

## **RAJYA SABHA**

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### **\*SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE**

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**(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)**

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**Monday, March 22, 2021 / Chaitra 01, 1943 (Saka)**

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#### **Reference on the Occasion of World Water Day**

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Hon. Members, today, i.e., 22nd March, is the World Water Day, a day that is observed to advocate sustainable management of fresh water resources. This year, the United Nation's theme for 'World Water Day' is 'Valuing Water' which highlights the value of water going beyond its mere numerical price. Water has enormous and complex value for our households, food, culture, health, education, economics and integrity of our natural environment. By overlooking these multi-dimensional values, we risk mismanaging this finite, irreplaceable resource and will be unable to save it for the benefit of everyone and for generations to come. With the ever-growing population, the demand for water has increased manifold, fulfilment of which is already putting enormous pressure on our limited natural resources and is eventually degrading the environment. The situation has further been exacerbated by the reckless exploitation and imprudent consumption of water. Conservation of water and preservation of our water resources is of utmost importance for our country, given the fact that our country has 16 per cent of the global population, but, only 4 per cent of the world's fresh water. Almost all civilizations had flourished on the banks of rivers indicating how vital

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

water is for our survival. For us Indians, water is an intrinsic part of our lives and ceremonies from birth to death. We revere rivers as our mothers. The many Vedic hymns like 'Nadi Sukta' and 'Apah Suktam' from Rig Veda invoking 'Water' as the bestower of vigour and strength, the nurturer of farmlands, the refreshing presence and the cleanser of both body and spirit, stand testimony to our close association with water. We need to carry this legacy forward by preserving and nurturing our rivers and freshwater resources like lakes, ponds, etc. In line with this year's theme for 'World Water Day', we also need to acknowledge and at the same time develop an active consciousness for the multi-dimensional value that water holds for us as it will help us develop a holistic and integrated perspective on water conservation. As parliamentarians, it is our bounden duty to act as role models and trailblazers in water conservation, by adopting sustainable water management practices both in personal and public life and sensitize one and all in inculcating water conservation techniques like rain water harvesting, afforestation of river banks to prevent soil erosion and reduce annual rainwater runoff. I hope the entire House will join me in supporting the conservation of water resources and ensuring judicious use of water so that while fulfilling our needs, enough is left for our future generations.

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## **MATTERS RAISED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIR**

### **1. Need to Set up Headquarters of Steel Research and Technology Mission of India (SRTMI) at Ranchi in Jharkhand**

**SHRI MAHESH PODDAR:** India is the second largest producer of steel in the world. The government has decided to establish the Indian Steel Research and Technology Mission i.e. 'SRTMI' and a society has also been formed in this regard. Ranchi, the capital of Jharkhand is the most suitable place for the headquarters and laboratory of SRTMI. Many public sector undertakings are set up around Ranchi. Apart from this, world renowned research laboratory institutes are also here. There should also be R&D for low grade coal

and low grade iron ore. I urge the Government to open the headquarters of SRTMI in Ranchi.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

## **2. Need for Strengthening Cyber Security**

**DR. NARENDRA JADHAV:** Cyber attacks on critical informational infrastructure is a matter of grave concern. Such attacks can weaken the national security, governance, economy and overall well-being of the country. Such attempts were made on Mumbai's power grid and Maharashtra State Electricity Board. This is just a proxy warfare. I urge the Government to strengthen our cyber security.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

## **3. Need for Evacuation of Surplus Rice from Odisha and Release of Pending Subsidy to the State**

**\*DR. SASMIT PATRA:** Odisha is the fourth biggest State in our country in terms of supply of food grain. During this Kharif season, around 30 Lakh MT rice is required to be lifted by FCI. If we compare it with the last year, only 17 Lakh MT rice was lifted. I urge upon the Central Government that arrangement to lift 30 Lakh MT rice by FCI should be made with immediate effect during this Kharif season itself. Apart from this, immediate steps should also be taken to release the pending subsidy of Rs. 5,616 crore that is owed to the state of Odisha.

