

RAJYA SABHA

*SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE

(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

Thursday, February 08, 2018/ Magha 19, 1939 (Saka)

OBITUARY REFERENCE

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, I refer with profound sorrow to the passing away of **Miss Frida Topno**, a former Member of this House, on the 6th of February, 2018, at the age of 92 years.

Born in September, 1925, at Sundargarh district of Odisha, Miss Topno was educated at the Women's College, and the Radhanath Training College, Cuttack, Odisha.

A social and political worker, Miss Topno worked for the preservation and promotion of tribal culture, women's education, welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. She established 'Priyadarshini Mahila Mahavidyalaya' at Rourkela. She had a few publications to her credit.

Miss Topno started her legislative career as a Member of the Odisha Legislative Assembly from 1985 to 1990 and served as Minister of State for Fisheries and Animal Husbandry from 1985 to 1986 and for Education, Youth Services and Sports from 1986 to 1990 in the Government of Odisha. She was also a Member of the Tenth and Eleventh Lok Sabha.

Miss Frida Topno represented the State of Odisha in this House from April, 1998 to April, 2002.

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

In the passing away of Miss Frida Topno, the country has lost a distinguished Parliamentarian and a dedicated social worker.

We deeply mourn the passing away of Miss Frida Topno.

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

WELCOME TO PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION FROM CHILE

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, we have with us, seated in the Special Box, Members of a Parliamentary Delegation from the Republic of Chile, currently on a visit to our country under the distinguished leadership of H.E. Mr. Fidel Espinoza, President of the Chamber of Deputies of the Republic of Chile.

On behalf of the Members of the House and on my own behalf, I take pleasure in extending a hearty welcome to the leader and other Members of the delegation and wish our distinguished guests an enjoyable and fruitful stay in our country. We hope that during their stay here they would be able to see and learn more about our parliamentary system, our country and our people, and that their visit will further strengthen the friendly bonds that exist between India and the Republic of Chile. Through them, we convey our greetings and best wishes to the Parliament and also the friendly people of the Republic of Chile.

DISPENSING WITH QUESTION HOUR

MR. CHAIRMAN: I want to put it on record once again that as a Chairman, I will not suspend the Question Hour unless there is broad consensus. There seems to be a broad consensus. That is why, today, there will be no Question Hour. We will go ahead with the discussion on the Union Budget, 2018-19.

THE UNDION BUDGET, 2018-19

General Discussion

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: The Prime Minister spoke about the achievements in the last four years. In the last four years, real wages have not increased, real GDP has not increased in agriculture, which means, compared to other sectors, the farmer has become poorer and poorer. Another challenge is employment. For four years you could not meet this challenge. You have one year left. How are you going to meet this challenge in one year? If you have not addressed this challenge in the last four years, how are you going to address this challenge in one year? Budget 2018-19 has made the fiscal deficit worse. I want to know what the current account deficit number for the current year is and what the current account deficit number for the next year is.

Every deficit target has been breached by the Budget. I want to ask the Government : What is the Government's estimate of average WPI and average CPI in 2017-18 and 2018-19? What is your assumption of the crude oil price in the Budget? Crude oil prices went below US \$ 40 a barrel. But, you wasted that opportunity. Suppose, the crude oil price rises to US \$ 70 or 75 a barrel, what is the impact of it on your Budget estimates? Will you increase retail price on petrol and diesel or will you cut the excise tax and give relief to the poor people? Total borrowings will be Rs. 85,000 crores. I want to ask you: Where did this Rs. 85,000 crores go in the Budget? What did you do with Rs. 85,000 crores? You have wasted money.

What is your Capital Expenditure? According to the Budget Estimates for the current year, the Capital Expenditure was Rs. 3,09,000 crores. According to the Revised Estimates, the Capital Expenditure is only Rs. 2,73,000 crores There is a shortfall of Rs. 36,000 crores. Please tell me, which are the schemes and projects that have been hit by the reduction in Capital Expenditure? Before you assumed office, you had promised two crore jobs a year. What is your definition of a job? How many ILO-defined jobs have you created in the last four years?

