

However, Madam, I appeal to the House wholeheartedly to support and pass this Bill. Thank you. (*Interruptions*)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): Yes, that is what I am going to say. On my ruling the Finance Minister is here in the House. He would like to make some Statement on the questions put and the information given to the House by Mr. Syed Sibtey Razi and others.

CLARIFICATION ON THE STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Hike in the prices of Petrol and Urea

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): Madam, I have a clarification to offer to the House. In my Budget Speech yesterday, I had mentioned that the price of petrol, i.e. motor spirit, was being raised by Rupee One per litre and that this money so collected will be put at the disposal of the National Highway Authority of India for the improvement of our National Highways. Consequent upon the policy of the Government to dismantle the administered price mechanism in the petroleum sector, certain duty changes had also been proposed. And, as a result of those duty changes, no increase in the price to the consumer was envisaged. There was some communication gap as a result of which it appears that some higher price for petroleum has been charged since last midnight. The moment I came to know about it, I got in touch with the Petroleum Ministry and we have sorted out the matter and I am happy to inform the House that instructions have already been issued that this burden, apart from the Rupee One, should not be transferred to the consumer. The consumer will continue to pay only the previous price plus One Rupee plus local tax on that Rupee One because local sales tax is different in different States. Any confusion in this regard has been completely sorted out and the new prices will become effective from midnight tonight. This is one clarification which I

wished to offer to the House. Simultaneously, I would like to say that if any inconvenience has been caused as a result of this lack of communication, then, I am sorry that this kind of a situation has arisen.

The second clarification which I wish to offer, Madam, was that in view of the fact that we have done a great deal in this Budget for the farming community of our country whose interests are uppermost in the mind of the Government, an impression has been created that a slight increase in the price of urea is an anti-farmer step. The Government considered this and we have decided to roll back fifty per cent of the increase which I had proposed. I had proposed in the Budget an increase Re. 1/- per kg., or, Rs. 1,000/- per tonne. This increase will now amount to fifty paise per kg. in the price of urea.

I would like to inform the House, through you, Madam, that the purpose behind this move was not so much to collecting money for the coffers of the Government. The important consideration which weighed with the Government in this was the fact that the balance between NPK, the three types of fertilisers which are used by the farmer, has got completely deteriorated as a result of the policies followed in the past. Instead of being in the ratio of 4:2:1, the ratio had deteriorated to 10:2:1, with a lot of emphasis on the use of nitrogenous fertilisers. It was with a view to protecting and safeguarding the fertility of our soil that this step had been proposed by the Government. However, in view of the sentiments, we have rolled back the price by fifty per cent.

This is the clarification which I wanted to offer before the House. Thank you, Madam.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): Thank you, Mr. Minister, for clarifying the position of the Government on this particular subject. But I think some Members would like to

seek clarifications on your statement. Shri Nilotpal Basu.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU (West Bengal): Madam, it is very good of the Finance Minister. We thank him for promptly coming over here and making a statement on this. But our basic contention was that a certain parliamentary impropriety has been committed by the Government, in the sense that in the other House, it seems, in the wake of a debate, the Minister of Agriculture made a certain statement, so far as the urea price is concerned.

Now, what we were questioning was this. Once the Budget is placed before both the Houses, it becomes the property of both the Houses and, in deference to parliamentary procedures, the correct thing would have been for the Government to seek the leave of the House to bring forward a formal amendment and bring about this kind of change.

So far as the logic that the Finance Minister has given is concerned, about the NPK balance, we, absolutely, do not buy this idea. What is more logical is to bring down the price of PK part of it. In fact, this whole thing of imbalance has come about because of the deregulation of the price of different categories of fertilisers.

In his clarification, Madam, he has not really addressed the central question that we had raised. Of course, nobody has any objection to reducing the price. In fact, we generally welcome this kind of rolling back. But the point is: the clarification given by the Minister does not take care of the central argument that we put forward here, in terms of parliamentary propriety. Secondly, we do not buy the original idea that was proposed in the Budget.

Thank you, Madam.

