

RAJYA SABHA

*SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE

(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

Wednesday, August 07, 2024/ Sravana 16, 1946 (Saka)

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, I am pleased to extend birthday greetings to hon. Member of Parliament, **Shri B. L. Verma**. Shri Verma, a Member of this august House since November, 2020, is currently serving as Minister of State in the Ministries of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and Social Justice and Empowerment. Earlier, he has served as the Union Minister of State from July, 2021 to June, 2024.

Shri Verma has continually and impactfully championed the cause of the marginalized sections of the society. Shri Verma is married to Shrimati Shanti Devi and the couple is blessed with daughters-Diksha and Sakshi and sons- Prabhat and Harsh. Hon. Members, on behalf of this House and on my own wish him a long, healthy and happy life and extend greetings to his family members.

MATTERS RAISED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIR

1. Concern over alleged attempts to remove Preamble from NCERT Text Books

SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE: The Preamble of the Constitution has been removed from the NCERT textbooks. The Preamble is the soul of our Constitution. It reflects the basic principles of our Constitution and democracy such as justice, equality, fraternity and its values. All of you will agree that every citizen and especially our future generation must know about our freedom fighters, the Constitution makers, democracy, the Constitution and its basic principles and values. How much our great heroes Mahatma Gandhi ji, Pandit Nehru, Dr. Ambedkar, Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad and others have sacrificed a lot for these values in the freedom movement. After the defeat, the BJP Government first removed the statues of Baba Saheb and Mahatma Gandhi. After that, the Constitution is being tampered with. I warn that the people of the country will not accept such changes. The RSS and BJP are tampering with the curriculum to impose their communal ideology on the people of the country. The step taken by NCERT is not fair. I demand from the Government that a detailed statement regarding the changes made in the curriculum should be placed before the House. The Government should come out with a clarification on this issue and withdraw the step taken against the Constitution.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If the Leader of the Opposition or the Leader of the House speaks, they have to be heard in rapt attention. What they speak, the Chair is there to look into it. Paper need not be shown. Showing paper is undignified. Hon'ble Members,

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undoubtedly, all of us are committed to the Constitution and any perception to the contrary, perhaps, will hurt everyone.

THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE (SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA), responding to the matter, said: A very big question mark has arisen. The leader of the opposition said that this has been seen, heard and read. I think that before making any statement in this House, the Leader of the Opposition should put the source on the table. I have neither seen the NCERT textbooks, nor have I seen any changes in them. But I can say here with full responsibility that no Government has decided to move the Constitution forward by respecting it as much as the present Government has. There is no question of tampering with the Preamble. It is literally there. The Preamble has been protected and I believe that the Preamble will be protected

2. Demand to improve the economic condition of women associated with Self-Help Groups of the Country

SHRIMATI SANGEETA YADAV: Our Government is doing an unprecedented work for the women associated with Self-Help Groups. Today there are about one crore Self-Help Groups in the country and about 11 crore women are associated with these Groups. Our Government is constantly making efforts for their economic activities and the State Governments are also contributing in these efforts. But, right now these efforts are not getting much success. Therefore, I request the Government to link the Prime Minister's Skill Development Programme with these Groups for the economic progress of women associated with the groups. I would also like to request the Central and State governments that the women associated with these Groups make goods, but their products are not getting enough market. Therefore, proper market should be made available to them. BMMs contribute a lot in advancing women at the block level. There is also a demand for an HR policy for them. I request the Government to consider that as well.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

3. Demand for wide publication of data related to Government Schemes amongst people for their Increased Awareness

SHRI SAKET GOKHALE: When we ask for data, the NDA Government becomes 'No Data Available' Government. My State, West Bengal's funds under MNREGA were stopped in the year 2021, which incidentally also is the year when the BJP had a resounding defeat in West Bengal in the elections. The excuse given by the Government was that fake job cards have been found in West Bengal. The Government data says that 99.7 per cent of job cards under MNREGA in West Bengal are found to be verified. The Government is requested to give a White Paper showing whether a single penny under MNREGA and PM Awas Yojana has been given to West Bengal after the BJP's humiliating defeat in 2021. A total of 1.72 lakh crore rupees have been withheld from West Bengal since 2021. Please give a White Paper. This is my demand.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

4. Concern over loss of Natural Resources due to developmental works in the Mountains of the Country

SHRIMATI RANJEET RANJAN: Exploitation of nature and Himalayas in the name of development is very worrisome. I want to bring this to the notice of the Government. Increasing landslides, cloudbursts, forest fires, drying up of water sources and rapid soil erosion in the Himalayan region are extremely worrying. This is not the effect of climate change, rather I would say that these are man-made disasters, about which we all should

worry very seriously Unscientific, uncontrolled and arbitrary development policies are adding fuel to the fire. Recently, it has come to notice that in this Char Dham project, only the 100 km long Bhagirathi stretch is an ecologically sensitive area, which was made in 2012. There is also an instruction of the Supreme Court regarding it, but even then a decision has been taken to cut trees indiscriminately. There people are being misled by the BRO, there is a conspiracy to cut about 15 thousand trees and about 6.5 thousand deodar trees at the highest height. Whereas if widening of the 100 km long stretch of that place, which is to be widened by 10 and 12 meters, is not done, even then that road is safe for defence as well as for the movement of people. We have to save the Himalayas first, not to commercialize the Himalayas. I urge that this is a very sensitive issue, for this there should be a calling attention motion or a big discussion in the next session.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

