

RAJYA SABHA

*SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE

(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

Monday, March 15, 2010/Phalgun 24, 1931 (Saka)

MATTERS RAISED WITH PERMISSION OF THE CHAIR

I. Increasing incidents of kidnapping and atrocities against children in the country

SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: An organized gang is kidnapping children and killing them in the whole country. Recently, two children were kidnapped and sacrificed by 'tantric' in Bulandshahar and Agra. These incidents have created fear in the minds of the people. These incidents are not being prevented. Last time, I had drawn attention of the Central Government towards this. The children are being kidnapped and misused. I, therefore, urge the Central Government to take measures in this regard collaborating with the States, by treating this subject not only of State.

(Dr. (Shrimati) Najma A. Heptulla, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, Shrimati. Maya Singh, Shri Prabhat Jha, Shri Raghunandan Sharma and Shri Santosh Bagrodia associated.)

II. Plight of weavers and recent incidents of suicide by them

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

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Today, I draw attention of the House towards those millions of handloom and small powerloom weavers, who are demonstrating outside the Parliament today. After farmers, the most of the suicides are being committed by them. They demand that facility of loan may be provided to them and inputs be provided to them on subsidised rate. Due to their profession being ruined, they are searching for other professions. Dalit Muslims have been denied category of SC due to religious discrimination. Reservations should be implemented for muslim community on the basis of recommendations of Rangnath Mishra Commission. I demand that the Central Government should take note of the demands of the weavers.

(Shri Shivanand Tiwari, Shri Moinul Hassan and Shri Shyam Benegal associated.)

III. Social, economic and cultural exploitation by fake dharam Gurus bringing bad name to religions

SHRI PRABHAT JHA: During the last few days, faiths of the country have been hurt by the bad acts of some fake saints, priests, mullah, maulavis and imams. There is no law to check their activities. They are engaged in the acts of abductions and human smuggling. Whether Government has no law to put check on them? I am not talking about any specific religion. Government should take note of this. Media should not depict such type of incidents again and again.

(Shri Raghunandan Sharma and Miss. Anusuiya Uikey associated.)

IV. Demonstration by Pasmanda Muslims in support of their demands

SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI: Today, thousands of Muslim belonging to Pasmanda community have gathered outside the Parliament to raise their demands. Their livelihood is in danger due to economic liberalization. They demand that they be provided loan at 4 per cent interest rate and their loan may be written off. They also demand that report of Sachar Commission be implemented. There is also a problem of bidi labourers. It has been demanded that they

should be provided Rupees one lakh each for constructing their houses. It is necessary that census of 2011 be conducted on the basis of castes. Restrictions put on rickshaws should be removed. I urge the Government that a meeting be held with their representatives.

V. Withdrawal of Central Financial Assistance under I.D.S.S. to mentally retarded children in Kerala

SHRI P. RAJEEVE: The Central Government has denied the financial assistance under the I.D.S.S. to the mentally retarded children who are studying in high schools in Kerala. The financial assistance has been provided to the students who are under the category of other disabilities, but not to the mentally retarded students. In Kerala, around 5652 differentially able students have been enrolled for the SSLC examination this year. Out of these, 1700 students are mentally retarded. I request the Government to discharge its mandatory obligation under the Disabilities Act of 1995 and sanction the financial assistance to the mentally retarded children who are studying in high school.

(Shrimati Brinda Karat, Shri Prashanta Chatterjee, Shri Penumalli Madhu, Shri P.R. Rajan and Shri Moinul Hassan associated.)

VI. Worsening situation in Air India

SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR: The condition of Air India is worsening day by day. Recently, Government has provided assistance of rupees eight hundred crore to the Air India. Today, in spite of having the biggest fleet, lesser number of passengers are flying by Air India flights. Today, employees are being compelled to work on half salary. The merger of Indian Airlines and Air India has proved fatal. Why was the matter regarding merger of Indian Airlines was not brought before the Parliament? The Standing Committee of Parliament has also said that the decision of merger was wrong. To drop well established routes, not using aeroplanes economically after purchasing them in large number, entering into bilateral agreements with foreign airlines against the national interest, all this is being done

there. The formation of Joint Parliamentary Committee should be announced so that this issue may be enquired into.

