lanka through the Agreements of 1972 and 1974. So, the Government of India should take steps to abrogate the Agreements and retrieve Kachchatheevu, so that traditional fishing rights of the Indian

fishermen from Tamil Nadu can be restored. I request the hon. Finance Minister to sanction adequate funds for diversification of fisheries sector so that fisheries sector of Tamil Nadu can be developed.

As regards NEET, I think, forcing the students of Tamil Nadu to take up NEET would adversely affect the socially and economically backward students. In this regard the Tamil Nadu Assembly unanimously passed two Bills. I request the Centre to kindly urge the hon. President of India, to accord sanction for these two Bills. In the Union Budget for 2015-16, the Government proposed to establish one AIIMS-like institution in Tamil Nadu. It is learnt that, luckily, Sengipatti in Thanjavur District has been identified as the best-suited location for setting up this AIIMS by the Central Team. I request the Government to take immediate necessary action. There is another long-pending demand of the people of Tamil Nadu to make the ancient language of Tamil as the official language of the Government of India. We strongly urge the Centre to declare all the languages included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution as Official Languages of the Government of India. I also request the Centre to kindly reconsider the proposal for the use of Tamil in the High Court of Madras.

SHRIMATI JHARNA DAS BAIDYA: An analysis of the allocations under the SC/ST Sub-Plan reveals a trend of under-allocation in 2017-18. Food, kerosene and LPG subsidies have a direct impact on women. The share of these in the Budget has come down from 9.5 per cent in 2015-16 to 7.9 per cent in 2017-18. There is no women specific allocation in either dairy or fisheries. The Budget Estimates for the ICDS for 2017-18 is only Rs.15,245.19 crore. It is even less than the budget allocation for ICDS in 2015-16, which was Rs.15,433.09 crore and Rs. 18,108 crore in 2014-15. The amount earmarked for the Maternity Benefit Programme is a mere Rs. 2,700 crore which will cover only 17 per cent of the 2.6 crore live child births per year in India.

The Government has completely failed to respond on the issue of rising violence against women and the need to ensure budgetary

support for survivors of violent crimes. The total schemes for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have been reduced. Only eleven new schemes for SCs and eight new schemes for STs have been introduced in 2017-18. Other than one single scheme for skill development, there has been no other new scheme introduced for the development of the North-Eastern Region. This Budget not only ignores, but also imposes further burden on the people. This Budget clearly upholds the interests of the market. It has no place for women. This is a budget to appease the rich.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Demonetisation, which was proudly announced by the hon. Prime Minister, has not achieved its intended purpose. Demonetization was done with some purpose such as to curb black-money, to stop corruption as well as to unearth black-money. But, what happened, actually, was not that. There is nothing mentioned in the Budget speech. There is no mention about the ways to unearth black money from other sources. The person who underwent all miseries is only the common and poor. Shadow economy is prevalent in all developing economies; no country is an exception to it. But, no country has taken the severest step. If you say that it curtails black money and stops counterfeit currency, it is a myth. During demonetization period, Many families could not perform marriages. People suffered a lot. But, at the same time, there were some marriages which celebrated pompously. And it was told that money spent was accounted. But, the point is, how they got it? When there was restriction with regard to withdrawal, how crores of rupees were spent in white money? So, we expected that, at least, the hon. Finance Minister, in his Budget, would come out with a fact as to how much black money has been unearthed through demonetization.

Actually, the black money holders are very safe. They had already shifted their money to the safest place. What are the methods and means you have in hand to unearth the black money which is in offshore accounts, which is in the form of real estates and which is in the form of gold and precious metals? There were long queues outside the ATMs. So many people, more than 100, died. The existing ATMs were not in a position to operate with the new currency, because the

size was different. The intention may be good, but the implementation process was very, very bad. These are all very basic things which anybody should have speculated. You are worried about black money as every one else is, but what is the way out of it. That is what we are again and again asking. When Rs.500/- and Rs.1,000/- could increase black money, why not Rs.2,000/-? You are shifting from Rs.500, or Rs.1,000 to Rs.2,000/-. I think these are not the ways and means. In the Budget Speech, we expected that Finance Minister would reveal as to how much money has been deposited and how much money is black money. But nothing has come out. Of course, your measures are good, your intention is good, but the implementation part spoiled everything else. The Internet connectivity is only 16.1 per cent in this country. Only 47 per cent of the people are having bank accounts but you want them to enter into cashless society. They don't know what is Internet. Many people do not have mobile phones even. We are living in India. We have to legislate laws and we have to bring out schemes suited to our people, not to other countries. It is a too hasty decision.