5. Demand to restore Train Services which were reduced during Covid-19 Pandemic time and to extend Train Services in Southern Railway, Tamil Nadu

SHRI C. Ve. SHANMUGAM: I rise to highlight the twin demand of restoration and extension of train services in Southern Railway, Tamil Nadu, particularly my own district and my town, Villupuram and Tindivanam respectively. During Covid pandemic, there were restrictions on the movement of people, and hence several trains had been cancelled. But even after the normalcy has been restored, the train services have not been restored, because of which nearly 10,000 people, including elderly people, college students, daily wagers, labourers, ladies and business people are suffering untold miseries every day. Secondly, electrification and doubling of lines have been completed up to Villupuram from Chennai Egmore. But regular electric train service had not been extended and started beyond Chengalpattu from Egmore. There is an urgent requirement for starting daily electric train services, including fast trains to and from Chennai Egmore beyond Chengalpattu up to Tindivanam immediately, which may be extended up to Villupuram.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

6. Concern over Plight of Indian Children in Foreign Foster Care

SHRI SHAKTISINH GOHIL: Our Indian people go abroad to work. There, without any valid reason, their children are picked up and put in foster care. They do not get our help there and those children stay there. In Germany, just 9-month-old daughter, Ariha Shah of a Jain family from Gujarat was put in a foster care. The only reason was that when the mother started bathing her after massaging her with oil, the child slipped from her hand and fell in the tub. After that, the parents took the child to the hospital for treatment, and then the hospital said that the injury on her genital part may be a case of sexual assault, so a police case will be registered in this regard. The parents agreed to get it investigated. A police case was registered. The police did not find anything, yet the German Government said that you are not able to raise your child properly, so we will keep her in a foster care. At that time, the daughter was 9 months old, today she is going to be 3 years old, but she is still in the foster care in Germany. The Jain families in our Gujarat do not even eat onions or garlic. If the daughter eats non-veg there, what will happen to that family? That daughter of ours should be brought back to Gujarat and even if it takes time, there are Gujarati people there, the Government can at least force the Government there to say that Gujarati people will take care of her. That girl should be kept in the Gujarati foster care there, so that the culture can be saved.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

7. Concern over Privatization of Biju Patnaik International Airport in Bhubaneswar, Odisha

SHRI NIRANJAN BISHI: I would like to draw the attention of the Government of India and this august House to the proposed privatization of Biju Patnaik International Airport in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. Forty-three flights are being operated from this Airport every day to 24 destinations in India and abroad. It handles over 4.6 million passengers every year. The Biju Patnaik International Airport is a profit-making airport in India. So, its proposed privatization after 62 years of successful operation is a matter of great concern. The State Government has not yet been consulted. The Government has not given any consent. And by privatization, the people of Odisha, the passengers particularly of Odisha, will lose everything. Odisha is SC/ST dominated State and they will not get job opportunities in Biju Patnaik International Airport. So, I urge the Government to stop privatization of Biju Patnaik International Airport for the larger interest of the people of Odisha.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

8. Concern over Gender Disparity in Access to Public Conveniences/ Utilities

SHRIMATI PRIYANKA CHATURVEDI: It is a matter of serious concern that with nearly a decade of Swachh Bharat Mission, the disparity in women's access to clean public utilities and conveniences is very prominent. There are women representatives here. When we are campaigning in different constituencies during the elections or for public work, we face the challenges to find access to clean toilet. Due to which, we have noticed that women face not just health challenges, not just safety challenges, but also challenges of self-respect and dignity. I would request the Government to look at this particular issue with concern.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

9. Demand to facilitate Entry of Sikh Pilgrims for Gurdwara Nankana Sahib in Pakistan

SHRI RAGHAV CHADHA: When the country was partitioned in 1947, our state Punjab was also divided into two parts. One Punjab remained in Pakistan, one joined India. When the country was partitioned, the blood of lakhs of Punjabi families was shed, including my family. Many of our friends, relatives were separated from us, but more importantly, our Gurudwara Sahibs were separated from us. Today there are many such Gurudwara Sahibs, like Shri Kartarpur Sahib, Shri Panja Sahib, Shri Nankana Sahib, which are located in Pakistan. One of these is a very holy place, where Guru Nanak Dev Ji was born - Shri Nankana Sahib, which is about 90 kilometers from Lahore. Today, I have come before this house with a demand. The Sangat has been demanding for a very long time to have an open darshan of Shri Nankana Sahib Ji. In that context, I want to place three small demands before the Government today. The first demand is that just like the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor has been built, the work of Sri Nankana Sahib Corridor should also be done in the same manner. The second demand is that there should be no need for visa, passport, fees or complex forms to visit Sri Nankana Sahib Ji and to have an open darshan, but there should be a simple process. My third demand is that the distance of Sri Nankana Sahib Ji from Attari-Wagah border of Amritsar is about 104 kilometers. This distance can be easily covered in two to two and a quarter hours by car or bus. The Governments of both the countries should together make the route that goes from Amritsar to Nankana Sahib via Lahore a safe passage, so that devotees can go there and have an open darshan.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