MOTION REGARDING TERMINATION OF SUSPENSION OF MEMBERS

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): I move:

"That the suspension of Srvashri Veer Pal Singh Yadav, Kamal Akhtar, Nand Kishore Yadav and Amir Alam Khan from their services of the House with effect from 9th March, 2010 for the remaining part of the current session, be terminated."

The Motion was adopted.

SPECIAL MENTIONS

I. Demand to give priority to the State of Chhattisgarh for adequate supply of iron ore from the National Mineral Development Corporation

SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS: Out of the 18 million tonnes iron ore required for production capacity of existing sponge and pig iron of Chhattisgarh, NMDC supplies only 14 per cent requirement. For the rest requirement, the plants depend on other private providers. Due to this production cost increases. I urge the Government that NMDC should first fulfill the requirement of Chhattisgarh, then the rest of the produced iron ore may be sent to other places for use.

II. Demand to take steps to check the incidents of death of children due to open pits and bore-wells in the country

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: I draw the attention of the House to the disturbing accident in Delhi on the day of Holi in which a boy lost his life of drowning in a deep pit in a park located in a populated area. I would like to know if there were regulations for

setting up pits and bore-wells in populated areas and whether there are penalties for leaving such deep bore-well open. I urge the Government to fix administrative culpability on the relevant Municipal Authorities for loss of innocent life of a child and prescribe standards and conditions for protecting Deep Water Bodies and for setting up and removing the bore-wells.

III. Demand to give compensation to the victims of grenade blasts around the kachiyari firing range of army in Kangra (Himachal Pradesh) and to take measures to check such incidents

SHRI SHANTA KUMAR: On the last 9th March, three innocent children, who had gone to offer worship in a temple at Kohala village around the Kachiyari firing range near Brahmanu Gallu Jungle in the district of Kangra (Himachal Pradesh), were killed on account of live grenade blasts. The villagers of the areas are horrified at the incident. Such incidents have occurred in the past, too. In this respect, responsibility is fixed upon the army and the border security force to alarm the villagers before using the firing range and also change their direction of the firing range. Besides, the Ministry of Defence may be asked to pay proper compensation to the families of the deceased.

IV. Demand to formulate a legislation to protect the rights of people infected and affected with HIV/AIDS in the country

DR. RAM PRAKASH: The HIV/AIDS Bill, under consideration of the Government for several years is of great significance to people affected by HIV/AIDS. Patients thereof have to face discrimination everywhere in the society. As the existing laws inadequately address the issue of discrimination, a law which protects the rights of people infected and affected with HIV and aims to control the spread of the epidemic is the need of the hours. It is urged that the Bill be introduced in the Parliament at the earliest.

V. Need to resolve the problems being faced by Indian workers in Afghanistan

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Sixty Indian workers were arrested in Kabul during the search after suicide attack on Indian Medical Mission. These workers were lured by the placement agents promising them of high-paying jobs. They were detained after it was found that either they were on fake visa or their visa was invalid.

The Indian Embassy is helping them to get their passport back. They are stuck in Kabul without money to return, food and proper clothes. They have found shelter in the Gurudwara.

I seek urgent intervention of the government to make necessary arrangements for their return and crackdown heavily on the network of illegal agents to get their hard earned money back.

(Shrimati Brinda Karat associated.)

VI. Request not to handover the matters relating to passport in the hands of private vendors in the country

SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: Private vendor should not be given sole right to accept passport application in the office of private vendor only. Government should keep its existing Passport Offices open for public to give healthy competition to private vendor. Control of software must be in hands of Government department, which has technical expertise. The proposal of keeping software under control of private vendor is unacceptable.

There is a long standing demand for placing the passport employees in the Indian Missions for handling passport related work. The pay parity for Superintendent Passport is also a long-pending service issue alongwith other service matter like annual DPC, transfer policy etc. with have been ignored for long. I urge the government to look into the matter seriously.

(Shri Tapan Kumar Sen associated.)

VII. Need to formulate a plan for raising awareness about water harvesting in the rain shadow region of Tamil Nadu

SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Tamil Nadu receives very less rain from South-West Monsoon. Only the North-East Monsoon brings in rain for the State. This too is highly erratic and unpredictable. People of the state mostly depend on ground water for agricultural and domestic purposes. Water table of the state has been depleted to an alarming level.

Union Government should bring large scale awareness programme on the importance of water harvesting and even an incentive scheme should be chalked out for those who contribute to rain water harvesting in the states like Tamil Nadu. I further request to consider nationalization of all the inter-state rivers so as to ensure equitable distribution of river water among the states.

