

RAJYA SABHA

*SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE

(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

Monday, February 03, 2025/ Magha 14, 1946 (Saka)

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Members, I am pleased to extend birthday greetings to hon'ble Members of Parliament- Shri Prem Chand Gupta, Shri Naresh Bansal.

Shri Prem Chand Gupta is currently in his fifth term in Rajya Sabha since April, 2020 representing the State of Bihar. He is also the leader of the Rashtriya Janata Dal in the House. Shri Gupta had served as Union Minister of Corporate Affairs under Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. He is widely travelled and has the distinction of representing India at the United Nations General Assembly thrice- 2000, 2002 and 2011. He is married to Shrimati Sarla Gupta and is blessed with two sons, Mayur Gupta and Gaurav Gupta, and one daughter, Shalini Aggarwal.

Shri Naresh Bansal is a distinguished Member of Rajya Sabha representing the State of Uttarakhand, since November 2020. Shri Bansal had served in various capacities in Uttarakhand before entering national scene. He was General Secretary of Bharatiya Janata Party in the State for seven years from 2002 to 2009 and was also Chairman of Housing Development Council, Uttarakhand from 2009 to 2012. He is married to Shrimati Kshama Bansal and is blessed with two sons, Kunal Bansal and Siddharth Bansal, and one daughter, Megha Bansal.

Hon'ble Members, on my own and on behalf of this House, I wish them a happy, long, and healthy life and extend greetings to their family members.

OBITUARY REFERENCE

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Members, I refer with profound sorrow to the passing away of **Shri Palavalasa Rajasekharam**, a former Member of this House, on the 13th of January, 2025. Shri Rajasekharam served as a Member of this House representing the State of Andhra Pradesh, from April, 1976 to 1982. Born on 1st of January, 1944, in the district of Srikakulam, in Andhra Pradesh, Shri Rajasekharam dedicated his life to the welfare of farmers, tribal communities and the marginalized sections of our society. His tireless commitment was reflected in his influential roles as Director of Andhra Pradesh Cooperative Central Bank and Chairman of Zila Parishad of Srikakulam. Further, Shri Rajasekharam served with distinction as a Member of the Legislative Assembly of Andhra Pradesh, contributing significantly to the State's legislative governance. In the passing away of Shri Palavalasa Rajasekharam, the country has lost a dedicated social worker, a champion of the

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

rights of the marginalized and an able parliamentarian. We deeply mourn the passing away of Shri Palavalasa Rajasekharam.

(One Minute's silence was observed as a mark of respect to the memory of the departed.)

OPENING REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Members, the 267th Session of the Rajya Sabha is a milestone in the constitutional journey of Bharat, being the first one convened as we march into the last quarter of the Century of adoption of our Constitution on November 26, 1949.

An occasion of expression of profound gratitude to visionary founding fathers, whose wisdom and foresight endowed us with a Constitution that has remarkably shaped the destiny of our Republic.

In this journey of 75 years, we have embraced modernity without forsaking our timeless wisdom and heritage. Our collective dreams and aspirations have enabled strides in digital innovation and sustainable development to space exploration and infrastructure.

Guided by the mantra of *Vikas* with *Virasat*, the march forward towards a Viksit Bharat by 2047 must be the North Star that anchors our collective efforts. It is incumbent upon us, as Members of this august House, to rise to this calling with unwavering resolve.

As the Council of States – the House of Elders — we must serve as both guardians of constitutional values and torchbearers of progressive thought. Let us emulate our founding fathers, and seize the moment in history to leave our indelible footprints upon the sands of time. Our conduct must be exemplary; our deliberations, wise and constructive; and our actions, driven by the welfare of the 1.4 billion citizens who place their faith in us.

A vibrant and functional Parliament is the lifeblood of democracy. In this sacred Chamber, the voices of a pluralistic, dynamic, and aspirational society converge, particularly those of our youth, who represent our nation's boundless energy and dreams. By empowering youth with education, opportunity, and a sense of responsibility, we can craft a more inclusive and sustainable future.

The great Mahakumbh, a resplendent celebration of India's spiritual and cultural essence, offers profound lessons for our journey — unity in diversity, collective well-being, and an abiding commitment to truth, tolerance, and harmony.

As we engage with the global community, let these principles remain the touchstones of our actions, ensuring that the well-being of every citizen remains at the heart of our endeavors.

Hon'ble Members, our task is monumental, so has to be our resolve. Let us pledge to uphold the sanctity and dignity of this House. Let our debates and decisions be guided by the noble aspiration of service to the nation. Let us work together, across all divides, to forge policies that elevate Bharat's standing on the global stage.

In the words of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the architect of our Constitution, I quote, "Democracy is not merely a form of Government. It is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. It is essentially an attitude of respect and reverence towards our fellow men."