*(Dr. Amar Patnaik, Shri Bhaskar Rao Nekkanti, Shri Subhash Chandra Singh and Shri Sujeet Kumar associated.)*

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\* Spoke in Odia.

#### **4. Havoc Caused Due to Flood in Rishi Ganga in Uttarakhand and Increased Human Intervention in the Ganga-Himalaya Region**

**SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH:** The Ganges and the Himalayas are symbols of our culture. These places are being commercialized on a large scale. New dams are being built here. The road has also been widened for Char Dham Yatra. In this way about one lakh trees have been felled. The risk of glacier rupture over the entire Himalayan region is high. I urge the government to stop the work being done in the Himalayas immediately.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

#### **5. Need to Take Steps to Prevent Deaths of Asiatic Lions Due to Accidents on Railway Tracks**

**SHRI SHAKTISINH GOHIL:** The Asiatic lions are the pride of the whole of Gujarat and Gir. According to a survey, the total population of Asiatic lions is just 674. It is very sad that many lions have been killed in train accidents. There were also suggestions by experts to prevent such accidents. I urge the government to take immediate steps to save the Asiatic lions.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

#### **6. Need to Exempt Local Farmers from Toll Tax at Bara Toll Plaza in Kanpur**

**CH. SUKHRAM SINGH YADAV:** Most people in Kanpur come to Kanpur Dehat from Kanpur every day. There is a Bara toll plaza. There are frequent quarrels at Bara Toll Plaza as this toll plaza is situated between Kanpur and Kanpur Dehat. Due to this, people of nearby villages are facing a lot of difficulty. I demand that the this toll plaza be removed from Bara and shifted to Kalpi Road near Sikandra as before.

*(Shrimati Priyanka Chaturvedi, Shrimati Jaya Bachchan, Shri Vishambhar Prasad Nishad and Shri Subhash Chandra Singh associated.)*

## **7. Need for Reissuance of Ration Cards Cancelled on Account of Not being Biometrically Linked to Aadhaar**

**PROF. MANOJ KUMAR JHA:** There is some very worrying news in this era of Corona. Three to four crore ration cards have been cancelled. Most of the ration cards were cancelled for not linking to Aadhaar. There have also been reports of starvation from many places. People have gained food security right after a big struggle. Under this law, nodal officers had to be appointed at the district level in the States, but no nodal officer has been appointed in any State. I urge the government to remove all these technical problems and restore all the cancelled ration cards and food security may be ensured.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

## **8. Implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) in Chhattisgarh**

**SHRI RAM VICHAR NETAM:** The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana is being implemented by the Central Government for the poor people all over the country. But the homeless needy people of Chhattisgarh are not getting the benefit of this scheme. In the PM Awas Yojana, the funds are released in the ratio of 60:40 by the central government and the state government. The state government has been unable to meet the target set by the central government as the state government has not deposited its funds. I request the government to issue instructions again to the State government to approve the houses and complete all the sanctioned houses as per the target set by the Centre.

**SHRI KANAKAMEDALA RAVINDRA KUMAR:** No house has been constructed under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin in 2019-20 and 2020-21 despite the release of funds by the Central Government. I came to know that the Central Government has released its share but the State Government did not release its share and no house has been constructed. I request the Central Government to take the necessary steps and direct the State Government to deliver

possession of the houses immediately and also take steps to construct the houses under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin Scheme.

**9. Need for opening of a Navodaya Vidyalaya at Mayurbhanj, Odisha**

**SHRIMATI MAMATA MOHANTA:** Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas are playing an important role in imparting good and modern education to talented children from rural areas. Mayurbhanj is a tribal dominated backward district. People living here are very interested in providing education to their children, but due to poor financial condition they are unable to get their children educated in private schools. There is only one Navodaya Vidyalaya in this large district. But due to the large number of students, many talented students are denied admission in this school. Therefore, I urge upon the Hon. Minister to get a Navodaya Vidyalaya established at Rayangpur sub-division of Mayurbhanj district of Odisha as soon as possible.