VIII. Need to adopt the 'Look East Policy' for developing friendly relations with the Asian countries

DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Our emphasis so far was on the relations with the big powers in the West. We have cultural bonds with the Asian countries. Asia has awakened now to realize its potential. India should renew its cultural ties with the countries in the East as Asia's richest contribution to human culture and civilization can not be denied. The epicenter of conflicts is in the Gulf and South East Asia. I, therefore, urge that India should forge once again friendly ties with Asian countries.

IX. Need to take suitable measures for welfare of children suffering from muscular dystrophy in the country

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Muscular dystrophy is a killer disease. Almost 2/3rd of the children suffering from this disease are between the age group of 3 and 13 years and 8 out of 10 are male. It is necessary to bring all such children under one roof so that they could be looked after properly and their life span could be enhanced with modern amenities. A research centre can be started to find a suitable solution for this incurable deadly disease.

Tamil Nadu Government is giving a monthly financial assistance of Rs.500/- for these affected children. The Union Government also must come forward with a similar financial assistance programme for these ailing children.

X. Need to bring in a legislation to provide various amenities to the Non-Resident Indians

SHRI P. RAJEEVE: The Non-Resident Community has brought in a foreign currency inflow of 52 billion US\$ for the financial year 2008-09. The Central Government's policy to completely neglect the issues related to them is highly regrettable.

I request the Government to deploy the non refunded emigration deposit collected prior to 23rd December for the welfare and complete rehabilitation schemes. I demand for a new legislation which provides for guidelines with respect to remuneration, working hours, safe accommodation, weekly off etc. I also demand for a Welfare Fund and Pension Scheme in line with the Non-Resident Keralite Welfare Fund Act, 2008 of the Kerala Government.

(Shri P. R. Rajan associated.)

XI. Demand for proper implementation of the guidelines of RBI and IBA on educational loans in the country

SHRI T. K. RANGARAJAN: There is no uniformity of rules in sanctioning education loans by nationalized banks. Many banks don't follow the guidelines given by RBI and IBA and demand collateral security/guarantee even for the loans less than Rs.4 Lakh, insist of payment of monthly interest, charge higher rate of interest etc. Many brilliant poor students either go to NGOs for support or borrow money at higher rate of interest or could not pursue higher education due to lack of finance.

The educational loan should be interest free. Government should advise the nationalized banks to popularize the education loan schemes through exhibitions and advertisements. The Government

may think of introducing credit guarantee for such loans and also subsidize part of the loan disbursed by the banks to the students.

(Shri P. Rajeeve, Shri Mahendra Mohan and Shrimati Brinda Karat associated.)

XII. Concern over the non-fulfillment of the Government's promise of providing foodgrains at low prices in the country

SHRI KAPTAN SINGH SOLANKI: Government had promised the people to provide foodgrains at low prices, but due to its eagerness to control the fiscal deficit and poor status of production of food grains, it could not fulfill its promise. The Ministry of Food has not been able to even prepare the draft of the Food Security Act so far. The people are compelled to undergo suffering of hunger due to a cut in the food subsidy bill. The Government should take appropriate measures at the earliest by taking this serious issue into urgent cognizance.

XIII. Need to take remedial measures in view of reported adverse impact of climate change on children

DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: A new report suggests that 175 million children will be affected every year by frequent natural disasters caused due to climate change. Climate change was the biggest global health threat to children. Malnutrition which affects 178 million worldwide and is associated with up to 3.2 million child deaths each year, would affect 25 million more children by 2050. Already one-third of all malnourished children live in India. The report links access to basic facilities with climate change. It said that 2 million children under 5 years of age die each year in India. Children were dying from a small number of preventable diseases, such as diarrhoea, malaria and pneumonia. In view of above grim scenario, I would urge the Hon'ble Minister for Health and Family Welfare, to undertake urgent corrective steps.

THE BUDGET (GENERAL), 2010-11

General Discussion-Contd.

THE LEADER OF OPPOSITION (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY), continuing his unfinished speech dated 12.03.2010, said : I had referred to the higher rates of taxation which have been provided for, the manner in which the service tax net has been expanded to areas like education, health care, railway freight, real estate, so as to make the essentials of a life all costlier. I had referred to the current agrarian crisis in the country where not only are we falling short of foodgrains, our productivity is not increasing and our prices are going up. I had dealt with presumption of disinvestment proceeds of Rs.40,000 crores. The 2-G spectrum has been allocated to nine parties. Most international players, who were excluded from the 2-G allocation, are not going to show any interest, as far as 3-G spectrum is concerned.