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES (Goa): Madam, since last night, in Delhi and other places, they have increased the price by Rs. 3.80 or so. This increased amount would continue to be collected

throughout today. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what happens to this excess amount collected since midnight last night till midnight today. Why is this confusion created by the Government?

Secondly, even if the increase in the price is going to be Re. 1.25 or so—including the sales-tax—what about the chaos which would be created in the public transport system? Is there any index to be followed by the Transport department that if there is a certain increase in the price of petrol, the fare levied by the public transport system would increase by an equivalent amount? Is there any such system? Or, it is just *ad hoc*, putting the people to a lot of harassment and inconvenience? What is the Government going to do in regard to the excess amount that would be collected till midnight today, throughout the country, which would run into crores of rupees?

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA (West Bengal): Mr. Yashwant Sinha is my old colleague not only here but also in the Securities Scam Committee. We were working together for long.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): So, you should not seek clarifications on that.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Mr. Yashwant Sinha cannot be allowed to be so innocent as he appears to be at the moment most unfortunately. The Finance Minister of a great country like India who had the experience of presenting two budgets cannot be allowed to be so innocent. He is innocently explaining it as if there has been just a fall of a word and that he is just changing a word. Should the Government of India be so unmindful of its own decision? I implore upon Yashwant Sinha to understand the implications of the way he is speaking today. His words have an impact on the stock market. His decision has an impact on foreign investors. His opinion counts in decision making by a number of important powers outside the country. Is it

that innocent? Or, should it be like this, that within less than 12 hours the Government goes to the other House to say that it has sorted it out as if it was an in-house, husband and wife quarrel? Mr. Sinha might have sorted out his differences with his wife. I don't think he is having any problem with his wife. But, again, he is allowed to do it in his bedroom or his parlour. But the Finance Minister is not allowed to "sort out" —within quotes—just a small point, the one-rupee increase and the tax formula on that.

It only speaks of the irresponsible way in which the Budget has been sought to be prepared by the people who are manning his office. The responsibility is not on him but it is on those who drafted this statement for him, who drafted the formula for him. This is absolutely an act of irresponsibility. I do not know within the next 24 hours how many decisions the Government is going to roll back. But, surely, I am at liberty to say that this is certainly not the way in which the hon. Finance Minister who has the experience of running the administration as he comes from the Administrative Service, should act. This is absolutely unfortunate, really unfortunate, and it is not that innocent.

Secondly, I would like to implore upon him kindly to consider this. A statement was made in the other House, and it was left to the hon. Chairperson of this House to give the direction that he should come. Is it the way that he should treat this House? Is it also some sort of sorting out between the hon. Finance Minister and the privileges of the Members of Rajya Sabha? Is it that? Please let us consider this. Let us call a spade a spade. Let us admit our mistake. What is the harm? You grow in stature.

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI (Uttar Pradesh): He has already said, "I am sorry."

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: No, this is not an issue of saying sorry.

He used the words "sorting out." I am only taking exception to the words "sorting out." This cannot be a question of in-house sorting out in your political party or in-house sorting out between the Ministry of Finance and the Department of Petroleum. It is not that.

Lastly, Madam, for the last 12 hours or 14 hours people have been squeezed. I had a trunk call from Calcutta in the morning, as I told you. People have been squeezed, and money has been made. Who is going to take the responsibility for the overpayment that petrol buyers were forced to do? Who is looking into this responsibility? How is the money going to be returned? And, if not, who is accountable for this? Nowadays, you speak of accountability. More than us, my friends on the other side have been speaking of accountability. Who is to be accountable for this? How is the money going to be returned? To me it is not just a flimsy case of a mistake. It is an act of irresponsibility, and the Government is unmindful. It is not only in petroleum. A prices increase was made in the case of urea. The Government had only 12 hours to understand that this was against the interests of the farmers and that, therefore, generosity demanded scaling down of the price. Why did you need 12 hours to become generous?

Why was it not done from the beginning? That is why I am saying that the Government is unmindful of its own decision. The Government does not know its mind at all.

