

RAJYA SABHA

***SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE**

(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

Thursday, March 10, 2011/ Phalguna 19, 1932 (Saka)

MATTERS RAISED WITH PERMISSION OF THE CHAIR

I. Increasing incidents of suicides by students

SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Rising cases of students committing suicide is a matter of grave concern. One of the key factors which lead to such suicides is parents' insistence on their wards for getting high percentage, and repeatedly reminding them of that. Students remain under pressure all the time that he or she may not be able to satisfy parents' aspirations and failure to get high percentage may compel their parents to seek loan of lakhs of rupees to secure them admission in higher studies.

Family conflicts, domestic violence, failure of crop in agricultural families etc. are also some of the reasons which lead to such tragedies. Undue media publicity to suicide cases especially of celebrities does more harm to the society than good. Educational reforms are the need of the hour. It is also high time that the existing educational policy may be replaced by a new policy.

(Shri V. Hanumantha Rao associated.)

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

II. Kidnapping of Indian Merchant Ship workers by Somalian pirates

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: The pirates have spread terror at Somalia coast and in the Indian Ocean as a result of which no ship can pass through that area. More than hundred people of our country have been held hostage in a Merchant Ship. Alongwith them, people from Pakistan, Egypt, Africa and Ghana and other countries have also been held hostage, but maximum people among them are from India. Their family members are disappointed after meeting all the Ministers of the Government. Yesterday, the Minister made a statement in the other House that the pirates have released 11 of our sailors. These sailors have not been got released by the Government of India, they were got released by the Spanish Navy. One of their ships was under the got possession of the pirates since 2010. When this ship was taken back, there were ten Indians in it. There is a Contact Group on Piracy off the coast of Somalia (CGPCS) constituted by the UNSC. Have you contacted them on this issue?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S. M. KRISHNA): The Government realizes the seriousness of the crisis of Indian sailors being taken hostage by the Somalian pirates. Our Government attaches utmost importance to the safety and security of all the Indians. The Embassies and the Consulates General of India in the countries concerned have been in regular touch with the local Governments and the owners of the two hijacked ships and have emphasized the need for the ship owners to do all that they can to ensure the safety and early release of the Indian nationals. Eleven Indian sailors of one of the ships have been released and they are on their way back to India. The Director-General of Shipping, who is the nodal authority as far as the movement of ships is concerned, is also making effort to get these sailors released. I met the Egyptian Ambassador earlier this week and sought his Government's assistance for obtaining early release of the hostages. Our Ambassador has once again stressed to the ship owner to ensure the safe release of Indians. Efforts are also on to work out joint effort by all those countries who are harassed by the Somalian pirates. When the Americans tried to carry

out an assault on some of the ship pirates, four of them were killed. We cannot afford to let the lives of Indian sailors to be at jeopardy. Let me assure this House that India will do everything possible within time to get the sailors out of hostage.

(Shri Rajniti Prasad associated.)

SPECIAL MENTIONS

I. Demand to include Scheduled Caste people converted to Christianity into Scheduled Castes category

SHRI S. THANGAVELU: I want to raise the issue regarding inclusion of converted Christians in the list of Scheduled Caste which is demanded for a long time. Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu had already sought the personal intervention of the Prime Minister in this issue which is pending for the last 15 years. In the absence of appropriate law, SCs who converted to Christianity especially in the State of Tamil Nadu are deprived of social status in respect of education, employment and other facilities which are generally availed by others belonging to SC. The Government should take necessary action to include people belonging to SC, who converted to Christianity in the SC list.

II. Demand to implement uniform system of education in the country

SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR KASHYAP: Seventy per cent of the population of our country, living in the rural areas, feels inferior due to the double standard of education. The students of the metropolitan and big cities are marching on the path of progress after getting high standard education. But even today, the students living in rural areas are feeling themselves neglected by receiving low standard education, on the basis of old syllabus, through Hindi medium only. As a result, the morale of rural students is continuously declining. The double standard of education in the country is creating inequality between the students of cities and villages. In order to strengthen the

democracy in India, a uniform education system should be introduced after discontinuing the double standard education so that the rural youth alongwith the urban youth, could also occupy the important posts in the country by receiving high standard education.

III. Demand to bring out commemorative stamps on the eve of the birth bicentenary of Acharya Balashastry Jambekar at national level

DR. BHARATKUMAR RAUT: This is the year of birth bicentenary of Acharya Balshastry Jambekar, a scholar, astronomer, social reformist and father of Marathi journalism. Acharya Jambekar launched the first Marathi newspaper, “*Darpan*” in 1832. At the tender age of 20, the then East India Company employed him as an Assistant Professor with Elphinston School. He took up the issue of conversion and was instrumental in bringing people, who were forcefully converted into Christianity back to their own religion. I request the Government to celebrate his birth bicentenary at the national level and bring out a special postal stamp on this occasion as he was the man about whom every Indian would be proud of.

(Shri Rudra Narayan Pany associated.)

IV. Demand to hand over the relics of Lord Buddha to the Pagoda at Mumbai as per recommendation of Dr. B.L. Mungekar Committee

SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: The Government had constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. B.L. Mungekar, the then Member of the Planning Commission, to give report regarding the handing over of relics of Lord Buddha to the Global Vipassana Pagoda at Mumbai. These relics have been kept at the National Museum, Delhi, where they are being exhibited like any other ordinary objects. This is highly objectionable. Lord Buddha relics must be treated with highest respect. Many leading personalities and organizations have already requested the Government to hand over the relics to Pagoda at Mumbai. What actions are taken by the Ministry on the report of the said Committee? What actions are proposed to be taken in view of various representations in this matter.

