MR. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, it is 1 o'clock. Mr. Suresh Pachouri can finish his Special Mention, then, we will adjourn. Is it okay?

SOME HON. MEMBERS : Yes.

श्री सुरेश पचौरी : रूरल एरिया के लिए प्रोग्राम चला। मैं आपके माध्यम से निवेदन करना चाहूंगा कि रेन वाटर हार्वेस्टिंग करने का जो सुझाव आया है उस पर अच्छे ढंग से पालन किया जाए, वैटर मैनेजमेंट किया जाए। इसमें एन.जी.ओज की भी मदद चाहिए। सभापति महोदय, आपको पता है आंध्र प्रदेश में साई बाबा ट्रस्ट ने लगभग 250 करोड़ रूपये की योजना 730 गांवों में पानी सप्लाई करने की योजना बनाई है। इस प्रकार के कार्यों को हमें प्रोत्साहन देना चाहिए। हमारे देश में वेस्ट वाटर भी बहुत है जिसका उपयोग नोन-डोमेस्टिक यूज के लिए करना चाहिए । उसके लिए रिसाइक्लिंग आर्की टेक्नोलोजी उपयोग करें तो ज्यादा बेहतर होगा।

नदियों के पानी को उपयोग करने का जो सुझाव आया है उस संबंध में हाशिम कमेटी ने 30.9.1999 को अपनी एक रिपोर्ट पेश की है। यदि उसका सही ढंग से पालन हो जाए तो ऐसे रीजन जहां वाटर की एक्सेसिटी है उस एक्सेस वाटर का उपयोग ऐसे रीजन के लिए जहां वाटर की कमी है, मैं कैसे किया जा सकता है, इस संबंध में ये सारे सुझाव दिए गए हैं। जब पूरा सदन पीने के पानी की कमी की चिंता कर रहा है जिसकी वजह से देश के कई राज्यों में अकाल और सूखे की स्थिति निर्मित हुई है तब यदि इन सब बातों पर गौर किया जाए तो निश्चित रूप से सूखे और अकाल से हम मुक्ति पा सकते हैं। धन्यवाद।

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House is adjourned till 2 o'clock.

The House then adjourned for lunch at two minutes past one of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at two minutes past two of the clock, THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI) in the Chair.

Motion of Thanks on the President's Address- Contd.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (Shri T.N. Chaturvedi) : Now, reply to the discussion on the Motion moved by Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, and the amendments put thereto.

SHRI JIBON ROY (West Bengal) : Sir, before that is taken up, I have a submission to make. I have a great fascination to hear the Foreign Minister. I love him and I like him. But the fact is that we are not hearing

the Prime Minister for the last two years. Last year also, he was indisposed, and the Leader of the House was kind enough to address this House. This year also, the same situation prevails. As such, we feel that this House is getting devalued. The Prime Minister is indisposed. Nothing can be done. We pray for his early recovery. I would like to know whether the reply can be deferred for some days so that, at least, in this House, we have the opportunity to hear the Prime Minister. Sir, you should also see to it that this House is not devalued.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE (West Bengal) : Sir, I share the sentiments of the hon. Member. But, at the same time, the fact is that the Prime Minister has been advised by doctors to have rest for a minimum period of two days. The President's Address was delivered in February, and during the first spell of the Session, we could not transact our business, and thereafter, the Prime Minister has already made his statement in the Lok Sabha on Monday. If we do not dispose of this business now , it will spill over to the next week, almost to the fag end of the Session, and there are compulsions that all the financial business is to be completed. By 15th of May, we have to pass the Railway Budget, the Railway Appropriation Bill; we have to pass the General Appropriation Bill, we have to pass the Finance Bill, and for all these transactions, there is a time limit, and I understand that the time limit is 15th of May. In view of that, if the hon. Members agree, we can proceed ahead. But surely, it should not be treated as a precedent, and we would be glad to listen to the Prime Minister, and I would request the Leader of the House that he can reply to the debate on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address. But, at the same time, I would request him also to convey our feelings to the Prime Minister.... at the earliest opportunity. When he is physically fit, he can take some opportunity and make his observations. Naturally, on some occasions, he can cover some of the points which have been discussed here.

THE VICE CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): I do not think there is any specific point here. In any case, the sentiments of Shri Pranab Mukherjee and Shri Jibon Roy will be conveyed to the Prime Minister by the hon. Leader of the House.

THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, before I come to the motion proper, I must express my

gratitude to the Leader of the Opposition, to Shri Pranab Mukherjee and to Shri Jibon Roy. Just before coming here, I had a telephonic conversation with the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister himself is extremely disappointed that he is unable to reply. He has asked me to convey his regret that his inability is born not of any disinclination, but it is born of a medical circumstance which is beyond his control.

The Prime Minister has been suffering from an upper respiratory throat infection. The doctors have advised him that he should not to sit or speak in. A.C., otherwise, the upper respiratory throat infection will not get cured. His obligations in the Lok Sabha and his sense of duty persuaded him to participate in the discussion in the Lok Sabha, which, in fact, aggravated the situation. And the doctors are rather insistent that he take complete rest for the next two days. But when I explained the circumstances to the hon. Leader of the Opposition and other hon. Leaders, I am grateful that they showed understanding. Otherwise, the whole debate slips over and slides into the month of May. We will not be able to take it up until the 2nd of May. May I take this opportunity, Sir, to assure the hon. Members that this is no precedent. It is a reality that the Leader of the House has the notional authority and responsibility to participate in the discussions in this House. But the Prime Minister is the Prime Minister. That is why he is called the prime among the Ministers. Therefore, the desire of the hon. Members that he should participate in the discussion is, naturally, understandable. But his inability is born of circumstances beyond his control. And without any doubt and any reservation, I can say, Sir, that no disrespect is meant to this House. There is no diminution either in the authority, or, in the status of this House. Without any doubt whatsoever, in the next week, there will be many opportunities when the Prime Minister will participate, with or without provocation from my friends in the Opposition benches. I can assure you about that.

Sir, I must take this opportunity to convey my thanks to the mover of the Motion, hon. Shri Venkaiah Naidu, to the seconder of the Motion and to all the hon. Members who have supported the motion. I must also convey my gratitude to all the other hon. Members who have participated in the discussion. The Government has benefited from the opinions of hon. Members. Some 34 hon. Members have participated. Discussions have ranged from the issue of governance to issues of national interest.

With your permission, Sir, therefore, I believe that the best manner in which I can do justice to the concerns of the hon. Members and for the effort they have made in participating and sharing their views with us, is to divide the issues broadly under three categories, that is, economic, political and foreign policy. We have classified the issues in such a fashion that even though I might not be able to answer every individual Member's points, broadly, I will endeavour to cover all the issues.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition, Dr. Manmohan Singh--I am first taking up the economic issues--has quite rightly said that the Government ought to build a consensus in regard to the question of economic reforms. I totally accept that. Indeed, the Government recognises that, in a field as important as economic reforms, of national endeavour, there is a need for all of us to collectively reflect on the issues. Though the particularness of our politics might divide us, the specificity of the issues that the nation faces is such that there ought to be a consensus and one approach in this regard, and partisan politics, to the extent possible, in an assembly which is essentially political, should be put aside for larger purposes. Therefore, the advice of the hon. Leader of the Opposition that the Government should endeavour to create a consensus in this regard is entirely acceptable to the Government. We will make efforts to do so. The Prime Minister has pointed out, while participating in the discussion in the other House, that we alter our roles, in our participation and in our governance, depending on the side in which we are sitting. A great deal of this is also understandable. This game is part of the nature of politics. But there are certain issues which, I believe, need to be a continuity, and a continuity borne of recognition that these issues really require a national consensus. In that context, I refer to the second major issue, which is the question of both financial assistance to the States and the situation of the finances of the States of the Union. We have a reality today that all parties represented in the House now, in one form or the other, are governing in one part of India or the other. Therefore, it is necessary for me to point out to all hon. Members that the financial situation, when it comes to the States of the Union, is not at all healthy. For the year 1998-99, we have a figure of deficit of the States running into Rs.75,000 crores. This is not any one party's responsibility. There is the Central Government and the Central Government has the responsibility to manage the Central finances. That is not possible, unless the finances of the States are also equally healthy.