10. Demand to start Rail Services from Giridih in Jharkhand to Kolkata and Patna

DR. SARFRAZ AHMAD: In the 1980s, I had got two bogies attached for the people of Giridih by asking the then Railway Minister - one from Giridih to Kolkata and the other from Giridih to Patna and later a 3 AC bogies were also attached. I thank Lalu Yadav ji, who later became the Railway Minister; he gave permission to attach that bogie in the Patna-Danapur-Howrah Superfast train. This trend continued. When Governments change, the facilities for the people should increase, not decrease, but the later Government ended that system. Kolkata is our center for business, education, which is close to us and Patna was our capital at that time. It was said that alternative arrangements would be made, which has not been done till date. Even today the people there have to face a lot of difficulties. There is one more thing. The "Vande Bharat" train running from Patna to Howrah does not have a stoppage in Madhupur, although Madhupur is our junction. If it also has a stoppage in Madhupur, perhaps people will get some convenience. In recent times, an intercity train has been started last year, which was first started from Giridih to Ranchi, ran for a few days, there was some problem in its timing, it was corrected and later it was extended till Asansol. Now it goes from Asansol to Ranchi, It should have stoppages at two important places; one of them is Maheshmunda Junction.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

11. Demand for Pension Facility and Health Insurance benefit to Handloom Weavers

SHRI NARAYANA KORAGAPPA: Today the 10th Handloom Day is being celebrated in every corner of the country. Being a weaver, I congratulate all the people of my society. Gandhi Ji organized a movement to support the weavers and burnt foreign cloth. This movement started in Kolkata in the year 1905. This movement was done to help the weavers. Keeping this in mind, our Prime Minister gave Handloom Day to the weaver community in Chennai in the year 2015. Today, the 10th Handloom Day is being celebrated. The Government should think about what problem the weavers are facing that their number is continuously decreasing. Their health should be taken care of by giving them pension after the age of 60 years.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

12. Need for Regulation of Private Detective Agencies in India

SHRI KESRIDEVSINH JHALA: We have a serious need for regulation of private detective agencies in the country. Private detective agencies are used for various reasons.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

OBSERVATION BY THE CHAIR

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Members, what we saw a while ago was beyond anything. Indecorous, undignified. It was challenging the authority of the Chair and trying to make it free fall for everyone. And that the Leader of the Opposition, an important fulcrum in parliamentary democracy, should be so doing, is painful. I have no words to take exception to such type of a conduct. We are Council of States, the Upper House, the House of Elders. The kind of sloganeering and shouting is something which people do not

do even in a worst-case situation. It was a spectacle in the House. We are in the midst of a debate. A debate has to go as per the Rules. Speakers alone have to speak. When the Leader of the Opposition wanted to make an intervention, having respect for the position he holds, I sent a blank paper to him to write it down. Hon'ble Members, Shri Pramod Tiwari, who was seated next to the Leader of the Opposition and, is the Deputy Leader of the main Opposition party, they ruled this country for quite long and should be fully in know rules of procedure and rules of conduct. It says that the leader of the opposition requests to raise an emergent issue impacting countrymen and wants short intervention any time. Imagine! Nothing is spelt out. This is the kind of approach to take the platform, only to earn brownie political points. This is a very important theatre of dialogue, debate, discussion and deliberation. I take exceptional stance towards a trend that is emerging to challenge the Chair every time. I have enough patience. They have put it in writing also on occasions I reflected. In this painful moment when our countrymen will be shocked that those whom they have sent to Rajya Sabha, to show responsibility, respect to Constitution and be an example so that others can follow, engage in an unruly conduct and shouting, a shouting which we will not bear in any institution or in any society anywhere. These are dangerous practices. They threaten the very fundamentals of democracy. Trust me and have it from me, if we do not search our soul, if we do not counsel our friends, we will be doing greatest disservice to democracy. We are here to strengthen the foundations of democracy. We have taken oath to abide by the Constitution and we are shredding it. If the Leader of the Opposition can be the epicenter of it, what could be more painful than this? I must tell you three things in particular. Whomsoever sits in the Chair has to be respected. My illustrious predecessors have been giants. I may not be able to come to their level. I will try my utmost, but to engage day in and day out in a manner to run down the authority of the Chair, to take the Chair light-heartedly, through each of you, I wish to finally appeal to them that they must reflect; they must introspect; they must search their souls and must always know that sometimes after giving all opportunities, there is an end to it. I never want to come to that end.