*(Shri Subhash Chandra Singh, Dr. Amar Patnaik, Dr. Sasmit Patra, Shri Sujeet Kumar and Shri Bhaskar Rao Nekkanti associated.)*

**10. Need for improving facilities at Ajanta, Ellora Caves and Devgiri Fort at Aurangabad**

**\*DR. BHAGWAT KARAD:** World famous Ajanta, Ellora caves at Aurangabad is close to Sambhajinagar city. Different references to the life of Lord Buddha and many pictures of Buddhist deities are found here. In 1983, UNESCO selected four tourist spots as world heritage in our country including Ajanta, Ellora Caves. Ellora has 34 caves. Information about Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism is given in these caves. Every year around 24 lakh tourists come to see these caves. However, there is a need to develop basic facilities in the premises of these caves. Ropeways and helipads etc. should be built

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\* Spoke in Marathi.

here and the air connectivity of the city of Aurangabad Sambhajnagar should be increased so that more and more tourists can come here.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

### **11. Dilution of Constitutional Provisions for Reservations for SC/ST Candidates**

**SHRI NEERAJ DANGI:** As per the list of selected candidates released by the UPSC for the Civil Services Examination, 2019 on 4th August, 2020, a total of 829 applicants were selected including 129 SC candidates and 67 ST candidates. As per the UPSC, another 66 candidates have been put on the provisional list, while the result of 11 candidates has been withheld. On 4th January, 2021, a reserved list of 89 candidates was released. Through which, the result of total 918 candidates out of 927 vacancies was declared by the UPSC. As per the percentage of reservation prescribed by the Government of India for SC and ST candidates, there must be selection of 139 SC candidates and 69 ST candidates. But, unfortunately, only 130 candidates from SCs and 67 from STs have been selected. Further, on 5th February, 2021, the Government of India issued a notification for lateral recruitment of Joint Secretary level and Director level posts on contract basis without any reservation for SCs and STs. These ten vacancies advertised for direct entry are curtailed from SC and ST quota. Thus, the Government of India is violating affirmative provisions of the Constitution to provide the reservations for deprived communities. It is my humble request to ensure the fulfilment of constitutional provisions of reservations for SCs and STs.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

### **12. Low salaries of technical and supporting staff of private hospitals and medical education institutions**

**SHRI HARNATH SINGH YADAV:** In providing good medical facilities to the citizens, the role of technical and other support staff in all types of hospitals is very crucial. The number of these technical employees is more than 80 lakhs across the country,

but the salaries of these employees are very low. In such a high inflation, it is difficult for anyone with a low salary to meet their minimum requirements. They live under stress due to low wages and feel a sense of insecurity. As a result, they are also unable to provide good services to the patients. No hospital can provide high quality health services without good employees. Therefore, I demand from the Government that by categorizing private hospitals across the country, the minimum salary of administrative and technical and other support staff should be fixed and their service safety rules should be determined.

*(Dr. Sasmit Patra and Shri Bhaskar Rao Nekkanti associated.)*

### **13. Welfare of Backward Classes**

**SHRI RAM CHANDER JANGRA:** The Government has paid special attention to the backward classes. It constitutes 54 per cent of the population of this country. The Backward Classes Commission has been given constitutional status at the Centre, but the Backward Classes Commission has not yet been constituted in the states. So, I request the Central Government that States should be directed to constitute the Backward Classes Commission and give them constitutional status so that these castes can be identified and appropriate steps can be taken to redress their grievances.

*(Dr. Sasmit Patra and Shri Bhaskar Rao Nekkanti associated.)*

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### **SPECIAL MENTIONS**

#### **1. Demand to enact a law for Health Guarantee to provide standardised healthcare**

**DR. FAUZIA KHAN:** Today, it seems that the healthcare sector has become a business sector. People are reluctant to go to Government-run hospitals because of the casual approach of the staff towards the patients in many hospitals. People go to a Government-



run hospital only when they absolutely cannot afford treatment in a private hospital. So, the Government should enact a health guarantee law and guarantee the provision of health facilities to all the people. The criteria for health facilities should be decided by the Government. The responsibility of the treating doctors, nurses and other staff needs to be determined. Healthcare personnel must be trained in courtesy and polite behaviour. Healthcare ought to be the right of every citizen. As this is a matter related to public importance, I request the Government to consider it.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