There is also a reality that, as regards the question of devolution of financial authority and devolution of funds to the States, the Tenth Finance Commission has given its recommendations. This Government has held meetings of the National Development Council, taken decisions and acted in accordance with the recommendations of the Finance Commission. The Eleventh Finance Commission will shortly submit its report. We will act accordingly. Now, more than this, the Government cannot do because the Government in discharge of its responsibility, and keeping in mind fiscal prudence, cannot advocate to the States a path which is of fiscal imprudence. I don't say this with a sense of either superior wisdom or superior ability. I say this as a matter of shared concern that unless we are able to collectively, as a Parliament, reflect seriously on the state of finances that is obtaining today in all the States of the Union--there are a few excpetions - we are, in fact, permitting a grave wrong to take place, and, in fact, continuing. It is self-evident, Sir, that a prudent financial management, essentially, is possible, if the States too manage the finances prudently. If, on this too, we could arrive at a uniform viewpoint, a consensus, it would be a very welcome development. There is one question of downsizing the Government. A great deal of work on downsizing the Government has been done by my good friend and distinguished colleague, the Minister of State, who is also attending to planning. Now, Sir, there are three points which I would like to share. This is the point which has been raised by a number of hon. Members who participated in the discussion. I need not cite the names of the States properly. But it is well enough known to the hon. Members that, today, there are States which spend almost 70%-- in some cases, even more than 70% - of their entire income on simply meeting the pay and administrative requirements of that State. You can, therefore, reflect on the reality in the management of the finances of the States. Unless both the Central Government and the State Governments seriously apply themselves to the question of downsizing government, we are again permitting a grave wrong to continue. On this too, we need to have one collective viewpoint; if not a collective viewpoint, a broadbase consensus we can evolve. I do believe that it is the respsonsibility of all of us here and not simply of the Government. Sir, I wish to share with the hon. Members the fact that, currently, there are forty lakh Central Government employees. Their salaries and welfare costs the country something like Rs. 40,000 crores, annually. This is an unsustainable situation. I am talking simply of the

Central Government employees. I am not not talking here of the State Government employees. I do not wish to point out how the burden has come to be borne by the State Governments after the Pay Commissions recommendations, and how the employees of the States were agitated when their emoluments were not at par with that of the Central Government employees. What has it done to the finances of the States? That is why, Sir, quite often, it is voiced, and despite that, there is a need to re-state that, today, we have a situation wherein the administratition, whether at the Centre or in the States, appears to be much more for those who hold either administrative or ministerial posts or for the administrative officers themselves and much less for - where it is intended to directly address themselves - the citizens of the country. It is a sad reality. But it is a reality which this Government is attempting to seriously address itself. And it is addressing itself. We express a sincere desire and wish of seeking your cooperation in the building of as near a total consensus in this regard as we can. The Government has appointed an Expenditure Commission. And the Expenditure Commission shall be addressing amongst other aspects, the downsizing of Government. But in the meantime, Sir, I urge upon all the hon. Members here - after all, we are the Council of States. That the States have to make an all out effort to control the expenditure. On grounds of scoring populist points against each other, if we do not address ourselves to this larger national purpose, we are leaving, not just leaving, but we are compounding the difficulties that we all face. The third major point that was made relates to prices. I do not say in any boastful manner, but I say it as an objective reality because these are the figures. The figures speak for themselves. The inflation has been the lowest since 1991. After the recent essential hike in the petroleum prices, etc. it has touched 4.6 per cent.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU (West Bengal) : Mr. Minister, will you yield for a moment?

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Certainly.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: We are given to understand that the method of calculating the Wholesale Price Index has been subsequently changed. Sir, 156 commodities have been included in the list which includes a large number of manufactured products. Because of the OGL and open import of these items, it is the manufactured component of the

commodity basket has shown a decline. If you desegregate the essential commodity prices, you will see that the inflation rate is much higher. The condition of the people, the way they are suffering, does not get reflected in the new method that you have evolved for calculating the Wholesale Price Index and as represented in your inflation figures.... *(Interruptions)*....

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Sir, I respect the viewpoint that has been expressed. I do not wish to appropriate the functions of the hon. Finance Minister. No doubt, when we have a full discussion on the Finance Bill, etc....

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: I would like to know whether there has been a change.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: I will answer it. On the methodology to be attempted to compute this -- whatever is the methodology -- if the hon. Member states that in the aggregate basket that is being used, because of the new methodology employed, the effect on the consumer is being felt adversely, then the important point is not the methodology, the important point is that the consumer is adversely affected. The Government also shares this concern. How can the Government be indifferent to the difficulties of the consumers? I assure the hon. Member that the Government is very seriously concerned with any difficulty that the consumer might face. What I pointed out was simply the objective reality and the objective reality is....

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: That the people are suffering.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: No, that the inflation rate is the lowest since 1991.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Sir, the Government do not want to see... *(Interruptions)*.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Sir, it will be difficult for me to engage in a constant argumentation on the subject. It is an aspect which the Government takes very seriously. Whatever is done is done for the citizens. If it is not good enough, it must be done better. I reaffirm that if you take this criteria the rate of inflation is low since 1991. The GDP growth at more than 5.6 per cent is amongst the highest today, certainly in Asia, even globally it is amongst the highest in countries of equivalent size and

complexities. No other country of India's size has today demonstrated a 5.6 per cent growth. The currency has remained fairly stable. The reserves have gone up. All indicators, macro and micro indicators suggest that there is a sense of vibrancy, there is a sense of growth. India is certainly on the move despite those who feel that India is not I believe that India will move, despite the non-believers not because we are saying or we alone are saying. A number of hon. Members spoke and had expressed their concern about food subsidy, as also about fertilizer subsidy. I would like to address myself to this, Sir, and with your permission, may I point out some essential aspects of this? The essential aspect of food subsidy, I want to take a little time in explaining. This subsidy, which I will explain in a moment, is in the background of having increased support price of foodgrains for the farmers. Now, Sir, amongst the steps taken by the Government, families below the poverty line, who earlier got ten kgs. of rice, today, get 20 kgs of rice. The total subsidy for those who are below the poverty line has not gone down; it has gone up. It was earlier Rs. 7,451 crores. It is, today, in 2000 Rs 9200 crores; and in the last five years, let me explain, Sir, through figures, that it has gone up; these are not subjective, these are objective figures, and the figures speak for themselves. On food, fertilizer, kerosene and LPG, in 1994-95, the total subsidy was Rs. 16,449 crores. In 1999-2000 on these very items - food, fertilizer, kerosene, LPG - from Rs. 16,449 crores, it has gone up by two-and-a-half times and stands at Rs. 40,300 crores. In this background, let me explain the history of food subsidy. On 1st June, 1997, Sir, the United Front Government started the targeted PDS; it was abrevietedly called TPDS. In July, 1996, in the meeting of the Chief Ministers, there had come into existence a general consensus that this is what ought to be done. It was TPDS because the benefit of subsidy shifted to poor in all areas and not all in poor areas, as it was earlier - poor in all areas, not all the subsidy, only in poor areas - The United Front Government took two important decisions in regard to PDS. It said that for above-the-poverty-line families, ten kgs. of foodgrains per month at 90 per cent of economic price; for below-the-poverty-line families, ten kgs. of foodgrains at 50 per cent of the economic price. We have improved upon this we have improved upon it by increasing the quantity for those who are below the poverty line from ten kgs. to twenty kgs. In between 1985 and 95, under the PDS, the price of rice was increased eight times. In between 1985 and 95, in the case of wheat the price was

increased seven times. This is evidence enough, Sir, that for those that are below the poverty line, in this decade in case of wheat and rice we are now moving towards an enhancement in the price. Whatever the enhancement is, it is based on the formula that this Government inherited from the previous Governments. We have made no departure. We have, in fact, improved the benefits that are going to those who are below the poverty line. The only appeal, therefore, I make is that we should not attempt to play politics with it, however easy and beneficial, in the short-term.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI (Tamil Nadu): Just a minute, Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir. The hon. Minister says that there should not be any politics in it. As far as the prices of essential commodities, fertilisers and the other things that are being consumed by the poor people are concerned, there is no politics here; there is no Left, Right or the Centre. We understand the difficulty of the Government. But the Government should also understand the difficulty of the poor people who are working from dawn to dusk to make their both ends meet. As far as subsidiy on food and fertilisers is concerned, we understand your difficulty. It is immaterial whether the decision was taken by the previous Governments or the United Front Government or the present Government. What is material is that the decision taken by the Government should not affect the day-to-day life of the poor people. Therefore, I request the hon. Minister as well as the Government to reconsider this issue. For example, the price of motor spirit has not been increased. You can touch motor spirit. But don't touch diesel. If you touch the diesel, the prices of goods automatically go up because the goods are transported by lorries and other such transport vehicles. You can touch the aviation fuel, the motor spirit, but leave the diesel which affects the life of the poor people. That is why I request you to reconsider the issue regarding the subsidy. This is totally agitating the minds of the people from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, regardless of the political parties and politics. Therefore, I appeal to you that as far as subsidy is concerned, you please reconsider it and see to it that some decision is taken in such a way that the people are not affected in any way.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: To add to it, the prices of...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T. N. CHATURVEDI) : Please. Let him continue. You will have time to discuss all this later when the Budget is being discussed. ...*(Interruptions)*... You can discuss this at the time of the Budget. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE (West Bengal): You cannot leave the price business to the Budget time.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI) : No. You should cooperate now.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE (West Bengal) : Sir, you cannot leave it to the Budget time. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): No. You have made your points.....*(Interruptions)*... Don't dilate on this. You have made your points.

SHRI JIBON ROY: Sir, the consumption expenditure is going down. That is your survey.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): You don't add more weight to what Mr. Nilotpal Basu is saying. I think he commands greater weight than you.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH : Sir, the hon. Members were speaking in a ...*(Interruptions)*... I can assure the hon. Members that whatever the Government does, it is with a direct and specific intention of benefiting, above all, the poorest of the poor and it is targeted at that. When an hon. Member pointed out that the total per capita offtake is going down, there are many explanations offered in this regard. I do not wish to go into this type of economic discussion. But these are all areas that are receiving the attention of the government. I have no doubt in my mind that when more focussed discussion takes place, the Ministers concerned directly will be addressing themselves to all the voices and the concerns that are raised here.

