

RAJYA SABHA

***SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE**

(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

Wednesday, February 03, 2021 / Magha 14, 1942 (Saka)

OBSERVATION BY THE CHAIR

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, as you are all aware, there is a restriction on the usage of cellular phones within the Rajya Sabha Chambers which is notified in the Parliamentary Bulletin Part-II issued prior to the commencement of the sittings of a Session.

It has been observed that some Members are using their mobile phones to record the proceedings of the House while sitting in the Chamber. Such conduct is against the parliamentary etiquettes and is not expected from the hon. Members.

Members should desist from such unwarranted activities inside the Chamber. Such unauthorized recording of the proceedings of the House and its circulation in the social media may lead to breach of privilege and contempt of the House. Even sections of the media, who have now started using some of it, have been advised not to do it because that is not authorized and then you will be liable for the consequences thereon. Keeping that in mind, I hope everybody will follow the rules. After all, this is the House of Parliament. We must maintain the dignity. If the Members are fair, everything will be fine.

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

Dispensing with Zero Hour Submissions and Question Hour

MR. CHAIRMAN: On a suggestion made by Shri Pralhad Joshi, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Minister of Coal and Minister of Mines and agreed to by the House the Zero Hour has been dispense with on 4th and 5th February, 2021 and Question Hour dispensed with on 3rd, 4th and 5th February, 2021 to take up discussion on the Motion of Thanks on the President Address, the Chairman dispensed with the Zero Hour and Question Hour.

MATTERS RAISED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIR

1. Need for Immediate Attention of Government towards Key Issues being Faced by Infrastructure Sector Companies

SHRI AYODHYA RAMI REDDY: Cost, time overrun and the delays in execution of projects is a huge problem which has engulfed infrastructure companies. There is a huge problem going on around this industry. Most of the companies are built over the years. This has to really support the nation building and is part of Atmanirbhar plan. So, until and unless the Government comes forward with some specific deliverables, it is going to be very difficult. Hence I request the Government to take necessary steps to support this industry.

(Dr. Fauzia Khan, Dr. Amar Patnaik and Shrimati Priyanka Chaturvedi associated.)

2. Need for Steps to be taken to Tackle Harassment of Indian Fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: On 19th January, 2021, four fishermen from Tamil Nadu reported missing. And, later, after four days, on 23rd January, 2021, it was reported by the Sri Lankan Navy that their bodies were found in the Palk Strait. The fishermen were brutally attacked, killed. The Minister of External Ministry said that a strong demarche was made to the Sri Lankan High Commissioner.

But, it is not enough. A strong condemnation or a quick and firm response from our Government should go. This should not happen again. The government should take this issue very seriously and give hope and confidence to the fishermen that nothing would happen henceforth when they go for fishing.

DR. M. THAMBIDURAI : It is not just four people who were killed, but, 245 Tamil Nadu fishermen till now have been killed by the Sri Lankan Navy. This is a very grave situation taking place in that area. They are arresting them and we are also bringing them back. I condemn the Sri Lankan Navy for doing these kinds of atrocities and killing our fishermen. This is going to affect the relationship between India and Sri Lanka. Therefore, I request the External Affairs Minister to take necessary action to see that our Prime Minister condemns these kinds of activities.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI. S. JAISHANKAR) responding to the matter, said: We have taken it up in the strongest terms with the Sri Lankan Government. This incident was particularly, unacceptable and that has been made very, very clear to them.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

3. Need for Initiatives for Socio-Political-Economic Empowerment of Women

***DR. SASMIT PATRA:** Whatever work we might have done for women empowerment is not enough. For the social and economic empowerment, we should consider chalking out a plan. In Odisha, there is a revolutionary programme called 'Mission Shakti' under which 80 Lakh women are being empowered. Through this programme they have been able to change their lives. Mission Shakti can also be emulated for formulating a women empowerment programme at the Central level. In Mission Shakti, economic

* Spoke in Odiya.

empowerment of women is being ensured through Self Help Groups which has revolutionized their lives and livelihood. There is ample scope and requirement for political empowerment of women as well. I believe that there is a pressing need to pass the Women's Reservation Bill. I believe that adoption of Mission Shakti as a national programme and passage of Women's Reservation Bill, would go a long way in socio-economic and political empowerment of women. I urge upon the Government to pass the Women's Reservation Bill without any further delay.*Hon. Member spoke in Odiya.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

4. Need to Take Action against Culprits Responsible for Attacks on Hindu Temples in Andhra Pradesh

SHRI G.V.L. NARASIMHA RAO: I would like to draw the attention of this House to a spate of attacks on Hindu temples in the State of Andhra Pradesh. There have been more than 140 such incidents. One such incident that happened very recently was in Ramatheertham where the idol of Shri Bhagwan Ram was beheaded. This temple is considered to be Uttar Andhra's Ayodhya. The State Government had not acted in time for the last year and a half on such incidents. As a result, several such incidents have happened. I appeal to the government to get into action and ask the State Government for a report.

(Shri K.C. Ramamurthy, Dr. Amar Patnaik, Shri Kanakamedala Ravindra Kumar and Shrimati Kanta Kardam associated.)