## **2. Demand to fill the vacancies reserved for OBCs in Government services on priority basis**

**SHRI RAM NATH THAKUR:** It is sad that a large number of reserved community posts are lying vacant in the Central Government Ministries. About 50 per cent of the posts of Other Backward Classes are vacant. These vacant posts should be filled up by launching a special drive. Also, public sector undertakings and state governments should fill up vacancies for their offices on time bound basis by launching a special drive, only then we will be able to secure justice to the people of this deprived community. I urge upon the Central Government that on the lines of the roster system adopted for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, the posts reserved for the Other Backward Classes should be filled up from time to time so that their proportional representation remains intact.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

## **3. Demand to develop Pachnada confluence of five rivers in Auraiya and Etawah districts in Uttar Pradesh as a tourist spot**

**SHRIMATI GEETA ALIAS CHANDRAPRABHA:** There is a confluence of five rivers, known as Pachanada at Etawah, Auraiya district of Uttar Pradesh. It is also called the seat of learning. There is immense tourism potential at this confluence of five rivers. The Uttar Pradesh Government has announced to develop Pachanada as a dam project and has also made a provision of Rs. 100 crore for this

project. Every year on the occasion of *Kartik Purnima*, lakhs of devotees gather at the confluence site and pray to God. So, I request the Hon. Minister that the tourism schemes of the Central Government be linked to the Panchanda Project, so that this confluence site can be developed more rapidly as a tourist hub.

*(Shri Harnath Singh Yadav, Shri Bhaskar Rao Nekkanti, Dr. Sasmit Patra and Shri Subhash Chandra Singh associated.)*

#### **4. Demand to open Examination Centres for UPSC/Other Examinations in Imphal, Manipur**

**SHRI MAHARAJA SANAJAOBA LEISHEMBA:** Every year many aspirant students of Manipur appear in UPSC Prelims Examination in Manipur. But at the time of Mains Examination, the examination centre has been shifted from Imphal to Aizawl, Shillong and Guwahati for reasons not known. This makes the poor and the middle-class aspirant candidates very disappointed as they cannot afford expenses of travelling, lodging and food, etc. Manipur is producing qualified candidates every year. As of now, no examination centre of UPSC/similar examination for Mains has been opened in Manipur, Imphal. Our students are facing hardship in appearing in these examinations. Therefore, I, on behalf of the students of Manipur, urge the Government of India to open the examination centre of UPSC/similar examination in Manipur, Imphal, as soon as possible.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

#### **5. Demand for the constitution of All India Judicial Services**

**SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR MODI:** In the year 1976, Article 312 of the Constitution was amended for providing constitution of All India Judicial Service on the pattern of IAS, IPS and other All India Services. The Law Commission's 14th Report 1958 and 116th Report 1986, and the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution also recommended that All India Judicial Service should be formed. Even after this Constitution Amendment, All India Judicial Service has not yet been constituted. Today, there is

negligible representation of SCs, STs and OBCs in the Judiciary. When earlier efforts were made, there was opposition from the judiciary and some raised language as a barrier for such an All India Service. But language should not become a hindrance in such a service because IAS officers also go to different States and language never becomes a hurdle in their way. So, I urge the Government of India to take all the stakeholders into confidence and fulfil the demand of All India Judicial Service.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

#### **6. Demand to recognise Odisha's Maritime trade history and utilise its Potential in India's foreign policy**

**DR. AMAR PATNAIK:** As the maritime space re-emerges as the theatre for geopolitical competition, it is imperative to tap into the great potential that Odisha's rich ancient maritime civilization has to offer, and use that information to strengthen our cultural diplomacy. Kalinga had maritime trade links with South-Asian, East-African, and certain Arab countries. This maritime trade not only helped in economic development, but also led to greater socio-cultural assimilation of the whole region. The trade routes, discovered by our forefathers in Odisha, have not only socio-cultural significance, but geo-political consequence as well, in today's day and age. Therefore, I urge the Government to promote further research and study, as there is lack of information about the ancient maritime history of Odisha. We also need proper archaeological and scientific survey of coastal Odisha which will help in locating the unidentified ports.