SHRI JIBON ROY: You should discuss the matter with all the party leaders and settle it out. Behind all this is the political issue. In the end it is a political issue.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T. N. CHATURVEDI): Mr. Jibon Roy, let him continue.

SHRI JIBON ROY: The rural wage is going down. The rural consumption is going down, according to the Government figures. These are not our figures.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: I had said that I would talk on fertilizers and food subsidy. I appreciate the Members' right to seek any clarification. It is really appreciated if a constant commentary is avoided because it is a reciprocal courtesy that we extend to each other, but that reciprocal courtesy is only in observance, not in its breach. The best I can do is to request Members to extend to each other that reciprocal courtesy.

I had said that I would refer to both fertilizer and food subsidy. Sir, I am sure, there are many eminent economists in this House, which I am not. Here again, there is an objective reality. Of the total fertilizer subsidy that you and I clear every year, as tax-payers we pay, more than half of it goes to the factories and the benefit of the fertilizer subsidy, intended for the farmer, is not being received. But, when, in 1978-79, the fertilizer subsidy was started -- I will just refer to the figures - the Budgetary liability that the Centre had to bear on that account was Rs.300 crores. Today, Sir, 20 years later, it has gone up to Rs. 12,651 crores. The figures speak for themselves. What the figures speak has a logic and that logic is irrefutable. That logic, indeed, is strengthened when you examine it in the context of the reality, that of this Rs. 12,651 crores, 60% virtually goes to the fertilizer factories. In the policy that you are pursuing, collectively, as Parliament, you are not subsidising either agriculture or the farming community. You are, in fact, subsidising the fertilizer factories. It is necessary, therefore, to reflect seriously in this regard and come to a position about fertilizer subsidy only after such a reflection.

The next major point on economy is about agriculture and rural development. It is a very important point. It is a point which was the highest priority in the National Agenda that has been adopted by the NDA. So far as agriculture and rural development is concerned, the Government's priorities, as announced and as accepted by all of us in the National Democratic Alliance, are clear and specific - rural health, rural education, rural housing, rural drinking water and rural employment. That is combined with the efforts that this Government has already made and announced, which relate to development of rural infrastructure. As hon. Members know, a Rural Infrastructure Development Fund has been established. The RIDF has been enhanced from Rs.3,500 crores to Rs.4,500 crores. For rural roads, a Rs.2,500 crores project will shortly start. It is for the first time that the Central Government has made special provisions. States of the Union are also encouraged to set up a network of rural roads because communication

is vital for movement of goods, and if we wish to see rural India, which is 80%, achieve its destiny without providing with the means of transportation and communication, it is simply not possible. The Government has taken it up. The Government is also committed to correct the imbalance that has come into the capital expenditure in agriculture. And all this is tantamount to capital expenditure because in the light of the discussions and the current drought conditions in some parts of India, for example, watershed management, development of irrigation, these are all the aspects, including issues like farmers credit cards, micro-credit, 50,000 self-help groups last year and a lakh of self-help groups this yea these are all steps that the Government has already taken. I have no difficulty in further sharing with the hon. Members that the Government has also taken yet another decision to appoint a fully designated and empowered task force for agriculture and the composition and the task that it will be entrusted with will very shortly be announced. Sir, amongst specific points, the Leader of the Opposition, Dr. Manmohan Singh had raised a point relating to the Assam Gas Cracker Plant. I understand this is a constituency problem for him. Therefore, it is an important issue and I must there take some time to explain what the situation in regard to Assam Gas Crackers Project is. There is a delay, I accept that. But this delay is not on account of what this Government has done. The delay was inherited by this Government. And indeed the Government has taken action now to obviate the delay and to expedite the matter. Now, I may point out that this was a project approved in 1991 for Assam and after that it was decided to convert it into a joint venture with the Reliance Group. Then between 1994 and 1997, the Government decided to give a variety of concessions, including Rs.337 crores, as one-time capital subsidy for this project. Thereafter, Sir, the Government of Assam agreed to give them land and part of land was given to this project. But because the rest of the land which was earmarked for this project fell into the area of Jabhua Airbase of the Indian Air Force and because the Ministry of Defence and Jabhua Airbase raised objections, it was shifted from Jabhua to Dibrugarh at Laptakhata and alternate site was agreed upon on 14th March of this year. I wish to inform the Leader of the Opposition that the Oil India, the Reliance and the Assam Petrochemical have entered into an agreement for supply for gas to this project. I think most of the delay was inherited by this Government. Thereafter we have acted with a great sense of dispassion and taken every possible action. I

wish to assure the hon. Leader of the Opposition....बहुत थोड़ा है, उसमें हाथी निकल गया है, पूंछ रह गई है। मुझे लगता है कि अब उसमें ज्यादा देर नहीं लगेगी। Sir, now I refer to an economic issue which was raised by a number of hon. Members. This issue relates to the Ministry of Commerce and this issue is about lifting quantitive restrictions and as explained to the hon. Members by the Commerce Minister, it would not take me long. I do not think we are going to discuss the Demands for Grants for the Ministry of Commerce. Therefore, it is only appropriate that I do so. Sir, consequent upon US filing a dispute against India, a Dispute Settlement Panel of the WTO held that quantitive restrictions on balance of payment grounds in respect of 714 tariff lines claimed by India was not justified.

India appealed this before the appellate body of the W.T.O. The appellate body, in its report on 23rd August, 1999, upheld the findings of the panel and recommended that the Disputes Settlement Body of the W.T.O. request India to bring its balance of payments restrictions into conformity with its obligation under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. The Disputes Settlement Body adopted these recommendations in September, 1999. India indicated its intention to comply with the rulings and recommendations of the Disputes Settlement Body and also indicated that it required more than the normal 15-month period for the implementation and we wanted a definition of what in WTO terms is called R.P.T. (Reasonable Period of Time). This was not acceptable to the U.S.A. and, when there is a dispute between the parties like this, a reasonable period of time is to be determined either by a bilateral agreement between the contesting parties or through an arbitrator. The arbitrator, normally, does not provide for more than 15 months. After bilateral discussions to determine the time period, India and the U.S. signed a bi-lateral agreement on 28th December, 1999. Under this agreement, the final reasonable period of time will expire on 1st April, 2000. Out of the 1429 tariff lines, at the eight digit-level, on which Quantitative Restrictions were maintained by India on the grounds of balance of payments, under direct signing of the agreement, 714 items were removed on 1st April, 2000 and the balance 715 by 1st April, 2001. As India has removed Quantitative Restrictions on 714, coinciding with the Annual Exim Policy for 2000-01, following the final expiry of the reasonable period of time, India would have to use the instrument of tariffs to provide protection to domestic industry.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): I will allow you later on... (Interruptions)... Please, no interruptions in between... *(Interruptions)*... I will allow you... *(Interruptions)*... You can seek clarifications at the end... *(Interruptions)*... The flow of thought should not be disturbed.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: In respect of 1429 tariff lines in question, India has the leverage of increasing tariff rates to appropriate levels in order to provide protection to domestic industry, provided these rates are not in excess of the bound rates. In respect of 1225 items of the 1429 tariff lines, India has the leverage to increase our tariffs and the Government shall exercise this leverage in protection of domestic industry.

There was a specific point raised by my good friend, Mr. Vayalar Ravi, and my gallant friend, General Shankar Roy Chowdhury. Both of them are not here. With your permission, may I just refer to the essence of it? They expressed a concern relating to privatisation, etc. Let me re-assure the House that in privatisation, the Government have a policy of seeking the interest of the workforce uppermost. In the case of Modern Foods which has been cited by both the hon. Members, it is said that it has been sold off at a price in which even the land value is more than the price at which it is sold. This is somewhat misleading. There was a global tender. Everything was done openly. Land is only there notionally. It is a leasehold land. It is meant specifically for the function, it is specifically for the purpose of food processing ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JIBON ROY: *

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): You can seek clarification on this also subsequently... (Interruptions)... No, please, you will have an opportunity... *(Interruptions)*... Please, do not disturb like this... (Interruptions)... I would not permit this... (Interruptions)..I am sorry. I would not allow... *(Interruptions)*... Let him finish... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JIBON ROY: *

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: *

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*Not recorded.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): Yes. The issue is serious... *(Interruptions)*...

