

RAJYA SABHA

*SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE

(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

Tuesday, February 11, 2025/ Magha 22, 1946 (Saka)

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Members, pleased to extend greetings to hon'ble Members of Parliament, Shri Debashish Samantaray, whose birthday is today, and Shri G.C. Chandrashekhar and Shri Nitin Laxmanrao Jadhav Patil, whose birthdays are tomorrow.

Shri Debashish Samantaray, a Member of Rajya Sabha, representing the State of Odisha since April 2024, is serving his first term in this august House. His illustrious public life includes his contributions as a Member of the Odisha Legislative Assembly for three terms, from 2000 to 2004, from 2009 to 2014 and from 2014 to 2019, and as Chairman of Odisha Tourism Development Corporation from 2006 to 2009. He has also served as the President of the Football Association of Odisha.

A graduate in Philosophy and Economics, Shri Samantaray takes keen interest in promotion of Odisha's art and culture.

Shri Debashish Samantaray is married to Shrimati Bitasta Samantaray, and the couple is blessed with daughters Bidisha, Mirasha and Chitragada. I have the privilege to be with him in daughters' club. We too have daughters.

Shri G. C. Chandrashekhar is currently in his second term in Rajya Sabha since April, 2024, representing the State of Karnataka. He is the Working President of the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee and formerly chaired the Karnataka Urban Water Supply Board.

An educationist and entrepreneur, Shri Chandrashekhar's commitment to public service and Karnataka's development is commendable.

He is married to Dr. Sudha Chandrashekar, and the couple is blessed with son, Aakash and daughter, Amulya.

Shri Nitin Laxmanrao Jadhav Patil, a first-term Member, is representing the State of Maharashtra in this House since August 2024. He comes from a prominent political family. His father, Shri Laxman Rao Pandurang Patil, has been a Member of the 13th and 14th Lok Sabha and his brother, Shri Makarand Patil, is a Cabinet Minister in the Government of Maharashtra.

His political journey from a Sarpanch in Panchayat to a Member of Parliament is remarkable. He has taken commendable initiatives in promotion of cooperatives in Satara District of Maharashtra.

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

Shri Nitin Laxmanrao Jadhav Patil is married to Shrimati Pratima Nitin Jadhav and the couple is blessed with sons, Kshitij and Shaurya.

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

MATTERS RAISED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIR

1. Demand for Inclusion of 22 Illustrations from the First Illustrated Manuscript of India's Constitution in the Re-printed Constitution

DR. RADHA MOHAN DAS AGRAWAL: Today, when a common citizen of the country goes to the market to buy the book of the Constitution of India, he does not get the original printed copy on which the Constitution makers of India signed on 26 January, 1949. I want to know what was the reason that some people removed important parts of the Constitution of India which was signed on 26 January 1949, without any parliamentary approval? Nandlal Bose ji had engraved 22 pictures on the top of the first page of the 22 chapters of the then Constitution of India. The seal of Mohenjodaro, the highest representative of Indian civilization, the oldest representative, the Indus Valley civilization and other miniatures etc. which were made on it, have been removed. When Lord Shri Ram was returning to Ayodhya, a photo of his return was made, which was removed. When Lord Krishna was giving a sermon on the battlefield, that entire scene was removed. Lord Buddha's photo, his Adesha was removed. The part of Lord Mahavira's preaching was removed. The pictures of Emperor Vikramaditya, Mahatma Gandhi Shivaji, Rani Lakshmibai, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and others were also removed.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE): I think they are unnecessarily raising the issue of the lecture given here on the Constitution. They want to bring the Constitution made by Baba Saheb Dr. Ambedkar into controversy. When the Constitution came into force in 1952, Baba Saheb Ambedkar was alive at that time, Jawaharlal Nehru was there, Vallabhbhai Patel was there, all the members of the Constituent Assembly were there. You did not see any change at that time. Your Mukherjee ji was also there. But today you are bringing new words. Someone is talking about Vikramaditya's photo, someone is talking about Krishna. Where is this in the Constitution?

LEADER OF THE HOUSE (SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA): The issue raised by Dr. Radha Mohan Das Aggarwal ji in the Zero Hour is very important. This issue is important in the way that he said that the original copy of the Constitution has many works in it and along with those works there is a copy of the Constitution. I have shown you this original copy. We can see this everywhere and the Constitution that is being published now, no matter which publisher is publishing it, these works are not there in it. The government will ensure that the publishers publish it with the spirit of the Constitution and the same copy of the Constitution is available in the market. Secondly, I have to say with regret that the subject was something else and our opposition leader gave it a different twist keeping politics in mind.

2. Concern over not Conferring Bharat Ratna to Raja Mahendra Pratap

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Raja Mahendra Pratap was a journalist, writer, philanthropist and one of the great freedom fighters of the country. His name is taken with great respect in the whole country. He had a special contribution in the national movement of India and this country will always be indebted to his services. He donated to many institutions including the Muslim University. It is a different matter that there is no inscription or plaque in any of them, but he was a great philanthropist. When the conference of Congress was held in Kolkata in 1906, he advocated Swadeshi and self-reliance there, he took a pledge to wear Swadeshi and burnt foreign clothes. In 1915, he went to Afghanistan and in 1916 he established the Azad Hind Sarkar in Afghanistan. He attacked the British army with 6,000 Afghani soldiers. He failed in that, but the foundations of the British government were shaken. He was the first President of the Interim Government.

(Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav, Shri Javed Ali, Shri A.A. Rahim and Shri Prakash Chik Baraik associated.)