*(Dr. Sasmit Patra, Shri Bhaskar Rao Nekkanti, Shri Subhash Chandra Singh and Shri Sujeet Kumar associated.)*

## GOVERNMENT BILLS

### 1. The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2021

**THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS; THE MINISTER OF COAL; AND THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI), moving the motion for consideration of the Bill, said:** India is a mineral-rich State. We extract approximately 95 minerals worth around Rs.1.25 lakh crores. We import Rs. 2.5 lakh crores worth minerals. We have around 500 million tonnes of gold and still we import around 983 tonnes of gold every year. India has the fourth largest reserve for coal but still we import coal. After agriculture, this sector is the biggest employment generator also. Despite huge mineral potential, India is under-explored and under-performed in attracting the investment. Our Government brought an amendment in 2015 introducing the transparent and non-discretionary method for allotting the minerals for auction. The current one is for bringing major change in the mining and coal sector. Presently, the contribution of mining to GDP is around one per cent. We want to take it up to 2.5 per cent. The reason for under-exploration in our country is that only the Government agencies are engaged in mining. We want to bring even private players into it. Hence, we are bringing some changes in it. Today we are giving mining licenses at G2 level. We want to take that up to G3 level and for composite license, we are taking it up to G4 level. Before 2015, the previous approval of the Central Government was required before granting any mining licence but today the State can give permission directly. They can give the mining licence. In the last five years, 105 mines have been auctioned. Two States have auctioned the working mines which expired in 2020. 143 original mines were handed over to various States. Out of these, only seven have been auctioned in the last six years. Hence, it is our responsibility first in consultation with the State Government and fix the time for auction. The Central Government will give all support to the State Governments to auction. Majority of the States have supported it. It is in the national interest. We are also bringing changes about DMF. We are trying to include a

Member from the Rajya Sabha who identified that district as his nodal district in the Committee headed by the DM. Also, we are providing that more work is undertaken in the affected areas and priority should be given for national programme. Every party and every Government demanded for auction. We are providing NMET so that no one suffer loss. Hence, fulfilling the demands of the State Governments, we have brought some amendments in it. We are allowing 50 per cent sale and are eliminating the difference between captive and non-captive. We are also fixing a mechanism to calculate the extra royalty in the Schedule of the Act itself. The allotments made before 2015 were restricted for transfer. We have allowed the transfer without any charge. We are trying to bring that system through this legislation. This is the most progressive Bill which will bring a big reform. In a federal structure, we want to work with the State Governments. I appeal to the House to kindly pass it unanimously.

#### **Motion for Reference of the Bill to the Select Committee**

**SHRI DIGVIJAYA SINGH moving an amendment for reference of the Bill to the Select Committee of the Rajya Sabha, said:** It is a big irony that the poorest people live in the areas where minerals are found. The biggest point is that most of the areas are tribal areas. The National Mining Policy, 2019 does not even mention about the land oustees and the minerals that are there, especially in the tribal areas. This subject is also serious because most of the areas are in the scheduled areas and PESA is applicable there. More than one crore people work in the mining sector. They are casual workers, they have no protection in this regard. Those people, whose land is being taken away, should also have a share in the profit of the mines. In the captive mines, the right to sell up to 50 per cent has also been given. Clauses 10 and 11 of the Bill are taking away the rights of the states. The District Mineral Foundation is used not for the beneficiaries but for the infrastructure, this Foundation is completely in the possession of the authorities. Even five per cent of the private beneficiaries would not have been benefited under this, while the poor people there should have been given priority. Even in the case of coal blocks, where mining was taking place, their lease was cancelled by

order of the Supreme Court. If their lease is cancelled after the passage of the Bill, then not only will thousands of people be unemployed, but many cases will reach to court. Therefore, this bill should be taken to the Select Committee so that the interests of the poor, labourers and tribals can also be discussed.

**SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW:** These reforms are very important which have been brought with the purpose of increasing employment in the mining sector. About 1.3 percent of the country's GDP comes from the mining sector. The challenge before us today is how to double this employment, this production. Hurdles and problems of existing projects have to be removed. Attention will have to be paid to ways to bring more investment in new projects, generate more jobs, increase production. A major reform has been made in the Bill, by which mining has been defined as a legal entity and it has been provided that in the entire period from the commencement of mineral production from the mine to the time it remains financially viable, there is seamless transfer from one lessee to other and there is no disruption as its biggest loss is to the people, who depend on that mine, who are working there. Captive mines have been allowed to sell their excess minerals. With the removal of the 'captive' system, it is estimated that out of 248 million tonnes, there will be at least 100 million tonnes of coal, which will substitute imports. The third reform is regarding re-defining mining operations. The definition of mining operation which had been in existence since 1957, was being misused by many. The definition of mining operation has now been revised and it is clearly stated that you have to start production within two years. If you do not start production, this mine of yours will be cancelled. Such a provision has been introduced in this legislation. I thank the honorable minister once again that he has tried to stop the misuse through this new provision. The fourth reform is related to transfers. There was a strange provision under which you could not transfer the mining lease. If there is a situation in the family or there is some financial difficulty due to which one cannot start production, then he should have a freedom to transfer the mining rights, as in the case of all assets. This has been overcome through this reform. The fifth reform is related to public sector PSUs. When the mining period

of public sector undertakings ends, there is a provision for extension of time. But many states were facing this problem in extending the time. Some states said that public sector undertakings should not be auctioned there by extending the time, but the Government of India decided that special provisions and special assistance is required for the public sector units because their role is special. They have a very important role, especially in the mining sector. So, this amendment bill brought a clear provision that the public sector units would be given a time-extension at the end of their mining period. The seventh reform is related to mine allocation. We all know how mines were allocated before 2015. Prime Minister Modi changed that entire system and brought in a transparent system, a system in which all the power is with the state government. It has been decided after considerable deliberation that in such a situation, on the recommendation of the state, the mine should be given to a public sector unit for ten years, so that it can run it and continue production from it so that the employments of people are not taken away and the work continues seamlessly. There is no such provision in this legislation by which the power of the states is curtailed. The eighth reform is very important, that is, a smooth transition from exploration to production. There was one inconvenience under the Act earlier that the entire process of application had to be redone after investigation. It has now been amended. The ninth reform is about legacy cases. Around 15 states have supported this and Odisha had earlier written on its behalf that you remove both these clauses completely, as both these clauses are anachronistic. When we have implemented the auction system on one hand, then there is no rationale to have the system of 'first come, first serve?' The 10th improvement is about the auction process. Our thinking is how the state and the center should go together and in which way both of them should develop. If a project starts, is it in the center? What is the Center? Center is a concept. When a school is built, where is it built? The school is built in one or the other village. Where is the village? The village is located in the panchayat. Where is the panchayat? Panchayat is located in the district. Where is the district? District is in the state. In this way, whatever happens, is ultimately in the state itself. Whatever

development takes place, it is ultimately in the state itself. I want to make it clear that there is no mindset to take the rights of the states in this. The Center, in consultation with the states, has proposed changes in the auction process which 11 states have supported and only one state has opposed. The 11th reform is the power to direct for the proper use of DMF. Right now the honorable MPs were saying that those districts which have more minerals, have more poverty. This was the situation since 1947. DMF (District Mineral Foundation) is for the local area, it is for the same district. The owner of each mine gives contribution to the DMF and with that contribution a capital of 45 thousand crores has been created today and many schools have been built, are also being built and many roads as well as many hospitals are being built. And who is using those hospitals, roads and schools ? They are being used by the same tribal brothers and sisters. The 12th reform is very important and relates to strategic reform. You all know how China once made the the whole world bow before it as it had an abundance of rare earths. Luckily in India, about 20 to 22 percent of the world's reserves of rare earths are available, but they were not being properly utilized. When this Bill becomes an Act, only public sector units can mine strategic minerals, that is rare earths and atomic minerals. No private company will be allowed to mine beyond a threshold. This is very important in terms of security of the country. The Minister has decided to make NMET an autonomous body in a well-considered manner. These 13 reforms are before us today. There is a potential of all kinds of minerals in India. It has vast deposits of iron ore, coal, gold, diamond, bauxite and other minerals. But there was a system in which it was necessary to make changes so that all these resources could be harnessed and people could get maximum employment. I would request my Odisha MP friends to request the state government to bring in law a system so that there is optimum utilization of the abundant natural resources available in the state so that employment can be created and investment can be made there on a large scale. This Bill assumes significance in that background.