I am afraid, by your shouting or interrupting again and again, the issue does not become more serious. ...*(Interruptions)*... I will give you an opportunity to seek clarifications subsequently. ...*(Interruptions)*... I will give you an opportunity. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU : *

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): No, I am afraid, these interruptions will not go. I will allow you to seek the clarifications at the end of his reply. ...*(Interruptions)*.... Please Mr. Jibon Roy. ...*(Interruptions)*... even this will not go. I know that your objections are serious. Please ask them as clarifications at the end of the reply. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI JIBON ROY : *

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): He will clarify. ...*(Interruptions)*... Nobody can expect to borrow words from you in giving a reply which satisfies you. The simple point is that you will get an opportunity to seek clarifications, and he will do it. Please do not interrupt in between. ...*(Interruptions)*... Let this continue. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU : *

SHRI JIBON ROY : *

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): I will take care of it. Please take your seat. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JIBON ROY : *

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): Mr. Jibon Roy, everybody is interested in public affairs and public interest here. So, please take your seat. I will give you an opportunity to seek clarifications. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JIBON ROY : *

*Not recorded.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI) : You can say. It is not going on record. It is not going. Interruptions will not go on record. You can continue to interrupt which I think the House does not like. Please continue.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH : Sir, I have covered most of the economic points raised by hon. Members. With your permission, I now go on ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JIBON ROY : *

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU : *

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): No, no, even the Press will also not note. So, what is the use? ... *(Interruptions)*... You will have to opportunity to seek clarifications. I have told you that I will give you adequate opportunity to seek clarifications. Then, why this intervention? ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU : *

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): If I have deprived you of this opportunity ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU : *

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): You are not allowing him to articulate his point. ... *(Interruptions)*... I will give enough opportunity. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JIBON ROY : *

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): Now, I think he can resume his reply. ... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JIBON ROY : *

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI) : It is not recorded. It is not going on record. Dr. Biplab Dasgupta, since you are the leader, I think ... *(Interruptions)*... When I am assuring ... *(Interruptions)*...

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA (West Bengal) : Sir, a very simple question has been raised. I am sorry it has not been answered. It would be better if he could give some reply to this question. This has been the concern in many quarters, including in his own party, that the property of the country is being sold at cheap prices. The prices are being fraudulently

*Not recorded.

fixed and all the transactions are also completed fraudulently. This has happened not only in India where they have sold the public sector units at cheap prices. This has been the experience in Brazil, Mexico, Russia and Pakistan. These countries have the same kind of experience. The public sector units are being being sold cheaply at fraudulent prices and the country is deprived of the money. Sir, evaluation is a very major issue. The evaluation should be on the book basis. They have given low prices. There should be a proper, realistic, price. Kindly reply to that point.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH : Sir, this has been the concern of everybody. The public sector units are not sold even a paise less than their value.

This is self-evident. When hon. Members raise their voice, I wish to inform them that I am really not hard of hearing. We do have a system of magnifying the sound. I can understand that hon. Members, under the guise of actually asking a query, wish to give voice to their opinion. I have found through experience, working in both the Houses, that it is best to hear the opinion.

The hon. leader of the CPM Party has said that there is an impression that things are being sold cheap. If there is such an impression, it is the Government's responsibility to correct that impression by coming to the House, by going to you personally and by clearly clarifying that it is not so. This is our duty. ...*(Interruptions)*... ....

I do not wish to give you facts which do not meet your total requirement or about which, I am not 100 per cent sure. But I do wish to assure you about the query that you raised, that you will receive from the Government a full and satisfactory explanation in this regard either in writing or orally when we take up the Finance Bill because the Finance Ministry is dealing with it. In a discussion that is a broad-based discussion on the President's Address, you will appreciate that it will be imprudent of me to assert a fact, which I will not be able to sustain. It is only for that reason that we will provide this to you later. It is something that we have to satisfy ourselves also. The Government is bound to satisfy itself that a public property, even if it is a pin, is not sold for a paise less than what it should be sold or it has to be sold. So, it will be provided to you.

Sir, the first political issue which I wish to refer to is the one raised by Shri Pranab Mukherjee. It relates to the question of the constitutional review that has been ordered by the Government. Let me clearly and unambiguously at the very start set all doubts at rest. I am not going to go into the eminence of those who constitute the Review Committee. The basic structure comprises of parliamentary democracy, secularism etc. These will not be altered.

There is no question of that. Whatever doubts the hon. Members might have in this regard, are completely, to my mind, unfounded because such is not the intention of the Government. In any event, in any case, the Government can simply not implement any constitutional amendment unless it comes to the House. The House is supreme. Unless both the Houses of Parliament grant their approval, is any constitutional amendment possible? It is a review that has been ordered. It is a review of assessing in totality by eminent Indians the distillate of the past fifty years of experience.

I do not wish to go into which party has done what in the past or which party has stood on what particular position about the basic rights. Take the history of the 24th Amendment, the Golaknath Case, the Kesavanand Bharati Case or the basic rights. Take, for example, the 39th Amendment. You do not wish me to read out the aspects of the 39th Amendment. No doubt, hon. Members are familiar with some of them.

PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV (Uttar Pradesh): That was deleted later on.

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री टी. एन. चतुर्वेदी) : यह तय हो गया है कि इसके बाद ही हम आपको मौका देंगे। ..**(व्यवधान)**..

Mr. Azad, please don't. The same policy will be there. I will not allow any interruption to be recorded. फिर आपका कहा हुआ इग्नोर हो जाएगा।

श्री जसवन्त सिंह : इस पर और भी चर्चा हो सकती है।

I wish to point out, for example, that this very body, this very House has passed the 39th Amendment. I wish the hon. Members to really reflect on some of the phraseology.

प्रो. राम गोपाल यादव : बाद में हम लोगों ने इसे रद्द कर दिया ।

3.00 PM

श्री जसवन्त सिंह : मानता हूं Should I read out some of the phrases?

प्रोफेसर राम गोपाल यादव : पहले ही बहुत क्लासिकल है ।

SHRI JASWANT SINGH:It was a classical affair. Let me assure you that such is not the intention of the Government. Article 339 (a) was inserted which said that whoever is elected Prime Minister after the introduction of that Article, the election of the Prime Minister shall not be called into question on any ground whatsoever. On disputes in relation to such an election, including the grounds on which such an election may be questioned, once a Prime Minister has been elected , he shall not be called to answer questions in any court of law. Then, if there are any election petitions pending against such Prime Minister, that election shall immediately abate upon that person becoming the Prime Minister. A step further: No law made by Parliament before the commencement of the Constitution shall apply or shall be deemed ever to have applied in relation to election of anything; the election shall not be deemed to be void or ever to have become void on any ground. It is only an illustration. We have no such intention.

The views of the Government are clear. A variety of views have been expressed. A lot of discussion on it has taken place. That is precisely the purpose. No amendment to the Constitution can be carried out without the authority, consent and imprint of the Parliament. The Government has not the requisite majority. But, what I say is that the entire Constitution merits a look to find out what is the distillate of our 50 years of collective experience. There is no hidden agenda. There is no unwritten agenda. There is only one agenda on which the Government is working. And that is the common agenda of the National Democratic Alliance. Let me set all doubts at rest in this regard.

Sir, hon. Pranab Babu in his intervention on matters relating to foreign policy - and also a number of other hon. Members -- referred to the Government's approach to resumption of dialogue with our Western neighbour, Pakistan. Let me, at the outset, state an intriguing sense of irony in this regard. When this Government did engage in a very serious -- and what I continue also to say a path-breaking -- initiative of the first journey to Lahore, we were charged by our friends of not acting wisely. While

initiating a dialogue, we were told that we were not acting wisely. Now, after Kargil, after Kandhar, after the military coup, after the Chittisinghpura massacre, when we say there is a need to assess the whole situation on Pakistan, these hon. leaders and Members of this House come forward and say: "You are acting unwisely." I am unable to tell which of these in your view is really unwise -- initiative to a dialogue or the ability of the Government or the desire of the Government to re-assess the situation? Let me again clearly re-state what I stated in the other House just yesterday in response to a question, that this Government and the people of India bear no ill-will to the people of Pakistan. This Government remains committed to the path of dialogue, of peace and of amity with Pakistan.

We have no enemity with their people; and shall not have, and continue to insist upon a dialogue. This is also well enough known. But for further dialogue to have meaning and substance, it is our view that an appropriate environment is created, not as a pre-condition, but, certainly, as the integral of the very foundation of the resumption of such a dialogue. We have said and decided when the aggression on Kargil took place, which was that you must abjure violence, you must reaffirm the essentials of bilateral relations. As the hon. Members know, only very lately, the Chief Executive of Pakistan, General Parvez Musharaff Sahib, has said -- and he has actually repeated - that he believes neither in the Shimla Agreement nor in the Lahore Declaration; you do not believe in the Shimla Agreement, you do not believe in the Lahore Declaration, you continue to encourage cross-border terrorism, you continue, almost on daily basis to invoke Jehad against India; it is very strange. If Jehad is to be advocated as an instrument of foreign policy, then, what will happen to the conduct of international relations? You continue to do that. You announce a five-point programme of a new approach to India. You announce and say, "We shall have nothing to do with trade or culture or any other contact until this happens." Therefore, we say now, as initiators of the dialogue process, it is not upon India to re-initiate. Whoever interrupted this dialogue process, it is incumbent upon them to restore the climate that is congenial for its resumption and for its restoration. These are certain essentials. I do not think in this, any other position can be taken because this is in national interest; it safeguards the essence of what India stands for. Pranab Babu's apprehension in that regard is that if you do not hurry up and resume the dialogue process, third party intervention may take place. Let me assure Pranab Babu in this regard

again, and in clear and unequivocal terms, that third party intervention, by whatever euphemism that might be implored, whether as an intervention or as a mediation or as a facilitation or any other euphemism of that variety, this Government shall not accept. We continue to believe that in this matter there is no such intervention. I urge upon the hon. Members to reflect for a moment; we will have the time to discuss this, if an opportunity is granted for a fuller discussion on the Demands for Grants of the External Affairs Ministry. I do not wish to digress much further. Since you had spoken specifically on Pakistan and third party intervention - this is a point that has been made by a number of hon. Members - I thought I would cover this.

