

(xxiii) G.S.R. No. 314 (E), dated 2.6.98, seeking to publish the prescribe retail sale price based assessment for certain specified commodities.

(xxiv) G.S.R. No. 315 (E), dated 2.6.98, seeking to rescind a notification.

(xxv) G.S.R. No. 316 (E), dated 2.6.98, seeking to rescind certain notifications.

[Placed in Library For (ix) to (xxv) See No. LT.—973/98]

IV. A copy each (in English and Hindi) of the following papers:—

(a) Annual report and Accounts of the National Housing Bank, New Delhi, for the year 1996-97, together with the Auditors' report on the Accounts, under sub-section (5) of section 40 of the National Housing Bank Act, 1987.

(b) Statement giving reasons for the delay in laying the papers mentioned at (a) above.

[Placed in Library See No. LT.—1350/98]

V. Thirty-sixth Annual Report of the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation, Mumbai, for the year 1997-98, under sub-section (2) of section 32 of the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation Act, 1961.

[Placed in Library See No. LT.—1351/98]

#### REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE ON SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE (West Bengal): Sir, present the following Reports (in English and Hindi) of the Committee on Subordinate Legislation:—

(i) Hundred and Twentieth Report on Petroleum Rules, 1976, OISD Standards and Related Areas.

(ii) Hundred and Twenty first Report on Oil Fields (Regulation and De-

velopment) Act, 1948 and Petroleum and Natural Gas Rules, 1959 made thereunder.

#### REPORTS OF THE DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU (West Bengal): Sir, I lay on the Table a copy each (in English and Hindi) of the following Reports of the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Urban and Rural Development:—

(i) Sixth Report on the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty-Sixth Report of the Standing Committee on Urban & Rural Development (Tenth Lok Sabha) on Preparation, Maintenance, Updating and Computerisation of Land Records under Centrally Sponsored Schemes—An Assessment, of the Department of Rural Development (Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment); and

(ii) Seventh Report on Integrated Wastelands Development Project (IWDP) Scheme of the Department of Wastelands Development (Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment).

#### CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Steep rise in the inflation and its adverse impact on the economy and the people

MR CHAIRMAN: We will now take up the Calling Attention Motion. Dr. Manmohan Singh is not here. Shri Gurudas Das Gupta

श्री रमा शंकर कौशिक (उत्तर प्रदेश): सभापति महोदय, हमारी लोकतांत्रिक व्यवस्था और संसदीय परंपराओं को तोड़ने का काम हो रहा है। मैंने निवेदन किया था कि लखनऊ में आई.पी.एस. और ऑ.पी.एस. अधिकारियों की मीटिंग हुई..... (व्यवधान)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Today there will be nothing else, only the Calling Attention Motion. (Interruptions)

आज कुछ नहीं.....(व्यवधान) स्टेट गवर्नमेंट का मामला नहीं...(व्यवधान)

प्रो० विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा (दिल्ली): सर, इसको रिकार्ड में नहीं जाना चाहिए...(व्यवधान)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record. (Interruptions) Only call Attention. (Interruptions) Only call Attention. (Interruptions) Only Call Attention. (Interruptions) Shri Gurudas Das Gupta. (Interruptions) Shri Gurudas Das Gupta. (Interruptions) Nothing will go on record. (Interruptions) Shri Gurudas Das Gupta. (Interruptions) Shri Gurudas Das Gupta.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA (West Bengal): Sir, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Finance to the steep rise in the inflation and its adverse impact on the economy and the people.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I share the concern of the hon. Member about the sharp increase in the prices of some of the essential commodities, particularly vegetables. The potato crop is estimated to be 60 lakh tonnes lower in 1997-98 and the onion crop is lower by six lakh tonnes due to prolonged wet spell in the Rabi season followed by a hot dry spell in May and June. These estimates are as yet tentative but there is enough evidence to suggest that 1997-98 output of vegetables and fruits is much lower. This has had an adverse effect on prices. On this I will come back a little later.

The recent uptrend in the inflation rate should be seen in the context of what this Government inherited. If we look at the present decade beginning 1990-91 — I wish my friends from the Congress Party were here to listen to some of the facts which I wish to present to the House—we have had a average inflation rate of over 10% in the six year period 1990-91 to 1995-96. Even if one were to disregard 1991-92, which was characterised by a high inflation rate of 13.7%, we still have an average inflation rate of over 9% during the Congress Government's

rule. Even on point-to-point basis, the average inflation rate during this period was close to 8%.

When the Congress Government left office, the next Government did inherit a decelerating average inflation rate of 6.3% in 1996-97 which reached a low of 4.8% in 1997-98 when the UF Government left office. However, this two year deceleration phase was characterised by slow down in growth of the economy, decline in exports, acceleration in money supply growth which reached 17%, and expansion in fiscal deficit to 6.1% of GDP.