3. Concern over the problems faced by people living near protected forests

DR. V. SIVADASAN: The wildlife attacks on lives and livelihoods are increasing. Hundreds of human beings have lost their lives in such attacks. The data shows that 606 persons lost their lives in elephants attack during 2023-24. In 1991, the number of people killed by elephants was 213. But now the number has tripled. In the world, India has the largest number of people killed by wild animals. In my home State, Kerala, in 2023-24, 94 persons lost their lives because of wildlife attack. The Government of Kerala has taken several measures for protecting the people but the existing outdated wildlife protection law is acting as a barrier in front of the measures taken by the State Government. The Union Government should change the anti-human nature of the laws. The law is basically neglecting the rights of the people. The Wildlife Protection Act has become a human life destruction act. People are not able to do the agricultural work. That is creating huge economic loss every year. The children are afraid to go to school. People are unable to go to hospitals because they are afraid of wildlife attacks. The attacks are not happening inside the forests, it is happening inside the villages and even in cities. The animals which are attacking the human beings are getting the protection and attention from the authorities.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

4. Demand to allocate more Funds for Railway Safety

SHRIMATI SULATA DEO: Railway accidents have become a growing concern and require immediate attention. According to the Ministry of Railways, there were 244 train accidents between 2017 and 2023, many of which were caused by derailments and the absence of the *Kavach* safety system. The Balasore train accident resulted in the loss of nearly 300 lives and left around 1,200 people with serious injuries. While substantial funds are allocated for the development of new infrastructure, it is equally crucial to prioritize the safety of existing infrastructure. The installation of the anti-collision *Kavach* system has been progressing slowly, with only 1,445 km of track equipped so far. While discussions around bullet trains continue, many trains are still using outdated halogen headlights. Only about 5 percent of trains have switched to LED headlights. Halogen lights allow visibility of up to 20 meters, while LED lights can illuminate up to 200 meters, significantly improving safety, especially in regions where wildlife, like elephants, are often at risk. There must be increased efforts to implement the *Kavach* system, modernize train stations, and regularly inspect railway tracks. Additionally, the inclusion of experienced loco-pilots in the Railway Safety Board is essential.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

5. Demand to conduct Direct Election of the Block Chief and District Panchayat President under the Panchayati Raj System

SHRI AMAR PAL MAURYA: The Panchayat Raj system was implemented in Nagaur, Rajasthan, on October 2, 1959. Since then, various local reforms and changes have been introduced. The Ashok Mehta Committee of 1978 recommended strengthening democratic processes to enhance transparency and accountability in local administration. Similarly, the Financial Administrative Reforms Commission of 2005 suggested the direct election of District Panchayat Presidents. Numerous efforts have been made to bring democracy to the grassroots level, and there is still significant potential for further progress. The country consists of about 787 districts and roughly 6,000 blocks. If these positions could be directly elected by the public, it would provide an opportunity for families, not from political backgrounds, to enter politics. The Prime Minister's initiative for 'One Nation, One Election' is a step forward in this direction, and the country is now progressing towards this goal. I appeal through you and this House that to ensure greater accountability, the elections for Block and District Panchayat Presidents should be conducted directly by the public.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

6. Expeditious Approval and Funding for Upgrading NH-44 Stretch from Dharmapuri to Namakkal from Four Lane to Six Lane

SHRI K.R.N. RAJESHKUMAR: I rise to bring the attention of this august House to the urgent need to upgrade the NH-44 stretch of 119.5 km from Dharmapuri to Namakkal in Tamil Nadu from a four-lane to six-lane highway. The project is currently at the DPR stage. This highway connects the industrial and agricultural hubs of Tamil Nadu, facilitating the transportation of goods and people between Bengaluru and Kanyakumari. The stretch between Salem and Namakkal passes through the Puduchatram block panchayat, which has a high population density and is home to many industrial units, schools, colleges and agricultural activities. The people in the region are heavily dependent on Puduchatram. Hence, it is essential to construct an over-bridge to reduce the risk of accidents, ensuring greater safety. Therefore, I request that this may be included in the DPR.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

7. Demand for Establishment of New Steel Plant in Mayurbhanj, Odisha

SHRIMATI MAMATA MOHANTA: I would like to draw the attention of the Government to the demand for setting up a mega steel plant in Rairangpur subdivision of Odisha. The district has ample resources and mineral wealth. The people of the district have submitted memorandums of thousands of residents of Anantapur and Kantabanji as well as the surrounding areas several times for setting up a mega steel plant. Many steel companies and agencies are mining iron and other minerals from this region. Due to lack of irrigation facilities and insufficient rainfall for the last few years, agriculture in the region is getting affected and this is affecting the income level of the local farmers. In this situation, there is a need to set up a mega steel plant in Mayurbhanj district, which will provide employment to the people and improve the social and economic condition of the district.

(Shri R. Girirajan, Shrimati Rekha Sharma, Shri Amar Pal Maurya, Dr. Sasmit Patra and Shri Niranjan Bishi associated.)

8. Demand for Stoppage of all Types of Trains at Kokrajhar Railway Station in the Bodoland Territorial Region of Assam

SHRI RWNGWRA NARZARY: The Kokrajhar Railway station, a gateway to North-Eastern Region from mainland India, is located at the heart of the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC), the headquarters of Bodoland. There is a Bodoland University, a Central Institute of Technology (CIT), Bodoland Territorial Council Secretariat and so many major offices of the Government. People coming from different parts of the Bodoland area to Kokrajhar for official purpose are facing lots of difficulties due to lack of availability of Express/Mail train stoppage at Kokrajhar railway station to travel to and fro from Kokrajhar as well as different stations of the Bodoland area to their different destinations. I demand for stoppage of Lohit Express, Saraighat Express, Jammu-Tawi Express, Jha-jha Express, including all types of Express/Mail trains at Kokrajhar station. I demand for stoppage of North-East Express, bound for Kamakhya to Anand Vihar, Delhi; Kamrup Express, bound for Dibrugarh to Howrah; Vibek Express, bound for Guwahati to Chennai; Bangalore Express, bound for Dibrugarh to Bangalore at Gossaigaon station. I urge upon hon'ble Minister of Railways to consider the demand of the public of that region and make it convenient to approve the proposal which is urgent need of the train passengers and will be very helpful to the region.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