5. Need for more Recruitment of Bureaucrats in the Country

DR. FAUZIA KHAN: Bureaucrats or civil servants play a major role in public administration. Today, these bureaucrats are subjected to enormous workload and at times, they are made in-charge of multiple portfolios. This impacts the overall functioning of the Government. Considering this, there is a need to expand the number of seats and recruiting more officers through the UPSC.

(Dr. Amar patnaik associated.)

6. Need to Withdraw Tax on Handlooms

SHRI SUBHASH CHANDRA BOSE PILLI: The handloom sector is the second largest sector in the employment generation. There are nearly 40 lakh handlooms existing in our country. The Handloom Act was passed in the year 1985 for protecting handloom weavers. 11 items were reserved for production under the act. Power looms violated this Act and are producing items of handlooms-reserved and hence handloom community is facing severe difficulty in their survival. 5 per cent GST on handlooms has automatically increased the production cost of handlooms in comparison to powerlooms. Hence, imposing GST is very ridiculous. Efforts are needed to ensure adequate availability of hank yarn to handlooms. Hank yarn is the main raw material for handlooms. In the present situation, keeping in view the troubles faced by handloom weavers, the hon. Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh had taken some valuable initiatives for the welfare of weavers.

(Dr. Amar Patnaik and Shrimati Priyanka Chaturvedi associated.)

7. Need for Proper Implementation of 'PM Fasal Bima Yojana'

SHRI RAJMANI PATEL: I would like to draw your attention regarding the 'Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana'. The purpose of which is to ensure financial security of farmers. The scheme was launched to remove the risk of indebtedness to farmers due to crop failure. But, the insurance amount is not being given to the farmers associated with the scheme based on the rules fixed under the terms of the scheme. They do not get proper insurance even after several months. Survey of crop damage caused by natural calamities is not conducted in an equitable manner, due to which proper compensation is not decided. Those who commit fraud should be punished as soon as possible. Immediate action should be taken against insurance companies cheating farmers and justice should be provided to the farmers of our country.

(Shri Vishambhar Prasad Nishad, Dr. Amar Patnaik and Dr. Ameer Yajnik associated.)

8. Need for withdrawal of FIRs against Politicians and Journalists

SHRI DIGVIJAYA SINGH: FIRs are being filed against the politicians, journalists and civil society activists under serious sections since the last few days. A case of sedition has been registered against several persons like Shri Shashi Tharoor, Member of Parliament, Shri Rajdeep Sardesai, Shrimati Mrinal Pandey, Shri Mandeep Punia on the application of the same person. An FIR has been lodged in different police stations of three states on the same complaint, it is a well-planned conspiracy to suppress independent journalism and independent voice and we condemn it. I request the government to withdraw this type of sedition.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

WITHDRAWAL OF MEMBER

MR. CHAIRMAN: Rule 255 talks of withdrawal of Member: "The Chairman may direct any member whose conduct is in his opinion grossly disorderly to withdraw immediately from the Council and any member so ordered to withdraw shall do so forthwith and shall absent himself during the remainder of the day's meeting." Shri Sanjay Singh, Shri Sushil Kumar Gupta and Shri Narain Dass Gupta, I am invoking Rule 255 and also directing you to please withdraw from the House immediately.

MOTION OF THANKS ON PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA: That an Address be presented to the President in the following terms:

"That the Members of the Rajya Sabha assembled in this Session are deeply grateful to the President for the Address which he has been pleased to deliver to both Houses of Parliament assembled together on January 29, 2021."

The Address which our President delivered on 29th January, 2021 is an important document and has historical significance. The Address reflects the vision of our Prime Minister believes in the principle of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Vishwas'. He also believes in the principle of 'Minimum Government, Maximum Governance'. He believes in empowerment and transparency. The Government is dedicated to strengthen the under-privileged sections of the society and build a strong nation. This Government believes in hundred per cent implementation of its promises and completed. It made operative both the Bhupen Hazarika Setu and the Bogibeel Bridge. My State, Assam, has achieved hundred per cent electrification in the villages. The President has highlighted how our country had to come together over the last year to overcome several adversities, including Covid-19 pandemic, floods, earthquakes, cyclones, locust attack and bird flu. The country witnessed an unparalleled and indomitable courage, endurance and discipline of our countrymen. India's economy is firmly in the middle of a v-shaped recovery and will bounce back to a record 11 per cent growth in 2021-22. 'One Nation One Ration Card' was provided, made foodgrains available which saved people from starvation during lockdown and pandemic period. An amount of Rs.31,000 crore was directly transferred to Jan-Dhan accounts of poor women. Programmes like Rashtriya Poshan Abhiyan, Fit India movement and Khelo India have helped in creating and increasing awareness amongst our countrymen, especially youth and children. With these Abhiyan and Yojanas, the importance of health is given utmost priority. The three farm laws have been passed by both the Houses of Parliament after much deliberations. The benefits of these three important farm reforms have started reaching to more than ten crore people, who are small farmers. Under Pradhan Mantri Kisan Yojana, the Government is encouraging production of various foodgrains. Our Government believes in 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'. Rapid execution of major infrastructure projects such as laying of submarine optical fibre cable from Chennai to Port Blair, the Atal Tunnel or the Char Dham road project and their completion even during the Covid-19 situation speaks of volumes of Government's resolve. The 'Vande Bharat Mission' of this