V. Demand to set strict norms and guidelines on production of junk foods in the country

SHRI B. S. GNANADESIKAN: I would like to bring to the notice of this Government in respect of the steps to be taken to restrict advertisement of junk food to children through satellite channels in the country. As per the World Health Organization report, the junk foods being taken by children are the leading cause of childhood obesity. In fact, there is no study conducted in the country in respect of the health consequences among children due to junk foods.

I urge upon the Central Government to fix norms and guidelines for the production of junk foods as well as restrict the production of junk foods by enacting strong provisions. Through satellite channels, guidelines for advertisement of junk foods should be framed and their quality should be monitored by an empowered adhoc body. That is how, the future generation would be saved from non-infectious diseases such as obesity, hearth disease, stroke, cancer and diabetes that cause 90% of premature deaths in developing countries like India.

(Smt. Maya Singh, Shri Rudra Narayan Pany, Dr. Bhalchandra Mungekar, Shri Mukut Mithi and Shri Anil Madhav Dave associated.)

VI. Demand to set up institutions of higher studies exclusively for people belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

SHRI AMBETH RAJAN: The educational status of the people belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are dismal even after 63 years of Independence. Legislations aimed at achieving social justice are not implemented due to which the conditions of the SCs and STs are very pitiable, particularly in the field of education. Instances of diverting funds, allocated under

Special Component Plan and Tribal Sub Plan to other schemes, came to light in recent times.

The students belonging to SC/ST category are facing severe discrimination at each level in the matter of obtaining education. They feel detached from main stream when they go to educational institutions. Due to this, dropout rate of SC/ST students from premier institutions is high. So, there is a need for an exclusive educational set up for the upliftment of SC/ST students.

Hence, I urge the Government to make necessary steps to start Universities, prestigious Institutions like IITs, IIMs exclusively meant for students belonging to SCs and STs.

(Smt. Brinda Karat, Dr. Bharatkumar Raut and Prof. S. P. Singh Baghel associated.)

VII. Demand to include appropriate provisions in the proposed Bill on management of Defence land so as to remove the present irregularities

SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: The Ministry of Defence owns 17.3 lakh acres of land in the country, valued at Rs.20 lakh crores. It is learnt that the Government is proposing to introduce a Bill to regulate Defence Land Management. In many places, defence land has been encroached by private parties. Only 1/3rd of the land belonging to Ministry of Defence is recorded in Revenue records, in the name of the Ministry while 2/3rd of defence land is still recorded in the name of individuals from whom the Ministry acquired it. In some cases, defence forces have occupied land which does not belong to them. When Military operation started to liberate Goa in 1961, Indian Navy took control of Civilian Airport operating at Dabolim, Goa. But, they did not surrender the area back although operation was over in two days. I would, therefore, request the Government that the proposed Bill for the management of defence land should not only find solutions to bring back the land encroached by Private parties to the Defence forces but also provide for returning back the land

illegally occupied by the Defence forces, to the respective parties to whom the land belongs.

VIII. Demand to formulate a long-term policy to prevent the suicides by farmers

SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Even today, the farmers are compelled to commit suicides on account of the Government's policies of negligence. The reason for suicides of the farmers in Vidarbha, Uttar Pradesh and Bundelkhand is debts taken from banks, private money lenders, etc. They have to repay much more interest on account of having no knowledge in respect of interest on loan. In Uttar Pradesh, 65% farmers are compelled to get loans from money lenders. The banks are also interested to extend loans to big farmers. In this connection, the suggestions given by the Sarangi Committee have not been implemented properly. Despite a package declared for the farmers in Vidarbha, they are committing suicides. It means that there is something wrong in our policies.

I urge upon the Government to formulate a long-term policy so as to redeem the farmers of the debts and prevent them from committing suicides.

(Shri Rudra Narayan Pany, Shri Anil Madhav Dave, Shri Parshottam Khodabhai Rupala, Shrimati Bimla Kashyap Sood and Shri Natuji Halaji Thakor associated.)

IX. Demand to ensure the allocation of coal for Small Scale Industries in the country at cheaper rates

SHRI R. C. SINGH: Coal being primary resource for power, steel, cement etc., increase in price of coal affecting price of final commodities used by common man. E-auction has yielded very positive result for CIL as it fixes base price for various grades of coal. But, under e-auction, only the highest bidder gets coal and small consumers are always kept at bay. Thus, small consumers don't have any other way except to buy coal from highest bidders at exorbitant price. The result is, prime coal now in market sold at Rs. 4,000-5,000/tonne. This system is resulting in blackmarketing. Hence, it is

requested some portion of coal be kept aside for SSIs, small factory owners so that they are not fleeced by highest bidders and consumers get end product at cheaper price.