9. Land acquisition by Coal India Limited under the Coal Bearing Areas (Acquisition and Development) Act, 1957

SHRI KHIRU MAHTO: I want to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Coal Minister to the fact that Coal India Limited acquires land under the Coal Bearing Areas Act, 1957. But it is seen that the company does not start coal mining for 40-45 years, but acquires the land. Whereas there are provisions that if coal mining is to be started very soon, only then the land has to be acquired under the CBA Act, 1957, otherwise it has to be done under the Land Acquisition Act. This is not happening, due to which many villages are being displaced from their land and no arrangements are being made for their rehabilitation. I demand from the Government of India that until Coal India does plan coal mining on the land, the farmers should be given the right to cultivate their land and earn their livelihood.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

10. Demand to Properly Implement the Manipur Merger Agreement, 1949

SHRI MAHARAJA SANAJAOBA LEISHEMBA: Manipur is a tiny State but it was once a sovereign nation having a long history of civilization of more than 5,000 years. Manipur became a part of India in 1949 under an Agreement called the Manipur Merger Agreement, 1949. However, for the last many decades, the previous Governments never tried to honour or address this Agreement. It really hurts the sentiments and pride of the Manipuri people till today, no suitable provisions to safeguard this are made in this regard. I urge upon the Union Government to make suitable provisions and take up necessary steps to uplift socio-economic cultural and political status of Manipuri people in the days to come.

(Shri Niranjana Bishi associated.)

11. Concern over the Vulgar Language Used by Social Media Content Creators

SHRIMATI PRIYANKA CHATURVEDI: It is a matter of urgent public importance that social media influencers are using vulgar language under the guise of comedy to gain views and likes on various platforms. It is deeply unfortunate that even educated youth are engaging in such derogatory speech in public forums. Given the

significant influence of social media on young minds, it is imperative to establish clear boundaries. Immediate action must be taken to ensure that vulgar content, disguised as entertainment, is removed. Furthermore, strict measures should be implemented to prevent influencers from using defamatory and objectifying language, particularly in reference to women and the elderly. Additionally, content creators engaging in such behavior should be required to issue a public apology to discourage similar conduct in the future. I urge the government to take the necessary steps to address this issue at the earliest.

WELCOME TO PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION FROM MALDIVES

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Members, on behalf of this august House, I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency, Mr. Abdul Raheem Abdulla, Speaker of the People's Majlis of the Republic of Maldives, and hon. Members of the Parliamentary Delegation who are on a visit to India as our honoured guests. We have strong bilateral relations with Maldives. The visit of Maldives' Parliamentary Delegation will further strengthen our bilateral relations. The Parliamentary Delegation arrived Delhi from Male on Monday, the 10th February, 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 Agra before their departure from India. We wish them a pleasant 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 the Republic of Maldives.

OBSERVATIONS BY THE CHAIR

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have no doubt and I am categorical that the Constitution signed by the founding fathers of the Constitution carrying 22 miniatures is the only authentic one and it can include amendments by the Parliament. If there is any change effected by judiciary or any institution, that is not acceptable to this House. I will appeal to the Leader of the House to ensure that there is only the authentic version of the Indian Constitution in the country. Any violation of this should be taken quite seriously by the Government and severe action be taken.

Dr. Radha Mohan Das Agrawal has rightly pointed out that the act of omission or commission either on our iPads or in any book without carrying the 22 miniatures of that Constitution of which the architect is Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and signed by our founding fathers--and the only variation, I reiterate, please note my words--the only change that can take place in the Indian Constitution can emanate only from the Indian Parliament and any change emanating from the Indian Parliament duly signed by the hon. President under Article 111 must invariably find mention in the Indian Constitution irrespective of any intervention from Judiciary or otherwise. Therefore, it is not optional for the Government or anyone else to adhere to it. This is the only way and everyone in the country is required to have Indian Constitution which is duly sanctified. Shri Derek O'Brien has a point. Before him, it is not there. We must regret it. We must make amends and make as quick as possible by everyone concerned, including the Government. If there is any publication from your side, strict steps should be taken and, I am sure, in the shortest possible time, the Government will make it convenient that people come to know only the authentic version of the Indian Constitution as it holds the field today.

GENERAL DISCUSSION - *Contd.*

The Union Budget, 2025-26

DR. BHAGWAT KARAD, continuing his unfinished speech dated 10.02.2025, said: I express my gratitude for allowing me to speak on the budget. I commend Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman for her eighth consecutive budget and PM Narendra Modi for presenting the first budget of his third term, reinforcing the vision of "Viksit Bharat 2047." The budget reflects fiscal discipline, with the deficit reduced to 4.4%. Budget estimates have tripled from ₹16.65 lakh crore in 2013-14 to ₹50.65 lakh crore in 2024-25, while receipts (excluding borrowings) have risen from ₹13.2 lakh crore to ₹34.96 lakh crore. The government prioritizes poverty eradication, quality education, healthcare, employment, women's empowerment, and economic growth through tax relief, export promotion, and ease of doing business.

PM Modi's leadership has eliminated corruption through Direct Benefit Transfer, ensuring 100% fund utilization. Terrorism, once rampant, has been contained, and India's global standing has significantly improved. Welfare schemes like Jan Dhan, Ayushman Bharat, PM Garib Kalyan, Ujjwala, Mudra, and PM Awas have uplifted millions, while economic growth has propelled India from the 10th to the 5th largest economy, with per capita income more than doubling. Inflation remains controlled, and RBI's policies have strengthened business and credit facilities. Agricultural reforms, including PM Kisan Samman Nidhi, crop insurance, and fertilizer subsidies, have empowered farmers. Unlike past loan waivers, Modi's schemes provide direct and sustained financial aid. Governance has been strengthened with new ministries for fisheries, cooperatives, and water resources.

The opposition has consistently opposed reforms like GST, repeal of Article 370, UPI, and EVMs, despite their proven success. EVMs have been tested since 1982, approved in 1988, and upheld by the Supreme Court. India will continue to progress under Modi's leadership, and I urge all to support the vision of a developed nation. I conclude by appreciating the Finance Minister and the Prime Minister for their leadership.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I congratulate Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on delivering her historic eighth budget and commend PM Narendra Modi's leadership in making India the world's fifth-largest economy, soon to be the third. We have moved beyond slogans of poverty eradication to building a confident, self-reliant, and developed India.