Honourable Member, Dr. Karan Singh, raised two issues. One related to the Kargil report. These are security-related issues. He dwelt with his experience, naivetence and knowledge of his home State, the State of Jammu and Kashmir. It is the first time ever that following upon the management of a conflict, the Government has ordered a review and made public the report. The Subrahmanyam Committee report is a consequence of that. It is the first time ever in 50 years of independent India's history - during which we have most unfortunately experienced a number of conflicts - that it has happened. It was not accidental. This decision was not accidental. This decision was taken upon deliberate purpose. It was designed with a view to setting in motion a correcting process so that all that we witnessed as unsatisfactory or not satisfactory enough in the total management of the security of the nation, we, at least, address not in an *ad hoc* fashion, but in a fashion that is a consequence of fully deliberating it and, out of that deliberation, working out all that requires to be done.

Hence, a Committee of Ministers has been formed. Dr. Karan Singh is quite right if he points out that this Committee of Ministers, by itself, will not suffice. All that I can urge him to see is this. The Prime Minister, in his wisdom, has appointed these Ministers because he feels that if there is the overall responsibility of these Ministers, then, the recommendations and the deliberations and determinations that these Ministers will make, will, certainly, be only after they have fully established, if needed sub-committees, and involved all the specialists that are to be involved. Only then will they come forward with a report. I can only urge him to reflect on this or to comment on this after he sees its action, at least for the first two or three times. We will, certainly, benefit if any hon. Member here in this House or in the other House has views in regard to the

management of security, he will get an opportunity so that the deliberations of this Committee are as broad-based, as truthful, as all-encompassing, as possible in the circumstances.

Dr. Karan Singh also mentioned about the State of Jammu and Kashmir. It is correct that there are three dimensions--the international, the internal and specific to Jammu and Kashmir, the regional. I can assure the hon. Member on the international dimension. I would like to share with the House what I said in the U.N. General Assembly. We do not treat that the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir is what our western neighbour Pakistan, sometimes, would like to call either 'unfinished agenda' or the 'core issue'. The Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir is not the core issue between India and Pakistan. Jammu and Kashmir is at the core of the Indian nation only. This is a statement that has been made by this Government in the U.N. General Assembly. It has been made, for the first time, last year. This is how the Government approaches this responsibility.

So far as regionally maintaining the peculiar diversity of the State of Jammu and Kashmir is concerned, let me assure the hon. Member and all other Members that may have concerns in this regard, that the sheer beauty and vividity of Jammu and Kashmir shall not be permitted even to be dented, leave alone suffer.

Mr. Vice-Chairman, you have been very generous in giving me time. I share with all hon. Members the sense of "a nation on the move". It is a nation on the move. As the Prime Minister has said, 60 per cent of the nation being less than 35 years old, it is a young nation. And, when the young nation of ours is on the move, we appeal to all hon. Members that the only manner in which we can facilitate the movement of this great nation is through consensus. The consensus aims at rapid development, balanced and harmonious development. Our commitment is for economic reforms for all, economic reforms with a human face. The development is for all and the development is not for a few or some only. Let us attempt at this, put aside small contentions, petty disputations. Do, by all means, score points against us in the Government. But, in the process of scoring points against us in the Government, take care, and aim off sufficiently, that we do not simultaneously, even unwittingly, score points against this young India. This assembly, Mr. Vice-Chairman, is for debate and discourse. Through that debate and discourse, this young India that is on the move seeks

direction. Of course, it is the Government's responsibility to provide direction. But it is the collective responsibility of the whole House to give the sense of direction and leadership.

And it is towards providing that sense collectively that I invite all Members to join step with us in this great, exciting and all inspiring adventure of leading this young India to its true destiny. Such, Sir, indeed is our bounden duty; such a Government, we believe, is both our raj and dharma, to which we are bound. Therefore, I appeal to all Members, while thanking the Mover of the resolution, to share with us in expressing our gratitude to hon. the President.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE : Sir, I would like to seek clarifications from the hon. Minister on three points. While responding to the issue of the Constitutional Review, the hon. Minister has referred to the 39th Amendment, and tried to build up a case that certain measures are required to be reviewed. But he has conveniently forgotten that the 39th Amendment is no longer a part of the Indian Constitution today. It was replaced by the 44th Amendment. He might equally recollect that the Janata Party piloted the 44th Amendment, while sitting on the Treasury Benches, myself sitting on this side of the House, and Shri Kamlapati Tripathi was occupying the place of Dr. Manmohan Singh. We extended our wholehearted support to pass that Amendment. Otherwise, with sixteen Members in this House, you could not have carried a Constitutional Amendment. This is precisely the point. We wanted to know, please tell us, which article, which part, which section you want to amend. You got a limited mandate. We will go with you. Let us know what amendments you want, and for what purpose. In this connection, may I most respectfully submit that we never believe in the basic structure of the Constitution. We believe that the Parliament is omnipotent. It should have all powers to amend any part of the Constitution. That is the rationale behind injecting the doctrine of constituent power of Parliament, by amending article 368, inserting clause (1) in article 368. If you want to pass on, that we believe in the basic structure and the basic structure is not going to be altered because nobody knows what the basic structure is, the Supreme Court is unfolding, and they have not exhaustively codified it. The second point on which I would like to seek clarification from him is that he has given three reasons why dialogue cannot be resumed with Pakistan. One reason is: Pakistan's Kandhar misadventure, Kargil and military coup. May I know from the hon.

Minister whether it is the first military coup in Pakistan? What happened in 1958? What happened in 1978? Is it not a fact that out of 53 years of its existence, for as many as 25 years, Pakistan was under military regime? But still we had dialogues, still we had talks. It is not that Kargil is the only armed conflict with Pakistan. We had it in 1948, we had it in 1965 and we had it in 1971. It is not for the first time that there was hijacking in Kandhar. In 1974, hijacking took place in Lahore where the Indian Airlines aircraft was burnt. In 1980 again, it happened, in 1984 it happened. Therefore, all these three reasons which you have given as to why a dialogue cannot be resumed with Pakistan, Mr. Minister, all these reasons existed before the Lahore Declaration, and still, we had to deal with them. We cannot erase the very basic fact... *(Interruptions)* Mr. B.P. Singhal, please do not disturb me. I did not disturb the Minister. I listened to him with rapt attention. These are the clarifications I am trying to have from the Minister and the Minister is competent enough to reply to my clarifications.

We have been repeatedly saying from this side that, 'Yes, there is need for reducing expenditure, but please open a dialogue. Please try to build up a consensus and take the lead.' Can you deal with subsidies on fertilisers, food and kerosene in this piecemeal manner? If, in two years, you had floated a paper, or, revised Mr. Chidambaram's paper, or, started a dialogue with the political parties, then, by this time, you could have come to a consensus. It would have helped you, or, whoever was in the Government, to carry on. Surely, one will agree that 16 to 17 per cent of the GDP cannot go towards subsidies. But, certainly, we would not like the food subsidy to be cut because it is closely linked with our food security. The basic point is, why don't you have an integrated, comprehensive, approach to this issue. Yes; you have appointed an Expenditure Commission. But like in the case of Constitution review, your primary concern should be Parliament; so, you are trying to stage Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark. You are trying to have the Constitution reviewed by experts. Yes; they are very respectable persons. But what would happen ultimately? It would remain a thesis paper and it will never be truly reflective, unless you involve the people sitting in this House and that House.

My third point is: I entirely agree with you that the Rs. 75,000/- crore deficit by the States cannot be carried on. You have advised, if I have heard you correctly, that they should avoid competitive populism. But

would it not be equally applicable to the Federal Government? After all, ours is a Union of States. The various measures which you have highlighted do not come within the definition of competitive populism. Therefore, at some point of time, somebody has to bell the cat. So, what we wanted is that, instead of having a piecemeal, disintegrated, approach, let us have an integrated approach. Then, we will be in a position to give whatever suggestions we want to give. Why cannot you do that? When you were the Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, you initiated certain measures. But where did it stop? We discussed this matter. Once I was having a discussion with you and we decided that we should discuss the problems of each State with the Union Finance Minister. There should be some sort of a provisional Memorandum of Understanding that I will help you provided you agree with me in this way. Why was it given up midway? I have not heard anything about it. Why this process cannot be initiated? Of course, it is not a clarification; it is a suggestion for action. It is for the hon. Minister to consider it.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Sir, I will take only one minute. I have already raised the issue of subsidy on foodgrains like rice, wheat etc. and on fertilisers, kerosene and LPG. The whole nation expects a reply from the hon. Minister. I frankly say that the entire nation expects a reply from him in this august House. I know that he cannot give a definite reply as to how much reduction in prices is going to be there, or, is not going to be there. But, at the same time, let him assure that he will reconsider the issue. In what way he will reconsider, how he will interact with other political parties and the mode of reconsideration all these can be decided later on. This is what I wanted to say. Sir, he can look into the matter.