**DR. M. THAMBIDURAI:** The objective of the Bill, as the hon'ble Member said, by way of amending certain things, is that they can generate more employment opportunities. And revenue can also



be generated and given to the States also. Here, what they are stating in the Bill is that they are going to allow the state government to auction but at the same time, if there is delay and if they are not going to auction, then Central Government will consult the State Government in this regard and will decide the process of auction. Extracting methane from Thanjavur belt will affect the agricultural farmers. Therefore, he brought a legislation in the Assembly to protect the farmers' interest. Members are here to protect the State's interest. Land is a State Government's subject. Therefore, Central government cannot take the rights of the State Government. The State Government also has the responsibility to raise the income. Our natural resources should be preserved for a long time. So, I request the Minister to see that the rights of the State Governments are not taken away.

**DR. K. KESHAVA RAO:** Sitting 1800 miles away from Telangana or Hyderabad, the government cannot decide which land should be taken for mining. This Bill should be sent to a Select Committee. Government may try to send it to a select committee and there should be a wider discussion on this. I have an objection to Clauses 10(i), 11, 14(iii) and 17.

**SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY:** The Mines And Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2021, should not be passed in its present form. It is pro-private sector and anti-public sector. It should not be at the cost of the public sector undertakings. Top priority should be given to the public sector undertakings and not to the private sector companies. Therefore, the Bill should be suitably amended to allocate the mines completely to the public sector and thereafter, if there are any mines that are still pending for allocation, those mines can be allocated to the private sector. Public sector undertakings are fulfilling social responsibility and also providing employment to millions of people. Whereas the private sector has the sole object of making profit while generating some employment. The hon'ble Finance Minister will allow commercial mining on revenue sharing mechanism. The Government of India's decision is to privatise State-run PSU like Vizag Steel. It is a public sector undertakings. It is incurring losses for two reasons. One is, it doesn't have captive mines

and second is, it has got debt burden. This Bill gives a right to the Central Government to conduct the auction process of mineral concession. If the State Government is unable to complete the auction process within the specified time, the Central Government can do it. It is an act of usurping the powers.

**PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV:** The Bill has been brought to transfer the mining sector to the private sector. In 1973, the coal mines were in the private sector and subsequently it was nationalized by the government. Coal India was formed. This was followed by a new concept of allocation of coal blocks in 1996. With this Bill, Coal India will be dismantled and the private sector will dominate. It would be better to send it to the Select Committee. There will be no objection to legislation made on the basis of the measures suggested by the Select Committee.

**SHRI RAM CHANDRA PRASAD SINGH:** This Bill will provide investment in the mining sector in the country. People will get employment and mining sector's contribution to GDP will increase. There was a possibility of getting natural gas in Koshi and Purnia in Bihar. Petroleum products can be explored there. The Hon'ble Minister is requested to take necessary steps in this regard. Therefore, I would request that for this type of transportation, a separate road should be made so that the main thoroughfare is not disturbed and at the same time, our environment should be clear. In mines and minerals, we should keep two things in mind that they will be useful for us in the future and it is very important to take care of the environment as well. I support this Bill.

**SHRIMATI JHARNA DAS BAIDYA:** According Statement of Objects and Reasons, the Ministry of Mines is proposing to allow captive mine holders to sell up to 50 per cent of the minerals excavated during the current year, after meeting the requirement of the attached plant. The other provision is that the captive mines, are now being allowed to sell 50 per cent of their produce to private parties. That is also not good because the idea of captive mines will go away totally. It is a good idea to open up the mining sector. But, minerals are permanent assets of the country. We should see that they are

properly utilised for the benefit of the country and not for the profit of a few people. We must ensure that the tribals, who live on the land where the mines are being set up, are not displaced. If they are displaced, total rehabilitation must be promised and ensured. I would say that for further discussion, the Bill should be sent to a select committee.