In the Budget Estimates, the customs duty estimate was Rs.2,45,000 crores. In the Revised Estimate, it is only Rs.1,35,000 crores. How did Rs.2,45,000 crores become Rs.1,35,000 crores? The next year, customs duty estimate is only Rs.1,12,500 crores. Why is customs duty figure coming down to Rs.1,12,500 crores next year? How is the GST for 11 months? Nowhere in his Budget speech has the Finance Minister even acknowledged that savings have fallen and investments have fallen. Corporate savings are not falling, it is household savings which have fallen. You have increased indirect taxes, but you have given relief to the corporate sector. Shall we tell the people that the NDA Government believes in burdening the poor people with indirect taxes? I hope the Finance Minister will answer them in this House.

Most of us are from rural constituencies. For four years, you did not implement the MSP. In 2004 and 2014, MSP increased by 100 per cent. In the first two years, you cheated the farmers of India. Now, suddenly you have woken up and said that we will give you cost. You have not even given A2 plus Family Labour cost. You can announce an MSP, but not all farmers get MSP. Most farmers sell at the market price. You have not announced MSP as defined in your Budget Speech and you are not giving an MSP. Even if you now give the MSP, it will have an impact only for the kharif crop. This is only an election jumla. The Economic Survey does not give any number about jobs. I ask first why only two academics were given access to data. I also wrote a column. After that, the two academics are unwilling to come in a public platform and defend their number. This must be the only country in the world where GDP falls but employment increases. How do you increase employment? Push the GDP down, increase employment. But, where are the jobs? In Kendriya Vidyalayas, vacancies are not being fulfilled. In CSIR Laboratory in Karaikudi, 40 posts are vacant. In CRPF, BSF, CISF, Sashatra Seema Suraksha Bal, ITBP and Assam Rifles lot many posts are vacant. The total number of vacancies in paramilitary forces is 78,234. You should fill these vacancies. There are vacancies of Judges. There are vacancies of doctors, nurses, para-medical personnel and medical technicians. In Delhi a number of vacancies are

there in almost all important departments. And, this is the same story everywhere in the Central Government. Instead of telling people that these are the jobs, why don't you fill these vacancies? The last jumla is this grand world's largest Government-funded health programme! Not one rupee has been allotted for this. A National Health Scheme announced by your Government to cover six crore families up to one lakh rupees in the year, 2016-17. You did not provide a rupee and you buried it in two years and now you say that you will cover ten crore families up to 5 lakhs rupees. People can not believe this. Many State Governments have their own scheme. For the coverage of one lakh, for all the States put together, it is one lakh crore of rupees. For one lakh crore of rupees, where is the provision? From where will you raise additional resources? The only way you will raise resources is to increase the tax on petrol and diesel. This is the biggest jumla that this Government has given us. We welcome some of your schemes but for half a dozen schemes, you have cut money. You should have increased allocation for MNREGA. You are in absolute majority in Lok Sabha. You should have taken India to the boom years. No jobs, farmers in distress, education and health outcomes are pathetic. One out of every two children in this country is malnourished. A child of class eight, class five cannot read a second standard textbook. Instead of addressing these problems, you are going to leave behind an economy that is limping. Investments are falling. Credit growth is sluggish. Jobs are not being created.