May we be ever mindful of this wisdom. As we embark upon this Session, let us deliberate with purpose, cooperate with dignity, and legislate with vision—mindful always

that we carry the hopes and dreams of a billion hearts. Together, let us chart a course toward a future that fulfils the promise made in the Constitution.

MATTERS RAISED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIR

1. Demand for Comprehensive National Farm Mechanization Policy

SHRI SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE PILLI: A substantial portion of India's workforce relies on agriculture. In order to inaugurate a new agricultural revolution and boost the productivity, the mechanization of farming must be prioritized, particularly for small and marginal farmers. There is no nation-wide survey to assess the level of mechanization in Indian farming. A national policy for the standardization of farm equipment is urgently needed. Government should ensure mechanization centers are established at the Gram Panchayat level, and that such schemes are widely publicized and popularized and the Government must guarantee access to power for small and marginal farmers.

2. Demand for Provision of Escalators & Lifts for Old and Disabled Devotees at Pilgrimage Sites of Himachal Pradesh

DR. SIKANDER KUMAR: Across the country, especially in Himachal Pradesh, elderly and differently abled devotees face many problems at most Hindu pilgrimage sites. Since Himachal Pradesh is a hilly state, most of the temples here are located at a height and one has to climb hundreds of stairs to reach those temples. In such a situation, especially elderly and differently abled devotees face a lot of difficulties in reaching the temple and having darshan. I request the Government to make arrangements for escalators and lifts for the convenience of devotees at religious places.

(Shri Maharaja Sanajaoba Leishemba and Dr. Sumer Singh Solanki associated.)

3. Concern over Increasing Human-Animal Conflicts in Country

SHRI A. A. RAHIM: I would like to bring the attention of House to the most important issue - the human-animal conflict. The people are struggling with the human-animal conflict.

(Dr. John Brittas, Shri Sandosh Kumar P, Shrimati Jebi Mather Hisham and Shri Jose K. Mani associated)

4. Concern over Accidents Caused by Navigation Error of Google Map Application

DR. AJEET MADHAVRAO GOPCHADE: Accidents caused by Google Maps going wrong are becoming a serious problem in India. Two 29-year-old doctors died tragically in Kerala and three people going to a wedding in Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh also fell victim to a similar incident. These incidents show that the information on Google Maps is not always correct. Google can be held legally responsible for this. Google Maps is a major means of navigation globally. Collaboration with Indian start-ups, ISRO and other related entities can develop a platform in India that will reduce dependence on global services like Google Maps. Indian companies will have maps and data designed specifically for our country, customized according to local needs and context. The Government should seriously consider all these issues and take concrete steps.

5. Demand for Declaration of Shaheed Raja Vijay Singh Memorial, Kunja-Bahadurpur, Uttrakhand as a Monument of National Importance

SHRI NARESH BANSAL: There was a revolution in Kunja Bahadurpur in Haridwar district of Uttrakhand three decades before the revolution of 1857. The king there,

Vijay Bahadur Singh and his commander Kalyan Singh, challenged the British rule by gathering an army of one thousand youths. As a result, the British tortured the village of Kunja Bahadurpur. Their empire at that time was spread across Meerut, Muzaffarnagar, Bijnor, Kumaon, Garhwal, Saharanpur. They showed courage and when the British attacked, 40 British soldiers were also killed, hundreds of our youth were killed and atrocities were also committed. Without the mention of the bravery of these heroes, our history is incomplete and very limited. It is necessary that these struggles for independence get a proper place in the history of the country.

(Shrimati Sumitra Balmik, Dr. Sumer Singh Solanki, Ms. Kavita Patidar, Shri Devendra Pratap Singh and Dr. Kalpana Saini associated)

6. Need for a Gender-Neutral Law against Domestic Violence in India

DR. DINESH SHARMA: I rise today to speak on an issue that lies at the core of our Constitution's promise of equality. There is a need for balanced legal protection for both men and women. From 2014 to 2021, 107.5 per cent more men cited family problems as a reason for suicide. Our laws have made great progress in protecting women from domestic violence and abuse, but the lack of such protection for men is also a matter of concern. The recent case of Atul Subhash, a resident of Bihar, has highlighted this problem. This incident highlights that there is not enough legal and emotional support for men facing false allegations. The problem of misuse of provisions like Section 85 of Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita is also a matter of great concern. I request the Hon'ble Minister to make the laws related to domestic violence and harassment gender neutral, so that justice can be done to all. If even one person loses his life due to the lack of a system, then it is time for introspection for us. Therefore, strict action should be taken against those making false allegations, so that the fairness and truth of the justice system can be maintained.