Government has been hailed universally. Our country has registered a record improvement in the Ease of Doing Business ranking. India has joined the Security Council as a Non-Permanent Member in the United Nations. The 'Ayushman Bharat', The Health Insurance Scheme and the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, Rural Electrification and Ujjwala Yojana Schemes have been the flagship successes of this Government. The implementation of the Goods and Services Tax was a bold step on the part of this Government. Keeping in mind the welfare of all sections of the society, the Government under the leadership of our Prime Minister has created opportunities and inclusion of peaceful environment to bring permanent peace in the North-Eastern Region. The Assam Government, during the last four-and-a-half years, achieved notable successes. Our hon. Prime Minister distributed Miyadi Pattas for one lakh six thousand people by his own hand. BTR Accord was signed in January, 2020. Recently, the elections were held to the Bodoland Territorial Council and all Bodos and non-Bodos participated in the elections, came to one platform and elected a Territorial Council recently in Assam. Another accord for re-settlement of Bru tribes has brought solutions in State of Mizoram and Tripura. Besides bringing peace, the second major focus of this Government is on development and connectivity. I want to raise some of the issues relating to the tea industry in Assam. They are getting their schools. They are getting their healthcare facilities and that community as well as other communities are prospering under the rule of Shri Narendra Modi. With this, I support the President's Address.

SHRI VIJAY PAL SINGH TOMAR: Thank you hon. Chairman, I stand to support the submission made by hon. Bhubaneswar Kalita Ji and to speak in the favour thereof. Sir, to deal with the Corona Pandemic, the way our Prime Minister has acted seeking cooperation of States is being appreciated worldwide. The death ratio in India remained to be 112 per lakh. Special package to tune of Rs. 2.46 lakh crore has been issued under Pradhanmantri Garib Kalyan Yojana. Special Shramik Rail were introduced for migrant labourers. By introducing Garib Kalyan Rojgar Drive opportunities of employment equivalent to 50 crore working day was created. Financial package to the tune of Rs. 20 lakh crore was issued under

Self-reliant India Scheme which was further enhanced to 26.6 lakh crore. 50 lakh of Indians stranded abroad were taken back to India under Vande Bharat Drive. India is playing leading role in Corona Virus elimination drive. Vaccination drive has started. Corona vaccine is planned to be exported to 100 countries. The efforts made by India to deal with Corona Pandemic is being appreciated. Today, we have 2400 Test Labs and 12 lakh tests are being done everyday. Under the Ayushman Bharat, Pradhanmantri Jan Arogya Yojana 1.5 crore poor gets free treatment upto Rs. 5 lakh. 7000 medicines centres introduced under Pradhanmantri Jan Aushadhi Kendra are supplying medicines at cheaper rate. The number of medical colleges have been enhanced to 562. 22 New AIIMS have been approved. We shall uplift Indian economy upto 5 trillion dollar. Hon. Modi Ji, has well understood this mantra that when farmers prosper, the nation prosper. Even during Corona times the growth rate of agro sector has been on its highest level. When the country attained freedom 75 percent people were involved in farm work and the contribution thereof to the economy was around 52 percent. After independence the same never crossed 18 percent. Why did the condition of farmers deteriorate and why did 3 crore 70 lakh abandon farming during 2005-2012? It is because farmers never got justice. There was no means of irrigation, no arrangements of godowns today we have around 86 percent small and marginal farmers. The way our Prime Minister and the Government under their leadership have taken steps, there is a possibility that agro income to increase and it would be the economy of 5 trillion dollars. Government is trying hard towards productivity, production, agro trade and processing. Government have taken a number of steps for the last six years for small and marginal farmers. Of the 99 projects of Agro Irrigation Scheme, majority of them have been completed. Besides, increasing budget for agro irrigation area, Corpus Fund of Rs. 40,000 crore has been created in NABARD. Soil Health Cards have been issued Rupees 1 lakh 13 thousand crore have so far been issued to the farmers' accounts under Kisan Samman Nidhi. Payment of Rs. 6000 is being done per annum. Mandis are being linked through e-NAM. Efforts are being made to reduce post harvest losses. An effort to remove middlemen has been made through these laws. Due to

these laws, farmers will increase cultivation and diversification will be possible due to value addition. By diversification, seed nursery can be developed even on small land. 4,000 crore rupees have been provided for medicinal plants in 'Atmnirbhar Bharat'. After the introduction of these laws, processing and storage of perishable products will be possible. Processing and marketing of products increases profits. Our government has also done work to promote bee keeping. According to a survey, beekeeping increases farm yields by 11 per cent. The central government has also given a special package of Rs. 15,000 crore for animal husbandry. Small farmers are benefiting from these laws. The government has formed 10,000 FPOs. NABARD will train the farmers. Along with this, grants will also be given to them. Branding, packing, processing and storage of products will be arranged. APIDA will assist farmers in exporting products. In this way, after the introduction of these laws, farmers can get six times more price for their produce. Our government has given a special package of Rs. 20,000 crore for fisheries. A farmer from Karnal was awarded the Padma Shri for fisheries. These subjects comes under the Concurrent List and the Center has the right to make laws on it. In the last two decades, 12 Expert Committees have been formed on this subject. I would like to tell you that Dr. Swaminathan's report came only in 2006 but it was not implemented till 2014. Hon'ble Prime Minister has given farmers more than the cost of their produce. With the permission to set up private mandis to the private companies and cooperative societies, farmers will have an option. The Essential Commodities Act may be kept suspended. Discussions have been held with all stakeholders. They have been taken into confidence and then these laws have been made. In the 2018-2019 report of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, it has also been clearly written that farmers should be given alternative platform apart from mandis. Some people are sceptical that these laws will snatch the land and will discontinue the mandis and there will be no MSP. Minimum Support Price will be there. A huge amount has been provided for medicinal plants, dairy, fisheries, warehouses etc. Special provisions have also been made for farmers. FPOs are now being made under these laws and farmers will also get benefit from them.