Since 2014, initiatives like Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat have strengthened our economy, transforming us from an import-dependent nation to an export-driven powerhouse. Sectors like defense, manufacturing, and infrastructure have seen unprecedented growth. Connectivity has been a key focus—highways, railways, and ports are being developed at record speed. The Chenab Bridge is a symbol of our engineering excellence, integrating remote regions into the mainstream economy. The ₹76,000 crore investment in Maharashtra's port infrastructure will further boost trade and economic expansion. Air travel has also seen a revolution. From 75 airports in 2014, we now have over 150, enhancing regional connectivity, tourism, and economic activity. The success of Vande Bharat trains has made rail travel a preferred option, and the upcoming Bullet Train will be a mark of India's progress. In energy, we are leading in solar, wind, and green hydrogen, reducing dependence on fossil fuels. Ethanol blending has reached 20%, benefiting both farmers and the environment.

This budget and our policies reaffirm India's path to becoming a developed nation by 2047. Under PM Modi's vision, we are not just growing; we are setting global benchmarks. Let's continue on this journey toward a stronger, self-reliant India. The farmers of the

country are getting benefits. They are getting higher prices for their produce. Now times have changed. Four crore houses have been built. Four crore houses are going to be built in the next five years. Due to the food for all scheme, no one in this country will have to sleep hungry. Today, for the first time, the middle class has been given respect in the budget. India's journey of development is pleasant, and we have also contributed to it.

SHRI CHANDRAKANT HANDORE: Earlier there were five-year plans which worked for the development of all sections. Our Prime Minister also says that the country will be developed by 2047. The Government should pay attention that along with the progress of the country, it is also important to bring these backward classes together. The plans prepared by the Government for the development of 70 percent of the people are not implemented. The Social Justice Department should be given funds according to the population of SC, ST and OBC. This year the finance department has given very less amount to this department. It is given to another department. A law should be brought at the Central Government level with such a provision that no class is oppressed and all classes get social justice. Apart from this, there should be a separate provision for scheduled castes in the budget. Atrocities against them should be stopped. This should be the resolution of Amrit Kaal. The maximum allocation should be done for social justice. We want that a building should be built in the name of Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar in every district. Hostels for boys and girls should be built in every district of the country and the central government should have control over them. Apart from this, residential schools should be planned in the country. SC and OBC entrepreneurs should be given financial assistance to enter new business and industry. A Venture Capital Fund should be created for this. The government should make proper allocation for this and should make efforts to bring our SC and ST children forward. I want that children from all over the country should be sent abroad for education. When it comes to developed India, all groups should develop together.

SHRI SAKET GOKHALE: Our economy is in serious trouble. It is not in good shape. In the budget, the Minister tried repair it but It requires more work to function well. The Government is not doing any good to the economy. The private investors have lost faith in the Indian economy. The Corporates are saving and not making any new investment. Lack of employment has adversely affected the demand for goods. Covid management was not good. People suffered a lot. CAPEX spending creates shiny new infrastructure, highways, But the problem with capex-spending is that it does not create jobs across sectors. Inflation is rapidly increasing which has led to price rise. The total amount of loans given by banks is much higher than the number of deposits made by people in banks. The words 'inflation', 'unemployment', 'price rise' do not find a mention. Promises made in the last Budget have not mentioned in this Budget. The Minister should have told the status of those schemes. Its good that major income tax relief has been announced. In the next year, the Government is going to earn more from taxes in this Budget, by compensating for the reduction in income taxes through GST and other indirect taxes. When you take money through GST, everybody is going to get impacted by that. The Government is not giving our state its rightful dues. Instead of the license raj, today we have the GST raj. Companies across India live in the dread of the GST Inspector, who finds the smallest violation and extorts huge fines from them.

SHRI MEDA RAGHUNADHA REDDY: The Budget embodies the timeless wisdom from our ancient text "Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah." This vision of collective well-being resonates strongly with the goals set by our Hon'ble Prime Minister and the Hon'ble Finance Minister, whose focus on GYAN -- Garib, Yuva, Annadata, and Nari -- guides us towards a Viksit Bharat. However, I must draw the attention of the House to the challenges we face even today. There is a need to control rental prices by allowing more construction of

housing units and also expanding. The Government's plan to set up five National Centres of Excellence for skill development is a major step towards preparing India's youth for the future. A ₹500 crore Centre of Excellence for AI in education will further boost learning opportunities. Given Andhra Pradesh's large youth population, one of the five skill development centres should be set up in the State of Andhra Pradesh. The Government's decision to allocate additional funding for infrastructure and fellowships across all IITs, including a boost for the five youngest IITs like IIT Patna, is a welcome step to strengthening higher education. However, IIT Tirupati also requires similar financial support. The income tax reforms, including raising the exemption limit to ₹12 lakh and the standard deduction to ₹75,000, will boost disposable income and stimulate consumer spending, savings, and investments. However, despite the corporate tax cut from 30 percent to 22 percent in 2019, wage growth has lagged behind inflation. Personal income tax now contributes 31 percent of gross tax revenue, surpassing corporate tax at 26.75 percent, shifting the burden onto salaried individuals. To address this imbalance, the Centre should decrease the tax on the individual from 30 percent to 25 percent. Regarding Railway Safety, while we appreciate the ongoing improvements in the railway sector, safety remains a serious concern. Despite the introduction of the Kavach Train Collision Avoidance System (TCAS), it has limited coverage. I request the Government to please consider the long-pending wish of the people of our Rayalaseema region for the setting up of a new Balaji Railway Division of Tirupati, with its headquarters in the newly-formed zone, South-Coastal Railway, Visakhapatnam.