**PROF. MANOJ KUMAR JHA:** I have been hearing a lot about cooperative federalism. I have not seen any bill that reinforces the foundation of cooperative federalism but it weakens it somewhere. There is no mention of the people who live on these resources. We are formulating our policy on their resources. The Bill talks about automatic transfer of lease. This will happen without environmental clearance. There is absolutely no clarity on it.

**SHRI KANAKAMEDALA RAVINDRA KUMAR:** The Bill provides that no mine would be reserved for particular end use. Vizag Steel Plant is a major issue. Now, the Government is planning to privatize the industry, which has secured the employment of two lakh persons and lakhs of crores of properties. Vizag Steel Plant does not have its own captive mine. Due to this, it incurs losses. If the Government ensures supply of adequate iron ore for the Vizag Steel Plant, there is chance for revival of the Plant without incurring losses. Vizag Steel Plant currently spends 65 per cent of the production cost on raw material alone. Therefore, I request the hon. Minister to take into consideration the absence of captive mines in the Vizag Steel Plant. Allocate captive mines and then run the Vizag Steel Plant for two years. If it still incurs losses, then you can take a decision to privatise it. In 2007 the Parliamentary Committee recommended that the Vizag Steel Plant should have its own captive mines just like other PSUs. Since then, this demand has been pending with the Central Government. Our State Government is also demanding not to privatise the Vizag Steel Plant. Now, the priority should be given to the PSUs instead of private sector. Then it will generate employment and profit. The clause for ending captive mines is not relevant at this juncture As far as our country is concerned, there is a lack of specific policy in respect of mines and minerals. Finally, I

urge the Government to look into these types of allegations instead of making amendment to the existing Act. I request the Central Government to take the steps not privatising the Vizag Steel Plant.

**DR. FAUZIA KHAN:** We are of the opinion that this Bill should go to a Select Committee and it must be scrutinised thoroughly. I would like to emphasise that natural resources of our country are the actual wealth of that country. These resources are our permanent assets which nobody can snatch away from us. The Bill liberates the captive mines and permits the end-users to sell upto 50 per cent of their resource in the open market. This will surely allow the end-users to sell their second and third grade mining produce and avoid heaping of materials and causing environmental hazards. But, this will open the doors for privatisation to exploit the allotment system and get larger mines allotted than their capacity. The Bill also lacks in addressing the environmental hazards caused by the process of mining itself. It does not address the transportation involved, especially in the transportation of coal and other minerals. We must be very careful while exposing our valuable natural resources to the FDI and the security concerns relating to them must be deliberated and addressed. This Bill would impact both the environment as well as the tribal culture. All this is a complex process and it would be very much advisable to refer this Bill to a select committee so that all the complexities can be studied at length.

**SHRI SANJAY SINGH:** All the cases of illegal mining across the country have been seen from time to time in which thousands of crores of scams have taken place in different parts of the country through illegal mining and their report has been prepared. But, the government is not ready to tell what action has been taken on it till date. It has been 9 years since 2012 in Goa, but mines could not be started again, the mining could not be started again. Employees and others people have been unemployed for the past nine years there. The Supreme Court had said that these mines must be auctioned. But the government did the work of re-leasing and renewing the lease. Because mining is done by the leaders of the ruling party and their relatives there. Visakhapatnam not only have a place in India, but in

the whole world but today, 100 percent disinvestment of that steel plant is being done. The Steel Authority of India Limited is being shown as a loss making company which is a profit making company to whom your government has included in the "Maharatna". Hindustan will not progress by selling the whole country, the country will not grow further by the system of selling the whole country. Mining was destroyed in Odisha, steel plant was destroyed. Government policies are responsible for this. I would like to request that mining in Goa has been closed for 9 years. Take action on it and the Visakhapatnam steel plant should not be closed. The government is going to make 100 percent disinvestment of it. This should not be done.

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