Now the children of farmers will be job creators. They can start their customer care centre. The government is paying special attention to modern agricultural infrastructure. For this, more than 100 air-conditioned farmer trains have been run till now. Solar pumps are being installed. Production of ethanol has increased a lot due to government policies. The Prime Minister has increased the price of sugar from Rs 3,100 to Rs 3,300. Ethanol will increase the income of the farmer and will also protect the environment. Since 2014, 2 crore houses have been built for poor rural families and by the year 2022 every poor will have a house. 10 crore toilets have been constructed so far. 3 crore families have been connected with pipe water supply for 'Jal Jeevan Mission'. Roads are being constructed in rural areas under the 'Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana'. Work on optical fibre is also going on. The work of saving the cottage industry is being done. Under 'Mudra Yojana' 70 per cent of the loans have been provided to women entrepreneurs. In the last 6 years, under the 'Gramin Aajivika Mission', a large amount of money has been made available to women entrepreneurs of the country through banks. Special attention is being paid to the health of women by the government. Pregnant women are being provided with the facility of free check-up. The government is giving scholarships to more than 3 crore 20 lakh students, including students belonging to scheduled castes, backward classes and forest dwellers. Similarly, expansion work of 'Eklavya Aavasiye Model School' is being done for tribal youth. For this, more than 500 schools have been approved. The current government has ended the interviews for Group C and Group D posts. The government has decided to set up a National Recruitment Agency. In the 112 under-developed districts of the country, the present government is implementing development schemes on priority basis. The MSP has been increased by 90 per cent on 46 forest produce by the government. The facilities of Jan Dhan accounts, Aadhaar and mobile have ensured the rights of the people. To encourage entrepreneurship in the country, the government has made many provisions of the Companies Act non culpable and has made four labour codes by abolishing 29 central labour laws. Today, 'Vocal for Local' has taken the form of a mass movement. Even in this difficult time of Corona, India has emerged as

a centre of attraction for the investors of the world. The government has started work on the National Infrastructure Pipeline worth more than Rs 110 lakh crore. Also, more than 13 thousand kilometres of road will be constructed under 'Bharatmala Project'. Some historical decisions have also been taken by the government. Bode Agreement is done. The people of Jammu and Kashmir have also given full support to the development policy of the government under the leadership of honourable Modi ji. Now, under 'Ayushman Bharat Yojana' in Jammu and Kashmir, every family will get free treatment up to five lakh rupees. To promote indigenous production in the field of defence, 48 thousand crore rupees have been earmarked for the manufacturing of indigenous fighter aircraft TEJAS. Government is also moving fast in the field of export of defence equipment. India has also entered the Security Council for the eighth time this year as non-permanent member and India has also been honoured as Chairman of BRICS. The birthday of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose has been celebrated as 'Parakram Divas'. We are going to celebrate his 125th birth anniversary in a big way this year. The NDA has given a huge budget to the agriculture sector. We have provided many times more funds for soil testing laboratories, agricultural mechanization. Whether is it railway tracks or doubling of railway lines, we have done many times more work than UPA. We have constructed a good length of national highways and rural roads in a short span of time. The present government has done unprecedented work in every field. These three laws will greatly benefit the farmers and I support these laws.

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): Hon. President's address mentions about our soldiers and farmers. Our soldiers fight on the borders and face extreme cold conditions. Our soldiers guard our borders on glaciers in such a severe cold. In the same region, 20 of our soldiers attained martyrdom at the Galvan Valley last year, so I pay tribute to those martyrs. At the same time, I also pay homage to 175 farmers who were martyred in the last nearly two and a half months due to severe cold and many other reasons while demanding withdrawal of the Bills. This is not the first time that there has been a deadlock between the farmers and the Government. For hundreds of years, the peasants have fought against