7. Need to take More Steps for Empowerment of Rural India by Transforming Villages into Vibrant Centres of Growth and Opportunity

SHRIMATI SANGEETA YADAV: Gramin Bharat Mahotsav has been launched by the Ministry of Finance under the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). This initiative is promoting the prosperity of rural India; at the same time, it is also playing a leading role in fulfilling the dream of a developed India by 2047. Government has taken and is taking several steps to expand infrastructure in rural areas through Jal Jeevan Mission, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Ayushman Bharat and other schemes. Through you, I would like to place two more small requests before the Hon'ble Finance Minister. One, more concrete steps need to be taken to increase the participation of small farmers and women in the ongoing initiatives in the rural sector. My second demand is that we need to take more vigorous steps to promote innovation and digital literacy in rural areas.

8. Need to address the Crisis of Plastic Pollution across the Country

SHRI AYODHYA RAMI REDDY ALLA: This is an important issue that not just India but the entire world is facing. Coming to our country, we are generating almost 3.5 million tonnes of plastic waste every year, as per CPCB estimates. However, the waste generated from other sources is more than 9-10 million tonnes every year. Unfortunately, only 60 per cent of that is collected. Out of that, only 40 per cent is recycled. It is just ending up in landfills, rivers and oceans. We must also involve the organized sector in tackling the menace of plastic. There are environmental challenges that we are facing because of this pollution. Most important is micro-plastic pollution. This is found in water, soil and in human bodies. Also, it is found in oceans. 0.6 Million tonnes of waste every year is entering into ocean around India. Air pollution is another major problem. Burning of plastics releases

toxins and they are contributing to lot of air pollution, respiratory diseases, soil and water contamination. Unfortunately, these chemicals reach into water and also soil, which is making it really very infertile and water is really contaminated for which treatments are also very costly. It is economic and resources loss. Unfortunately, in India, we are importing more than 80 per cent of our crude, and plastic is nothing but crude. We have to see that plastics are properly recycled and with that we can save, at least, Rs.50,000 crores per annum by recycling these.

9. Concern over Poor Enrolment of Girl Students in Joint Entrance Examination For Admission in Indian Institutes of Technology

DR. BHIM SINGH: I want to draw the attention of the government towards the problems of girl students. Our country is a pioneer in the field of technology and is constantly moving ahead. Our Prime Minister also started the campaign 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao'. That means both girl students and technology are important. When we look at the enrollment in National Institutes of Technology, our attention goes to the problem of girl students. We find that even now the enrollment of girl students is between 15 to 20 percent. There is a need to improve it. Therefore, the government should make some special provisions so that more and more girl students can get enrolled there. Such a special scheme should be implemented so that the students who are studying and want to take the entrance exam can get admission in maximum numbers, such arrangements should be made.

10. Demand to Operationalize Ashok Nagar Oilfield in West Bengal

SHRI SAMIK BHATTACHARYA: After 65 years of relentless efforts from geophysicists, scientists and the oilfield workers, finally the ONGC and the Oil India Limited discovered oil in Ashoknagar North 24 Parganas district. 13 letters have been written by the ONGC to the State Government. This matter has been raised in the Eastern India Development Council also. If oil is extracted, the Bengal government will get royalty of Rs.8 thousand crore every year. The entire socio-economic structure of that area will change in a short time. But, the most unfortunate thing is that a Government, which is very much in the power there, does not have any faith in the federal structure. They are not ready to participate in any Central Government programme. Today, all the social welfare projects of the Central Government in West Bengal are not being allowed to run and the common people of West Bengal are suffering the consequences.

11. Demand for Speedy Completion of Khongsang-Imphal and Jiribam-Imphal Railway Line Project in Manipur

SHRI MAHARAJA SANAJAOBA LEISHEMBA: Though Jiribam-Imphal railway line project was started around a decade back, it has not been completed yet. Only Jiribam to Khongsang portion has been completed but the remaining portion, that is, from Khongsang to Imphal, is still incomplete due to many reasons. Manipur being a hilly State, our only connectivity with other States depends on National Highways and airways. During rainy season, people bringing in essential commodities and travelling alongside National Highways face hardships because of wet roads, landslides and extortion by differed armed groups, etc. Besides this, bandhs and economic blockades by different groups, with a view to put pressure on the Government to meet their demands, are becoming a normal practice. During this crisis, around 20 lakh people could not travel outside the State through the National Highway and they are facing financial problems for travelling by air due to increased airfares. Moreover, the prices of food grains and other essential commodities are also skyrocketing. The railways have become the only alternative means to resolve their problems.

The Government of India should also deal with the foreign narco terrorists or separatists with an iron hand to restore normalcy in the State as well as along the national highways and complete the Jiribam-Imphal railway line project positively by 2025 or at the earliest.