प्रो० विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा (दिल्ली): उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, मुझ से अभी मंत्री जी ने कहा कि प्राइसेस आज रात मिड नाइट से वापस आयेगी। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि इस बीच में क्या होने वाला है? क्या आज सारे दिन प्राइसेस बढ़े रहेंगे या नहीं? प्राइस एक रुपया बढ़ गया है तो क्या वह दिन भर रहेगा, मुझे लगता है कि यह क्लीयर होना चाहिए क्योंकि जैसे ही टी०वी० से गया होगा कि सारे हिन्दुस्तान भर में प्राइस एक रुपया बढ़ाया गया है और 1.10 रुपया केवल दिल्ली में है, बाकी नहीं है।

दूसरे, मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि यह जो बार-बार बात कही गई है, मैं इस बात को मानता हूँ कि यह जो

सरकार है, यह जन-भावनाओं का इतना आदर करती है कि 12 घंटे में ही उसने प्राइस कम कर दिए हैं। जन-भावनाओं का इस सरकार ने इतना आदर किया है। इसलिए आपके इतना बड़ा दुख हुआ, कष्ट हुआ क्योंकि आप यह चाहते थे कि कोमते बढ़ी रहें ताकि आप सरकार की आलोचना करते रहें। इससे आपको आलोचना करने का मौका नहीं मिला रहा है इसलिए आप इस बात को इस ढंग से पेश कर रहे हैं।

श्री खान गुफरान ज़ाहिदी (उत्तर प्रदेश): मैडम, क्लेरीफिकेशन की बात आपके डिस्पेंशन पर हुई है।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (कुमारी सरोज खापरडे): मेरे डिस्पेंशन का सवाल ही नहीं उठाना चाहिए जैसे कि गुरुदास दास गुप्ता जी ने कहा कि यह सेंकड चेम्बर है और इसको सेंकडरी चेम्बर नहीं मानना चाहिए। मंत्री जी ने अगर कोई बयान लोक सभा में किया है तो उन्हें उज्ज्वल सभा में आकर अपना बयान करना चाहिए था।

श्री खान गुफरान ज़ाहिदी: मंत्री जी आए और उन्होंने अपना क्लेरीफिकेशन दिया। लेकिन इससे तीन बातें बिल्कुल साफ नहीं हैं, जिनका जिक्र अभी मल्होत्रा जी ने भी किया और गुरुदास दास गुप्ता जी ने भी कहा है। सच बात यह कि इसके साथ-साथ हमें यह भी मालूम होना चाहिए कि वे कौन से अफसर थे, जिन अफसरों ने फाइनेंस मिनिस्टर के भाषण के बाद पार्लियामेंट में, लोक सभा में क्लेरीफिकेशन देकर 3.85 रुपए पर लीटर अनानस कर दिया। जो अखबारों में छपा, उसकी वजह से सारे हिन्दुस्तान के डीलरों ने बसूल करना शुरू कर दिया। इस क्लेरीफिकेशन में यह बात तय नहीं हुई कि जो करोड़ों-करोड़ के हिसाब से पैसा जमा हो गया है वह नेशनल हाईवे अथॉरिटी को जाएगा या गवर्नमेंट के खजाने में जाएगा या फिर डीलर के पास ही रह जाएगा? ये तीनों बातें क्लियर नहीं हुई हैं। इस इश्यू को आपने सर्ट-आउट कर दिया है, इस पर हमें कोई ऐतएज नहीं है। लेकिन ये बातें क्लियर होनी चाहिए।

इसी तरह से 50 पैसे पर किलो गूरिया खाद का जो मामला है वह भी बड़ा गंभीर मामला है। इसके सिलसिले में भी हम यह जानना चाहते हैं कि लोक सभा में जो इन्फॉर्मेशन दी गई है, वह कृषि मंत्री ने अपने बयान में यह बात कही है या फाइनेंस मिनिस्टर ने ही अपनी तरफ से वहां यह बयान दिया है? 50 पैसे की वह जो बढ़ोतरी थी, इसमें क्या सब्जाई है वह बात भी क्लियर नहीं हुई है। मैं चाहता हूं कि इन सारी बातों का क्लेरीफिकेशन होना चाहिए।