A Leader of the Opposition wants to interrupt me the debate without taking recourse to any rule. A Leader of the Opposition sends a written message to take the floor without detailing out the issue. And all parties that have gone outside have worked in togetherness without rationally examining the damage they have done to this institution. If we work like this, mechanically, then the greatest disrespect you are showing to this temple of democracy. It is sacrilege of democracy. If you have left with them, you agree to their shoutings, you agree to that misdemeanour, no one will ever countenance. That will put shame to all of us. I am in deep pain. I plead with you all. I plead with those who are coming. Please search your souls. Do not engage in sacrilege of this temple. Do not engage in a conduct which is least becoming of any individual in the country, much less a Member of Parliament, much less a Member of the Upper House. I was surprised that rather than giving wiser counsel, rather than reflecting, shouting people walk out. You were not walking out from this House. You were walking out from your constitutional duty. Your attempt was to disrupt the House. Disruption and disturbance of the House is very painful. It is antithetical to democracy. If we continue with this trend, faith of the people will be lost. Even now, let me tell you, friends, the respect that people have for our deliberations is at the lowest level. For heaven's sake, think about it. Do not herd yourself. Do not form a group or a bloc only to walk out, only to slogan shouting. And why I am saying so? From this Chair, I have watched moments, I have watched developments, I do not wish to share with you. But those who walked out know it for sure and if they do not know it, then they have outraged their oath, insulted the elected that have sent them here.

GOVERNMENT BILLS

***(i) THE JAMMU AND KASHMIR APPROPRIATION (NO.3) BILL, 2024 - as passed by Lok Sabha**

*** (ii) THE APPROPRIATION (NO.2) BILL, 2024 - as passed by Lok Sabha**

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE; AND THE MINISTER OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): I move that the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir for the services of the financial year 2024-25, as passed by Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration.

I also move that the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 2024-25, as passed by Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration.

SHRI DIGVIJAYA SINGH: The progress of any country depends on its socio-economic conditions. Unity in diversity is the speciality of India and this is also its strength. In this budget, inequalities have increased, the rich have become richer, the poor have become poorer and a few people, i.e. one percent of the people of this country have 40 percent of the wealth and one percent have 22 percent of the income. The weakest class in this country is that which has no assets, no resources, no source of income, those people should have the first right on the budget. Even today we are at number 111 among 125 countries in the Global Hunger Index. The first priority of resources is that the gap between the rich and the poor should be reduced, inflation should be reduced, unemployment should end and the poor should get their full rights. There are some super rich corporates, there is a middle class and there is a lower middle class. In this way, now we have to divide the corporate sector also, the way we do in the middle class. Today, net financial household savings is the lowest in 47 years. Net savings are continuously decreasing. This is an indicator that poverty is not decreasing, rather poverty is increasing. Be it an agricultural labourer, a non-agricultural labourer or a construction worker, his wages have not increased by even one percent in 10 years. The Government changed 44 labour laws and introduced 4 labour codes without any discussion with any trade union. You are giving Kisan Samman Nidhi to those who have land. You are not giving even a single penny to those who do not have land, who are landless labourers. The old age pension which was Rs. 200 per month during the UPA Government is the same today. You have not increased it by even a rupee. The poor are already distressed, today the middle class is also distressed. Only 2.2 percent people pay income tax, the tax that comes from the corporate sector today is less than the direct tax collection. The number of billionaires has increased the most in one year. If we impose 2 percent wealth tax on only 300 richest families, then India's entire year's budget will be covered by it. Unemployment is the biggest problem today and skill development is also a big medium to solve the problem of unemployment, but at the same time you need to focus on labor-intensive industries. The Government has ignored the textile sector the most. Its investment is gradually decreasing. My request is that all cancer drugs should be made custom duty free, and all cancer related machines should also be exempted from tax. You have talked about tax reform, but it appears that if anyone has benefited the most from IBC, it is the corporates. While on one hand cross-border terrorism is increasing, on the other hand tax terrorism is also increasing in this country. Capital expenditure has gone up but is it being used correctly? The way new buildings and bridges are collapsing, it is clear that there has been corruption in capital

* Discussed together.

expenditure. In case of all such big construction projects that have been damaged, their contractors should be blacklisted.

SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN: I request the Government to roll back 18 per cent GST on insurance health insurance and life insurance. The Government has not paid Bengal even a single rupee for MNREGA. The Government owes thousands of crores on the Awas Yojana to Bengal. I appeal to this Government to please understand the mandate. The mandate says that show cooperation and humility. Take all together and solve problems. Please understand the mandate with humility. Then it would not be a problem at all for the Government to roll back the 18 per cent GST on the medical and health insurance. Please acknowledge the price rise on daily use items and gas cylinders and find solutions.

SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY: The first important issue is taxation for the middle class. The problem with the taxation in India is that taxpayers are not getting anything back from the Government as incentives. I request to make the pension tax-free. The point is that if citizens get money from the Government by way of pension or annuity, the Government should make such income from pensions up to Rs.1,00,000 per month tax free. I urge the Government to work out a comprehensive scheme specifically designed to assist senior citizens with their tax filing obligations. This should provide personalised assistance through dedicated helpdesks. The second important issue is that of tax on small savings schemes. Today, the PPF rate is lower than the FD rate by 0.4 percent. The PPF rate has been struck at 7.1 per cent for the last four years. This is dis-incentivising the people from saving their money and forcing them to invest in risky stock markets. The Government should kindly look into this matter and increase the PPF rate. The Government should provide early filing discounts and tax credits for the investments. Offering rewards for timely and accurate submissions can definitely encourage the taxpayers to comply with the investment in tax-saving instruments. Linking tax compliance with eligibility for Government-backed insurance schemes and providing additional security for taxpayers will incentivise the maintenance of good tax record. The Government should implement the interest-free or low-interest instalment payment plans for taxpayers who are facing financial difficulties. The last point is about taxation on agricultural inputs. There is high GST on certain agricultural inputs like tractors and several other machineries and equipments. This not only increases the financial burden on the farmers, but it also prevents the usage of equipment which reduces the pollution. This is the worst situation, both for farmers and the environment. I urge the Government to reduce the GST on agricultural inputs taxed at the rate of 12 per cent.

SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA: The focus of this Government has been 'Sabka Saath; Sabka Vikas'. The Government has looked after the interests of all the sections of the society and all the sectors of the economy, and this is a successful move to bring in stability in the economy as well as prosperity of this country. The main focus of the Government is the upliftment of the poorer sections of the society, youth of the country and, the kisan, who contribute a lot towards the economy of India. Another very important focus area is the Nari Shakti. The Government is also focusing on infrastructure development which is necessary to have an ecosystem for all-round development of this nation. The first priority of the Budget is productivity and resilience in agriculture. Today unemployment is one of main concerns of this Government. The Government is doing a lot through skilling and taking different measures for employment. The Inclusive Human Resource Development and Social Justice have always been the priority of this Government. Hundred smart cities have come up and the cities, which were lacking some facilities for their proper development, have been looked after under this Smart City scheme. The urban poor are also provided with dwelling houses along with infrastructure and other facilities. PMAY and PMAY-Urban, both have played a greater role in developing our cities and rural areas. Energy security is one of the main

priorities of this Government because energy is the key for industrial development. There was lack of infrastructure at one point of time. Even our borders were insecure because of lack of infrastructure. Today, India has developed infrastructure even in the remote areas. There is hardly any place where there is no border road. Besides the border roads and other infrastructure, there are innumerable projects, which the country was once aspiring for, that have been taken up. Under the leadership of our hon. Prime Minister the country is on the path of progress, self-sufficiency and development. Today, we are the fifth economy in the world and will soon become the third one. The Budget has handled and tackled almost every sphere of the country's development. According to this Budget, the North-Eastern Region should be allocated a few additional industrial parks. The Government led by Shri Narendra Modi ji has kept focus on that. It needs land bank for industrial activities, preferably near the railheads. The Government needs to set up SEZ for furniture industry in Arunachal Pradesh and for export promotion in Assam and Tripura. Development of multi-storage facilities for MSMEs in the industrial States of North-Eastern Region is very important. Establishment of railway manufacturing hub in the North-Eastern Region is very important. Augmentation of logistics is one very important factor for the remote areas in the North-Eastern Region. Today, every State capital in the North-Eastern Region is connected with flights.

The existing projects like UDAN can be expanded so as to make these remote areas more accessible. Waterways have recently been developed. We have nearly 42 waterways in the country whereas in North-Eastern region, there were hardly three waterways. Today, it is connected from Ganga to Brahmaputra, connecting 3-4 countries. The one project that I must mention here is the Logistic Park in Assam, which was never there during any Government. Today, because of the establishment of the Logistic Park, we are now reachable. The products and manufacturing has gone up because of these facilities. Connecting New Jalpaiguri station with Sivok-Rangpo railway project had been an impossible project, but that has been made possible by the Government led by Shri Narendra Modi. Dimapur-Kohima, Jiribam-Imphal and Bairabi-Sairang projects are some of the very important projects of the railways and there is need to expedite operationalisation of Agartala-Akhaura rail connectivity. I wholeheartedly support this Appropriation Bill.

SHRI P. WILSON: The Budget 2024-25 presented is not for the upliftment of the people or for this country, rather it is for the survival of the Government and for keeping the coalition partners happy. Tamil Nadu has received nothing from the Budget because BJP received nothing from the State of Tamil Nadu. There is a decreasing allocation to crucial sectors such as food, social security, health, education, etc., which has made the intentions of the Government clear, and which is nothing but anti-people. For every one rupee we pay from the State of Tamil Nadu, we are receiving 26 paise from the corpus of the Union Government, despite huge contribution to Union by the State of Tamil Nadu. The Government is not showing any interest in conducting Caste Census and increase the reservation for the OBC, SC and ST communities in proportion to increase in their population. We have seen how the caste survey in Bihar has been struck down by the court. The creamy layer law is being mooted to destroy the reservation and should be stopped by proper legislation. The Finance Minister's announcement of Rs.25,000 standard deduction and Rs.17,500 annual tax savings translate to relief of just rupees 48 per day. This paltry sum is hardly a relief for the taxpaying middle class who sustain the nation's economy. Several national highway projects in Tamil Nadu are falling behind the schedule because of want of fund allocation. So far as the Money Laundering Act is concerned, the entire Act requires a relook because it has been misused and abused targeting the opposition parties. The budget fails to address the issues of employment opportunities in the country, high inflation rate, increase in black-money, corruption and high prices of fuels even after the reduction in the

global oil. It is time for accountability and a re-evaluation of priorities to ensure a fair and inclusive future for all.