12. Concern over the Problems Faced by ASHA Workers Appointed Under National Health Mission

SHRI MAHENDRA BHATT: Through you, I want to draw the attention of the government to the problems of ASHA workers working to provide health facilities to mother and child, including running awareness campaigns about health and social determinants to the rural and urban population through the government's 'National Rural Health Mission'. Since the launch of this mission, while the villagers are getting health related information, ASHA workers have been continuously organizing health awareness programs from the Corona period till today. Despite their work, they have been deprived of the minimum wage till date. They are given a monthly incentive amount of only Rs 4,500, which seems very less considering their work. They are also being given annual incentives in many states. Among them, Uttarakhand is the only state where they are being given an annual incentive amount of Rs 5,000. Therefore, through you, I demand from the government that considering the importance of the work being done by them in the field of health, they should be included in the ambit of the Minimum Wages Act, which should also include the share of the State Government.

13. Proposed Mega Power Project by China on the Brahmaputra River

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: The River Brahmaputra is our lifeline and the Brahmaputra Valley Civilization is one of the ancient civilizations of the world. Now, we are very much concerned because of the proposed/initiative taken by China to build world's largest mega power generation project on the River Brahmaputra. It will be a great threat to our Brahmaputra Valley Civilization, to our culture and the socio-economic life of the people of Assam. If they divert the water flows of Assam to the China side, there will be no water in the river Brahmaputra on our side. So, I would like to draw the attention of the Union Government to take up the matter with the China Government and raise the issue at international platforms, if necessary. Otherwise, Our identity, our culture and our economy is going to be finished.

14. Concern over Lack of Geriatric Facilities in the Country to Deal with Old Age Problems

SHRIMATI SUDHA MURTY: Old age is a part of our life. When you grow old, there are many problems which we come across. My suggestion is that every district in India should have a geriatric ward or a part of the hospital should have geriatric department because geriatrics is different from normal medicine department. In urban areas, we do have it, but by and large, geriatrics comes under physicians. In a Government hospital, it is not possible to separate. So, I request that we should design a separate department for that at district level so that the rural area people can come to the district area and take advantage of that. When you grow old, you always come with someone to the hospital. So, when you design an OPD, you require 1:2 space. Their waiting period should be reduced. Government has to train doctors, geriatric specialists, special nurses, helpers and other staff. It may be a little expensive, but the Government should take initiatives to improve the position of the old people, so that old age will be easy and comfortable.

15. Concern over Lack of e-filing Centres in State of Uttar Pradesh

DR. LAXMIKANT BAJPAYEE: The Government of India had decided that 4400 e-filing centers would be started in the country and an amount of Rs 7,100 crore was announced in the budget. In the same order, these were to be opened in Uttar Pradesh as well. A center was also opened in Meerut where litigants could present their cases. Litigants' interest is supreme, cheap and accessible justice, this is our theoretical stand. The Hon'ble Supreme Court also said in its verdict that after 15 days from today, no one can refuse to hear through the hybrid system, but the Allahabad High Court has issued an order for hearing only once till now. The people of Uttar Pradesh get the opportunity to file a case, obtain bail and hear cases in the High Court and Supreme Court from the district through the e-filing center, we are being deprived of that. Even though the e-filing center has been established in Meerut, the order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court was kept in abeyance by the administrative order of the Allahabad High Court. While putting forth my views on this subject, I demand through you that the order of kept in abeyance be suspended and the system of e-filing center be started.

16. Demand to include Agricultural Sciences in Syllabi of Navodaya and Kendriya Vidyalayas

DR. SUMER SINGH SOLANKI: 80 percent of the people in our country live in villages and their occupation is related to agriculture. Our government is continuously working under the leadership of the Prime Minister of our country to make farming a profitable business. Being an agricultural country, agricultural subjects should also be taught in colleges and schools. I demand to include the subject of Agricultural Sciences in CBSE and NCERT syllabus, so that the sons and daughters of our farmers can study agriculture and when they return home, they can do farming in a very good, high-tech way and help the brothers and sisters of the village to do farming technically.

17. Demand for Adequate Means of Transport for City of Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh

SHRIMATI SUMITRA BALMIK: Jabalpur is an important city located in the centre of the country, from where effective transportation is possible to different parts of the country. This city is situated on the banks of river Narmada. The busiest national highways of the country pass through here, which makes it a highly suitable area for logistics and trade. Under the dynamic scheme of the Hon'ble Prime Minister led by the Government of India, initiatives like Bharat Mala Project and Dedicated Freight Corridor can make the logistics infrastructure in the country modern and efficient.

WELCOME TO PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION FROM RUSSIA

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Members, we have a foreign delegation. On behalf of this august House, I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency, Vyacheslav Volodin, Chairman of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, and Members of the Parliamentary Delegation who are on a visit to India as our honoured guests. We have strong bilateral relations with Russia. The Parliamentary Delegation arrived in Delhi from Moscow on Sunday, February 2, 2025. They are now seated in the Special Box. They are scheduled to meet and call on various dignitaries in Delhi. Besides Delhi, they will also visit Mumbai before their departure from India. We wish them a happy and fruitful stay in our country. Through them, we convey our greetings and best wishes to the Members of Parliament, the Government and the friendly people of Russian Federation.