X. Demand to approve the proposal of Himachal Pradesh Government to levy generation tax on hydel power production

SHRI SHANTA KUMAR: Himachal Pradesh, being a hilly State, depends upon major natural resources like forest and hydel power generation. Himachal Pradesh does have the generation capacity of 20376 MW hydel power. The proposal of levying generation tax on power generation in the State has been pending with the Central Government for the last three decades. Such taxation was suggested by the Rangarajan Committee to improve the financial condition of the State. Later, in 1995, the State Government have passed a bill in this regard which is pending for the President's consent. Union Ministry of Power citing Article 288, of the Constitution of India have objected to it while as per Clause (2) of the same Article, the State Government with the consent of the President can levy such tax.

Therefore, the Central Government, with a view to controlling increasing revenue losses of the State, should approve the proposal at the earliest.

THE BUDGET (GENERAL), 2011-12

General Discussion- Contd.

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: I stand in opposition to this Budget which is to further the neoliberal agenda which is being set out in the Economic Survey. This Budget and the Economic Survey present a blueprint to further deregulate the Indian economy and open up even crucial sectors of the Indian economy such as agriculture, retail, the entire retail industry, for the FDI and the corporates. The Budget Speech of the hon. Finance Minister reflects that poverty is no longer a problem for the people of this country. This Budget favours

the rich, the corporates and their interests as opposed to the interests of the people in this country. There are forty-three crore people in the unorganized sector with fluctuating incomes. The Budget marks the distance from the lives of dalits, the adivasis, the minorities, and the women of this country. I do not agree with the argument that we should learn to live with inflation. The recent IMF report shows conclusively that growth and inflation need not necessarily move in the same direction. The argument is not tenable that the social sector policies of this Government have given more purchasing power to the people and so, consumption has increased. I request the hon. Finance Minister to look at the inequalities which exist in the consumption patterns of India and not to blame the poor for eating more. I have to reiterate that there should be a ban on future trading in essential commodities. The Government should universalize the Public Distribution System and stop the manipulation of imports and exports. By changing the policies we will find a difference in the rate of inflation in this country. In the name of fiscal consolidation and controlling the deficit, this Budget is a compression in expenditure. The growth rate has fallen in proportion to the GDP.

When we talk about expenditures, it is absolutely essential in the context of unemployment in this country. This Budget shifts the burden on resource mobilization from the profits of the corporates to the pockets of the working people and the poor people of this country. It cuts subsidies in the most important commodities like fuel, food, and fertilizers. Instead of public expenditures, it depends on investments by the corporates, both Indian and foreign. Mutual funds are going to be opened up for the NRIs. So, it will allow hot money to come in India. The public sector institutions and the public sector banks gave stability to the Indian economy. I want to know the method by which the deficit can be controlled and Indian economy can be stabilized. Indirect Taxes are being taken out of the pockets of the people by making goods more expensive. In India, it is seen that the concentration of wealth is being created by these policies which the Government is following.

The tax-GDP ratio at 10.4 per cent is lower than the 12 per cent tax-GDP ratio three years ago. You are following a policy which is not inclusive growth. As regards indirect taxes, I would support the tax on articles of luxury consumption. But your indirect tax regime is taxing school children's exercise books, stationery, etc. There is five per cent service charges at health sector. But we are absolutely incapable of strengthening our health infrastructure to ensure free health services to our people. This is very cruel. I hope that the Finance Minister would withdraw this. There is 10 per cent duty on ready-made branded garments. This word 'branded' is really misleading. It means that any small garment manufacturing company which has a label to its garment has to pay excise duty. So, the Indian small manufacturers are going to suffer. Therefore, please differentiate between the small and the big and branded. The other aspect which I want to raise is the removal of import duty on raw silk. There is a misconception that this is really going to help the handloom sector. Handlooms are not using imported raw silk. It will help certain powerloom sector units. But what about the sericulture farmers? In West Bengal, there are so many small farmers involved in sericulture. It is going to wipe them out. Therefore, I would request the Government to relook at the entire Indirect Tax aspect and change it.

Then, I come to petroleum tax which should have been removed, and which was not removed. It is giving huge revenues to the Government. This year, according to the latest figures of the Petroleum Ministry, the revenue is going to go up to approximately Rs.1,35,000 crores. Therefore, I say that it is completely wrong and anti-people on the part of this Government to continue with this tax regime. You are removing subsidies and substituting with the so-called Direct Cash Transfer. The prices of fertilizers are going to shoot up. We are importing, approximately, 70 lakh tonnes every year. Once you remove the subsidy on fertilizers, the fertilizer prices are going to shoot up. This Government wants to introduce private participation in fertilizer sector. It is an anti-farmer step and I demand that the Government should withdraw this cut in subsidy. We are not against direct cash transfer principle. But we oppose it as a substitute and

replacement for the Government's responsibility to provide provisioning of essential services. You are going to give it to BPL families when your BPL estimates are so very dubious. The expenditure on social services has been coming down over the years as growth has been going up. Last year, in 2009-10, the expenditure was 7.27 per cent; in 2010-11, the expenditure came down to 6.63 per cent.

On rural development, you have cutting by Rs.2,000 crores. On MGNREGA, you are saying that you are going to link wages with the price index. Yet, the allocation for MGNREGA has been cut by Rs.100 crores. You have cut the food subsidy by Rs.27 crores. I ask you, is that inclusive development? I would specifically like to come to the issue of the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and women. The plan for them is supposed to be population proportionate. I request you not to discriminate against these sections and do not divide tribal areas into Maoist-affected and non-Maoist-affected. All tribal areas deserve development. The allocation for multi-sectoral development plan for minority districts must be increased.