सैयद सिन्ने रज़ी (उत्तर प्रदेश): मैडम, मुझे सरकार के कार्य करने के तरीके पर बहुत दुख और अफसोस हुआ कि क्योंकि यह मसला फाइनेंस मिनिस्टर और फाइनेंस मिनिस्टरों से ताल्लुक रखता है इसलिए इन सारी छोटी-छोटी गलतियों की वजह से देश के ऊपर इसका बहुत खराब असर पड़ता है और गवर्नमेंट की क्रेडेंसिबिलिटी पर क्वेश्चन मार्क लग जाता है। जैसा कि अभी ज़ाहिदी साहब ने कहा निश्चित रूप से आपको इसकी इन्क्वायरी करनी चाहिए, इसकी जांच करनी चाहिए कि इस मामले में—एक रुपया, आपने बिल्कुल साफ साफ कहा है, इसमें कहीं कोई कंप्यूजन नहीं है, जो आपने सैलियेंट फीचर, महत्वपूर्ण चीजें उजागर की हैं, आपने बजट में साफ कहा है कि Petrol cess of Re. 1/- per litre is to fund National Highway expansion. तो यह कंप्यूजन कहाँ से हो गया है? निश्चित रूप से इसकी एकाउन्टेबिलिटी होनी चाहिए। या तो आप इसकी जिम्मेदारी लीजिए या इसकी जिम्मेदारी नौकरशाही पर डालिए जिसकी लापरवाही की वजह से इतनी बड़ी गलती हो गई है। मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि यह पैसा आप कैसे पेट्रोल डीलर्स से वापस लेंगे? इसके लिए कोई न कोई कानून बनाना होगा क्योंकि आपके हुकम से उन्होंने प्राइस बढ़ा दिए हैं अब आप अगर उनसे कहेंगे कि पैसा वापस करिए और वह वापस नहीं करेंगे तो उस पर कानूनी लड़ाई शुरू हो जाएगी। इसलिए बेहतर तौर से आप इस मामले की जांच करिए और इसकी एकाउन्टेबिलिटी फिक्स करिए और जितना पैसा आ गया है उसे यकीनी तौर पर नेशनल हाईवे के एक्सपेंशन पर लगाएं और इस बात को निश्चित करना चाहिए कि भविष्य में इस तरह की कोई गलती नहीं होने जाए। यह बहुत महत्वपूर्ण मामला है और हम लोग इसके ऊपर काफी देर से चिन्तित हैं। आप यहां तथारीफ लगाए यह खुशी की बात है लेकिन निश्चित रूप से हम लोग कन्फर्म हैं और आप खुद भी राज्य सभा के सदस्य रह चुके हैं। हमें याद है जब हाउस के आप सदस्य थे तो आप प्रोपरायटीज़ के इश्यूज वहां उठाया करते थे और हम सब आपका साथ देते थे। अब किस्मत ने आपको साथ दिया है और आपकी पार्टी सत्ता में आई है और अब फाइनेंस मिनिस्टर हैं लेकिन आप अपने पुण्य हाउस की गरिमा का ध्यान रखेंगे, हमें ऐसा विश्वास है और निश्चित रूप से जैसे कि यहाँ पर कहा गया कि यह आज रात से सग्न होगा। तो आप इस तथक तबज़ीह दीजिये, इसका मेसेज तुरत जिस तरह से भी हो सके करने करें तो जो हमारे कंज्यूमर्स और हमारे परफार्मर्स रात के 12 बजे तक प्रभावित होने जा रहे हैं, वह प्रभावित न हों। यह महत्वपूर्ण सवाल है। हमें बहुत