MOTION OF THANKS ON THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

SHRIMATI KIRAN CHOUDHRY: I move that an Address be presented to the President in the following terms:

"That the Members of the Rajya Sabha assembled in this session are deeply grateful to the President for the Address which she has been pleased to deliver to both Houses of Parliament assembled together on January 31, 2025."

The President's Address outlined our great nation's path towards the fulfilment of the dream of Viksit Bharat. Her Address encapsulated the vision for an India where youth, women, farmers, the common man, and all the citizens of this country have the best opportunities to flourish. Viksit Bharat is a profound reflection of the dreams of sages and visionaries. When we speak of Viksit Bharat, we speak of the aspirations of every farmer, youth, and entrepreneur striving to secure their rightful place in society.

The sustained and determined efforts of the Indian Government have addressed all the important issues that had remained unresolved for a long time due to policy paralysis. It is an exposition of our global leadership capabilities and our intent to shape global norms and rules in a way that is inclusive and equitable, projecting India as a responsible global leader. Initiatives like the National Hydrogen Mission and the International Solar Alliance demonstrate our leadership in the global green energy revolution. According to the Economic Survey 2024-25, the Indian economy now records steady credit growth, with banks posting higher profitability and lower NPAs.

The farmers have always been the backbone of our nation, and our Government has taken monumental steps to double their incomes and improve their lifestyle. Brand India is no longer just a dream or a vision; it is a reality in the making. Our Government has taken the historic decision of declaring MSP for all Rabi, Kharif, and commercial crops, as mandated by the Commission of Agricultural Costs and Prices. In the new year, we have introduced a special package for farmers. The Government has increased the allocation under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana. The Government launched the PM-Kisan Yojana, under which an amount of ₹6,000 per annum is directly credited to the bank accounts of smallholding farmers. Farmers are receiving money directly in their accounts without intermediaries. Through one of the largest DBT schemes in the world, launched in 2019, an amount of ₹3.46 lakh crore has been disbursed directly to the accounts of 11 crore farmers. In the Budget 2025-26, the Kisan Credit Card limit has been increased from ₹3 lakh to ₹5 lakh. The Government has also proposed the establishment of new fertiliser manufacturing units. Our agricultural income has increased at an annual rate of 5.23 percent over the past decade. This Government has consistently worked for the upliftment of farmers at every step.

A society that values its women as equal partners in its historical march of progress is not just building a future; it is honouring its past and its very soul. It is a matter of immense pride that our Prime Minister's vision for a developed India places women's empowerment as a cornerstone of national progress. Initiatives such as the construction of toilets and legislative representation for women go far beyond empowerment. They are efforts to liberate women from the systemic cruelties of indignity, violence, and marginalisation that they have endured for millennia.

The achievements of the NDA Government and the schemes it has introduced can be termed game changers. Today, with just a click on a mobile phone, gas connections and cylinders are readily available to every household. In a society like ours, deeply embedded with patriarchal biases and male dominance, sexual harassment, suppression through violence against women at workplaces, in public places, or at home is a stark social reality. In such a

scenario, initiatives like One Stop Centres, women's helplines, and Mahila Police Volunteers have provided relief to women. Under the flagship programme of Jan Dhan Yojana, the Government has given wings to the dreams of women. They can now aspire and achieve, something that was not previously possible. There is also a provision for skilling women entrepreneurs through women's centres such as STEP, the Stand-Up India Mission, and the Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana. Initiatives like the construction of twelve crore toilets under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan have not only significantly contributed to improving sanitation and promoting hygiene but have also given dignity to millions of women. The Lakhpati Didi Yojana is a visionary step towards empowering rural women. This Government has dismantled age-old patriarchal attitudes and given hope to millions of women to dream of a better future.

We all know about the Shah Bano case. It granted hapless divorced Muslim women the right to alimony and maintenance under a secular law, overriding any caveats in personal laws. However, the then Government nullified the Supreme Court's judgment through the enactment of the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986. The NDA Government, under the leadership of the hon. Prime Minister, declared Triple Talaq illegal, putting an end to a regressive practice that denied Muslim women their fundamental rights. This is a landmark legislation for the empowerment of Muslim women through equality, justice, and human rights. It is due to our Prime Minister Modi that now 33 per cent women will represent in Parliament and in the State Legislatures.