I am happy that Anganwadi workers and helpers' salary has been doubled. I welcome that and I also hope you will take one step more by giving them a pension. There are 50 lakh women employed by the Government in different areas viz ASHAS, Mid-day Meal Scheme Workers etc and they find no place in this Budget. Their work is sewa of the nation. So, they do get only a pittance of Rs.500. I demand a minimum wage for them. I especially would like to mention about the 43 crore workers in the unorganised sector and the home-based sector, a large section of whom are women. Their work is not reflected in any calculation or in any laws. Therefore, I demand that they should be covered under social security. The Government should reverse its deeply flawed policies based within the Neo-Liberal framework which has created huge social inequalities and concentration of wealth. It is then that India will be able to advance towards realizing its full potential.

SHRI N. K. SINGH: I would like to point out some three critical positive features which are recognized in the Budget. First is plan and non-plan expenditure -- capital and revenue expenditure. Not all expenditures, on the Non-plan particularly can be regarded as unproductive. I must compliment that the Budget has begun to take credit for the revenue expenditure which could be considered to be productive and hopefully, the reclassification of Government accounts will continue to make this positive growth. Second, on conditional cash transfer, I also agree that this is not the substitute for the other poverty alleviation programme which the Government will pursue. In this context, we should not borrow from examples of other countries but we have to follow the best practices prevalent in India and Bihar is one of the examples.

Around the world, neo-liberalism has been imposed by powerful institutions like the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank etc. Let me look, at the colossal amount of under-provisioning. The Budgetary support for the Central Plan has increased by only 12 per cent when nominal GDP had grown by 14 per cent. There is a gross under-provisioning for subsidies. The Budget seeks, in fact, a reduction in oil subsidies from Rs. 38,000 crores to Rs. 23,000 crores at a time when oil prices seem to look up. In a drop in fertilizer subsidy from Rs. 55,000 to Rs. 50,000 crores when agriculture apparently is an important focus area of the Budget and food subsidies are being paid at Rs. 60,000 crores. The allocation for agriculture is far below expectations. Bihar alone would need not Rs. 400 but Rs. 4000 crores. This is not to speak of the other necessity of money for downstream development of agro processing industry. The far-reaching recommendations of the Swaminathan Committee need to be revived. Connected, with this gross under-provisioning in our excessive optimism on revenue numbers.

I, now, come to the key challenges, which remain under-addressed in the Budget. There cannot be a more devastating evidence to suggest that the income inequality in the last ten years has, unfortunately, grown significantly. There is also lack of coherent strategy for the development of backward regions. The case for a

coherent strategy to address the backwardness of the Eastern India, especially Bihar, is compelling. The Finance Minister was expected to articulate a policy designed to bring down the current account deficit to manageable levels. Even the Reserve Bank has expressed its worry over the current account deficit of 3.5 per cent of the GDP in 2010-11.

It is also a challenge to manage high and persistent inflation. Interest rates are high, investment sentiments are low, rekindling an investment-led growth pose equal challenges. Fiscal consolidation is important not merely achieving numbers, but the quality of fiscal consolidation is equally important. I commend the Minister of Finance for pulling out a whole host of legislations from the cold storage. Every quarter, from 2009-10, manufacturing sector has been declining and the latest estimate has turned into the negative zone. This requires a strategy. Unfortunately, even the far reaching recommendations of the manufacturing competitive council are yet to see the light of the day.

If you look at the employment data today, India has a staggering rate of 9.4 per cent rural unemployment and 10.1 per cent unemployment in the urban sector. These are under estimated because they do not take into account disguised unemployment, they do not take into account seasonal unemployment and they do not take into account under-employment. We would request the Government to come up with a White Paper on Unemployment.

SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: There was recessionary phase all over the world and inspite of that we registered about 8.6 percent rate of growth and also reduced our fiscal deficit, which was pegged at about 4.8 percent. But we could not get results as per our expectations because of recession in our manufacturing sector. We expect that in the years to come, we would be able to resolve it.

There is a need to reform the social sector. The plan allocation for this sector has been increased 17 percent in comparison to the last year's allocation. Agriculture is one of our most important sectors. We registered 5.4 percent agricultural growth rate despite facing

difficulties. It would play very prominent role in maintaining national growth rate of the country. The outlay has been increased for this sector to Rs. 1105 crore since last year. The interest rate on the short term loan on agriculture has also been reduced.

There is increase of about 23.3 percent for infrastructure in the Budget. The efforts are being made to bring in drastic changes in villages through Bharat Nirman Programme. The Backward Region Fund is also increased to 35 percent. Our focus is on inclusive growth which is related with the concerns of common man.

We need to check price rise as it affects common man. One of its reasons, is hike in the prices of petroleum products. But we have to redress the shortcomings of agricultural products, short supply, marketing and distribution along with it. The artificial illegal hoarding also causes shortages of goods in the market and people have to bear rise in prices because of it. There is also mention about direct transfer of cash subsidy in the Budget as middle men take benefit of it and this subsidy does not reach to the poor people.