अफसोस है, हमें इस इश्यु पर बहुत ज्यादा दुख है, आज आप इस परिस्थिति में आ कर खड़े हुए क्योंकि आपकी लियाकत, आपकी गम्भीरता और आपकी मामलात से निपटने की निष्पक्षता और लियाकत है, उससे हम सब प्रभावित रहे हैं, लेकिन हमें नहीं मालूम आप किस कंपनी में पुहंच गए हैं कि 15 दिन, एक महीने के अन्दर आपकी यह हालत हो गई है। हमें उम्मीद है कि आईदा ऐसा नहीं होगा। देश के ऐसे सवालात जो फाइनेंस मिनिस्ट्री के सुर्द हैं, उनको इस तरह से केजुअली नहीं लिया जाएगा। धुन्ने लगता है कि आपके डिपार्टमेंट में मामलात को केजुअली लिया जाता है। यह इसका एक एजेंडल है। हमें आपको एश्वोर करना चाहिये कि प्रचुर में आप ऐसा कोई कदम नहीं उठाएंगे जिससे ऐसा लगे कि फाइनेंस मिनिस्ट्री और आपकी सरकार देश के मामलात को केजुअली ले रही है।

॥सिद्धे सبطारुخی: मुद्दाम مجھے سرکار کے کام کرنے کا طریقہ پر بہت دکھ اور افسوس ہوا۔ کیونکہ یہ مسئلہ فائننس منسٹری سے تعلق رکھتا ہے اسلئے ان ساری چھوٹی موٹی غلطیوں کی وجہ سے دیش کے اوپر اسکا بہت خراب اثر پڑتا ہے اور کچھ رخصت کی کرڈیٹی بیلینٹی پر کوئٹیشن مارک لگ جاتا ہے۔ جیسا کہ امیں زاپری صاحب نے کہا نشیبت روپ سے آپ کو اسکی انکوائری کرنی چاہیے, اسکی جانچ کرنی چاہیے کہ اس معاملہ میں - ایک روپیہ, آپ نے بالکل صاف صاف کہا ہے - اس میں ہمیں کوئی کنفیوژن نہیں ہے - جو آپ نے سیمیلینٹ فیچر مہتویورن چیزیں اجاڑ

کی ہیں, آپ نے بحث میں صاف کہا ہے کہ:

Petrol cess of Rs. 1/- per liter is to fund National Highway expansion.

॥تو یہ کنفیوژن کہاں سے ہو گیا ہے۔ نشیبت روپ سے اسکی کاؤنٹیبلٹی ہوئی چاہئے۔ یا تو آپ اسکی ذمہ داری لیں یا اسکی ذمہ داری نوکر شاہی پر ڈالئے جسکی لاپرواہی کی وجہ سے اتنی بڑی غلطی ہو گئی ہے میں جانتا چاہتا ہوں کہ یہ پیسہ آپ کیسے پیٹرول ڈیزل سے واپس لینگے۔ اسکی لئے کوئی نہ کوئی قانون بنانا ہو گا کیونکہ آپ نے حکم سے انوں نے پرائس بڑھا دیے ہیں اب آپ اگر ان سے کہیں گے کہ پیسہ واپس کر لیں اور وہ نہیں کرینگے تو اس پر قانونی طرائق شروع ہو جائینگے۔ اسلئے بہتر طور سے آپ اسکی جانچ کرئے اور اسکی کاؤنٹیبلٹی فلکس کرئے اور جتنا پیسہ آگیا ہے اسے یقینی طور پر نیشنل ہائی وے کے ایکسپینشن پر لگائیں اور اس بات کو آپ کو نشیبت کرنا چاہیے کہ بھوشے میں اسلوحہ کی کوئی غلطی نہیں ہونے پائے۔ یہ بہت اہم معاملہ ہے اور ہم اسکی اوپر کافی دیر سے غور کر رہے ہیں۔ آپ یہاں تشریف لائے یہ خوشی کی بات ہے۔