Clean water is supplied to Delhi, but dirty and stinking water from Delhi is dumped in Agra Canal. Due to this, many diseases are spreading in the surrounding areas. Delhi has become like a slum. In Haryana, rain water is harnessed during monsoon and is put in Western Yamuna Canal, which is providing 25 percent additional water supply to Haryana. BJP has done major development work in Delhi, which includes construction of national highways, underground tunnels and construction of houses for weaker sections and poor people. The new education policy provides better opportunities for the poor. A working women's hostel has been built, which provides accommodation to women coming from outside Delhi. A veterinary hospital has also been built. The BJP government has done a lot of work in the country like interlinking of rivers, abrogation of Article 370, building of Ram temple, and reducing terrorism. In this budget, the Government has given a big relief to the middle class and income tax exemption has been provided on annual income up to Rs 12 lakh. BJP government is working efficiently in every way. The people have given a befitting reply to those who indulge in deceptive and cheap politics. The journey to Viksit Bharat is not the responsibility of one individual, one Government or one institution or one sector, everyone has to take care of this and bring it forward. It requires participation from every citizen of this country. I would like to say that just as the Kumbh Mela draws millions into a collective experience of transcendence, so too could India's rise inspire a global awakening, where material advancement and spiritual depth coalesce. Let us work to ensure that future generations inherit an India that is prosperous, harmonious and sustainable.

SHRI NEERAJ SHEKHAR, seconding the motion, said: After the President's address, the statements made by some of our senior opposition leaders in front of the press have saddened me personally. And every person in the country is also saddened by it. It is very sad to call the first citizen of this country a 'poor lady'. Several leaders said that the President's address was very boring. These days it has become fashionable to comment on people holding constitutional posts. Our President first spoke about housing and development in her address. The Hon'ble Prime Minister has repeatedly said that his aim is that every citizen of this country should have a concrete roof over his head. First of all, it was passed in the cabinet that three crore new houses will be built. Most of the disputes in rural areas are

about land. The Hon'ble Prime Minister thought about it and launched the "Swamitva Yojana". Nearly 1.25 crore people have been given ownership certificates of their land. 'Ayushman Yojana' has not been implemented in Delhi and West Bengal. You are committing a crime against people by not implementing this scheme. The loan amount under the 'Mudra Yojana' has now been increased to Rs 20 lakh. Today youth are starting their business with Rs 20 lakh and providing employment to people. The President mentioned in her Address that a railway line connecting India from Kanyakumari to Kashmir is being built. Today the world's tallest bridge is being built on the Chenab river. The improvement that has taken place in the railways in the last 10 years has never happened before. Trains like Vande Bharat are running, which we could never have even imagined. I had never thought about bio-toilets. Today you will see how clean and modern the stations are. Our Government has constructed a number of national highways and expressways in the country. Before 2014, I think there was only one Pune-Mumbai expressway. I would like to cite the example of Uttar Pradesh. Today, about five expressways are being constructed in Uttar Pradesh. Why did other Governments not think about Ayushman Yojana, Gram Sadak Yojana, expressways, hospitals, new medical colleges? Today, the number of medical colleges has doubled compared to earlier. Before 2014, there was not a single doctor in Lakshadweep. After our Government came to power, the situation has changed there but the opposition people will never be ready to accept it, because for them it was a boring speech.

The President's Address is a very important document. Everyone should go through it carefully before expressing their views. I would like to mention the work done for the tribals. Nearly 1.25 lakh tribal children are studying in Eklavya schools today. It is because of this Government that people across the country know Lord Birsa Munda today. We are celebrating his 150th birth anniversary. 30 medical colleges are being set up in tribal areas alone. I would definitely like to talk about Delhi. Delhi has not developed. Except the NDMC area, the condition of roads, sewers etc. in Delhi is pathetic. There have been scams like liquor scam, land scam etc. in the country's capital Delhi. I would like to congratulate the Finance Minister that she has said so much for Bihar. You know very well what the condition of roads and law and order in Bihar was earlier. I would like to request you that the people of Purvanchal should not be made just a vote bank, but work should be done for them. The Hon'ble Prime Minister has been repeatedly saying in meetings everywhere that we will work for the people of Purvanchal. I want to tell you one very important thing that the abrogation of Article 370 was a historic event, which Her Excellency has also mentioned in her Address. For us, the country is supreme and will always be. I am still surprised that these people still support Article 370. Today, after the abrogation of that Article, all the schemes of the Government of India are being implemented there. Dalits have got the benefit of reservation. There is complete peace and not a single incident of stone pelting has taken place there. Peaceful assembly elections have just been held there. This is a great achievement of our Government. Today many people roam around with the Constitution and talk a lot about Baba Saheb. Baba Saheb cannot be respected by merely carrying the Constitution. The Hon'ble Prime Minister has done the work of *Panchtirtha*. What have you done? When you want to take advantage, you pick up his book. They spread a rumour in the Lok Sabha elections that we will change the Constitution, but after the Lok Sabha elections, people understood it and defeated them so badly in Haryana and Maharashtra that today they are not able to stand. That is why they are disturbed today and are making fun of the President's Address.