We do not deny that conditions of farmers is very pathetic. The wages under 'MNREGA' have been revised. There is a mention about self-reliance scheme for unorganised sector in it, which is a welcome step. It also talks about Foreign Direct Investment. I would urge the Minister of Finance first to comprehend our energy needs, and then proceed for infrastructure. There is no special consideration in the budget on alternative measures for energy sector and renewal energy sources. The income of Aganwadi workers has been doubled. I would like that we should help the economically weaker people of other sector also. We should also stream line our PDS system

SHRI SHASHI BHUSAN BEHERA: The Budget is prepared mainly basing on the corporate sector's influence. 77 per cent of the population's per day income is twenty rupees now. 33 per cent are still illiterate. Still, health care is inaccessible to the mass tribals and poor people living in rural areas. On the health care, the Government is confined only to 26 per cent. Agriculture has been the most neglected sector since 1947. Lakhs of farmers had committed

suicide because of negligence of the agriculture sector and ill fiscal management. Fiscal management can improve the economic growth and it can reduce the inflation.

Production also declined. The Budget allocation for agriculture is also very miserable. Only 15 per cent of total Budget allocation has been provided for rural development. The Agriculture budget should be enhanced to a limit so that it can cover up the negligence made in the last 60 years. Nothing has been pledged in this Budget for the improvement of agriculture infrastructure. This Budget is the most cruel budgetary blow to the middle classes and the salaried section. Price rise is there. On the one hand, food inflation is growing. On the other hand, you are cutting subsidy from food sector. To reduce the fiscal deficit of the total GDP, Government is thinking of borrowing from market. No specific steps have been taken to curb inflation, corruption and black money. Big amounts in our economy are being wasted in an anti-people way. Because of the ensuring elections in five States, the Government has placed this voter-oriented Budget. I doubt the inclusive growth plan of this Government.

Millions of tonnes of buffer stock of foodgrains have rotten due to lack of storage facilities but not given to hungry people. There is no job creation – neither in agricultural sector nor in industrial sector. Because of decline in manufacture growth, there is infiltration by foreign manufactures. Industrial sector is in a helpless position because the companies from China are also selling the components in our country. This type of infiltration of industry should be checked. The backward States like Orissa are being neglected thoroughly in this Budget. If iron ore taxation is shared with the State Government, Orissa's economic growth will improve. I am disheartened with this Budget.

SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Good governance improves fiscal position of Governments and allows them to spend more on the needy in the country and creates a far more sustainable and prolonged growth cycle by creating a investment environment. The Finance Minister must usher into the Government a value for

money culture – a culture that reinforces the truth that Government is only a trustee of public money and assets.

There should be statutory disclosures by all Government Departments on commercial decisions. There should be more effective Finance Ministry oversight on all commercial decisions relating to spending, contracts and public assets. The expenditure information system recommended by TAGUP should be implemented. We should have a re-look at this whole concept of independent regulatory institutions. In recent years, Independent regulators have become parking spots for retired bureaucrats. We must create motivated, public service-oriented and specialized people who want to serve as independent regulators.

The service tax on health is being referred to as “misery tax”. The Government must exempt the poor from this additional cost. I want to raise the issue of “one rank, one pension” for our veterans, as these proud men and their families have served our nation selflessly. I would urge upon the Finance Minister let not a few hundreds crores of rupees come in the way of our duty to help these men and their families.

SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: * (*Spoke in Tamil*)

SHRI D. RAJA: This Government is pursuing the policies of strengthening the corporate capitalism through this Budget. The country is passing through a challenging period. The challenges of political credibility, morality and values in the public life, on the one hand and there is challenge to the economic stability of the country due to anti-people policies pursued by the Government today, on the other hand. The Government, which has given such a budget, failed to address very crucial issues of the people such as poverty, unemployment, the growing inequalities, price rise and inflation. The Government speaks in terms of inclusive and faster growth, but it has

* Synopsis of speech delivered by the Hon'ble Member in Tamil will be published separately as supplement.

actually acted against all these claims. The Budget is slow and steady march to corporate capitalism without declaring India as a capitalist country. What is revenue foregone? On account of concessions to private sector in exports, the revenue forgone is Rs. 58, 590 crore, and, on account of corporate taxes, it is Rs 88, 263 crore. The Government has also extended heavy concessions to corporate houses on account of excise duty and customs duty and you talk of *aam aadmi*. There is decline in every *aam aadmi* programme. There is decline of Rs. 100 crore in MNREGA scheme. The budgeted food subsidy is Rs. 60, 573 crore as against Rs. 60,600 crore last year. The allocation for Indira Awas Yojana, the National Rural Livelihood Mission has also been declined this year. The allocation for minorities and SC/ST welfare schemes is notional keeping in view of the inflation.

The main thrust of the Budget is liberalizing the finance sector. The attempts are being made openly towards getting Foreign Direct Investments in our banking and insurance sectors. The Government does not want to promote public sector insurance companies. This will affect the country's interest in the coming days. We know, what happened in USA and other European countries. Budget makes it clear that the Government will go ahead with disinvestment programme in public sector undertakings. The recession did not affect us because of strong public sector and this government is going to dismantle this public sector, which is going to be detrimental to the country's progress and prosperity. This government has drifted from the stated position of Indian Constitution. You are betraying *aam aadmi* and the country.

SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Over the last two decades, India has transformed from a largely state-driven, slow growing economy to a mostly capital investments-led enterprise which is ranked amongst the world's fastest growing economies. But there are still some old lingering challenges like poverty, illiteracy and inaccessibility to basic health care facilities. Disparities are growing and worsening with inflation. The Government needs to address these issues. However, this is well thought out and growth oriented Budget.