SHRI SUBHASISH KHUNTIA: This Budget is not for the people. It is a Budget for perception, a Budget for Press conferences, not for public welfare. It is a Budget for announcements, not for accountability. It is a Budget for the privileged, not for the neglected. The USA's tariffs are disrupting global trade, weakening the rupee, and impacting India. As a BRICS member, are we leveraging our partnership to protect our economy? This House must discuss the Government's strategy to counter these challenges and provide clear awareness to the people. Our beloved leader Naveen Patnaik ji has repeatedly spoken about giving Special Category Status to our state Odisha because there are cyclones and natural disasters there. But when the Budget comes, Odisha is not given the Special Category Status. You give Bihar a Greenfield airport, keeping in mind the Bihar elections. But when it comes to Odisha, why don't you give an international airport to our Jagannath Puri, Odisha? While the Minister claims that we are nearing a Viksit Bharat, the reality is that this Budget offers no relief for the poor and the middle class.

SHRI SANJAY YADAV: This Budget is not a document of economic development but a document of slogans, and for Bihar, it is an election bubble. This is not the Budget of the common man and farmers but of the market and the rich. This is not a progressive Budget but a regressive one. There is nothing in this Budget for the youth, farmers, unemployed, and students. He said that two new Greenfield airports will be built in Bihar. However, there is no mention of where they will be built, and no mention of how much money has been allocated. I have heard that one airport will be built in Sonpur and another in Rajgir. These four airports are 65 miles apart. What will be the viability of these four airports? Before 2005, international flights were operational in Bihar. Look at the fare for Darbhanga-Bangalore. Today, you will see that tomorrow's fare will be between ₹60,000 and ₹65,000. If you want to contribute to the aviation sector in Bihar, you should start new air services in other cities. There was also mention of a Makhana Board. The National Research Centre for Makhana was established 23 years ago. It has been operational for 23 years. There are 42 sanctioned posts, but only 10 staff members work there. To this day, a full-time Director has not been appointed. In the past 5 years, only ₹3.4 crore has been spent. The mandate of the Makhana Board and the National Research Centre for Makhana are the same. If there was already a

Research Centre, then what was the need for establishing the Makhana Board? They also mentioned the Western Kosi Canal Project. This project has been running for more than 60 years. The budget only mentions that financial assistance will be provided, but it doesn't mention how much assistance will be given. On page 9 of this Budget, it is written that Patna IIT will be expanded. But how will the expansion happen? How much money will be allocated? There is no mention of this. Bihar is a backward state, so I would like to ask the Hon'ble Finance Minister how much per capita investment has been made by the Centre in Bihar, and how much per capita investment has been made in Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Andhra Pradesh under the same government? This Budget does not mention any plan for industrial development in Bihar, how to stop migration, how to handle floods and disasters, or any plan to eliminate unemployment and poverty. Bihar's farmers have the lowest income in the country. What is the plan to increase their income? Bihar has not been given the status of a special state, nor a special package. You can refer to the NITI Aayog's index or any other index, and you'll see that Bihar is at the bottom. There is no source of income in the country. Jobs and employment opportunities are not being created. You talk about GDP. GDP can measure our ambitions, but it cannot measure our condition. The middle class is facing many challenges. Due to financial constraints, people are taking loans to fulfill small needs. In this Budget, on page number 12, the Hon'ble Finance Minister mentioned "Make in India." What "Make in India" have you done? Make in India has happened in inflation, Make in India has happened in unemployment, Make in India has happened in poverty, Make in India has happened in migration. If you have to impose GST, then you should impose 100 percent GST on hatred, so that social harmony and goodwill remain in our country.

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: When a new Government comes to power, the people of India expect that it will give us a vision of what it intends to do in the next five years. This Government already had ten years and the delivery mechanism has been both slow and inconsistent. The biggest challenge in this country is that we have to educate our children. Unless educated children come into the mainstream and get quality education, India can never develop. There is good education in some urban centers, but the general public does not get quality education. We need to have a plan as to how to make our children educated. When China became the power that it is today, the first thing China did was universal education. Today, we have not even attained the goal of universal education; forget about quality education. Chat GPT and Deep Seek are the new technological revolutions which are taking place in the world. What plans do we have for the future? We need AI otherwise, we cannot be competitive in the world. Health is the best investment that can produce the maximum results. The fact of the matter is that 38 per cent of children born in this country is stunted and 53 per cent of women in this country is anemic! There is a 9 per cent increase in the Budget in the health sector and that also because they want to create 10,000 new medical seats. The two biggest challenges facing this country are education and health. This country has been growing at 6.3 per cent, 6.7 per cent and it will continue to grow. But, what we need is a growth rate of 8 per cent! What is the vision of this Government to attain double digit growth? How do you increase per capita income in this country to US\$14,000? The Government has no vision for it. That is really the point that needs to be looked at and discussed in this House. Our big industries are running away. Our high net-worth individuals are leaving this country, because when you proceed against them, you proceed on the basis that you are guilty till you are proved innocent. That is a very dangerous trend that is happening in this country. Most of the people in this country are involved in agriculture, and you have a dream of making India a manufacturing economy. If you do not become a manufacturing economy, how will you become competitive? You only become innovative if you put money into R&D. Do not rely on the growth through your external exports because you need to give more money into the hands of the people of this country. There are about 8.09 crore people in this country who pay

income tax and out of them about 4.9 crore actually pay zero tax and you are left with 3.19 crore people who actually pay tax. Now, of the 3.19 crore people, that is, 2.2 per cent population of this country, you can have two inferences on that. Firstly, since they do not pay taxes, arrest them. Second, they do not have enough money to pay taxes, so give them the money. Don't sell dreams. Give us a dream Budget. We want India to move forward. We will all support you if you have a vision as to when and how India will move forward.