SHRI DIPANKER MUKHERJEE: I am on the limited point of subsidy on urea, especially, when the hon. Leader of the House has pointed out that it is the factories which are being given the subsidy. I think there has to be a little bit of understanding. We are talking about the reduction in the selling price of urea to the farmers. You have raised that point. If you want to control the subsidy which is going to the factories, then, there is one price which known as the retention price. If you want to control that, you should have controlled the retention price and the price of urea to the farmers need not be increased.

My second point is this. If the Government is really serious - the Prime Minister is not here - there is an appeal, there is a consensus in this House, and there is the recommendation of the Standing Committee on Petroleum and Fertilizers for the last three years, on this issue. I had written to the Prime Minister and last time the Prime Minister had given an assurance when he replied to the debate on the Motion of Thanks. There is a specific case of overdrawal of subsidy by a few fertilizer companies -- last year, it was to the tune of Rupees 1000/- crores - to the tune of Rs. 1500 crores.

My suggestion, if they want a consensus, is to reduce the price for the farmers. You recover this sum of Rs.1,500 crores from these companies who have drawn this money. You give such an assurance right now. Your subsidy or whatever you are saving by increasing the price for the farmers can be annulled, if you can recover this amount. This is the recommendation. It is there. The Government doesn't have the will and it is wilting before the industrialists.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): You seek your clarifications.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Can he give an assurance to the House that this subsidy, which has been illegally drawn by the fertilizer companies, to the tune of Rs.1,500 crores will be recovered? Let it be recovered from them. Till that time the price for the farmers should not be increased.

DR. KARAN SINGH (Delhi): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, during my intervention I had put a specific question to the Government. That is this. Why is this curious reluctance to appoint a full-time National Security Advisor? Why is it? This is a country of 100 crores of people. The Government does not seem to be able to find a second person. One person is doubling up in two critical jobs. The Subrahmanyam Committee has also specifically recommended it. May the hon. Minister please enlighten us as to why this curious reluctance is and when a full-time National Security Advisor will be appointed?

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I don't want to join issue with the hon. Minister.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): You seek clarifications.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: My point is that we are not sharing the views about the health of the economy. Now, the figures are there. Poverty level is going up. If you don't want to mention it, you don't mention. But the point is this. The impact of the increase in the prices on the people below the poverty line and those who are marginally above the poverty line is there for all to see. My only question is whether you are going to roll back the prices or not. It should not be announced outside the House because of the pressure of the allies and all that, and some arrangements taking place outside. What is happening? This House is losing its sanctity.

The second point is this. The Leader of the House has mentioned that the Government will inform the House about the methods which the Government is applying in evaluating the assets which the Government is selling. We had replies on disinvestment by the hon. Minister refusing to divulge the facts about the methodology which the Government has applied to re-evaluate the assets as also the names of the companies which are being sold. We think this is a grave breach of privilege of the Parliament.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): Why do you raise this at this point of time?

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Just one point. It is because the Parliament is supreme in deciding as to how the assets of the nation should be maintained. When the assets are being disposed of, the facts will have to come to the Parliament. Without the approval of the Parliament, you can't do that.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): Please, you have said enough. ...*(Interruptions)*... You have said enough.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: My question is: Why does it continue?

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Mr. Basu, you were mentioning about the pressure of the allies. The allies are pressurising the Government to see that actually the issue prices of PDS are brought down. That is the only pressure.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: We appreciate that pressure. What I am saying is this. Let it be announced in the House.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: My State is providing a food subsidy of Rs.1,300 crores.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: It should be announced in the Parliament.

SHRI B.P. SINGHAL (Uttar Pradesh): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, he has said that the Government refused to divulge the information. It should be authenticated when and where it was done before making such an allegation against the Government.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): I will take care of it. I don't think there is anything unparliamentary.

SHRI B.P. SINGHAL: It is not unparliamentary. He is misleading the House, giving wrong information.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): The Minister himself will deal with it.

SHRI NILOTBAL BASU: It is there on the record in the reply of the Minister to the questions.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): Mr. Gandhi Azad. After that Mr. Ahmad Khan and Dr. Das. That is enough.

श्री गांधी आज़ाद (उत्तर प्रदेश) : महोदय, संविधान समीक्षा के संबंध में मैं अपने को प्रणब मुखर्जी के साथ सम्बद्ध करते हुए यह कहना चाहता हूं कि सरकार की ओर से सदन में भी और सदन के बाहर भी आश्वासन दिया जा रहा है कि संविधान के मूल ढांचे में कोई परिवर्तन नहीं किया जाएगा । तो सवाल उठता है कि क्या परिवर्तन किया जाएगा ? दूसरी बात यह है कि सरकार द्वारा बार-बार आश्वासन दिया जा रहा है कि मूल ढांचे में परिवर्तन नहीं किया जाएगा लेकिन देश की जनता को भरोसा कैसे हो क्योंकि 1992 में 6 दिसंबर को ...**(व्यवधान)**

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री टी.एन. चतुर्वेदी) : वह छोड़िए । छोड़िए उसको । "भरोसा" कह दिया आपने, काफी है । ऐसा है कि जो मौके की चीज है, वह कहिए ।

श्री गांधी आज़ाद : महोदय, देश की जनता को कैसे भरोसा हो ? बार-बार कहा गया कि बाबरी मस्जिद को खरोंच तक नहीं पहुंचेगी । सुप्रीम कोर्ट में तत्कालीन मुख्यमंत्री ने शपथ पत्र भी दाखिल किया था लेकिन ढांचे को खरोंच पहुंची और बाबरी मस्जिद शहीद हुई । आप बार-बार आश्वासन दे रहे हैं लेकिन देश की जनता कैसे भरोसा करेगी आप पर ? .....**(व्यवधान)**

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री टी.एन. चतुर्वेदी) : ठीक है, हो गया । गांधी आज़ाद जी, आप बैठिए ।

श्री गांधी आज़ाद : इसके साथ-साथ एक प्रश्न और है ।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री टी.एन. चतुर्वेदी) : आपने एक ही सवाल पूछने के लिए कहा था । दो सवाल पूछ लिए । काफी हैं । अहमद खान साहब, आप पूछिए ।

SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMAD KHAN (DURRU) (Rajasthan): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I wish to seek a clarification on a news-item which has appeared in the Indian Express today, with the headlines "Muslims, reply to Pak: Advani". 'Union Home Minister L.K. Advani who, of late, has been keeping a low profile over Jammu and Kashmir, today stepped up the rhetoric giving it a new twist. He said that Pakistan which suffered a humiliating defeat in 1971 had called for a jehad against India and now "Indian Mulsims" should reply to this call.' What I do not understand is - I would like to seek a clarification from the hon. Leader of the Opposition ....*(Interruptions)* Why have Indian Muslims been...

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री टी.एन. चतुर्वेदी) : वैसे भी यह आडवाणी साहब से पूछते तो बेहतर रहता ।

SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMAD KHAN (DURRU):Sorry, sir, if I have said something which I should not have said, I apologise for that. But what I would like to know from the Leader of the House is, why have Indian Muslims been segregated and identified in this manner. क्या पिछले 52 साल में मुसलमानों ने, हिंदुस्तान के मुसलमानों ने पाकिस्तान को सही जवाब नहीं दिया था ? in terms of war which we fought where the number of muslims who died was in the same proportion as the Hindus or people of any other caste. Why have Indian Muslims, in this case, been segregated, or eliminated, from the mainstream, or the rest of the population. I would like to seek a clarification. Thank you.

PROF.(SHRIMATI) BHARATI RAY: Sir, I do not have as much political and parliamentary experience as most of my colleagues here have.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): But I think you must have gained enough experience in these three years.

PROF.(SHRIMATI) BHARATI RAY: No, Sir, not that much. Anyway, I have the impression that Parliament is the only competent place in India for constitutional review or amendment. When hon. Member, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, was making an excellent observation on the constitutional review issue, one point which occurred to me was this. Why was a Constitutional Review Commission set up and the members, though they are very respectable Members, were chosen without taking Parliament into confidence? That is the only question.

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री टी.एन. चतुर्वेदी) : सरोज दुबे जी, आप पूछिए । दो ने ही रिक्वैस्ट की है । वन-थर्ड नहीं तो दो तो हो ही गया ।

श्रीमती सरोज दुबे (बिहार) : उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, बार-बार यह कहा जाता है कि जब फर्टिलाईज़र और अन्य चीजों में राजकीय सहायता दी जाती है तो उसका लाभ गरीबों को न मिलकर फर्टिलाईज़र फैक्टरी को मिलता है । और भी चीजों में जो राजकीय सहायता दी जाती है, उसका लाभ बड़े लोग उठा लेते हैं और उसका नतीजा हमारे गरीबों को भुगतना पड़ता है । महोदय, अब फर्टिलाईज़र का दाम बढ़ा दिया गया है । मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से यह कहना चाहती हूं कि गरीबों को लाभ पहुंचाने के लिए कोई कानून न बनाकर फर्टिलाईज़र की फैक्टरी को वह लाभ न पहुंचे, इसको रोकने का आपने कोई इंतजाम नहीं किया । उलटे गरीबों को तंग करने के लिए आपने फर्टिलाईज़र का दाम बढ़ा दिया, मिट्टी के तेल का दाम बढ़ा दिया और आप कहते हैं कि हम राजकीय सहायता इसलिए बंद कर रहे हैं क्योंकि उससे बड़े लोगों को फायदा पहुंचता है। तो क्या इसका कोई बीच का समाधान नहीं निकाला जा सकता है ताकि आप जो राजकीय सहायता दे रहे हैं, उससे गरीबों को और निर्धन वर्ग को लाभ हो ?