The Finance Minister has also given a roadmap for reducing fiscal deficit over the next few years. But all the gains of economic growth stand to be lost because of inflation and more because of food inflation. The viability gap funding, granting of capital investment in cold chain and post harvest grains and giving infrastructure status to this is a very welcome move. But these moves were announced in the past also and not met with great success. The execution of the schemes should be faultless.

Direct cash transfer instead of subsidy for fuel, kerosene, and fertilizers will plug all the loopholes in the current PDS. This budget only gives an increase of 19 per cent from the Revised Budget Estimates in the area of education whereas last year it was almost 42 per cent. Without proper allocation of funds, the Right to Education will remain a distant dream. Only 31 per cent of Indians have access to decent clean sanitation. We are fast becoming the diabetic capital of the world and are having lifestyle diseases.

Only 50 per cent of our Eleventh Plan expenditure has actually been spend. There is no innovation in the health sector. The decision to impose five per cent service tax on diagnostic centres and hospitals will prevent people from preventive health care. It is going to actually encourage roadside places, which don't have adequate facilities. The Finance Minister should reconsider this.

SHRI NARESH GUJRAL: Sixty per cent of our population lives off agriculture, but the policies are anti-farmer. The International prices are double that of the MSP that Government are offering. We do not allow our farmer to export his produce and our godowns are full. Farmers should be given loan at four per cent to make storage space so that we do not waste our precious produce. Dr. Swaminathan report should be implemented.

International oil prices are creating a very serious problem. Food can be bartered for oil. If the farmer is not going to get his fertilizers at subsidized rate, it will affect the price rise. We must allow entry of FDI into retail to save the wastage of fruits and

vegetables. Also, this country requires an FDI. So, this is desperately needed to save the farmers.

GST should be brought as quickly as possible and the Agricultural Produce Marketing Act should be amended. The States should be allowed to levy tax. Private and public sector companies should be incentivised to set up skill development centres. For long Punjab has been discriminated against. An amount of Rs. 3500 crore to modernize the dilapidated canal system is not given to us. Realistic MSP should be given to the farmer, so that he can survive.

Terrorism led to our industry shifting away from the State and no new industry came to our State because you gave 100 per cent tax incentives to our neighbouring States. That is a faulty policy. The Centre should restructure our debt. A moratorium on interest for at least ten years should be given. 50 per cent of Punjab's youth has fallen prey to drugs. Pushed in by Pakistan an anti-drug police force on the lines of the BSF should be set up. Liberal grants should be given to set up rehabilitation centres and unleash a sports movement to fight the drug war. Malwa region of Punjab has become the cancer area of Punjab. An all India Medical Institute should be set up there only for cancer patients.

SHRI VIKRAM VERMA: The present Budget is completely disappointing and direction less. What else can we expect from a helpless Government. The number of persons asking for employment under "MNREGA" has also reduced during last 5 years. On an average, the employment for maximum 54 days has been provided. The labourer does not come to work because there are so many conditions attached with it. A survey should be done in this regard and an effort should be made to correct the related norms.

As far as health sector is concerned, the Health Minister has accepted that there is mal-nutrition and increased child mortality rate. People had some apprehensions about this Government and they are proving to be true. Inflation, fiscal deficit and foreign loan can turn out to be detrimental to the economy in the long run. We will have to

borrow 27 paisa from the market in order to pay the interest of 18 paisa. The Government has been unsuccessful on the loan front.

The Government is accepting that there is corruption. The Leader of Opposition had cautioned Government regarding the appointment of Mr. Thomas as CVC as well as 2G spectrum. But the Government is not ready to accept all this. Regarding Common Wealth Games Mr. Suresh Kalmadi himself became the Chairman of the Organising Committee. There is no formal order in this regard. The Government is not ready to do anything even after the occurrence of the corruption of such a magnitude. Delhi Government is also equally responsible in this matter and the action should be taken against it also. Corruption has become a perpetual painful ailment on the path of progress of the country. The investigation regarding black money should be done covering last three-four years, otherwise, if the proposed Act is brought from the 1st April 2011, we will not be able to find out the black money before this period.

The inflation was at 13.6 percent before December 2010 which reached later at 20 percent. Futures trading is weakening the country. Our position in agriculture field has lessened. There has been negligible increase in the estimated income of the poor. This is the matter of concern in view of the declared goal of progress. The farmers are committing suicides and no attention has been paid to insurance scheme. A pilot project – Season Based Insurance Scheme – was started in Indore and Dhar districts of Madhya Pradesh, but the farmers have not got even a single paisa till date. Only half or one percent of the 2 percent subsidy would be reaching the poor. All these matters should be reconsidered.

SHRI BIRENDER SINGH, making his maiden speech,
said: A strong nation can be built only when there is a Parliamentary democracy. We have emerged as a vibrant, stable, democratic State. Why should no discussion be held in the House before forming the JPC? Even the common man was of this view that the Parliament must function. If the aberrations are there, then, we are responsible for it, not the nation. Increasing tendency to stall Parliamentary

proceedings should be stopped. The problems can only be sorted out through this system.