If we are to undertake expenditure at a particular level, to keep up the growth rate or to touch a growth rate of eight to nine per cent, that kind of expenditure is necessary. For the year 2008-09, compared to the previous year, the expenditure went up by 24.56 per cent. If our expenditure graph is going up by 24 per cent, then, to anticipate that, next year, it will come down, and, it will only be a 08 per cent increase, particularly, when you anticipate next year to be a higher growth year than the previous years, this figure needs to have a re-look. There are still several items in the financial accounts of the Government which do not reflect themselves in the Budget.

Though these may be shown in the Government accounts, they are not being factored in as far as this fiscal deficit is concerned. There is a similar statement to this effect in one of the recent CAG Reports that there is a complete inconsistency between the finance accounts and the Budget documents. It is essential that infrastructure involves a public-private partnership, infrastructure involves a large number of Government spending and, therefore, for the growth of Indian economy, the infrastructure development and growth also has to increase. There were problems in one of our flagship projects of

our country, the National Highway Development Project. Obviously things can't change overnight. So, the projects which have been lying behind will take some time for fresh tenders to be given.

We have developed some domestic capability in building highways now. The Direct Tax code still requires a lot of debate. We have also made some suggestion to the hon'ble Finance Minister. This is a transient year. Next year, when the Direct Tax Code is fully implemented, and if the original proposal in the Direct Tax Code is an indication it will look very attractive, then it is accompanied by a certain onerous circumstances. This year, of course, fortunately, is a relief year in the sense that those exemptions have not been eliminated this year.

A large number of people in this slab, who will be getting relief are all employees, may actually end up the benefit that you increased figure has given them. Last year, in the Budget, the hon'ble Finance Minister said that there was this great aspiration about 'one rank, one pension' and the impression created in the whole country was that 'one rank, one pension' was really being granted as far as the ex-servicemen are concerned. We would like to have a specific reply because the implementation Budget seems to indicate that this has not been done. Eleven per cent of global population directly or indirectly today gets its employment or sustenance from tourism. We are blessed with religion and cultural tourism. Therefore, we need to have some initiatives as far as these areas are concerned.

As far important flagship programmes are concerned, the utilization of funds has not been good in the Rural Development Ministry. When I look at the Budget, there are some disturbing trends also which are there. Internal debt of the Government has increased from some 23,74,743 crores in 2008-09 to 35,55057 crores, which is now projected beyond 37,00,000 crores. If we add all our external and internal debts, 38,04180 cores divided by our population, each Indian is today indebted because of our public debt to the extent of Rs.33,966/-. Therefore, the management of our resources or revenue collection, all requires to be done with an extreme element of vision

and efficiency. I am confident that the Indian economy will grow, but it will grow with inflation, and this growth will not be on account of this Budget, but this growth will be really on account of the sense of great entrepreneurship we have in India where there are sectors like services which occupy 60 per cent of Indian economy which are actually growing more rapidly.

DR. E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN : When Shri Pranab Mukherjee took over from Shri R. Venkataraman as the Finance Minister in 1982-83 Budget onwards, he could make out what India is going to be because at that time, we were facing the situation of Nehruvian thought that more investment by the Government in the public sector is to be reviewed and more participation by the private sector is to be given.

When Indiraji took over, she could make a very drastic measure of nationalizing the banks and the other sectors. At that time, people thought that India was not following the international law.

In nineteen eighties, the State Governments were having too much of interest burden. Various pulls and pressures started and different concepts were created in the States. Therefore, their vision was something different from the national thought of Congress Party. At that juncture, Pranabji took over as Finance Minister and told the public that it is a socialist country and we have to look after the common mass who are ready to sacrifice everything for the country and who have created the freedom with bloodless sacrifice. Dr. Manmohan Singh took over in 1991 as Finance Minister. He created the globalised economy by allowing the foreign investments in India, and people started thinking that India is the best destination for making investments.