दूसरी बात मैं यह जानना चाहती हूं कि संविधान समीक्षा के बारे में आपने बार-बार कहा कि इसके बुनियादी रूप को नष्ट नहीं किया जाएगा ...।

इस संविधान ने यह साबित कर दिया है कि देश में जितनी भी चुनौतियां आई हैं, उनका इस संविधान ने बहुत अच्छी तरह से मुकाबला किया है। मैं यह जानना चाहती हूं कि आपको अचानक संविधान में ऐसी कौन-सी कमी दिखाई दे गई जिसकी वजह से आपने देश की तमाम समस्याओं को छोड़कर इसकी समीक्षा करने का कदम उठाया है? आप कौन-सी धारा इस संविधान में जोड़ना चाहते हैं अथवा आप कौन-सी धारा निकालकर निजात पाना चाहते हैं?

DR. M.N. DAS (Orissa): Mr. Vice-Chairman,Sir, through you, I would like to seek two clarifications, one on economic issue and the other on political issue. When the hon. Finance Minister was speaking on the issue of subsidy, he said that a huge bulk of the subsidy granted for fertilisers is being consumed by fertiliser companies and the real farmer gets a minimal benefit. I would like to know whether it is a confession of failure of the Government to control big business houses like the fertiliser companies, or, it is, parenthetically, another confession that this Government is not able to protect the interests of the people. This is the first simple clarification that I am seeking. Regarding my other point of clarification, much discussion has taken place both on the floor of this House and on the floor of the other House about the so-called Constitution Review Commission. The President has a constitutional obligation of reading out the Address prepared by the Government in power - it is fair on his part to do so - and, we, in the Opposition, have a constitutional obligation to criticise, to censure, to expose and to oppose the Government whenever we feel that the vital interest of the nation is being affected. I would not speak anything about the Constitution Review Commission. Much exercise is going on; it is a herculean exercise. A Commission has been appointed, and that Commission has appointed a number of expert committees . It will be a great academic exercise, no doubt. But, Sir, I am reminded of four words of Shakespeare - Much Ado About Nothing. The Government knows that not a single word, not a single comma, not a single full stop, can be changed without the approval of Parliament...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): Excepting that, professors, through that exercise, can give us an enlightenment.

DR. M.N. DAS : But at the cost of huge money from the exchequer. What the Opposition feels is that when both the Houses contain eminent jurists, legal experts, constitutional experts, a joint parliamentary committee could have been constituted for this purpose.

प्रो. रामगोपाल यादव : उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, डिपार्टमेंट रिलेटिड पार्लियामेंट्री स्टैंडिंग कमेटी वस्तुतः एक मिनी पार्लियामेंट है। अगर यह कमेटी कोई रिकमण्डेशन करती है तो उसका सम्मान करते हुए उसकी रिकमण्डेशन को सरकार को मानना चाहिए। फॉर एक्जाम्पल जिस तरह से पेट्रोलियम कमेटी ने बढ़ी हुई फर्टीलाइजर की कीमतों को रोल बैक करने की रिकमण्डेशन दी है क्या माननीय मंत्री जी इसका संकेत देंगे कि उसको वापस

करायेंगे? बिलो पावर्टी लाइन की बात बार-बार आती है। जिस तरह से पावर्टी लाइन को डिफाइन किया गया है तो क्या माननीय मंत्री जी इस बात से सहमत हैं कि उस परिभाषा के हिसाब से जो व्यक्ति गरीबी की रेखा के नीचे है, केवल भोजन और उससे जुड़ी हुई चीजें, मिर्च-मसाले तक के लिए ही वार्षिक आमदनी है, लीव असाइड, उसके बच्चे पढ़ सकते हैं या नहीं, मकान मिल सकता है या नहीं, स्वस्थ रहने के लिए क्या वह भोजन कर सकता है? उस पावर्टी लाइन को किस आधार पर डिफाइन किया गया है? बार-बार यह कहते हैं कि पीडीएस सिस्टम से दुगना अनाज देने की व्यवस्था की गई है। आप लोगों को पीडीएस सिस्टम से दुगना अनाज देंगे, लेकिन जो बिलो पावर्टी लाइन में परभाषित किया गया है उसके हिसाब से उस गेहूं को वह खरीद नहीं सकता है। क्या माननीय मंत्री जी इस पर विचार करेंगे कि इस पावर्टी लाइन की परिभाषा को फिर से देखें ताकि लोगों को कुछ राहत मिल सके?

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: I will abide by what you say because we have had a very good discussion. After all 34 Members participated and, ordinarily, clarifications, at the end of the reply, are not sought, but as you directed, I will attempt to answer them. Here, again, very broadly, among the economic issues, one relates to subsidy, as the hon. Member, Shri Das said, parenthetically, the question of whether it is fertilizer subsidy....

यह भी कहा कि कमेटी की रिपोर्ट है। साधारणतया यह होता है। यह पद्धति रही भी है लेकिन उस पद्धति का प्रचलन थोड़ा कम हो गया है। साधारणतया यह होता था कि संसद की किसी समिति की रिपोर्ट जो होती थी, वह अपने आप में सही है कि यह एक मिनी पार्लियामेंट है। तो संसद की रिपोर्ट की संसद में चर्चा हो, मसलन पब्लिक अंडरटेकिंग्स कमेटी, पब्लिक एकाउंट्स कमेटी हैं। समय का प्रभाव है, हमारी प्राथमिकताएं अन्य हो गई। कमेटी की रिपोर्ट पर संसद में चर्चा होना बंद हो गया। इसलिए आपका यह आग्रह कि चूंकि कमेटी ने रिपोर्ट दी है इसलिए सरकार उसको माने, यह व्यवस्था जब कमेटी की बनी थी तब समिति बनाई थी उस समय लोक सभा के स्पीकर साहब ने। हमने कहा था कि Committee is not the cost of the Parliament., वहां कमेटी में चर्चा होती तो उस चर्चा का विवरण मीडिया पर नहीं है। कमेटी में मंत्री जाकर अपनी बात नहीं रख पाता। वहां कर्मचारी जाते हैं, अफसर जाते हैं। इसलिए जब तक कमेटी की रिपोर्ट पर संसद चर्चा नहीं करेगी तब तक मात्र इसलिए कि कमेटी ने रिपोर्ट दी है इसको स्वीकार कर लिया जाए, यह नहीं है। एक्शन टेकिन रिपोर्ट वगैरह आती है। यह मैं आपको आश्वासन दिला देना चाहता हूं कि कुछ माननीय सदस्यों ने कहा कि सरकार इस पर विचार करे, कुछ ने तो आग्रह किया कि मैं घोषणा करूं, मैं नहीं सोचता कि मैं उद्दंडता कर सकता हूं, यह मेरे अधिकारों के

बाहर है, किसी मंत्री का एकछत्र राज्य नहीं है।

प्रो. रामगोपाल यादव : आप तो प्रधान मंत्री की तरफ से जवाब दे रहे हैं।

श्री जसवंत सिंह : आप इसे गलत न समझें।

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: There is political pressure. They are not going to pay. It is an administrative decision. It is not only the Standing Committee's recommendation. The money is to be recovered. It is a fact. It is an administrative decision. They are saying that it is political intervention. They are not in a position to recover the money.

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री टी.एन. चतुर्वेदी) : इस प्वाइंट की ओर कंसर्न्ड मिनिस्टर का ध्यान दिलाएंगे।

श्री दीपांकर मुखर्जी : कंसर्न्ड मिनिस्टर का दो साल से सुन रहे हैं This is not today's recommendation.