Still 58 percent of the population is of agriculturists. It must be near about 70 percent. Our share has now reduced to 14.6 percent. We are not giving correct justice to the peasantry of this country. When we started MSP, it was Rs.63 per quintal. Now it is Rs.1100. Have we been given justice by the rise in the MSP and the rate at which we purchase? The Minister has talked for the second time about giving fertilizer subsidy direct to the *kisans*. It is a welcome step. We must not let the recent tensions hold us back converting possibilities into realities. What advantage will we be having as 70 percent of the population? There is more than fifty per cent money in circulation according to Reserve Bank. Whether that money has gone to the poorest of the poor and the peasantry of this country. No. Farmers cannot grow in the system. Don't we have a dual currency for the farming? Then, we don't need any subsidy.

Why do we have storage at two places? The entire foodgrains can be lifted from Punjab and Haryana within one month's time. Then there is no need to have any storage capacity. For 100 kg of wheat you are spending Rs.350 as handling charges. The spending should also be looked into, where are the leakages, where the system is at fault. If we are able to sustain the growth of 10 per cent, (-) 0.25 per cent of (+) 0.25 per cent, in 4-5 years, our overall economy will grow 100 percent. We are spending huge amount on pulses. Growing of pulses and oilseeds is a gamble. It may be or may not be a bumper crop. Rs.5,000 per acre should be given to the farmers of Punjab and Haryana on trial basis and they should be given liberty to sell it at any price. UPA-I remitted the loan to the tune of Rs.65,000 crores. This relief has been given to about 4 crore families. The commercial banks tried to avoid giving fresh loans to farmers. Eighty-five percent of the land holding is below one hectare of land. So, how can one be called a *kulak* farmer? If there is rise in prices of agricultural commodities, the farmers would be benefitted. International condition is responsible for price rise. Those farmers who are not able to pay, they are not willful defaulters.

SHRI RANJITSINH VIJAYSINH MOHITE PATIL: I won't like to repeat the issues mentioned earlier. I would like to thank for allocating Rs.300 crores for oilseeds and pulses. Rs.300 crores have been allocated for the Fodder Development Programme. Three per cent rebate has been given to the farmers, earlier it was two per cent. Government should think about those who are not getting credit from nationalised and multinational banks. The total insurance scheme for the agriculture has been reduced from Rs.2,700 crores to Rs.700 crores. Ours is an agrarian country. About 60 to 70 per cent of our people are dependent on agriculture. The Budget allocation for weather forecasting is Rs.15 crores. If the farmers get timely weather forecast, then, he can save his crop and we will have enough production for the country.

MNREGA is going very well. Labours are working on government plots and they are getting wages. MNREGA should have provisions for farm labourers as well. Allocation to education sector has been increased considerably. India is young nation. Around 40 per cent of our people are under 25 years of age. We can build infrastructure. A survey says that 40 per cent of the 5th standard students cannot read text book. This is the situation. We should get a proper outcome because students is our human resource. Government is doing well in the areas of power generation, transport, communication and water management. Policy is not clear about renewal energy under power generation. Private industry is ready to work for renewal energy but there is no policy. Why cannot we take railways for coastal areas to dry land areas. Water should be transported to dry land areas by railways so that industrial hub can be developed there. I support the Budget.

SHRI MANGAL KISAN: This is the largest budget after independence in terms of volume of amount. We were hoping that scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and OBCs will get attention of the government. Issues of unemployment will be considered which is creating some internal problems. It is regrettable that allocation to

social sector is not enough. Irrigation has been provided only Rs.1222 crores. Irrigation needs to be managed in a better way. Government should think about deprived, poor, unemployed and villagers.

DR. ASHOK S. GANGULY: I wish to compliment the hon. Finance Minister. The nation realized that this country is making progress in spite of many areas where progress is yet to be made. We have to face the rise of crude prices which will have a cruel impact on this country. We should be prepared. The Finance Minister always prays to Varuna. Wheat crop is a failure in Russia, China and Australia and food inflation is going to stare at us. A large region of China is suffering from repeated droughts. China is laying a pipeline from its flood-prone areas into the area which is drought-prone over a thousand kilometers at the cost of 60 billion dollars. We have to have imaginative programmes in this country that those areas which are drought-prone are equally treated with the seriousness. The food storage is the biggest challenge, but I do not see anything that we are doing something about it. We have to take up food storage on a war-footing. We produce, enough food in this country to control both inflation and hunger. Million tonnes of fruits and vegetables are being rotted on their way to marketplace. We have to increase the involvement of the private sector. Fruits and vegetable growers should be remunerated. Inflation will come under control.

Delivery of credit to the rural areas is one of the biggest weaknesses in our banking systems. I believe the money that we are spending quite rightfully on the MNREGA scheme must be used for productive purpose. There is a whole new way of looking at the MNREGA. We must reduce the human intervention between giving subsidy and the receipt of subsidy. I believe that neglect of water is going to be even is a bigger threat than food and shelter. Major provisions are needed to raise ground water levels. Otherwise poisoning of water will take place. The Finance Bill must make special provisions for investment in regeneration of India's water bodies. I want to talk about is migration of people. You cannot prevent people from going anywhere in India. But, we cannot make India miserable as a consequence of migration. The biggest failure has been

the slow development of infrastructure and the slowing down of Foreign Direct Investment. Some steps have been announced to encourage investment in the infrastructure area. I have to compliment the Finance Bill on the balance between manufacturing, services and foreign trade. We have a lot to do on skills development. The million of people are entering the job markets. They can add to the wealth of India. GST is going to be the crowning glory of the financial initiatives of the Government of India. We must have emergency plans. If governance and corruption are not brought under control in a purposeful manner, if the Lokpal Bill does not find prominence, none of our grand schemes is going to see the light of the day. I hope that some of the minor suggestions that I have raised will be taken into considerations.

SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Inflation and corruption have been the major issues, which are hunting the present Government. The Budget 2011-12 has completely failed to tackle these issues. There is absence of inclusive pro-poor growth and it is directly attributable to pro-rich and pro-corporate. Development projects in so-called Left-Wing-Extremism-affected Districts have got big grants. There should be a policy of providing 100 per cent job security to the youth of those areas of the country, which are affected by Maoists or any other extremism. Grade III and IV posts of Central Government, State Government and Railways should reserve for local youth. Health treatment becomes costlier as the Government has sought to levy tax on all services offered by centrally air conditioned hospitals, nursing homes and diagnostic labs. This comes at a time when the health care sector is already bearing the brunt of an inflationary spiral.

North Eastern Region needs special assistance in the budget. Special task has to be done for critical flood control scheme in the Brahmaputra as well as erosion wherein thousands of acres of land have been washed away by the Brahmaputra. People are dwelling on the embankments. There is no industry in our region, we are under developed. Youth are engaged only in insurgency groups. In the North Eastern Region, the Government has even failed to open up the

industry like Ashok Paper Mill which was promised in the Assam Accord in 1985. The North Eastern Region needs special package in the budget. We are rich in tea cultivation. Now, many tea estates have been abandoned by the owners or the workers have not been paid their dues for several years pushing them on the verge of starvation. I want to raise one issue with regard to development of Assam. Massive leakage of central funds and sanction for development works have hamstrung the development process. The politicians, bureaucrats and militant nexus was responsible for siphoning off central funds to the tune of thousands of crores in NC Hill district of Assam. The recent Comptroller and Auditor General of India's report exposed the Assam Government's excessive expenditure of over Rs. 2,316.67 crores which has brought it under criticism and protest.

DR. BHARATKUMAR RAUT: I rise to express my deep disappointment about the budget that has been presented by the Hon'ble Finance Minister in Parliament. This budget neither fulfills the minimum expectations of the rural poor or urban middle class nor does it provide any effective instruments to overcome fiscal problems. The budget is full of contradictions and anomalies and thus directionless. The Government has raised income-tax limits. Whom are you trying to fool? When the minimum income-tax limit has gone up, have you checked how much the inflation has gone up? A middle-class family, from urban city like Mumbai or Delhi is saving around only Rs. 179 a month because of your relief. What is the rate of inflation? Therefore, you need to have a re-look at what you are doing. Over seventy lakh people, live in slums in Mumbai. What are you doing for them? You are giving one per cent interest subsidy on housing loan up to Rs. 25 lakh. It is the builder who is benefited. On Anganwadi, everyday is praising the Government.

You have really doubled their honorarium. What is needed is not the honorarium but you need to absorb them in the Government service. It is the responsibility of the Government to absorb them or create some mechanism by which they get all the benefits of Government employees. We need to make some provision in the budget for the development of the regional languages. I am happy that

you have increased 40 per cent funds on 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan'. In the near future, our maximum attention should be on primary education. We will be creating a new India.

SHRI M. RAMA JOIS: The National Identification Authority India Bill, 2010 is pending before the Parliament. It was introduced in the last session. But the Bill has not been made into an act and it had not come into force. It may go to a Select Committee or it may go to the concerned Standing Committee. But nothing has been done so far. The aadhar number is sought to be given not only to citizens but also immigrants. The Aadhar number has to be given only after it becomes an Act. Now he says that 10 lakh Aadhar numbers will be given per day. Clause 2(a) says that "Aadhar number" means the identification number issued to an individual under sub-section (2) of section 3.

The costs involved in such a project are always enormous and have to be weighed against the limited benefits that are likely to follow. When the Bill is pending, can a project of this magnitude be implemented by merely on executive directions? Ultimately, if the scheme fails, all the amount that has been spent will go waste. The Subrahmanyam Committee has said, "Even if you are going to issue Identity Cards, let there be separate cards for citizens and non-citizens be issued Identity Cards of a different colour and design."

If a person gets the card, and is issued 'Aadhaar', under article 14 and 21. Now, under the scheme of the Constitution, when a Bill is pending, it should become an Act and then the President has to give his assent. Only then any project can be implemented. Unfortunately, a measure of this magnitude, which may, completely, affect our economy, is being implemented and crores of rupees are being spent, without the approval of Parliament. There is nothing in the Budget speech anywhere, that they will wage a war against corruption and financial purity will be maintained. Without financial purity, all the budget features are useless. As far as agriculture is concerned, the contribution of agriculture to GDP, last year, was 21.7 per cent. Now

it has come down to 14.2 per cent. As far as environment is concerned, the problem is over-exploitation of environment.

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

ERRATA TO SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE, DATED 9TH MARCH, 2011

- Page 190 Line 9, read the name of Hon'ble Member as '*Shrimati Viplove Thakur*'
- Page 190 Line 8 from bottom, read the name of Hon'ble Member as '*Shri Mohammed Amin*'
- Page 192 Line 5, read 'an' for 'and'
- Page 214 Line 5 from bottom, read 'can' for 'come'