SHRI BHUPENDER YADAV: You have misused Constitutional Institutions. Ours is democratically elected government. For the last four years, India is heading towards developments. During the tenure of our government, number of indirect taxpayers has increased up to 50 percent. The number of direct taxpayers is also increased. All have formed their separate political parties. But, after coming to power, the Congress started working less on thoughts and more on behaviour. We are working to pursue economic discipline in the country. Many indirect taxes have been eliminated through GST in the country and the poor of the country are benefiting. Our government has tackled the challenges and today India has progressed on the development path. The government has passed many new laws

to give stability to India's economy as a whole. The poor people are taking benefit of Aadhar card. The shortcomings of the Company Act of 2013 was removed. To improve the economic conditions in the country, this government brought forward the subject of monetary-policy. Today we are moving towards the open market. I would like to congratulate the finance Minister that he not only formed the fund for controlling the prices, but the government also succeeded in overcoming inflation in the past four years. Jan-Dhan accounts were opened for the country's poor man to include him into the country's economic system. The aim of the Ujjwala Yojana has been raised to Eight crores of rupees. Keeping in mind the self-employment in the country, the amount of self- help groups has been increased to 75 thousand crores of rupees. This government has provided job for 321 million crore human days, constructed 3.17 million km long rural road, 51 lakh rural houses, 1.88 crore toilets and 1.7 crores power connections have been given to the needy people. The predecessor government never completed its goal. Our Government is fully committed to the villages and the development of this country. The road connectivity has been strengthened in all the villages by Gram Sadak Yojana. All time high agricultural loan of 11 lakh crores of rupees has been extended during the tenure of our Finance minister. Loan is available for a farmer who own land, but now arrangement of loan has been made for the landless farmer. I would like to congratulate the Government for opening 22,000 rural haats in the rural areas and has strengthened the agriculture market by establishing its infrastructure through MGNREGA. Our government has given importance to the subject of horticulture and food processing along with agricultural production in the country. 'operation Green' has been mentioned for yield, like tomatoes and potatoes. The farmers of the country have been invigorated by developing the dairy industry. The credit goes to this government for completing many agricultural irrigation schemes in the country that were pending for completion since long. Sufficient allocation has been made in the budget for employment, education and skills training sectors. Our government has focussed on the challenges of employment and skills development as well as improving standard of

education level in this budget for the development of the Northeast. Further, banks have to be recapitalised due to increasing NPAs. Several effective steps have been taken against corruption. We have been facing many challenges in the field of health in our country, therefore, many improvements have been made in the health system. Sir, the government is offering health insurance to 10 million people. This government will complete this "Namo Care" scheme on a mission mode. The history of this country will remember that when we implemented the demonitisation, GST in the country for the poor, and subsidy was provided to the poor through Aadhar, the opposition opposed it ideologically. However, when the anti national slogans were shouted in the universities that was supported. While the government has made provision for employment generation in the budget, at the same time, corporate tax has been reduced by 5 percent for the micro, small and medium industries having turnover of 250 crores of rupees. We have worked to push the country's manufacturing sector forward. Ours government has introduced "AMRUT Yojana" for the country's urbanization, and the "Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission" for rural areas. I believe that the government has taken a very big and progressive step. The government has given a rebate of 40,000 thousand rupees for the salaried class, and the pensioner class has also been granted concession.

Ours is a country of diversity, and in such a country the middle class cannot be classified into any one category. We can only uplift the middle class when we will provide them the basic infrastructure in correct form. The required basic improvements are carried out in education sector. When we use more and more resources for the innovative ideas. When we develop their skills. Improvement in the required facilities in the urban areas is done. Our Government has taken the steps to move further in this direction through this budget. If you look at the budgets of the last four years, you will find that the Government has moved consistently with all these aspects. We work on the basis of philosophy of the nationalism. Since 1952, till date if there is any party which never compromised with its political ideology, then this party is the Bhartiya Janta Party, and politically acted without any untouchability in politics.