SHRI RAGHAV CHADHA: I am very happy to mention that our views on indexation have been positively considered by the hon'ble Finance Minister and it has been partially restored though it has not been fully restored and applied as of now only to immovable property. I urge the government that we should at least not levy GST on health and life insurance because they are not a luxury product. We should eliminate tax on health insurance and life insurance and incentivize people so that more and more families in India come under health insurance cover and life insurance cover. At the same time, there is a need to provide relief to the common man as he has to pay multiple taxes such as income tax, GST, road tax, cess, motor insurance, toll tax and so on.

SHRIMATI SULATA DEO: This is not a pro-people Budget, this is an anti-people and pro-corporate Budget. One per cent of the people has 40 per cent of the wealth and the remaining one per cent of the people have 22 per cent of the wealth. I want to say that the Government is pursuing the policies for corporate masters. It appears that this budget aims to save the government. Our Odisha has suffered double loss in the double engine budget. People of Odisha have elected 20 MPs to the Lok Sabha, but they did not get anything. Why is such step-motherly treatment being meted out to us? Why did we not get any special package even after giving 20 MPs? For 20 years we have been demanding special category status, because everyone knows that Odisha is a state facing natural calamities. We demand that if you do not give Odisha Special Category Status, then at least give it the recognition of Special Focus State and give them more matching share. Today, no one is investing. The 18% GST is being levied on insurance. The taxpayers should get relief in the health sector. The votes are sought in the name of identity. But, nothing has been done for the development of Odia language. We have backward tribal districts of Sambalpur, Balasore and Koraput. We have repeatedly demanded for AIIMS, and that demand remains unfulfilled. The 22 AIIMS were approved for the country, but there is nothing for Odisha in them. Therefore, the neglect of our state should stop.

SHRI MANOJ KUMAR JHA: I had earlier said in my Budget statement that those who make the Budget should not make the Budget without Article 39, sub-section 'C'. Now everyone knows that 10% of the people have rights over about 78% of the assets. In our country, there should be a provision for additional taxation for the super-rich people under the Preamble, so that the welfare of the people can be ensured on priority basis. Through caste census in the country, we will be able to know the socio-economic status of each class. The marginal and small farmers are our priority. The minimum wages should also be fixed in the country. There is a need for better planning in the unorganized sector as well. The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises should also get proper encouragement. The porters and other workers who become unemployed due to mechanization should be accommodated under Class IV jobs in government departments. If we look at the budget allocation for UGC, the government is not serious about higher education. The fruit producers of Kashmir are suffering losses due to the 20 percent reduction in import duty on walnuts and apples. The farmers of Kashmir are also suffering losses due to the import of saffron from Iran. Our collective concerns are permanent, while political parties and governments keep coming and going.

SHRI SANDOSH KUMAR P: We find that this Budget has failed to fulfill the dreams of millions of common Indian citizens. The total Budget Estimate is Rs. 48.21 lakh crore. The first demand from a common man was a monthly wage of Rs. 26,000 for laborers. Next thing was filling up the 30 lakh vacancies in the Government and public sector units.

Third was a minimum work of 200 days under MNREGA. Fourth, a price stabilization fund for farmers and assured MSP to farmers on their crops. We do not oppose the corporate houses. But they have been getting an unfair advantage from Government. For BJP this matter is a problem. They cannot talk against corporate. But, they have failed to address the genuine concerns of health care workers, teachers and farmers. For each of these sectors, the budgetary allocation is abysmally low. For UGC and Research programmes, the allocation remains insufficient. By bringing it in the Concurrent List, the Central Government is misusing its power and trying to jeopardize the interest of the States. The states like Kerala are getting a step motherly treatment from Central Government. Every state must get adequate number of projects and budgetary allocation. The 60 per cent of the GST is being collected from 50 per cent of the poor population of the country. So, the GST Act too must be amended.