لیکن نشیبت روپ سے ہم لوگ کسٹرن
ہیں اور آپ خود بھی راجیہ سبھا کے
ممبر رہ چکے ہیں۔ ہمیں یاد ہے جب
ہاؤس کے آپ سرد سید تھے تو آپ
پروپرائیٹیز کے ایشیہ بیاں اٹھا یا کرتے
تھے اور ہم سب آپ کا ساتھ دیتے تھے۔
آپ کی قسمت نے تو بکا ساتھ دیا
ہے اور آپ کی پارٹی سٹا میں آئی ہے
اور آپ فائنٹس منسٹریں۔ لیکن آپ
اپنے پرانے ہاؤس کی گریٹا کا دھیان
رکھتے۔ ہمیں ایسا وٹھواں ہے۔
اور نشیبت روپ سے جیسا کہ
یہاں پر کہا گیا ہے کہ یہ آج رات سے
لاگو ہوگا۔ تو آپ اس طرف توجہ دیجئے
اسکا میسج فوراً جسٹس سے بھیجیے
سکے کونے کریں تو جو ہمارے کنزیوٹرز
اور ہمارے پریزیڈنٹ کے رات کے ۱۲ بجے
تک برخواست ہونے جا رہے ہیں یوں
برخواست نہ ہوں۔ یہ ہتھیارن سوال
ہے۔ ہمیں بہت افسوس ہے، ہمیں اس
ایشیہ پر بہت زیادہ دکھ ہے آج آپ
اس پر مستحق ہیں اگر ٹکڑے ہوئے۔
کیونکہ آپ کی لیاقت، آپ کی گنجیم تار اور
آپ کے معاملات سے غم کی نشیبت اور
لیاقت ہے اس سے ہم سب برخواست
رہے ہیں لیکن ہمیں نہیں معلوم کہ آپ کس

کینی میں پہنچ گئے ہیں کہ ۵۵ دن اور ایک
مہینہ کے اندر آپ کی یہ حالت ہو گئی
ہے۔ ہمیں امید ہے کہ انکسور ایسا نہیں
ہوگا۔ دیش کے ایسے سوالات جو
فائنٹس منسٹری کے سپرد ہیں انکو اسلا
سے کنزیوٹی نہیں لیا جا رہا۔ مجھ لگتا
ہے کہ آپ کے ڈیپارٹمنٹ میں معاملات
کو کنزیوٹی لیا جاتا ہے۔ یہ اسکا ایک ایگز امپل
ہے۔ ہم آپکو ایشیہ رونا چاہتے ہیں کہ فیوچر
میں آپ کو ایسا قدم نہیں اٹھائیں گے
جس سے ایسا لگے کہ فائنٹس منسٹری
اور آپ کی سرکار دیش کے معاملات کو
کنزیوٹی لے رہی ہے۔

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): Mr. Minister.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Madam, Vice-Chairperson.... (Interruptions)... I am under the orders of the Chair. ... (Interruptions)...

श्री हेच० हनुमन्तप्पा (कर्णाटक): मैडम, आपको लेफ्ट साइड पर भी देखना चाहिये, हम भी छड़े हैं (व्यवधान)

उपसभाध्यक्ष (कुमारी सरोज खापर्डे): आप कुछ बोलना चाहेंगे? (व्यवधान)

श्री हेच० हनुमन्तप्पा: जी हाँ।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): Mr. Minister, will you yield for a minute?

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Okay, Madam.

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: I am sorry for my dear friend, Mr. Yashwant Sinha who has walked away to the other side. it is not a question of the Finance Ministry running this country, running

this administration. The whole country listened to the speech of the Finance Minister yesterday. He announced that he was increasing the cost of petrol by Re. 1/- more per litre. But the moment the vehicle goes to the petrol pump station, the dealer charges Rs. 4 or Rs. 3.80 per litre. Who is running this administration? Is the Ministry of Petroleum or the petrol pump station owner or the Finance Ministry or the Government of India who are sitting in Parliament? I am very sorry to say that the Government has exhibited itself in a very poor and casual manner. I thank Mr. Malhotra उन्होंने कहा जन भावना, क्या भावना है, कौन गवर्नमेंट चला रहा है? The Government has not given a proper explanation. Can the Ministry of Petroleum overrule the Budget promises? ...*(Interruptions)*... I am sorry if it is interpreted in the spirit of freedom. Yesterday, you have promised us a 'new India'. Can anybody rule? I was listening very carefully to your speech. You have promised a new India. Is the petrol pump station owner the master of new India, not the Government of India, not even the Finance Minister who had announced the Budget proposals? One instance has come on the day of your presentation of the Budget down the line. This shows how your administration is functioning. As my colleague, Syed Sibtey Razi, said Mr. Yashwant Sinha has joined that company. I do not know why. Whatever it is, I wish him good luck. But the Government owes an explanation. The Minister owes an apology to the people of this country for having done this mistake. It is a serious mistake. The Government has exhibited itself in a poor manner. I want to record my disenchantment on this with the Government.