Good Governance in politics started with the Government of the Shri Atal Bihari Bajpai in the year 1996. A successful government was run in the Gujarat for continuous 15 years under the leadership of Shri Narendra Modi. We introduce the Good Governance in the country's politics. The major cause of the current scenario prevailing in the country is that deserving persons were not given their due rights during the last 70 years. For the first time, our Government introduced the direct cash transfer scheme with under MGNAREGA. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi acted with farsightedness and opened the Jan-Dhan accounts because he intended to provide the resources to the poor people. To move further with "Antodaya slogan", we have tried to move our Government towards that direction. We want to move forward with corruption-free, transparent governance, governance in the interest of the poor, with a government offering employment to the country's youth. This Government which came into power with a commitment of changing the face of the rural economy, and the persons who did not fulfill their responsibilities during their 50 years of governance, are trying to hinder that commitment. Therefore, the economic survey of the country which has been presented, states that the country is being led to a path of the continued growth. We have moved dramatically on Global Competitive Index, 'Ease of doing business index'. The foreign exchange reserve is at highest level as of now. Our Government has acted to control the economy of the black money. Making principal is one issue, and taking strong decision on the basis of that principal, and acting in the interest of poor on the basis of that principal is a big issue. This is ground-breaking budget. The social philosophy of the Government also counts. Congress party opposed the schemes introduced in this budget, it opposed the bill related to the OBCs, bill introduced in the interest of the Muslim women, the bill related to improvement in rural areas. As far as the development of the country is concerned, at least they should come forward on those issues. Our Government is working according to the political thoughts of Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Ji. All the schemes formulated under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, those have been formulated while keeping the poor people in the mind. Our

Government is committed for the economic empowerment of the poor persons and social accommodation of each and every class in the country.

SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD: This House is meant for discussion about the poor people of the country, here discussion should be held about the deaths due to hunger in the country, discussion should be held about the mal -nutrition, and unemployment; however it is not happening. In the year 2014, on the basis of single slogan i.e. on the name of the black money, the Modi Government came into power. It was mentioned that we will bring back the black money; however nothing has happened. As far as Jandhan accounts are concerned, 24 crores accounts are active out of 30 crores and slowly these will also become inoperative, as the hope of the people is dying. Similarly, it is not possible to construct a toilet at the cost of 12-15 thousand under "cleanliness campaign", whereas the cost has increased to a large extent? In the same manner Ujjawala scheme was introduced. The Government is cheating the poor women on the name of free connection under the Ujjawala scheme. First gas connection is given free of cost, and then in the second, even charges for the first connection are recovered. Similarly, there is Prime Minister Crop Insurance scheme. In this scheme, it is being observed that only the Insurance companies have been benefitted. Less payment is being made, in comparison to the premium charged by the insurance companies. Similar is the health insurance scheme of 5 lakhs of rupees. All the Government hospital, clinics in the country are lacking sufficient number of doctor, medications, equipment. How would you provide the treatment? Only the private insurance companies are going to be benefitted. Similarly, they introduced the Mudra Bank Scheme. If one has to take loan from the bank, then no bank manager agrees to accept the file without taking the commission. The farmers are committing suicides and they are depressed. Nothing is being done with regard to linking of 30 rivers. E-Mandi is there, the crops of our farmers get spoiled, as the Government middlemen, and Government Center, don't buy the crops. During demonetization, only the big industrialists succeeded in getting their currency exchanged. Respected Akhilesh Yadav Ji introduced the Kamdhenu scheme in