We are spending more than Rs.10,05,000 crores for various programmes under, both Plan and Non-Plan. There is a system under which most of the things are controlled at the Central Level, but, at the same time, the programmes are executed through the States. We have accepted the federal set-up. It has to be distributed accordingly to different States in different ways and the statutory power has been

given to the Finance Commission. The Twelfth Finance Commission have created a lot of new approaches in various ways to address the situation of globalization. Now the question is whether we are having cohesion with the State Governments and the approach of the Union Government is accepted by the State Governments. When Shri Rajiv Gandhi as Prime Minister found that the system was not working at the grassroots level, he created the third tier of administration, that is, the Panchayati Raj institutions. Now more than Rs.95,000 crores are going to be spent by the Panchayati Raj institutions.

We have got Five Year Plans, we have got national development programmes. We have got very clear thinking that we should have cohesion so far as the State level budget is concerned. We can take the examples of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. These are States which have their Annual Budgets of more than Rs.2,50,000 crores, while the other States could not come up to this level. It has been made possible because these States have developed their infrastructure and have invited foreign investments to be made in their States. Slowly, Bihar is also picking up. But we find that the contribution of the State Governments, in developing and associating themselves with Panchayati Raj Institutions, is lacking. They have to realize that this is the right time for them to give more powers to the people at the grassroots level. They have to understand how the situation is changing. Each Panchayati Raj Institution has an annual Budget of Rs.1 crore to Rs.5.5 crores, and they are able to implement the various programmes. In fact, it is through these Institutions that the Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme is being implemented. Also, more Central Funds are coming forth in different ways. But it is only when the State Governments pass on the funds, which are earmarked for various programmes to be expended through the Panchayati Raj Institutions, that we can find results. Similarly, we have natural resources at the village level. We feel that the State Governments must think on the same lines as the Central Government thinks.

During this short tenure of Shri Pranab Mukherjee's Budget, the results are visible. The booming health care sector is expected to

create nine million jobs by 2012. In the manufacturing sector, IT sector, hospitality and traveling industry, real estate and construction sector, education, training and consultancy sector, banking and financial services industry, good quantum of new jobs are expected to be created. Tax exemptions have been enhanced; Income-tax slabs have been increased; and, by and large, people in the middle-class and upper middle-class are happy.

Education is available to the people. We have made those opportunities available to the people in the last five years. Their salaries have increased manifold. When the people are earning, they can very well contribute 10 per cent of that earning as tax. It is a very simple calculation. The Service Tax is a better way to see how the people are spending.

In one way, we are happy that the migration of labour from villages to urban areas has stopped. But, at the same time, our urban areas are now being flooded with other nationals from the neighbouring countries. I have not been able to get a clear idea as to how many such people are living in our urban areas. It is high time to calculate as to what is the real population of our country, and see to it that we issue identity cards to the people as quickly as possible.

The present Budget has focused on all areas. If any skilled person needs money, he can get money from the banks. The Budget has provided for opening of a bank branch for a population of 2000 people. With zero money a bank account can be opened. When we are implementing the compulsory education system, we should see to it that we do not have new system of creating schools, but we should expand the system of Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas in each and every block so that children get education. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has given a great boost in giving infrastructure to schools by erecting classrooms and other facilities at the grassroots level.

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: The Union Budget 2010-11, in totality, projects a fall in expenditure as a proportion of GDP. It is shocking to see the inability of the Government in containing price

rise. There was almost a consensus on demand that corrective measures should be taken. The universalized PDS cost to the exchequer. Futures trade, in the commodity market is not contributing to inflation. If this speculation will continue, the price rise will continue, whatever may be the increase in production. Opening up of the retail sector to the corporate sector will invite monopolies to marginalised lakhs of petty traders in the economy. We have buffer stock and we are not releasing it to ease the price situation. Instead we are talking about long-term prospective that agricultural productivity must rise. The allocation to rural economy, agriculture and allied activities, irrigation and flood control have consistently been declined as a proportion to the GDP and also as a proportion to the total Budgetary Estimates.

In respect of price policies, a policy declaration has been made that now it will be totally decontrolled and the price will be linked to import parity prices. You are giving 383 per cent more through revenue forgoes. That amounts to 8.1 per cent of the GDP. Instead of over-taxing the arrear which affects the common people, we can look for alternative arrears. The Government ownership is the best form of people's ownership. When the Government sells a company, they say, no asset valuation should be done using a tax-free method. When the Government purchases, they purchase at a high price and the private sector gains. Kindly get it reviewed. I urge the Government to correct the Budget of its anti-people thrust, correct the Budget of its promotional approach to inflation, correct the Budget of its pro-speculative policies.

SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI: I think that this Budget is anti-public, anti-farmer and anti-development. At the same time it is a budget of increasing price-rise, poverty, inequality and corruption. Poverty is increasing in developed and rich countries. Due to increase of inequality, unemployment or underemployment will affect our economy also because our export and world trade will decrease.

Our domestic condition too, is not very good. Industrial production has been standstill, development of service sector is not so

satisfactory or it is nill. Agriculture is worsening. Therefore, increasing the growth rate does not appear to be correct. Efforts should be made to increase the growth rate as well as to check the price rise. Following the budget, the price rise increased more. Lots of reasons have been stated therefore. Availability of foodgrains has not increased. The condition of middle class farmer is not well. Petroleum price rise has affected everything, yet the same would not be reduced. To reduce the losses of the petroleum companies indirect taxes can be reduced, taxation on automobile manufacturing companies can be increased but they have been provided concession.

Four issues have been stressed in the budget and it appears that general farmers are not going to be benefitted thereby. People of corporate farming would reap the benefit. The budget does not speak anything on irrigation. Golden chains have been erected for reduction in wastage of farm produce. They have been provided lots of concessions. Greatest problems with farmers is that they do not get the prices fixed by the government. If in place of big godowns, small grain banks are opened on the block level, farmers can be benefitted a lot. The condition of "credit support to farmer" is that the farmers do not get any loans here. The farmers of big or industrial groups grab the bank loans intended for small farmers. Private sector banks are to be opened in the villages which have no social philosophy. Poor farmers and rural areas would be exploited thereby. This budget would further increase the poverty. The Government is unable to determine the statistics of poverty in the country. Conflicting opinions are appearing in this regard. The "trickle down theory" has been converted as the inclusive growth. Development should be total. It appears from the provisions of the budget that the poor man is nowhere in the budget. It has ignored education, agriculture, industry and everything. It does not have any solution to the basic problems. A very meagre allotment has been made to deal with the challenges in the education sector. The entire economy is moving towards privatization and commercialization. The forces of uncontrolled market is affecting the entire society. With a view to streamlining the economy, price rise has to be checked and small income and big income to be determined. The

entire economy can not be streamline on the basis of foreign capitals alone. It is necessary to divert the scheme and provisions towards the total development of the country for the safety from the naxal violence springing forth because of unemployment and disparity.

DR. K. MALAISAMI: Considering the budget, it appears that priorities and objectives have rightly been included. It has also been stated that the budget is growth oriented and reforms oriented. It has also been pointed out that it lacks imagination and it is counter productive. The development of Aam Adami has been talked about. Loans at cheaper rate have been ensured for the farmers. But the farmers should get not only cheaper loans but also easy payment. In the manifesto of the UPA, supply of foodgrains at nominal rates has been mentioned, but it could not be effected as yet. Fiscal deficit, price rise and development are inter-linked and can't go along. In such a situation, it has not been made clear as to how the three challenges can be tackled along. It is also not clear as to how the price rise could be checked money flow streamlined and agrarian condition improved. Fiscal health appears to be apparent but it is not real. The fuel prices have touched even a common man. Higher spending on infrastructure will slow down the growth.

The major portion of the allocation for education goes to elementary education. Its 66% per cent goes to Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. In respect of Mid-Day Meal Scheme, there is a mismatch between the foodgrains consumed and the cooking expenses. In respect of rural development, 80 per cent amount goes to the Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. The allocation for health is very low as compared to that of the other countries. The allocation for rural drinking water and sanitation is 73 per cent in Bihar and 69 per cent in Jharkhand. But, they have got no toilets. There is the problem of poor storage and improper transportation of food items. The total allocation for urban development is meant only for seven States. In respect of rural roads, only one-third of the total requirement is met.

Even after 62 years of Independence, the poverty level has not come down. The unemployment problem is still boggling. The industrial

and agricultural growth is very slow. As a result, the public debt is not coming down. The domestic price has a got an impact of rising international prices. I think that there should be efficient control and monitoring of expenditure. I am more concerned about the outcome than the outlay. I think that the utilization of funds and their allocation should be done in time. There should be transparency and accountability in this respect. I insist on discovering new sources of mobilization of resources. Black money needs to unearthed. The money deposited in the Swiss Bank should be recovered. There is the need to simplify the tax structure. There should be efforts to go in for more investment and public ownership of public undertakings. The agricultural economy needs to be converted into service sector economy. The existing system is not able to take care of the procedure, system, organization, manpower and its utilization. Really, the benefits do not reach the targeted groups. The poor are becoming poorer and the rich, richer. The Budget can be meaningful and beneficial only when thoughts are translated into action.

DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: I appreciate and support the General Budget. It is not merely a statement of the Government Accounts. A true Budget is a future-oriented document which reflects the vision of the Government and defines its future policies. The Budget is very important because it takes care of GDP growth and the inclusive development. Our economy is again on the right track and it will gradually gain momentum. We shall overcome the problem of price rise. The *aam aadmi* is at the centre of the Budget. It has given a lot of importance to the social sector which includes education, health and employment. It has given top priority to education. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has contributed greatly to dissemination of education. Right to Education will certainly accelerate the universalisation of elementary education. It will better the economic, social and cultural conditions. The Rashtriya Mahdyamik Shiksha Abhiyan is a right step in that direction. The National Rural Health Mission is a very important programme for the people living in the villages. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme has ensured employment to the rural labour class. The unorganized workers will get the benefit of the National Social Security Fund. The four pronged strategy will prove a boon for

agriculture. The Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana is comprehensive enough to ensure welfare of farmers.

The problem of empowerment of rural women is given due importance. Now, the country needs a second Green Revolution. In the Budget, security, both external and internal, has been given adequate priority. The abundantly available solar energy in the country will pave way for self-reliance in energy. In the Budget, the backward regions have been given as importance as the backward classes. Development is a race between problems and human endeavours, and we have to win the race anyhow. The Bharat Nirman Programme is bound to change the scenario of poverty in the country. Inclusive development, inclusive economy and inclusive polity will lead us to inclusive democracy. It is the hightime when we have to abridge the gender gap, the rural-urban gap and the majority-minority gap. Thus, the Budget is pro-farmer, pro-*aam aadmi*, pro-poor, pro-women and pro-minorities.

SHRI D. RAJA: I oppose the Budget which is anti-poor, anti-farmer, and pro-rich, pro-corporate sector. If the Government takes side with the vested interests, the corporate houses and the big business houses, the problems will be very difficult. I appeal to the Government to amend its policies and also certain things in the Budget. The UPA Government fails in its objective of achieving inclusive growth. Though the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, the Backward Classes, the Minorities and so on, have got increased allocation, the funds are insufficient. The Dalits have got less amount than half their due share. It is not an indication of inclusive growth.

There is a cut-down in the subsidy on food items and fertilizers. The duties on petroleum products and diesel have been increased. The decision in respect of revenue mobilization from disinvestment from Public Sector Enterprises will weaken the Public Sector. The tax concession given to the corporate sector will incur loss. I, thus, think that whatever the Government is doing, is not in tune with its claims of inclusive growth. We appeal to the Government to amend its economic policies. Actually, neo-liberalism has proved to be disastrous for the country and its people. It will aggravate the sufferings of people.

SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: I support the Budget which is a brave and bold attempt to atone for the fiscal sins of the past. It is a diversion from the fiscal profligacy. It shows fiscal prudence. It establishes the fact that our ability is much better than it was a year ago to sustain high growth. There will be a full-fledged economic growth and that is how we can attain a 9 per cent growth from the year 2011 onwards. The Budget will evidently build the business and consumer confidence. It is optimistic and it will gain strength in future.

The Budget initiates the action on cutting down of subsidies. It is a very politically sensitive issue. The Unique Identification Card will soon become a reality and prove to be very beneficial. To rejig the tax slabs is also a very bold move. It reflects the Government's commitment to implement the Direct Tax Code. The taxation measures of the Government will increase the tax revenue. The corporate surcharge has been reduced.

The Budget has continued general allocation for the urban poor, and rural India keeping with the Government's *aam aadmi* agenda. When the draft Food Bill becomes an Act, it will further deepen the inclusive growth strategy of the Government. The Budget will rapidly change the scenario of healthcare.