SHRI K.M. KHAN (Andhra Pradesh): Madam Vice-Chairperson, I will not take much time of the House. The whole thing is very unfortunate. What has been done is not correct. I do not find any effort anyway to undo it. The people of the country have been duped. They have

already paid the money. There appears to be no way out as to how to collect the money back. However, I suggest to the hon. Minister to ensure that the excess money which has been paid by the consumers, that is, Rs. 4 per litre of petrol, the excess collection for the whole day should go to the fund of the National Highway Development so that the public is not cheated and the petrol dealers do not pocket this money. Thank you.

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: It is not a question of money, it is a question of the credibility of the Government. ...*(Interruptions)*....

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): It is not a discussion. I have given sufficient time to everybody...*(Interruptions)*... You have already spoken. Gurudasji has already spoken. Mr. Brahmakumar Bhatt, if I give you a chance to speak, the hon. Member sitting behind would also like to speak. Let Mr. Javare Gowda speak for half a minute. Then I will allow you to speak.

SHRI JAVARE GOWDA (Karnataka): Madam, the hon. Finance Minister has given the reason to roll back the fertilizer price to fifty paise. The reason given by the Finance Minister for doing so is the utilisation of other two types of manure. I would like to submit that even this enhancement will not make any change in the use of manure. My point is that by enhancing fifty paise the ryots will not stop using the particular manure. The ryots are struggling throughout the country. There is no monsoon. They are committing suicides. On behalf of the entire ryots I am making an earnest appeal to the Finance Ministry and to the B.J.P. Government to roll back the price fully. This is the need of the hour.

SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT (Gujarat): Madam, the first question is about the communication gap to which the hon. Minister has referred to. I would like to know as to between whom this communication gap was. Yesterday, we heard the discussion on the Budget on

TV till late night and in the presence of an efficient Secretary like Mr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, what was the communication gap and between whom? That is the question and that is the main thing as to where the communication gap was. The hon. Minister has referred to the overuse of urea. The question is that of balanced fertilizer. NPK is very popular. Now, DAP has taken the place of NPK because you cannot afford and as advised by the Agriculture Ministry, NPK is not to be used because potash is not necessary. Therefore, they are using DAP. But in any case, the Agriculture Minister will support my argument that the farmers of India, by and large, are using only the nitrogenous fertilizer. They know urea as the fertilizer, and I believe tomorrow, there are bye elections in 50 constituencies in this country and majority of the voters are farmers. So, in some States, some results here and there might change the Government also. That is very likely. Because of that effect on the farmers using fertilizers, the hon. Minister has felt overnight that this is a heavy burden on them, and therefore, the price is reduced to fifty paise. How has it happened? How did it strike the hon. Minister that the farmers require some more sympathy? How has he decided so? We would like to know.

SHRI YASWANT SINHA: Madam, I had the good fortune of starting my parliamentary career as a Member of this House. Various hon. Members here have referred to that period which I spent in this House and have also referred to the attitude that I had in those days to various issues. Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta is not here. He has made his point, and as usual, gone away so that he does not have to listen to the reply. He was a valued colleague not only in this House but in the Joint Parliamentary Committee also, as were other colleagues. I always feel great pleasure in coming to this House because I feel I am coming home whenever I come to this House after all these years that I spent. The point that I am making is that I would be the last

person to think in terms of doing anything which is not in accordance with the dignity of this House. I tell you as to what happened. I was in the House. I was answering questions in the morning from 11.00 AM to 12.00 Noon.