SHRI KUNWAR RATANJEET PRATAP NARAYAN SINGH: Ever since the day the Budget was presented, the opposition has been in a state of disarray. When Rs. 12 lakh income tax was waived off in the Budget, they had nothing to say. In ten years, the Government has made our economy bigger than the economy of Britain, which ruled over us, and has brought it to the fifth position. We are going to reach the third position very soon. Recently, due to the Covid pandemic, the economies of the whole world are lagging behind. If there is any fastest growing economy in the world, it is the economy of India. By removing tax of Rs. 1 lakh crore for consumption, we have injected Rs. 1 lakh crore in the economy, but you say that our economy is so big, so what will happen with this Rs. 1 lakh crore? In 2014, there was a budget of Rs. 1 lakh crore in infrastructure, but now Rs. 11 lakh crore has been kept for infrastructure. There has been an increase in wealth creation, foreign exchange reserves and infrastructure spending. This Government has implemented many schemes in the health sector in the last ten years, due to which the money of the public and the Government is being saved. The implementation of the Ayushman card is saving the public's money. People save money in purchasing medicines after getting 80% discount on medicines at Jan Aushadhi Kendra. Under the 'Nal Se Jal' Yojana, water has been delivered to more than 12 crore households, which has reduced diseases. PM Surya Ghar Bijli Yojana will also save people's money. Farmers save money through Soil Health Card. The life of the farmer has become really happy. The Government has given a subsidy of Rs 12 lakh crore on fertilizers. The Government is setting up a new factory to reduce the import of fertilizer. 8 crore farmers are benefiting from the Kisan Credit Card. The limit of Kisan Credit Card has been increased to 5 lakh rupees. Farmers' income has increased due to ethanol blending. In the last 10 years, MBBS seats have doubled while working in the health sector. PG seats have gone up to 72,000. The Government will set up day care cancer centers in all district hospitals. 200 new Cancer Centers will be started, which will provide better and timely treatment to patients. Customs duty on life saving drugs has been abolished. This budget is not just a calculation of numbers, but the story of new India.

***MS. DOLA SEN:** Much ado is being made about this budget especially with respect to proposed income tax relief to the middle class for an income upto Rs. 12 lakhs. This budget is completely silent on the issue of inflation. The food price inflation has averaged at 8 per cent and the household savings are also at 50-year lowest. Further, expenditure has been reduced for sectors like agriculture, rural development, MGNREGA, food subsidy, education and health to the tune of Rs. 1.06 crore. The budget has failed to address the issue of severe unemployment. While there has been a deluge of promises for the State of Bihar in this budget, it is silent insofar as the State of Bengal is concerned. This is not an economic budget, rather a political one. This budget is devoid of any steps as to the alleviation of unemployment, issues concerning the MGNREGA. The Government has undertaken disinvestment worth lakhs of crores, and virtual privatization of profitable PSUs. 100% FDI has been allowed in the insurance sector, despite assurances the GST on insurances continues to be charged at a rate of 18%. During the financial year 2023-2024, 272 Central Government organizations made a profit of about Rs. 3 lakh crores, but the Government also withdrew

* Spoke in Bangla.

about Rs. 6 lakh crores from the Reserve Bank of India. This has had a detrimental effect on the overall economic situation of the country. It is an anti-people Budget and only rhetoric.

SHRIMATI JAYA AMITABH BACHCHAN: All single screen cinema halls have closed down. This is the only industry that connects the entire world to India. The film industry is one of the highest tax paying industries in the country. There are a lot of poor people in this industry like technicians and daily wage workers. With no reduction in entertainment tax, their survival is really in a very difficult situation. I request the Finance Minister to consider this and provide some relief to help this industry survive.

SHRI K. R. SURESH REDDY: I appreciate the Hon'ble Finance Minister for opening her speech with a profound statement of a famous Telugu poet, Shri Gurajada Apparao garu which means that a country is not just merely soil, a country is its people. I hope what she quoted will translate into action. She spoke about Viksit Bharat. But look at the statistics. Today, in our country, 50,000 TMC of water is not utilised. Almost 35-40 per cent of power is not utilised. This great country is blessed with one of the most arable lands in the world. Having 83 crore acres of landmass with majority arable, today the Minister and the Government say that they are giving subsidised ration to 80 crore people. Such a huge population getting free ration is not something what we can proudly tell our people in the 75th year of our Republic. It needs serious rethinking because when we have resources, talent and land mass, definitely, the planners have to think of it.

The Finance Minister spoke about Viksit Bharat and also said that she is going to make agriculture the first engine. When 60 per cent of people take agriculture as a profession and when you are going to fix your focus of Viksit Bharat on agriculture as the first engine and move in that direction, it will not only be a Viksit Bharat, but I am sure it can be a Samaan Bharat also. You will be able to bridge the inequality by focusing on and making agriculture a little more profitable and more workable. I appreciate the Government for the middle class relief they have given. Majority of the middle class came from the rural background mostly with agriculture as a base. So, if you want to expedite the percentage of middle class, the more you focus and make people developed in the rural areas, the country's middle class will continue to grow. Some initiatives in this regard are welcome. You have identified 100 low productivity districts. You also spoke about Kisan Credit Card under which credit has increased from Rs. 3 lakh to Rs. 5 lakh. You also mentioned how the environment is impacting the farmers, the farm produce and the seed. Having said that, what we get to see is that the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana is the lowest in seven years! There is a decline in insurance claims for farmers. So, the the Government should step in and do the necessary intervention in this regard. Announcement of Makhana Board for Bihar was a welcome step. I mean you identify State-wise products which need specific intervention and help through the Boards.

I come from a turmeric-growing region. Turmeric is a very good home produce for any ailments, for any food-making, etc. After a lot of hard work, the Prime Minister announced the setting up of a Turmeric Board . But not a single penny has been allocated for it in the Budget. I request the Government to pay attention to this. The Turmeric Research Centre is running and now you are bringing a board! To ensure that there is no overlap and adequate funds are available, I think the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Agriculture really need to work in tandem. There are about 3700 large dams for irrigation, but over time, due to lack of maintenance, their storage capacity has reduced by 25 per cent due to siltation. This silt can be used by farmers. This is a very good suggestion. The Government of India has taken over the work of dams. In my opinion, the work of removing silt is also the responsibility of the Central Government.