श्री जसवंत सिंह : यहां माननीय प्रधान मंत्री जी भी होते, चूंकि उन्हें मैं व्यक्तिगत तौर पर जानता हूं कि प्रधान मंत्री जी भी यही कहते कि जो कुछ मुझे कहना है। मैं अपनी केबिनेट के सदस्य मंत्रीगणों से बातचीत करके उनकी सलाह लेकर ही कह सकता हूं। चूंकि आप ने जो विचार रखे हैं...**(व्यवधान)**

श्री दीपांकर मुखर्जी : यूरिया प्राइस को रोल बैक कर दीजिए...**(व्यवधान)** तब तक नहीं बढ़ाइए जब तक यह डिसीजन नहीं होते। यह कह दीजिए तो देखिए, आराम से सब लोग सुनेंगे। नहीं तो क्या होगा...**(व्यवधान)**

उपसभाध्यक्ष(श्री टी.एन. चतुर्वेदी) : मुखर्जी जी, हां, हो गया।...**(व्यवधान)**

श्री दीपांकर मुखर्जी : कुछ तो कराइए? कुछ भी नहीं करेंगे, रोल बैक का डिसीजन भी नहीं ले सकते?...**(व्यवधान)**

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): Please take your seat.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: The other economic point was raised by Shri Pranab Mukherjee which related to Expenditure Commission, and you advocated with which I agree. It is not enough to just simply appoint an Expenditure Commission. Is it only the responsibility of the State and not the responsibility of the Union? No, Sir. There should be equal

responsibility. We share the responsibility. After all, the Union Government cannot function as a separate and apart and autonomous; autonomous in a functional sense, autonomous not in a consequential sense. The consequences of what we do at the Centre and what we do in the States are closely interrelated; they are inseparable; they are interwoven together. And if we have an illusion that the States can perform autonomously, without simultaneously the Centre also doing so, it is an illusion. Therefore, in that sense, I share that, Yes, we have a joint responsibility. Ought we to consult each other? Without any doubt whatsoever, we must consult each other because reduction of expenditure is a collective responsibility. I can assure you on behalf of the Government that there is no doubt that my distinguished colleague, the Finance Minister, will initiate a suitable dialogue with everyone concerned at the appropriate time.

You did not do me justice, Sir, after all that I had said; I had offered three reasons for having the position that the Government has in regard to resumption of dialogue with Pakistan. No, Sir, I cited incidents. The aggression in Kargil is a consequence. It was not simply a violation of the political boundary and territory of India. It was, without any doubt whatsoever, a transgression on the territory and the trust also. Kargil or Kandahar or the military coup, are not by themselves the causes. These are not the conditions. They are incidents. What I have said, what I have said today also, not as pre-conditions, but as essential ingredients for the creation of a suitable climate; we need to have our Western neighbour, Pakistan, abjure violence, reaffirm the essentials of bilateral relations, which are, after all, the Shimla Agreement, the treaty documents and the Lahore Declaration. Why? Because, the Chief Executive has recently said, and he repeated, that he does not believe in these. We assert that cross-border terrorism must cease. Why? Because you cannot simultaneously engage in cross-border terrorism, put a pistol to my head and say, "Now, talk to me". Stopping cross-border terrorism, abjuring violence, are not conditions. The dialogue process that was set in motion by India has been fractured, has been interrupted. Those who have fractured or interrupted it, the onus is on them to recreate the conditions so that the process can be resumed. I did not cite those three.

A specific question was asked about the National Security Adviser. Sir, India is, without any doubt, full of talent in this or in any other field. Why has this not been done? It is the prerogative of the hon. Prime

Minister. He has exercised it in his judgment. But this is one of the recommendations of the Subramanyam Committee. And for that examining that committee's report, this Group of Ministers has been appointed. This Group of Ministers will make its recommendations and I cannot predict the time-table of this appointment. But I can assure that the Group of Ministers will attempt at every recommendation, including this one.

My good friend from Rajasthan, the hon. Member, cited a newspaper report and asked me to comment on it. The only advice that I can have for him is that it will not be possible for me to comment on a newspaper report. If there is anything that he has objection to what was stated by my distinguished colleague, the hon. Home Minister, no doubt, at the earliest opportunity, will come back. After all, in the other House, there has been a full-fledged discussion on the Demands for Grants of the Union Home Ministry and that will be the opportunity when this issue is best raised with him.

Sir, I think, to the extent that I can, I have answered all the clarifications. Therefore, I urge upon all the Members from all sections of the House to join us in conveying our gratitude...

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: One of the major issues which was raised was about the prices. It was also raised by Shri Virumbi and others of the DMK. The minimum we want is some promise, some reconsideration on the roll-back of the prices.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T. N. CHATURVEDI): But the Minister is here to reply..*(Interruptions)*... The Minister is here to reply....*(Interruptions)*... He is not here to give an assurance ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI C.P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU (Pondicherry): Will the Government reconsider the rise in the prices of essential commodities? We want a specific answer...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY (Tamil Nadu) : This should be announced in this House today itself.

SHRI C.P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU: We do not want a rollback. But, at least, give a promise that you will reconsider it...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): I can't force the Minister as to what reply or what clarifications he should give. It is for

him. I think, he has already replied. Now, I shall put the amendments tc vote....*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI MD. SALIM (West Bengal): He should give some reply....*(Interruptions)*...

DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: Seeing what has happened in the House, it should be clear to the Government that a majority of the Members of this House want a serious reply to the issue of rise in the prices of essential commodities. The hon. Minister has not dealt with that issue. I would request him, even though it is late, to say something positive on that.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Sir, judgment of positive or negative is a subjective judgment. I would give the highest consideration to what the Leader of the Opposition says. I am sure, all hon. Members are motivated by the highest concern and have no political interests whatsoever. I am bound by the system, of which I am a product. I did say this even earlier that I will faithfully communicate to the Cabinet the concerns of the hon. Members, indeed of the Leader of the Opposition....*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): I think, it is enough....*(Interruptions)*...

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: What is he saying?...*(Interruptions)*... In protest, we walk out of the House....*(Interruptions)*...

(At this stage, some hon. Members left the Chamber)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): Now, I shall put amendment Nos. 6 to 30, moved by Shri Kapil Sibal, to vote.

(Amendment Nos. 6 to 30 were negatived)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): I shall now put amendment Nos. 75 to 100 and 139 to 240, moved by Shri E Balanandan, to vote.

(Amendment Nos. 75 to 100 and 139 to 240 were negatived)

श्री सुरेश पचौरी (मध्य प्रदेश) : उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैंने संशोधन संख्या 241 से 264 तक प्रस्तुत किए हैं लेकिन मैं आपकी इजाजत से दो वाक्य कह कर अपने संशोधन वापस लेना चाहूंगा। खासतौर से जो दो संशोधन संख्या 247 और 249 है, इनमें मैंने 247 में मध्य प्रदेश की राजधानी भोपाल के हाई कोर्ट में बैंक की स्थापना करने के लिए आग्रह

किया है और संशोधन संख्या 249 में भोपाल गैस पीड़ितों के लिए राहत, पुनर्वास और चिकित्सा सुविधा उपलब्ध करवाने के लिए आग्रह किया है। मैं आपके माध्यम से सदन के नेता से आग्रह करना चाहूंगा कि वे हमारी भावनाओं को प्रधान मंत्री तक प्रेषित करें और मेरे इन संशोधनों में जिन बातों का उल्लेख किया गया है इस बारे में निश्चित रूप से सकारात्मक पहल करें। इन्हीं शब्दों के साथ मैं अपने संशोधन संख्या 241 से 264 तक जो मैंने प्रस्तुत किए हैं, उन्हें वापस लेता हूं।

Amendment Nos.241 to 264 were, by leave, withdrawn

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI) : I shall now put to vote Amendment Nos. 265 to 275 by Shri Jiben who is not present at the moment.

Amendments No. 265 to 275 were negatived

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): I shall now put vote Amendment Nos.289 to 311 moved by Shrimati Sarla Maheshwari who is not present in the House.

Amendments No. 289 to 311were negatived

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): I shall now put to vote Amendment Nos. 355 to 366 by Shrimati Saroj Dubey who is not present in the House now

Amendment Nos. 355 to 365 were negatived

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI) Amendment No.366 is in the name of Dr. Manmohan Singh Dr. Singh, are you pressing your amendment?

DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: Sir, I am not pressing.

Amendment No. 366 was, by leave, withdrawn

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): Amendment Nos.367 to 375 are in the name of Shri Pranab Mukherjee. Mr. Mukherjee, are you pressing your amendments?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Sir, I am not pressing.

Amendment Nos. 367 to 375 were, by leave, withdrawn

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): I shall now put to vote. Amendment Nos. 439 to 440 by Shrimati Sarla Maheshwari who is not present at the moment

Amendment Nos. 439 and 440 were negatived

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): Amendment No. 442 is in the name of Shri S. Vidhuthalai Virumbi.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Sir, I moved this amendment only to draw the attention of the Government because it relates to the linking of the Cauvery and the Ganga. This issue has been pending for the last five decades. That is why I hope the Government will take this matter seriously. An international conference which was held in the Netherlands identified six States where there would be drought after five decades. Even there will be acute scarcity of drinking water. If we do not take steps now, I do not think we will be able to do anything after fifty years when we will be facing this problem. I hope the Government will concentrate on this problem. With these words I withdraw my amendment.

Amendment No 442 was, by leave, withdrawn

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): I shall now put to vote Amendments No.448 to 459 by Shri Dipankar Mukherjee.

Amendment Nos. 448 to 459 were negatived

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI): I shall now put the motion to vote.

The question is:

"That an Address be presented to the President inthe following terms:-

> " That the Members of the Rajya Sabha assembled in this Session are deeply grateful to the President for the Addrress which he has been pleased to deliver to both Houses of Parliament assembled together on February 23, 2000."

The Motion was adopted.

Discussion on the working of the Ministry of Agriculture

श्री जनेश्वर मिश्र (उत्तर प्रदेश) : उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, सच तो यह है कि खेती एक बहुत ही उदास विषय है, उदास ही नहीं बल्कि बड़ा ही मनहूस विषय है जिस पर हम