Then I laid some Papers on the Table of the House. Then I went to the other House. And in the other House, there was some discussion going on. I responded to that discussion, and in terms of the clarification which I had offered here. That was the clarification which I offered in that House also. Why? Not because that issue was raised in that other House, not because that issue was not raised here when I sat through past twelve, but because I was myself surprised when I found out that motor-spirit prices have gone up beyond what I had announced and I had planned. And, therefore, I got in touch immediately with the Officers concerned, and I set in motion the process of correcting it. Now I would like to say here, we all work in a parliamentary democracy. Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta said, "Officers are responsible." He doesn't think I am responsible. I think, I am responsible because I am the only one who is accountable to this House, I am the only one who is accountable to Parliament. My officers are not accountable to Parliament, and, therefore, if anyone has to take the blame, I will take the blame. I will not put the blame on my officers as far as this House is concerned because this is the way the parliamentary system, the parliamentary democracy must function. I would not like to hide behind blaming officers.

Now, a number of points have been raised here by way of clarifications. One is the question of parliamentary propriety. Now when I made that clarificatory statement in the other House, it was very much in my mind that I should come at the soonest possible opportunity and make the same clarification before this House also. But I was held up in that House. I don't want to comment on the proceedings of that House. It is not done in our system, that we refer to that

House in this House, to this House in that House; this is not done. At least, that was the practice when I was here the last time. So, I am not referring to what happened. But what I would like to say is, I got held up there for a longer while than I had imagined. In the mean while, the issue was raised here, and it was communicated to me; your ruling, Madam, was communicated to me, and I took the first opportunity to come here and clarify the situation. So, as far as the dignity of this House is concerned, as far as the parliamentary propriety is concerned, I would like to assure the Members of this House that I will be second to none in upholding that.

Public transport is not affected, as we know, by any increase in petroleum prices because buses, etc. run on diesel and not on petrol. It is only the personalised mode of public transport which is affected. But because the clarification has been given by me, and already the Government has issued the clarification also through a Press note, there will be absolutely no doubt in anybody's mind as to the intention of the Government and as to the fact that the prices of motor-spirit will be rolled back.

Now, the question, which was also raised here by my colleague, Mr. Vijay Kumar Malhotra, is: What will happen to the monies collected? I think a very eminent suggestion has come, that we should collect all this money and transfer it to the National Highways Authority, which is what we were planning to do with a one-rupee increase. Now this is a very eminent suggestion, and I will certainly look into this and see whether the monies collected within the 24 hours, or between the last night midnight and tonight midnight could be so transferred. This is a possibility which I will certainly examine so that any loss on the part of the consumers becomes the gain for public welfare. It doesn't go to any one individual. I will also say that if I understand the system of petroleum-distribution, I would like to say that any petroleum dealer who would have picked up

petroleum, today it is the motor-spirit, would have paid a high price, and from midnight tonight, he will be selling at the older price. So, it is something which evens out. But even then, I will be quite willing to look at that possibility.

Now as far as the other issues are concerned, the moment all this came to my notice, we acted *post haste* to correct the situation, and I don't think, I should be criticised for having corrected the situation. In fact, I think, it is a matter which will satisfy the whole House that when a mistake was noticed the Government moved immediately to correct the situation and I would like to assure the House on behalf of the Government that there is absolutely no question of any ineptitude, there is no question of any inefficiency, there is no question of any lack of will. The Government shall continue to function with full vigour, with complete will power, and we shall continue to do good by the people of this country for which they have sent us to this House and the other House and they have given us the opportunity to govern this country for a while. Thank your very much.

THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION BILL, 1997—Contd.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): Shri Vijay Kumar Malhotra.

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (Delhi): Madam, I am not speaking on the Bill.

SHRI S. S. BARNALA: Madam Chairperson, I am thankful to the hon. Members who all have supported this Bill. They mentioned that this Bill should have come earlier. Some delay has taken place. This treaty was signed on 14th of January, 1993. It was a difficult treaty at that time. Many years had taken for discussing the matter, and ultimately wiser counsel prevailed and many countries decided gradually to sign this treaty. We signed it in 1993. The other countries also started signing it and the