The poor farmer's has to face drought also, due to which he is forced to go to Gulf countries and other places. His life is spent paying off his debts. My request is that under the Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana, apart from accidental death, natural death should also be included. I request that the Ministry of External Affairs should open a consulate for Kuwait and a consulate of Saudi Arabia for South India in Hyderabad. There are lakhs of workers living there who can get a lot of benefit from this. And the biggest thing is that we come from South India. we give tax contribution to the Central Government and what are we getting? Telangana gives one rupee to the Central Government but it gets only 43 paise back. More or less the same situation is with other southern States. But northern States like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh get back several times of their contribution. You will say that this is the formula of the Finance Commission, but this formula is given by your Cabinet. My request is that before the Cabinet gives any suggestion to the Finance Commission, an all-party meeting should be held.

SHRI ARUN SINGH: This Budget is going to fulfil the hopes and aspirations of 140 crore countrymen, is dedicated to welfare of the poor and is also going to increase the income of farmers. It provides many opportunities to provide employment to the youth and roll out many schemes focused on women empowerment. If we look at all the parameters of the economy, we can say that there has been a great performance in all the sectors under the Modi Government, which is seen in this Budget. During the UPA regime, many types of manipulations were seen in the Budgets. Several projects were stalled because they did not get clearance or approval. But Modi ji moved forward by making the policy of reform, perform and transform his main mantra. The result was that India's economy became the world's fastest growing economy for three consecutive years.

If the Budget is to be analyzed, you will see that this time the Budget was increased by 7.4 percent compared to the previous Budget. For 67 years since the country's independence, most of which was ruled by the UPA, the total expenditure was Rs 16.65 lakh crore. But in these 10 years, the Modi Government is spending more than three times. During the UPA regime in 2013-14, the health budget was only Rs 37,000 crore. In this Budget, it has been increased more than three times. You see the budget of railways, six times more money is being spent in this Budget as compared to the UPA Government. 137 special trains are being run for the Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj. The farmer is our food provider. An amount of Rs. 27,000 crore was earmarked for farmers in the Budget 2013-14 during the UPA regime. The Modi Government has increased it more than six times. Every farmer in the village uses Kisan Credit Card. In this Budget, its limit has been increased from Rs 3 lakh to Rs 5 lakh. Many schemes are being run for farmers including Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana. In the Budget, especially the Pradhan Mantri Dhan-Dhanya Krishi Yojana has been announced through which the income of farmers will increase. Similarly, in the field of road transport, several times more money is being allocated as compared to the UPA Government. The MSME sector is the backbone of our economy and is the second largest sector in the country that provides employment to people. Till a decade ago, there used to be Inspector Raj. The MSME sector was caught in the web of several laws. The Prime Minister decided that we have to save the MSME sector. It has been announced to provide an additional credit line guarantee of Rs 1.5 lakh crore to the MSME sector through this Budget.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has increased the investment and business norms of MSMEs twice in 10 years and in this budget, the norms have been increased for the third time. During the UPA regime, the investment limit for micro enterprises was Rs 25 lakh. Similarly, the norms for small enterprises were increased by two and a half times and the norms for medium enterprises were also increased, which increases their working size. Efforts were made to increase their business as well. People are getting benefits from the

MSME sector through the Udyam Registration Portal. The result of giving so many benefits is that MSMEs contribute 36% to the manufacturing sector and 45% to exports. We used to import toys earlier, but today we export them. Similarly, MSMEs have been promoted through the PLI scheme. Earlier we used to import mobiles worth Rs 49 crore in 2013-14, now we have exported smartphones and mobile phones worth 15 billion dollars in 2024. Today the middle class across the country is congratulating the Prime Minister, because the way the middle class has been benefited is amazing. Income up to Rs 12 lakh has been exempted from income tax. Earlier the processing time used to take many days, but now the income tax refund comes to you within 16 days. Sir, in the end I can only say that under the leadership of Honorable Prime Minister Modi, there is a continuous increase in ease of doing business and we have reached the 5th economy from the 10th and we are moving towards the third economy. The resolution of making a 'developed India' will also be realised, this is possible under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi.

SHRI ASHOK SINGH: The Finance Minister has presented a populist budget. In which an attempt is being made to deceive the poor and middle class of the country again through figures and data. Thanks for increasing the income tax exemption limit to 12 lakhs, but how many people will get relief from the income tax exemption of 12 lakhs? Only three crore people are tax payers. Nothing has been said in the budget about 137 crore people, their development and their facilities. The decisions taken for the poor, middle class, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, minorities, backward classes are very inadequate. Even today, farmers have to stand in queues all night long for DAP and other fertilizers, shivering in the harsh cold. The debt on farmers is increasing. There is no concrete action plan for farmers. Our demand is that the way the loans of farmers of about 72 thousand crores rupees were waived in one go during the UPA government, the loans of farmers should be waived in the same manner. MSP is also very low. Nothing has been said about it. It should be increased. The price of production based industries is decided on the basis of price index. MSP law should also be made by making a law in the budget, in which the price of farmers' crops should be decided on the basis of the cost price of their production. The price of dollar is continuously increasing. The government should adopt some clear policy regarding it. The youth is facing a continuous employment crisis. The youth unemployment rate has reached almost 45.4%. The unemployment rate of graduates is also 29.1%. GST has been successful only in those countries where there is a single slab system, but here there are still five-six types of slabs in GST and central cess is also being levied, which is a kind of injustice to consumers and industrialists. Uniformity should be brought in the GST system, only then it will be successful. Petrol, alcohol, petroleum products should also be brought under GST. There is no data regarding the success of startups. The level of pollution in the country is constantly increasing. Serious diseases are increasing due to pollution and poor people have to spend a lot of money for their treatment. The work that the government should have done to reduce pollution in the country, to save the environment, has not yet started. In this government, economic policy has been made only for the rich, not for the common people. Make in India has become a propaganda campaign, not an industrial revolution. The contribution of the manufacturing sector to GDP has decreased instead of increasing. Domestic demand is also continuously declining. There has been a huge cut in the field of education and health. Budget has been cut in important sectors like education and health. We envision a different India, where the economy is for everyone, where employment increases, jobs are not lost, where farmers are prosperous, they are not burdened with debt and where education and health are the priority of the government.