Uttar Pradesh for dairies. They discontinued the Kamdhenu Scheme. Currently, a state of panic is prevailing in the country. It was talked about to offer one and half times of the cost of the farmers for their crops. The people from several states are going to other areas for employment. Currently no one is getting the appropriate price for their produce, due to same, they are committing suicides. More than 14 crore people are unemployed in the country and wrong data are being presented in this regard. The Prime Minister said that we would offer employment to ten crores of people in five years. However, nothing has been done. Currently, the jobs are declining. Lakhs of posts are lying vacant, which are not being filled. In four years, the number of our army men who have sacrificed their lives, is more than the number of army men who sacrificed their lives in 70 years. We want to know why Center is maintaining friendly relations with Pakistan? Sugarcane farmers are dying, the sugar industry has been completely ruined. Hunger, poverty is prevailing in Bundelkhand, the farmers are involved in loss making activities. We would like you to work for bringing in the uniformity with regard to the backward classes categorization. Akhilesh Yadav Ji sent the recommendation for granting reservation to 17 castes; however that matter is still pending. The most dreaded disease in the country is Cancer. You don't have hospitals for cancer affected persons. The government should make arrangement for them. It was promised during the Lok Sabha election that the farmers would be given one and half times of their crop cost. However, that promise has not been fulfilled. The crop insurance is only benefitting the insurance companies, the farmers are not getting its benefit. The Central Government has asked the state governments to bear the responsibility of paying 40 per cent insurance claims and due to same, several State Government's have refused to implement this scheme, therefore, how this scheme can be implemented? During last two seasons, the State Governments and Central Government have paid an amount of rupees 20,374 crores to the insurance companies, out of which claims amounting to Rs.5,650.37 crores were made and only 53.94 lakh farmers have been benefitted. In the year 2016-17, the insurance companies earned a total income of Rs.1.27 crores, whereas during this financial year they earned three lakh crores of rupees. It is

helping the private insurance companies. A promise was made that a loan waiver of rupees one lakh will be offered to all the farmers in the country, which is yet to be fulfilled. Banks hesitate in offering loans to the farmers. Commission is charged through middlemen. The 70 agriculture universities in the country are in dire state. They don't have land as per the standards and they also lack other facilities as well. Central agriculture universities are also passing through a very bad state. Agriculture Science Centres are also in a very bad state, they don't have sufficient laboratories, and technicians. Crores of farmers in the country are involved in fisheries. The Sri-Lankan and Pakistani Army arrest the fishermen, even today thousands of our fishermen are languishing in the Sri-Lankan and Pakistani prisons. I demand that government should take action to free them and it should formulate schemes for their benefits. In 2014, the current government stated that it would offer jobs to 10 crore people, will offer one and a half time of the crop cost to the farmers. However, this government is now resorting to gimmicks only.

Prime Minister assured to provide electricity for 24 hours but once the electricity is not being generated, how it will be provided. A good package was assured for Bihar but after election it was said that it was an Election Gimmick. In Uttar Pradesh, Shri Akhilesh Yadav provided electricity and water free of cost along with samajwadi pension and laptops to deserving candidates. All the projects initiated by him have been closed. In the Budget, there is no mention of solution for inflation, poverty and starvation. GST implementation has ruined whole trading. As far as tax is concerned, you are befooling the people. The target of providing insurance upto 5 lakhs free of cost by the government is a gimmick. Only insurance companies will be benefitted by it. This Budget is anti poor, anti farmers and anti labours. This Budget ignores unemployed and businessmen. This Budget cheats farmers and encourages the rich.

SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN: From this Budget everyone expected that the slab will be raised, but it was not done. As far as raising of standard deduction is concerned they are giving from one hand and taking it from the other hand. The long term capital

gains tax has come back. Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana is welcome but it must be carried out in a proper way. I, request the Government to exempt projects executed for State Governments from the purview of the GST. Money out of MPLADS for the execution of works must be exempted from GST. A few States like Tamil Nadu have suffered badly due to the Fourteenth Finance Commission's recommendations. This should be corrected by the Union Government to bring fairness in resource distribution. Government has reduced the budgetary allocations in some very important schemes which cater to the rural areas and the poor. Government has not increased the allocations for schemes like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan over the last three years. I, request the Government to significantly increase the allocations for these vital schemes. I, request the Finance Minister to make adequate budgetary provision to the Ministries in order to honour the commitments made by Government to the States. I request the Government to approve the phase-II programme of the Chennai Metro Rail Project in Chennai under 'Bharatmala' and expedite the execution of these projects

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Desh Deepak Verma,
Secretary-General.

rssynop@sansad.nic.in

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