Along with that another point is about public sector undertakings. The Government is very keen in disinvesting the public sector. It is not only an organization which generates employment, but it also helps our economy. If the private sector is earning something, it is the wealth of one person but if the public sector is earning something, it is the wealth of the country. If, at all, the public sectors are failing somewhere, we have to go into its reasons and plug the loopholes. Kindly don't go into disinvestment. The scholarship being given to the students of the scheduled castes is very meagre. The Finance Minister has said that steps will be taken to promote contract farming in the country. But unfortunately the practice of contract farming reduces farm income, increases the prices and at the same time increases the margin for procurement firms. Instead of going in for contract farming and encouraging corporate, the Government must find out some means to encourage the traditional agricultural methods. Demonetization has affected us a lot. Kindly take care of the agriculturists, the public sector undertakings and the Scheduled Caste students.

PROF. M.V. RAJEEV GOWDA: Finance minister didn't focus only on money-related issues and schemes of various sorts but he laid emphasis on electoral reforms also. We applaud the intent of the Finance Minister. He talked about electoral Bonds and he also said that he would lower the amount that can be contributed by individuals to parties. These are good efforts but I think that they will don't deliver the results that are required for electoral reforms. For this purpose state funding or public funding of elections can be a very good idea. So to clean up the political system money this mode should be used. We need to give individual candidates and political parties an opportunity to raise funds through open contributions which are tagged with their Aadhaar number. When Government will do all these things many of the objections, which the activists have against the political parties, can be removed. All advertisements given in media needs to be audited by an independent source because lot of malpractices are going on there which are affecting the political system. All these measures can bring transparency in our electoral system.

SHRI MAHESH PODDAR: I support this budget. Our promises are not mere promises but they are our targets. Now the people are getting benefits of various schemes like housing, safe water, electricity, employment and affordable medicines etc. without any hassles. This Government is very concerned about the problems of farmers. So they are trying to provide comprehensive security to farmers. Lack of economic equalities is being felt in various parts of the country. Now Pradhan Mantri Urza Ganga Yojna will meet this gap also in various states. People of Jharkhand are now very hopeful and happy. This budget is a unique budget. The Finance Minister has focused on capital investment which will have far reaching results in terms of generating more job opportunities in the country. Ours economy is one of the most progressive economy in the world and this Government has taken very strong decisions in this regard. The proposals regarding disinvestment are for infusing more private investments only and not transferring ownership. This budget has provided 48,000 crores of rupees for MGNREGA. Now, the central assistance has been enhanced from 97 crores of rupees to 491

crores of rupees. This Government has aimed to electrify all the villages by the year 2019. The poor families have been provided LPG connection under Ujjawala Scheme. This Government is also committed to increase its tax base and ensure tax compliance. Dhanbad city has been declared as the most polluted city and natural resources have become curse instead of boon for it. The people belonging to middle class be given a social security net by the Government by considering them a part of the tax collection system. The State of Jharkhand has been neglected in terms of railway and tax revenue. The small traders be exempted from paying tax to a certain limit in order to encourage more people for self-employment. And for this, problems regarding tax compliance, official hurdles, etc. be solved. The States have been provided 4.11 lac crores of rupees instead of 3.6 lac crores of rupees. The capital expenditure is more than 25 percent compared to the last year. We all are agree that revenue system has improved a lot and has become more transparent under this Government. This budget has provided more funds for the rural areas, which reflects commitment for improving their living standard. The deep rooted democratic system of the country had appreciated every big and strong decision taken by many great leaders in the past as their decisions were in the interest of the nation and beyond any doubt. So, considering the same things in the mind this budget has also taken a number of steps for improvement in the all areas.

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