feudalism, zamindari and have fought against the governments for their rights. In many such agitations, the governments finally had to bow down. Between 1900 and 1906, three laws were enacted in the United India under the British rule. According to these laws, the farmers were denied ownership of their lands and the ownership of the lands was given to the British government. This created a ruckus and in the year 1907 an agitation was launched by Sardar Ajit Singh, elder brother of Bhagat Singh ji, Kishan Singh ji, father of Bhagat Singh, Ghasita Ram ji and Sufi Amba Prasad ji. A protest was held all over Punjab. Lala Lajpat Rai also supported it. Then the Government made a minor amendment to that Bill. Because of this, the agitation increased further, because it was not according to their satisfaction. Then violence took place in Rawalpindi, Gujranwala and Lahore. As a result, the British government withdrew all three Bills. The Champaran Satyagraha took place in 1917 under the leadership of Gandhiji. The British were forcing the farmers there to cultivate indigo. To put an end to the cultivation of indigo, Gandhiji compelled the government to bring in a law for this purpose. The members then demanded that the Bill be sent to the Select Committee. A copy of this Bill was also given to Gandhiji. In this way the suggestions of Gandhiji and the Select Committee were taken and the cultivation of indigo ceased. In 1918, Kheda Satyagraha was started by Mahatma Gandhiji and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patelji. They gave a petition to the Bombay government to abolish their taxes. At that time, the British government rejected their demand. The British government warned the people that if they do not pay taxes, their land and property will be seized. People's land and property were then seized and people were arrested, but the agitation did not end. As a result, that year's taxes were waived. The increase made in taxes was also reduced by the government. Thus the farmers won again. In 1925, the Bombay Presidency raised taxes for farmers by 22 per cent. After that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel ji wrote to the Governor, Bombay to reduce the tax, but the Governor rejected it. The government announced the auction of lands, houses and cattle of those people who were not paying taxes. But not a single man came to participate in that auction. Against this, a civil disobedience movement took place in Gujarat in 1928 under

the leadership of Sardar Patel. As a result, the government returned all the lands and reduced the tax to 6 per cent. In Telangana from 1946 to 1950 a zamindar grabbed the land of a poor washer woman. After that, such a big movement started that people took the lands of other zamindars. In October 1988, the Congress Party wanted to hold a rally at the Boat Club. We had hired trains all over the country to bring around one million people for the rally. I was in-charge of that rally. At that time, Tikaitji's peasant movement was going on in U.P. for several days. And it was published in the newspapers that there was going to be a Congress rally in the Boat Club. We were taken by surprise that Tikaitji was sitting in the Boat club with 50 thousand people a day before. We did not fight with the farmers and shifted our venue to the Red Fort. We told the people coming in the Rally that they should go to the Red Fort. If we had evicted people from the Boat club, lot many people would have been injured. And after two or three days Tikaitji himself withdrew from there. Our farmers provide food to 130 crore people of India. A person should at least get two square meals to survive. We should fight the enemy on the border instead of farmers. Hon. Prime Minister knows very well as to when the Green Revolution started and who built the canals and Bhakra Dam etc. We are not taking credit for this, it is the responsibility of the government. Even, the British government had to withdraw due to peasant movements, so why can't we? If these Bills were referred to the Select Committee or Standing Committee at that time, then this problem probably would not have arisen. I request the government to withdraw these three Bills. For those who went missing on 26 January, a committee be constituted to investigate where they are. The entire opposition condemns the incident that occurred at the Red Fort. It is against democracy and law and order. The insult of national flag cannot be tolerated. Those involved in this act should be punished severely. But innocent farmer leaders should not be implicated. The case of sedition should be withdrawn against some journalists and our member Shashi Tharoorji. An MP elected by the people cannot be called a traitor. If the editors of the media are charged with sedition, then it will be against democracy and against this government. The government should focus on the major challenges facing the country.

If the government withdraws these three Bills, a big solution will come out.

As regards Jammu and Kashmir, Article 370 was abrogated on August 5, 2019. This article was an agenda of the ruling party. Hon. Atal Bihari Vajpayeeji or any other BJP leader or MP had never demanded till August 5, 2019 that the state should be bifurcated and the U.T. be formed. There are two districts in Ladakh, one is Kargil and one is Leh - it is Leh district that had demanded union territory. Had the Government made Leh a Union Territory and would not have disturbed the rest of the State, then the matter could have been understood, but to convert such a large State a Union Territory is beyond my comprehension. When there were State Governments, law and order, militancy, developmental work related conditions were good. But no developmental work is going on today. Conditions of education, health have worsened. Tourism has come to an end. There is no price control. The condition of the roads is very bad. There is a good thing that you held the DDC elections there. This step towards BDC and DDC is a very good step. For this, I want to congratulate the Government. But nothing else is good. You would say that the people of Ladakh got UT and they became happy. No, the people of Ladakh are not happy, because now anyone can buy their land. Earlier when Article 370 was there, no outsider could get a government job there. But today, any outsider can do any job there. Therefore, they are also offended. You would say that the people of Jammu are happy. The people of Jammu are also not happy because if any outsider will buy the land, then he will buy the maximum in Jammu itself because Punjab and Jammu are nearby. He may or may not buy land in Kashmir. Not even transporter, shopkeeper, unemployed youth of Jammu is happy. Thus, Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh none is happy. Therefore, I urge the Government that for the progress of Jammu and Kashmir, to take our own people into confidence, to keep them united with love and affection a Bill be brought in this House and the statehood of the State be restored and elections for the Legislative Assembly in Jammu and Kashmir be held. On behalf of my party, I thank the hon'ble President for addressing the Joint Session of both the Houses.