It is the resolution of the Hon'ble Prime Minister that India should become a developed country by 2047. But many people laugh at this. When we used to talk about UPI, PhonePe, Google Pay, etc., people used to say that even cables had not reached villages, there

was no Wi-Fi or internet, so how would this be possible? We have made it possible. The hon'ble Prime Minister fulfils every resolution he takes. I once again conclude my speech by supporting the President's Address.

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE):

Before I begin my speech, I pay tribute to the people who lost their lives in the Maha Kumbh. I also pay tribute to the Dalit people who lost their lives and to the women who were raped and murdered.

The hon'ble President is the pride of our Parliament, and we all respect her. However, there is nothing new in what the Government has made her say. I have listened to the entire speech. The way the Government has been drawing a line in water for the past eleven years, this speech is a continuation of that trend. Many failures have been presented as successes in this speech.

'*Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas*' is mentioned in this speech, and I can tell you whose support you received and whose trust you gained. When the BJP Government was formed, it was claimed that there would be *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas*. A year later, more words were added—*Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayaas*—so four words have now been included. First, I will speak about *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas*. After that, I will discuss *Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayaas*. Following that, I will speak on *Jai Bapu, Jai Bhim, Jai Samvidhaan*. That is all I have to say. I hope you will allow me to speak or at least listen to me.

All the promises they made have turned out to be hollow. I was surprised to see on what basis the proposers and seconders they selected to speak here. However, none of them are from their party. Both of them were given the opportunity to speak right now. It is good that the newly elected members were given a chance to speak.

The farmers and the unemployed youth of this country are being forced to commit suicide. Unemployment has reached unprecedented levels. Inflation has broken the backbone of the common man, and the condition of people in villages has worsened. This Government has guaranteed the development of a few wealthy individuals only. That is why I spoke about *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas*. This Government has guaranteed the development of a few rich people, and as a result, the troubles and hardships of the common people are continuously increasing.

If you say something in the interest of the country, I understand that you are speaking for everyone and working for the development of all, not just for the benefit of a few friends of you. The poor, who are struggling for survival, the farm labourers, and the small farmers—these people should be at the centre of your concerns. Instead, from morning to evening, you keep announcing that this port has been given to them, this airport has been given to them, this road has been given to them. This is their development, but what about the poor? The poor are dying under the burden of inflation. There is rampant unemployment. You do not seem concerned about this.

Should I present statistics to you? I will provide statistics. *Amrit Kaal*—I wonder if this is *Amrit Kaal* or *Vish Kaal*. How many farmers are committing suicide? In the last ten years, one lakh farmers have committed suicide, and yet you talk about development for all! There has been no development for the farmers. There is no MSP for them. You promised to double the income of farmers, but there is nothing like that.

When the rupee was valued at ₹60 per dollar, it was said that the rupee was in the hospital, lying in the ICU. The currencies of Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka do not depreciate as much, but the Indian rupee continues to weaken. Who said this? Modi ji himself had said this. Now, the rupee is on a ventilator. The rupee has fallen to ₹87 per dollar,

yet there is applause and self-congratulation. They fabricate many narratives. You should also compare the previous situation with the present. Look at what you had said earlier and compare it with what you are saying today.

During Dr. Manmohan Singh's tenure as Prime Minister, India's GDP growth rate was 7.8 percent, whereas under the BJP Government, this figure has dropped to 5.8 percent, but they refuse to acknowledge this. They always stand by their original claims, even if reality contradicts them. However, if there is no economic growth, how will employment be generated? I am not discussing the Budget. I am only speaking on what has been written in the President's Address. I am talking about what has been said regarding employment and education.

In the past eleven years, they first insulted Dr. Manmohan Singh. They made highly disrespectful remarks, but Dr. Manmohan Singh endured it all silently. He chose not to retaliate, remaining committed to the nation's progress and the welfare of all. The work done by Manmohan Singh Ji was done quietly, not by blabbering. The work done by him is not being emulated by you, rather you kept trying to defame him. Your model of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas' can be seen in the disastrous demonetisation or the poor implementation of GST or the mismanagement of the Covid-19 pandemic, in which the country was brought to the brink of destruction. On one hand, you deceive the people so much and on the other hand you praise yourself. There are so many educated young friends in our country, today they are all unemployed. I want to ask the government that there are still 35 to 40 lakh vacancies in government jobs, why are they not being filled? If Sabka Vikas is to be done, then these 35 to 40 lakh vacancies should be filled. You are not filling these vacancies so that the children of Scheduled Castes are not recruited. They had also said in the last budget that they would send our youth to 500 good companies by giving them stipend and would provide them jobs there.