SHRI NIRANJAN BISHI: Sir, 80 crore citizens, to whom we provide ration, expect a lot from the budget that the rate of petrol will be reduced, the price of diesel will be

reduced, the price of gas-cylinder will be reduced. If the price of petrol-diesel is reduced, then the price of essential commodities like rice, pulses, potatoes, onions and oil etc. will come down, the inflation rate will come down. If the prices are reduced, then those 80 crore Indian citizens will also progress. If we look at this budget, the prices of petrol-diesel and gas cylinders are not coming down. This is a disappointing budget. Many factories, industries, mills etc. are closed in our Odisha, due to which the problem of unemployment has increased. Sir, 80 crore common citizens, including SC/ST, are upset with this budget. Sir, there is nothing in the budget for SC/ST. And the ministry has given only Rs 1,200 crore fund to the department for the welfare of SC/ST, OBC, minorities and Divyangjan. There was a fund of Rs 26 thousand crore for SC/ST development in 2024-25, this year also it is Rs 26 thousand crore, so will the Central Government not make budget provision for the development of SC/ST, OBC, minority and Divyangjan. If there is no development of SC/ST, minority, weak and Divyangjan, then the country will never develop. Something should also be done for the development of 80 crore labourers. The Central Government should make budget provision for them. All the industries and mills in Western Odisha have closed down. We need a cotton factory here to provide jobs and employment opportunities for them. If mills, factories and industries are established, then job and employment opportunities will increase and the country will develop.

SHRIMATI SUDHA MURTY: The Budget is really good. Particularly for the middle-class, it has given tax exemption up to Rs.12 lakh annual income. I have a small suggestion We can teach children AI, computer science, mathematics, etc., but we are not making our children good citizens with good character. We come from a land where *smriti* and *shruti* were both equally important. Here, *smriti* means that we should remember and *shruti* means that we should hear. The story is not just telling children a few lines. It is actually an advantage to children to imagine and increase their creativity, and it is a great communication from one person to another person. I am sure that the Government of India in the new National Education Policy has revised the syllabus with stories. This storytelling tradition was there in our country before also. We have to inculcate this with our teachers. We should have compulsory story telling sessions in school and we should also have teachers' training inclusive of storytelling and, if possible, we should have an institution to be built over a period of time for storytelling. India is always famous for stories. India had this tradition of passing great stories on to the next generation. We have Pandit Vishnu Sharma's Panchatantra. When children did not study well and father was worried, he brought children back to a teacher and he taught the entire politics of the kingdom, the rules of the life and everything in the form of a story. We should not neglect this great art of storytelling and we should make this a part of the curriculum. We should also ask teachers to tell it in a proper way. I request the Government of India to provide more funds for building a classroom with an air conditioner or a fan, depending on the situation, at the primary and high school level to build a library as library is the house of learning and knowledge .

SHRI JAVED ALI KHAN: The budget for 2025-26 which is presented before us has grossly neglected the minorities. The schemes that were running for the welfare of the minorities have either been stopped or there has been a drastic reduction under the heads. The budget of the Post Matric Scholarship Scheme for minorities has been reduced by Rs. 731 crores. In the budget for 2024-25, the interest subsidy on foreign education loan has been reduced to just Rs. 8.16 crores. In 2020-21, there were two schemes for minorities, namely, Qaumi Waqf Board Tarqqiyati Scheme and Urban Waqf Property Development Scheme. Both these schemes have been merged. I understand that the kind of reduction that has been made in items related to minorities, is certainly not in line with the philosophy of SabkaSaath, Sabka Vikas.

SHRI P. P. SUNEER: I rise today to expose the Union Government's blatant disregard towards the State of Kerala. The Government has deprived our State financially and has undermined our developmental progress. Despite our fiscal discipline and responsible governance, the Centre has systematically reduced our share of funds. The Government has choked our finances by ending GST compensation and the Revenue Deficit Grant. This Government has also introduced a new methodology for determining open market borrowing to strangle Kerala's borrowing space. We demand that CSS funding be exempted from arbitrary restrictions. All this a calculated effort to weaken our welfare State model. The Government remains deaf to our legitimate requests. The Government claimed that GST would ensure fair revenue distribution but Kerala has been suffering due to incorrect settlements. We demand continuation of the GST compensation scheme until these flaws are rectified. It needs to be seen as why the Government sees migrants only as ATM machines, and not as human beings. Kerala's 108 ITIs are denied their rightful share of Rs. 2,100 crore. Our higher education sector has been ignored under PM-USHA despite submitting proposals worth Rs. 2,117 crore. Our fisheries sector is struggling, but harbour modernization funds remain elusive. Our coastal communities are fighting for survival against rising sea levels. We ask for increased subsidies for essential commodities, support for cashew, coir, handloom sector, fair wages for MGNREGA workers and a much-needed AIIMS in Kerala.

SHRI A. A. RAHIM: The Union Budget is disappointing. The Government is completely neglecting the State of Kerala. Despite your financial sanction against Kerala, while the country's economic growth rate is at 6.4 per cent, Kerala's economic growth rate is at 7.2 per cent. In this Budget speech, the Finance Minister allocated funds for broadband connections in schools. But, every school in Kerala already has internet connectivity. Kerala is the only State which declared the right to internet as the Fundamental Right to all. What Kerala thinks today, India thinks tomorrow. The Government is hindering Kerala's path to prosperity. India has the largest workforce in the world yet most of them do not have enough money to spend in the market. Despite soaring corporate profits, stable salaried jobs are declining and employees' salaries are not increasing. This Budget proposes nothing significant to address a common and grave issue like wage stagnation. The Government is not protecting the workers, it is not protecting the spirit of young women and men. It is enabling modern slavery. It is an illusion that income tax exemption will boost middleclass purchasing power. True economic progress of the country will come only by increasing wages and purchasing power for vast majority of the workforce, including youth. It is time for the Government to prioritise people over corporates.

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