DR. BHAGWAT KARAD: This Bill has been introduced in the Parliament under Article 114/1 of the Constitution. This Bill has been presented to obtain approval for the expenditure of the Parliament. This Bill was recommended by the Hon'ble President and after discussion in the Lok Sabha, it has been presented in the Rajya Sabha. Opposition members alleged that there is nothing in this budget for the poor people. In this regard, Kisan Samman Nidhi was mentioned. The fact is that in the last 10 years, under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Modi, a lot of work has been done for the poor, youth, women and farmers, there have been many achievements. The country's economy has been strengthened, which has come from 10th to 5th position and is now moving towards the third position. In this Budget, the needs of every sector have been kept in mind. Now in the country, there is no bank guarantee for '*Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana*', '*construction of toilets under 'Swachhata Abhiyan*', '*Gareeb Kalyan Yojana*', '*Jan Suraksha Yojana*', '*Swanidhi Yojana* and '*Mudra Yojana*'. These are guaranteed by the Government of India. These schemes were made under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi Ji and people have benefited from them. Here, the inequality was mentioned and according to the internationally accepted Gini Coefficient, there has been a huge reduction in inequality in the country during the last 10 years. The country's exports have increased, and imports have decreased. Indigenous manufacturing has gained strength. The bad debts and non-performing assets have decreased. The work of collection and distribution of GST has been done with transparency. I conclude my speech by supporting this Bill.

SHRI SHAKTISINH GOHIL: Under Article 114 of the Constitution, the Government has control over the financial resources of the country through the Parliament. Today, the Government has brought the Appropriation Bill. Everyone knows that this country is an agriculture-based country. It is not an industry-based country. You must take industries forward. But, your priority should be agriculture. You impose GST on farmers' tractors, seeds, medicines etc. You increase customs on plastic used by the common man. On the other hand, you reduce customs duty on platinum. If China is not controlled, the diamond industry will also shut down. You will have to ban synthetic diamonds. Diamond polishers in Surat are committing suicide due to unemployment. The biggest ship breaking centre in entire Asia was in Alang, Bhavnagar. Today, the plots there are lying vacant; ships are not being docked there. It has been replaced by Bangladesh, Pakistan and Taiwan. After independence, the communal harmony was established in the country and continuous efforts were made to make the country self-reliant. The green revolution and milk revolution came in the country. Now, the blaming practice against the previous governments should be stopped. And you should have your own ability to catch who is stealing in the old system. Why are cooperative societies being merged with Home? There have been no elections in Ahmedabad District Cooperative Bank for 14-15 years. Earlier, politics never came in the way of cooperative

societies, everyone worked together. In this appropriation bill, we are giving funds for defense. Your policy should be such that if you bring a scheme like Agniveer for the soldiers who are recruited to protect the country, then what will happen to the security of this country?

DR. M. THAMBIDURAI: In the Constitution, we have the cooperative federalism which is a very important factor. In that respect, most of our Members requested more money to be allotted to the States, especially Tamil Nadu. As far as Railways is concerned, there is a pending railway project from Puducherry to Bangalore through Jolarpet, Krishnagiri and Hosur. And regarding road projects, Karur-Coimbatore eight lane project and Karur-Trichy six lane project are important. In Spectrum case, there was a loss of one lakh seventy-five thousand crore rupees to the Government. Katchatheevu is part of our Indian territory. I still do not know what the position is. Because of that, the fisherman is suffering. Most of the Tamil Nadu fishermen are arrested by the Sri Lankan Government. I want to know about the steps that the Central Government is taking to retrieve Katchatheevu. The loss caused by the UPA Government in Spectrum case was of one lakh seventy-five thousand crore rupees and the DMK was part of that. It was serious corruption. I demand to include Valmiki community, fishermen community and Kurava community in the Scheduled Tribes.

SHRI JAWHAR SIRCAR: Bengal has been blocked out of Rs.34,000 crores by the Central Government. Cesses and duties and additional duties are collected by the Central Government and not shared. A State like Bengal or Kerala cannot speak of any Central expenditure other than railways and national highways. The investments in Central Public Sector Units have been shut down. Bank credit is being controlled by the officials of the bank. We have not received any FDI approval in years. Seventy per cent of the PLI has gone to one State. Then comes discouragement of private investment. You are choking State loans. The IAS and IPS are being misused.

SHRI ARUN SINGH: During Congress' UPA government, our rank in Ease of Doing Business was 142, today it is 63; during Congress' time our rank in Global Innovation Index was 76, today it is 40; during Congress' time our rank in E-Governance Index was 193, today it is 96. During Congress' time our rank in Climate Change Performance Index was 30, today it is 7. During Congress' time our rank in E-Participation Index was 40, today it is 15. During Congress' time our rank in Logistics Performance Index was 54, today it is 38. If you look at the allocations for all heads of accounts, it has increased five times in some, seven times in others as compared to 2013-14 and if you look at the average of allocation and expenditure, it is more than three times. During the UPA regime, 12 km of national highways were constructed per day and today under Modi ji's leadership, 28 km of national highways are being constructed per day. During their time, it took an average of 12 minutes 20 seconds to cross a toll plaza, today you will cross the toll plaza in 47 seconds. During their time, 4 km of railway track was built per day and due to the allocation of a huge amount of money, today the work of railway track is being done at a speed of 14 km per day. During their time, an average of 233 railway accidents took place. During our time, only 34 railway accidents have taken place. In this Appropriation Bill, the maximum thrust has been given to the youth. 4.1 crore people will get benefit in the coming time through five different schemes. For this, the government has made a provision of Rs 1,48,000 crore for this year only. Through this, they will be provided skills under these five schemes, and they will play their leading role in building India.