SHRI A. NAVANEETHAKRISHNAN: I want to place my gratitude to the Government for the enactment of the Tamil Nadu Protected Agricultural Zone Development Act, 2020. In January, last year, in the all-party meeting, I had made a request regarding the apprehensions of the farmers of Cauvery delta that the ongoing oil exploration would create danger to their farming activity. The Act prohibits all the activities which harm the agriculture in the Cauvery delta and hence the entire Cauvery delta farmers are very happy. The Government has taken right steps and protected the interests of the agriculturists of Cauvery delta. The steps taken by the Central Government on COVID-19 pandemic proved to be right and it ended in success. It has been successfully controlled in Tamil Nadu. There have been many inventions in scientific fields. The entire world is still suffering from the Corona virus but India is now saved. The Government is successful in all its endeavours. The technology is being put into use effectively. Cell phones are playing a vital role. Now, the barrier between the rural and the urban has been broken and internet and Google search are very familiar everywhere in India. In Judiciary also, the barrier between the mofussil lawyer and urban lawyer has also been broken. Now the Digital India has come into place. Two vaccines have been invented by our scientists. India is standing first in all walks of life. There were twin problems of saving the life as well as saving the economy. But the Central Government won the fight. Agriculture played pivotal role in this fight and our farmers produced more wheat, more paddy and other yields. I support the President's Address.

SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA: My party respect the Constitution and the convention. Therefore, we attended the Joint Session of the Parliament. But, I don't think that the contents of the hon. President's Address inspire the crores and crores of people of this country. It was just a stereotype speech of the hon. President. It was a track-record of the Government. What happened on 26th of January was the most unfortunate. During the last couple of years, there have been incidents of violence in many parts of the country. We are celebrating 150th Birth Anniversary of that great man who was the profounder of the non-violence. So, we have to create an

atmosphere and a mindset about non-violence in this country. My Party has been appealing to all the national leaders and all the political parties to incorporate the theory of Gandhi's non-violence in the Preamble of our Constitution. I appeal to this Government to ponder over this proposal. What happened on 26th January at Red Fort is most unfortunate, no Indian can appreciate this. But, putting the entire blame squarely on a few farmer organizations or a few farmer leaders is not going to solve the problem. My suggestion to the Government is that a proper impartial inquiry should be instituted into this incident headed by a sitting Supreme Court judge. One of the main demands of farmers was about the MSP. Government is verbally assuring the farmers that MSP will be there. If you can assure the farmers about MSP verbally, why don't you write two lines in the law itself and give a legal assurance to the farmers of this country that yes, MSP was there and MSP will be there. The Government is yet to implement Swaminathan Commission recommendation in true sense, so far as MSP is concerned. So, my appeal to the Government would be to implement Swaminathan Commission recommendation. Heaven wouldn't have fallen if this bill had been referred to a Select Committee of the Rajya Sabha because that was the demand of the Members. It is astonishing to know that during the last century, Odisha was hit by natural calamities for 129 times. That has severely affected our economy. The last super cyclone in 1999 devastated Odisha. Therefore, the Odisha has been demanding for a Special Status, a Special Category State and if it is not accorded, at least accord a special package for Odisha . But that has not been done. Patelji brought political integration after Independence. But I think the task of economic integration seems to be halfway as yet because economic disparity between the States and regions still remains in this country. The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes are the most poorly served by the Indian States and they are vulnerable to chronic poverty. This House, this Rajya Sabha, in 2010 had already passed the Women Reservation Bill. But it has not yet been passed in the Lok Sabha for various reasons. Country's half of the population is women but their representation in the highest forum of our democracy is only 14 per cent. The global average of women's representation in

Parliamentary forums is 24 per cent. Among four BRIC countries, we are in the fourth position so far as the women's representation in Parliamentary forum is concerned. The Muslim countries, like Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, etc., have more women's representation than in India. Our mothers and sisters are equally competent. In some fields, they are more competent than men. This is an opportunity where government have an absolute majority, a comfortable majority in Lok Sabha. Rajya Sabha has already passed the bill. So, get the Bill passed, if possible, in this Session itself and give the women of the country the right place in the democratic system. My State Assembly, Odisha, has unanimously passed a resolution and sent it to the Central Government for a State Legislative Council in Odisha. There is no response as yet. I urge upon the Central Government to allow the Odisha State to have a State Legislative Council. In my State Odisha, we speak Kosli-Sambalpuri language in the western parts. Odisha is an Adivasi-dominated State. The Government of Odisha has been requesting the Central Government to include Koshali-Sambalpuri, Santhali and Ho languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India. That is pending with the Central Government. I urge upon the Central Government to kindly take a decision on it. There are some coal bearing or mineral bearing States like Odisha, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand etc. We are a mineral bearing State and that is one of the main sources of our income. We get a royalty on that. Every three years this royalty needs to be revised, which was done by the earlier Government. It is astonishing to know, for the last ten years there has not been any revision on the royalty of coal. Therefore, I take this opportunity to tell the Union Government to kindly consider it. Jan Aushadhi Pariyojana is one of the best yojanas in the health sector. I appreciate it. For the poor people of this country the only remedy is Jan Aushadhi and Jan Aushadhi can alone save the poor patients from the exploitation of the multiple medicine manufacturing companies. So, my appeal is, more Jan Aushadhi Kendras should be opened. Another important thing is the production of ethanol from paddy, sugarcane, etc., which is going to help farmers in a big way. There are many moribund sugar factories in Odisha which are defunct. Ethanol can also be produced from sugarcane. So, I request the