Uptrend in prices began in January, 1998 and accelerated thereafter having touched 8.1% as on 11.7.1998. This year's inflation is to a large extent due to high prices of vegetables and edible oils, but for which, the inflation would still have been just about 6%. Other major reasons are the general decline in the economy together with high growth in money supply and widening fiscal deficit that characterised 1997-98, as well as unprecedented East Asian crisis which has disrupted the world market for edible oils. This is what this Government inherited. Let me now come back to the recent sharp price rise in some of the essential commodities that has caused great anguish to the public. This year seasonal rise in price level is much higher. Onion price skyrocketed by 300 per cent in November — December 1997 when UF government was still there. But by February — March prices came back to normal level, with the arrival of the new crop. I should like to remind the House that some years in the past also were characterised by sharp rise in prices of onion and potato. For example, on an annual point to point basis, onion prices were higher by 96 per cent on April 1993, 180 per cent in November, 1993 and by 85 per cent in March 1996. As for potatoes, a seasonal increase of around 50 per cent was quite common in the past. Last year potato farmers suffered tremendous losses when prices crashed from an index of 600 in November, 1996 to a low of 167 in May, 1997.

Amongst the 30 essential commodities whose prices are monitored on a weekly basis, foodgrains are the most important. Wholesale prices of rice, wheat, *jowar* and *bajra* as also some pulses (except *arhar* and *masur*) have by and large remained stable. Gram prices are actually lower by 11.7 per cent over last year though *arhar* price has increased sharply by nearly 33.8 per cent and *masur* by 22.2 per cent. The House has already been informed that pulses production had declined by 14 lakh tonnes in 1997-98.

Prices of edible oils too have risen sharply, particularly the prices of groundnut oil and mustard oil. I must point out that the spurt in edible oil prices this year was the result of decline in oilseeds production by about 13 lakh tonnes. The situation is further aggravated by high international prices of edible oil. FOB prices of palmolen from Malaysia rose from \$ 547 per tonne in December 1997 to \$730 per tonne in May-June 1998 following the export restrictions by Indonesia.

Onion prices are likely to fall shortly with the arrival of pre-Kharif crop but in case of potatoes one may have to wait for some more time though some decline is already seen consequent to opening of sale outlets through co-operative stores. I may remind the hon. Members that perishable seasonal commodities such as fruits and vegetables are perhaps the only consumer items whose prices after going up also come down in response to increase in supplies.

I must, however, mention that government intervention for managing supplies of seasonal and perishable commodities such as vegetables has its limitations, since one can neither import on short notice nor are such products available in large volumes. Their import prices would be prohibitive in view of costs of refrigerated transportation.

Fortunately, we are in the midst of monsoon season and the country is likely to have yet another normal monsoon this year. There is a general expectation that

1998-99 output of agriculture will be much better than the preceding year, which should bring considerable relief to the general public.

PDS continues to be the dominant measure of intervention by the Government to ensure availability of the most important essential commodities such as rice, wheat and sugar. It shall be the endeavour of the Government to ensure that the system operates effectively. Whereas Centre ensures supplies, the State administrations have the responsibility for distribution.

To supplement availability of some essential commodities we have in place a trade policy regime that makes it easier for private trade to import pulses and edible oils since both these are not adequately produced in the country. The Government has reduced the import duty on edible oils recently from 25 per cent to 15 per cent as a price reduction measure. Also 1.5 lakh tonnes are being imported by the Government for supply through PDS.

Some short term measures to control vegetable prices have been taken. State Governments have been advised to invoke Essential Commodities Act to check hoarding. Consumer co-operative stores and NAFED have been activated to intervene and sell onion and potato at lower prices. prices of potato and onion have already shown some decline.

Aside from supply management and trade policy, Government will keep a tight check on the fiscal deficit and advise RBI to keep the growth of money supply within the target range of 15-15.5 per cent in 1998-99. This will help contain the rise in prices of all commodities, including essential commodities. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, the statement made by the hon. Minister of Finance appears to me to be an irresponsible statement of the Government that has abdicated its responsibility when the country is perhaps facing the

gravest crisis arising out of an unheard of inflationary situation. I call it irresponsible because the hon. Minister finds satisfaction in saying as to what has been the level of inflation during the period when he was not the Finance Minister. Sir, the point is that it is nobody's contention that inflation is not such a thing which is not common to the Indian economy. But, what is strange is that the hon. Minister does not realise the gravity of the situation. If the gravity of the situation is not to be realised by the members of the Government and the members of the combination which is ruling the country, then the conclusion is that the Government lacks a political conviction, a political will to tackle this situation. The missing factor is the political conviction, the political will of the Government which is ruling the country. Sir, the point is as to what has been done in this three-months' period. Has there been any respite in the rise of the prices level? Has the Government been able to activate the PDS?