The budget of various ministries like Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Power and Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has been increased by 5 times to 15 times. That is why India's economy is

growing at the fastest pace in the world today. Through solar rooftop installation under "PM Surya Ghar: Free Electricity Scheme", one crore people will get free electricity and will also be able to sell it. Through the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, food grains are being given to 80 crore people, out of which 72 lakh people live in Jammu and Kashmir. LPG gas connections have also doubled in the country compared to the previous Government. According to the Multidimensional Poverty Index, 29 percent of the people were poor in 2013-14, which decreased to 11 percent in the year 2022-23 and 25 crore people came out of poverty. The Government has brought neem coated urea for farmers. There are many schemes like "PM Kisan Samman Nidhi" and "Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana". Now, farmers are being given insurance even if there is only 33 percent crop loss. MSP has also been increased. Kisan rails are being run to transport the agricultural and horticultural produce from production sites to places of consumption. A large amount of goods are being transported by railways. The target is to increase freight loading to 3000 metric tonnes by the year 2030. Many new trains have been started. CCTV cameras have been installed in trains. In this budget, provisions have been made to convert 4000 bogies into AC bogies. Rs 28,400 crore has been sanctioned for the industrial development of Jammu and Kashmir.

SHRI MOHAMMED NADIMUL HAQUE: Due to digitalization, nowadays Income Tax or GST notices come at any time, be it night or a holiday. I request the Government to ensure that these notices are received during office hours and on working days. It should not happen that a notice is received on Friday night and a reply has to be given by Monday morning. At least 15 days should be given to respond to the notice, some time is needed to prepare the reply. Apart from this, the money that is given to a company etc. at the time of payment of a bill under the GST head, if that company does not deposit the GST amount in the Government account, then after 2-3 years the consumer gets a notice for GST. Therefore, a system, similar to TDS should be adopted for GST, so that GST can be deducted at the source and deposited directly in the treasury. I would also like to reiterate the demand of my party that the GST on medical and life insurance needs to be scrapped.

DR. FAUZIA KHAN: The middle class pays about 48 percent of its income as tax to the Government through income tax and GST and on every item of living. But despite this, it is deprived of basic facilities like uninterrupted electricity, clean water, good government schools, good government hospitals and has to spend money on these separately. In the year 2024-25, the budget of the Ministry of Education is only 2.5 percent of the total budget. This is a decrease of seven per cent from the revised estimate for 2023-24. The National Education Policy and the Kothari Commission have recommended six percent from the GDP on 'Education', but we are not doing it. The volcanic rise of the coaching-class industry gives testimony to the fact that our quality of education in schools and colleges is much below the required standards. There is also a pertinent issue of unequal opportunities in rural, urban, semi-urban divide. In order to improve the quality of education, we have to focus on the pre-primary sector i.e. children of 3 to 6 years.

SHRI GHANSHYAM TIWARI: Appropriation Bill is the third stage phase of the Budget. Today, the average GDP growth in the entire world is between 2.5% to 2.7%. In the countries where GDP has increased, inflation is not less than 8%, but our country's GDP is above 7.4%, and still we have controlled the inflation. In this Budget, provision has been made to make India a self-reliant and developed nation by 2047. Today India is self-sufficient in the sector of food grains and is exporting them to 131 countries, and everyone in the country is being given free ration. This Budget has abolished the angel tax. This will provide employment to unemployed youth. Agniveer was discussed in the House. We should be careful while talking about the army. It should be remembered that it was the Congress party

which had proposed the Short Service Commission. In this, officers are selected for four years. Many of these officers go on to become high ranking officers in the civil services and other services. Similarly, 70 percent of the people who will join Agniveer will be absorbed in different services. We were just talking about economic policy. Earlier there was a license raj, that raj has ended. Today is the era of direct benefit transfer. At that time there were dual systems. Electoral bonds were criticized but earlier in the era of license raj, the then ruling party used to fight elections by keeping control on industrialists and taking money from them. Transparency was brought in through electoral bonds so that everyone could clearly know which party was getting how much money. Before former Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the mortal remains of the martyrs of army were not allowed to reach their homes, but today they are cremated with respect, a procession is taken out in their village, they are honoured and later all facilities are provided to their wives and children. Opposition parties have been talking about one rank, one pension for a long time. Since the time of Shri Vajpayee ji, a lot of work has been done for the army and improvements have been made in it. Today, an additional Rs 1 lakh 41 thousand crore is being given under One Rank One Pension. The previous government had tied the hands of the Indian army. India had to test the nuclear bomb, but it was not allowed to do so. Today India has emerged as a powerful country. It has emerged as an economic power. Earlier, Indian industrialists were respected as the fathers of India's industrial development. But today the industrialists who increased India's wealth are being criticised. There is also a lot of demand for caste census. Previous Government conducted caste census but did not publish it. Apart from this, the census of Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe or OBC is available. By providing benefits to the deprived sections of other castes through EBC reservation, this Government has established harmony all over the India. This Appropriation Bill is to take India to its peak and to fulfill the desired goals of 2047. I fully support it and thank the Government very much.

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