Government of India to kindly take up this sugar factory and convert it into an ethanol production factory. The Government of Odisha has been requesting for an airport at Puri – the Dham of Lord Sri Jagannath. The Government of India must consider it. On Clean Energy Cess, I wish to say that the entire Cess from clean energy is diverted for GST compensation which is not justified. The Central Government should give some sort of recognition to all those fighters who fought against the dictatorial rule at the time of JP Movement.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: This Government came to power with a slogan 'Minimum Government and Maximum Governance'. But, what we have experienced is 'Minimum Governance and Maximum Mishaps'. People have come across several intolerable miseries during this period such as there have been unprecedented hikes in petrol and diesel price, subsidy for the LPG has been drastically cut down, the prices of drugs, railway fares hiked, new taxes have been levied, the value of rupee depreciated, the demonetization gave blow to the MSMEs and the export sector, hasty implementation of the GST and the disproportionate imposition of taxes on various goods, the GST compensation funds to the States has been deprived, there has been delay in the pension of ex-servicemen, the UDAY scheme poses a threat that free electricity to the farmers will be withdrawn, the Central Government has not extended helping hand to the needed level to State Tamil Nadu, there has been a scam in the ration of army men, delays in the disbursement of MNREGA payments and decline in the GDP. In this Government both the agricultural sector and the public sector undertakings are being affected to the maximum. Agriculture is no more remunerative. Many are quitting agriculture. Profitable PSUs are also being sold out. The MPLADS Fund is actually meant to satisfy the needs of the local people, which the Government has suspended it and it is only Rs.8,000 crores! But under smart City project, every city will be getting Rs.1,000 crores. I urge that the Government should appoint a monitoring committee to oversee how the smart city schemes are being implemented. In my city, Tiruchi, all the expenses that have been done are made on insignificant schemes. Nothing reflects the concept of smart city. This is prevailing across the country. Hindi is

being imposed in all possible ways by this Government to the agony of non-Hindi speaking states. There is no proposal for increasing employment. So also is the case about the unrest and withdrawal of fundamental rights in the valley of Jammu and Kashmir. The National Education Policy is also impractical. There is still a dispute about it but the Government has started implementing it. The opposition of CAA is still going on but without addressing the protesting people's concerns, the Government has started the process of implementation of the CAA. There has been abrogation of Article 370. Rs.72,000 crores loan has been given to only one individual corporate, the Adani. Also, there is the anti-minority stand of this Government. Tamil Nadu is totally against the NEET examination. The State Assembly of Tamil Nadu has unanimously passed two Bills saying that NEET is not needed in Tamil Nadu. The DMK, the main opposition, has also supported it. But later, when the National Medical Commission was introduced here to replace the Medical Council of India, I moved a motion that it should be repealed. There is deprivation of jobs to local candidates. This is deliberately being done and deserving candidates in the State are not getting their deserving jobs. We have opposed draconian laws. As like other draconian laws, the UAPA is being misused against the protesting farmers. There was non-plan lockdown because of which migrant labourers had to suffer a lot. There were low tests for Covid and because of that, there was under-report of the positive cases, which was criticized globally. There is enforcement of the eight-lane project against the rejection of the proposal by the local people in Tamil Nadu and extraction of methane and hydrocarbon in delta region leading to the fertile lands to become sterile. Foundation stone was laid for AIIMS at Madurai. But not even a stone has been placed there. Internet in the normal speed is deprived in the Valley of Jammu and Kashmir. During the regime of this Government, the poor are becoming poorer and the rich are becoming richer. Had this Bill been sent to a Select Committee, the farmers or the stakeholders could have appeared before the Committee and that would have given us two months' time. But the Government did not agree. Hundreds of farmers have died. They are still out in this bitter cold. Government should have a humanitarian approach towards

its citizens. That is our humble suggestion. On behalf of my Party President, Shri M.K. Stalin, I would urge the Government and expect the Prime Minister to assure in his reply that they would repeal these three farm laws.

DR. K. KESHAVA RAO: We have passed through the worst year of corona pandemic. Today, we are engaged in the world's largest operation of vaccination. We really thank the Government for doing it and also the States, particularly our. We salute the scientists and the companies for the great job that they have done in giving us vaccines. Front-line workers are given these doses. The next phase will cover elderly people and then we go to the next phase where all the doses will be given to 130 million people. This is the first phase. The real challenge will arise in the second phase when we need more centres and more sessions. We must be prepared for that kind of operation. It is all right if Members of Rajya Sabha are given doses in the second phase. It is a very good Budget as far as the health and well-being is concerned. There are 7,000 Jan Aushadhi Kendras, but looking at the size of the country, they are inadequate. We have to see whether necessary facilities are there or not. Around Rs.71,000 crores as against Rs.65,000 crores last year for the Health and Family Welfare have been provided in the Budget. That is very good. What is more welcome is that the Finance Minister has said that more money can come in for this sector if needed. If only we were to be a little more democratic, a little more accommodative, a little more liberal in approach and receptive in mind, farmers' agitation would not have come to this pass. My suggestion is whether we can think of some method where this entire issue is brought back to the Parliament and we discuss it here. Although I do not agree with the rigid stand taken by the farmers, reasonable and rationale changes should be done. Had we sent the Bill to a Select Committee at that time, things must have been solved. I have one objection. To my knowledge, this law is unconstitutional because it is a State subject. Issues like this should be left to the States concerned. The President spoke about NEP. The NEP is good but the discussion is inconclusive. Even if NEP is being implemented. There is also a mention of some standards for the teaching staff. It is necessary. But the question is how to train the