They always call farming as engine number one. What did they give to engine number one in this budget, how much did they give to the farmer. Don't make false promises. Make fewer promises but implement more. In 10 years, i.e. from 2014 till now, more than 1 lakh farmers have committed suicide. Who is responsible for this? Would their development happen after death? What will happen by increasing the credit limit, the debt will increase, then what help will you give them? Where is your subsidy, where is your MSP, where is the move towards increasing the fertilizer subsidy, where is your move of giving discount on the purchase of equipment? On one hand, you impose Gabbar Singh Tax on them and on the other hand say that I am a great friend of the farmer. MSME sector is like second backbone for you, but what has become its situation – 12 thousand MSMEs have closed in four months. Everyone knows that many MSMEs have closed, but the government does not accept this. On the other hand, you are giving the public sector, railways, airports, public resources etc. to one person. Are there no other industrialists? You provide level playing field. You make rules according to them and publish advertisements, so that only they get it. I am in favor of the public sector and will remain so. There is only one way to help the poor, which was found by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Minorities are being oppressed. The Prime Minister has allowed a few people from the BJP to spread hatred. No action is taken against them. Manipur is the biggest example of your 'Sabka Saath' model. The situation there remains critical. In 2023, 243 incidents of violence have taken place in the North-East, out of which 187 happened only in Manipur. Last year, 258 deaths have occurred, but the Prime Minister does not have the courage to go there, and he does not want to go. He talks about the country, go there and end that conflict.

You tell us to keep peace in the country. Everyone is calm, but why are you not going, that is the question.

SCs, STs and OBCs are ruined, there is no proper arrangement for their education. Today, while crimes against SC have increased by 13%, crimes against ST have increased by 14%, the conviction rate has decreased by 7%. This shows that there is a lack of governance. If those in power do not work properly, there will be a lot of problems, and more people will die.

Is this *Sabka Vishvas*, is this *Sabka Prayas*? This is an attempt to eliminate Dalits. I speak only after I get the authentication you ask me to give, otherwise I don't. The information received from RTI shows that in IITs, IIMs, more than 80 percent and in some places up to 90 percent of the faculty is from the general category. There are no reserved candidates, no backward candidates. There are 80-90 percent general candidates only. SC, ST, OBC are being deprived of the constitutional rights of higher education and jobs. This is a complete conspiracy and keeping these people in the dark, separating them from higher education, is happening in today's BJP government. Central universities, IITs, IIMs, IIITs are all running in the same way. Scholarships are being stopped. Scholarships of SC, ST and OBC students were cut. Pre-matric scholarships were stopped. Is this Sabka Vikas? Is this an attempt to take them forward? More than 61,000 aided schools have been closed. This government is such that it listens less to the elected government and more to the Governors.

I would like to emphasize that the role of Governors is increasingly becoming a threat to our federal structure. In states like Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala, and West Bengal, there is unnecessary interference in the functioning of democratically elected governments. I have observed that files remain stuck with Governors for as long as six months, disrupting administrative processes. This situation goes against the core principles of democracy. We must not establish such harmful precedents that could damage democracy and the Constitution in the future. I also want to highlight how privatization policies are severely harming our public sector. Employment opportunities for Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) have significantly declined. Temporary and contractual jobs do not provide stability. Therefore, mere rhetoric is not enough; concrete actions are necessary. I strongly advocate for the caste census as well. Conducting a caste census would help us to understand the actual economic and social conditions of different communities. This would assist in formulating and implementing policies more effectively. It is not intended to insult any community but is essential for ensuring social justice.

In this speech, I didn't see anything particularly about Gandhi Ji. However, it was us who first established Gandhi Ji's statue in Parliament. The name of MGNREGA was also given in his honour. But today, the budget for this scheme is being reduced. It is contradictory that those who claim to follow Gandhi Ji's thoughts were unable to support the Quit India Movement and even supported the British. Gandhi Ji and Nehru Ji spent many years in prison, but today's leaders neither fought in any struggle nor were part of any movement. Moreover, BJP leaders believe that India gained independence in 2014, which is an insult to the freedom fighters and Gandhi Ji. Those who celebrate the assassination of Gandhi Ji cannot be supported. Sardar Patel and Nehru Ji had strongly reacted to this. Attempts to erase Gandhian ideology will never succeed because Gandhi Ji's thoughts are eternal. I also want to make it clear that the contributions of leaders like Dr. Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi cannot be denied. Removing or disrespecting their statues will not change history. The ideals and thoughts of these leaders remain the foundational pillars of our society even today.

In conclusion, false promises are made to the public, and these policies are harming every section of society. The government must face the truth and work in the interest of the people. I conclude my speech with these words: *Jai Bapu, Jai Bhim, and Jai Samvidhan.*

* * * * *

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