Though, funds have been allotted for education sector yet, the abysmal quality of the teachers and the poor quality of content actually may become a drag. We need to ensure that the transmission losses that we face today between intend and action with so many good schemes not resulting in the kind of inclusive growth needs to be addressed again on a very urgent basis. Whilst we need to improve the delivery, every effort will also have to be made to contain inflation so that it does not gallop like we have seen it in the past. We have to move from a system of outlays to a system of outcomes. In 2008-09, 30 per cent of the corpus of the Government's marquee programmes, which is the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, was unspent. Under NREGA, nearly a fifth of the allotted money remained unspent. One of the most important recommendations Thirteenth Finance Commission for empowering the third-tier of Government and moving away from

grants to a system of entitlement. It would be good for the Government to set a clear time-line for implementation. The Economic Survey had also stated that India can achieve double digit growth. I think, it requires some serious fiscal reforms. This Budget places much more on consumption-led growth where the hon'ble Finance Minister hopes that the upper middleclass with higher disposable income will spend more thereby spurring the economy and growth. In the end it is all about the execution, and, therefore, ensuring that the loopholes in public delivery system are fixed, will help us in achieving the Finance Minister's dream.

SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: India has growth potential even in the situation of global financial crisis. India has the potential to be real economic powerhouse and use its economic power and growth to address the destitution and poverty that still afflicts a majority of our fellow citizens. So, what ought to be the role of the Government in this background. It is to create a framework and basket of policies and strategies that fully exploits this inherent potential of our country. The challenges for the Finance Minister and the Government are obvious.

This Budget does not meet the test of setting clear directions for the next four years. The process of fiscal consolidation and reforming subsidies should have and could have been harmonized. If politically you have chosen to increase fuel prices, the correct and sustainable way to have done this would have been to allow the OMCs to increase pricing, reduce under-recoveries, and therefore, reduce the funding pressures on the Government as the Kirit Parikh Committee Report suggested. Every rupee of the Rs.1 lakh crores that will be spent this year should be spent wisely. We cannot continue going on borrowing from the future to finance the present. We need significant FDI flows into our economy and one a sustained basis. Inflation bias in our economy not addressed. We are not addressing our inflation as a structural problem. This challenge of demand-supply mismatch led inflation was brought to the attention of the Government in 2006/07 when inflation was first rearing its head. The solution should have been thought of then and we would have not been still discussing this

today as if it was a brand new phenomenon. I cautioned the Government that it was not the time to be complacent. I would urge the hon'ble Finance Minister to use his credibility and respect to get the many parts of the Government that seem to have slipped into a comfort zone and/or private agendas to be kick-started.

SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: I support the Budget. There was an environment of economic slow-down, global recession for which Government had to pay a stimulus package of Rupees 1 lakh 86 thousand crores. The situation of monsoon was also not good because there was 20 per cent less rain due to which there was a situation of drought. There was less productions upto 15 to 18 million tonnes in Kharif crops. I think, this is a very praiseworthy job to present such a budget in these all circumstances. Because of this we are touching the growth rate of 7.2 per cent and I hope that it will attain 8 per cent or more growth rate.

Our Industrial development rate crossed 10 per cent barrier in this year for the fifth time, manufacturing activities are increased. This is a balanced budget and efforts have been made to make it balanced. The criticism which is being done on the issues of price rise and petroleum prices require a better understanding that the Government is giving Rupees 30 per litre subsidy on kerosene and the prices of kerosene are not increased. The condition of oil companies is very poor because budget came at the time when the international prices began to increase. There was such a situation in the international market that we have to make the provision in the budget. I suggest to keep monitoring on the condition of oil companies so that the Government exercise control on the oil companies.

There is a big gap between the disinvestment to be done and the disinvestment have been done. The Government is going to disinvest in order to have the participation of retail investors. The Government participation will remain at least 50 per cent. This is not that private sector will be sold at through away prices as was done in the past.

The Government have made provisions for infrastructure, employment and social sector in this budget so that there may be a provision of fund and budget deficit is not increased. The budget support of 3 lakh 73 thousand crores have been made for the Central Schemes. Certainly this is going to influence the growth rate of the country and common man will get employment. Special focus should be given to enhance the productivity in agriculture sector. The farmers are going to get benefits from 10 Mega Food Park, referred in the budget. As far as the prices of oil are concerned, we will suggest the State Governments to reduce VAT and Trade Taxes. Prices are now decreasing and the situation will be better after one month.

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

**ERRATA TO SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE, DATED 12TH MARCH,
2010**

- Page 180 Line 5 from top, 'In certain ways' read as new para.
- Page 185 Line 5-6 from bottom, delete 'Only under -----of law'
and add it in line 7 from bottom, after 'has arisen.'