teachers? Educational psychology has taught us that any such interference with the child will stall its growth. Secondly, the dropout rate is very high at school level. Without trying to criticise geography, I want to put across a point that the teaching of geography needs to be reoriented and should first mention the origin of a person or, for that matter, thing starting from the village, then the state, then India, then Asia and lastly, it should be taught that Asia is one of the six continents. This will be another way of going vocal for local. Secondly, emphasis needs to be laid on speaking the truth. So, in NEP, we are talking about morale and other things like sensitization.

PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV: I want to know how much fund has been allocated for ICMR whose scientists develop vaccines for the country and the world. The farmers have protested against the farm laws across the country and many of them have been sitting on dharna against these laws and many farmers even lost their lives during the protest. Nevertheless, these farm laws are not being withdrawn. My suggestion to the government is that they should withdraw the three farm bills and bring in new bills in their place during this session and refer them to the standing committee. I had not seen such security and cordoning anywhere as has been done near Ghazipur border, Tikri border or, for that matter, Singhu border. My contention is that if the farmers are saying the farm laws in question are detrimental for them, why are these laws being brought ? The farmers know that the mandis of Punjab and Haryana, which function very well, will be rendered ineffective if these laws come into force as the industrialists will procure the farm produce from the farmers as per their own convenient rate. Secondly, the contract farming also has its own demerits and cases of frauds have been reported about it many times. Another fear associated with contract farming is that the big industrialists will take only huge tracts of land for farming while the farmers who own less than 3 acres of land, and who account for 85 per cent of the farmers, will be completely left in the lurch. Some actions raise doubts. For instance, a provision has been made that the main items such as paddy, wheat, potato and some oilseeds and pulses will not come under essential commodities. Farmers do not belong to any

political party, nor are they politically motivated. Instead, they asked the leaders of political parties going there not to make speeches from their stage. Farming was our only mainstay during this pandemic which saved nation and the people of the nation. I request the government to provide a compensation of at least 20 lakhs each to all the farmer families who lost their flesh and blood in the sit-in against farm laws and also provide their one child a government job by requesting the state governments or by absorbing them in the central government.

SHRI RAM CHANDRA PRASAD SINGH: You talked about Champaran in Bihar, so I want to make a comparison. Our farmers participated in Satyagraha movement spearheaded by respected Bapu ji. In the three agricultural laws, there is no pressure on the farmers from the government to cultivate anything. According to the first law, the farmer is free to sell his produce in mandi or elsewhere. Now second agricultural law is about contract farming. The farmer can contract for it at his own will. There is no compulsion in it. The third law deals with the Essential Commodities Act. There is no anti-farmer law in these three agricultural laws. There should be a discussion about making agriculture profitable, making the lives of farmers prosperous and facilitating the progress of the country. Today, we should be proud of the work done by our farmers, soldiers and scientists in our country. We should maintain the fabric of our country, social harmony and communal harmony.

SHRI ELAMARAM KAREEM: The world is going through a very tough situation due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Our nation is not alienated from its adverse effects. Our economy has fallen to the lowest ever mark during this time. The people of our nation are suffering a lot from its effects. All of Government's policies are intended only to appease corporate and implement its communal agenda and, thereby, divide the people. The Address of the hon'ble President has failed miserably in portraying the real picture of the present India. Today, India is witnessing its historic protest of the farmers against the three farm laws. The agri-laws were enacted in Parliament without proper consideration or taking into confidence the

Opposition parties. Many of the farmer leaders are booked with fake charges in connection with the unfortunate incidents which took place on 26th January. The Government is trying to weaken this democratic protest by perpetrating violence and using force. I urge upon the Government to yield to the demands of farmers and withdraw the farm laws immediately. The BJP, through its State Governments has intensified attacks against those journalists who have been reporting truthfully. Since January 28, FIRs have been filed against nine Indian journalists on charges of sedition. Contrary to all propaganda by this Government of economic rebound, the reality is that the GDP contraction continues to plunge. Unemployment is the biggest issue which is being faced by our nation. The Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy makes a conservative estimate of loss of 14.7 million jobs. Such a massive job loss among the educated young Indians is a bleak indicator of India's future. After six years of this Government, we are watching similar number of jobs being lost every year. The miseries imposed due to pre-pandemic economic slowdown have worsened during the course of this year. The latest National Family Health Survey has confirmed the fact of worsening malnutrition of Indians, particularly that of children. This Government is doing everything possible to systematically undermining our Constitution. Most of the existing labour laws have been repealed and replaced with four Labour Codes. These Codes seek to convert workers into slaves. In the same way, BJP-ruled States are also enacting such anti-constitutional legislations. Our prestigious public sector undertakings in insurance, oil and steel sectors are all going to be sold. These policies will ruin our country. Nothing of the people's concern is reflected in the Address of the hon'ble President. So, I am opposing this Motion of Thanks for the hon'ble President.

Discussion not concluded.

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Secretary-General.

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