Is it not true that the Government has failed even to discipline the traders who believe that a trader-friendly Government has come to power? That is the moot question. The inaction of the Government, the lack of political courage of the Government, the lack of action on the part of the Government is a matter which makes the people feel concerned about. Sir, the essential point to me is this. It is the economic misrule which is responsible for the critical inflationary situation that has been created. Sir, it is an economic misrule. Sir, the point is that many economic fundamentals have gone wrong. It is not a seasonal spurt. Many of the economic fundamentals have gone wrong and it may be well beyond the level of a reasonable management. There has been a talk, there has been an attempt to underestimate the level of inflation of this country. The hon. Minister has his own statistics to tell the country as to what are the items the prices of which have been stationary. I am not going into individual items. But, the point is that inflation is being calculated in term of the wholesale

price index. Sir, it is a fraud to calculate inflation in terms of wholesale price index. I agree that this fraud has been committed by the successive Governments and by the successive Finance Ministers. He is towing the line of his predecessors. If we look at the wholesale price index, we find that it was 6.4 per cent in the month of May. But, if we calculate the rate of inflation in terms of the consumer price index valid for the industrial workers, we find that the inflation rate is 10.5 per cent in May 1998. The country is facing a double digit inflation not only today, but it was so in May also. Sir, today the wholesale price index, as prepared by the Government, is 8.5 per cent. If the wholesale price index is 8.5 per cent, then the real inflation is of the order of more than 10 per cent, around 11 to 12 per cent.

This is a fact that the hon. Minister would like to suppress. Suppression of fact tantamounts to committing a fraud and fraud is being committed on the public opinion of the country. The country is facing inflation at the rate of 11% to 12%. It is valid for all commodities. Sir, kindly believe that India is a place where concentration of poor people is highest in the world. And, 1/3rd of the poor people of the world live in India and inflationary situation has been created because of the economic misrule and financial mismanagement. What it means for poor people? For a poor agricultural worker, it means, dispensing with at least, one meal a day. Nolonger, dal roti is available for the poor people who constituted not less than 40% of the population of this country. This is the impact on the poor people. for the middle class, it is sizzling onions and deep fried potatoes option. For a women who manages the budget of a family, deep holes are being perforated by the inflationary situation. The hon. Finance Minister is not aware of the complexity of the inflationary situation. We are facing a puzzling situation. The situation is low-down on the one hand and inflation on the other. There is slow-down on the

economic activity. It is stagnation and inflation. It is unabated recession rather than inflation only.

It is not a question of inflation alone. The economy has been slow-down, the recession has not been contained and in such a situation, we are facing more than a double digit inflation. Therefore, the most disquieting feature of the present inflation that is ruling the country is, inflationary pressure is not linked with the growth of demand. Inflationary situation is not linked with the buoyancy of industry. Therefore, it is a situation of stagnation and inflation. The hon. Minister finds satisfaction to call it a seasonal rise in the prices of commodities to absolve himself from the responsibility of taking concrete action as a retaliatory measure. Sir, the point is, what are the factors responsible for such a situation of stagnation and inflation? It is not only the poor people who have been affected most but it is the common middle class, having fixed income who do not thrive on black marketing, are the worst sufferers. The most important factor is, the Budgetary levies have to be held responsible for the increase in prices.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gupta, see the time.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Yes, Sir. The Budgetary levies have to be held responsible for inflationary situation. Secondly, there is a shortfall in agricultural production. That is known to everybody. There is a negative growth in agriculture. Why the agricultural commodities are being allowed to be exported from the country compounding further the complexity of the problem of the inflationary situation? Sir, as has been pointed out by the Leader of the Opposition, the Government has undertaken excessive borrowings from the market. There has been an extraordinary increase in the supply of money. There has been a constant decrease in the external value of the Indian Rupee. Sir, while discussing the Budget, we had pointed out that the nature of the

Budget, preponderance of indirect taxation, has been one of the most important factors that was producing runaway inflation in the country.

The next point is, the reckless adventure that was undertaken by the present Government by having Pokhran explosions. What are the consequences? The threat of sanctions has made the Indian economy nervous and as a result, there is an outflow of two billion American dollars since September. The total foreign exchange reserve, we had, was around 26 billion dollars. Now, today it is less than 24 billion American dollars. It is made an impact on the economy, and has made it nervous, made foreign investment difficult, and has created a situation, arising out of scarcity, more vulnerable for the Government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have already taken ten minutes, please conclude now...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, I am just concluding, but when I move ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no, please conclude.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, please give me some more time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no, please conclude ...*(Interruptions)*... Please conclude ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, unfortunately the reaction of political leaders is they do not believe to respond to the situation of the country.

श्री विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा (दिल्ली): इस सेशन में इस पर छठी बार बहस हो रही है, सिक्स्थ टाइम और वही बातें रीपीट हो रही हैं।

श्री ईश दत्त यादव (उत्तर प्रदेश): जब तक महंगाई है, जब तक रोज बहस होगी।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please complete this.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, it is not only the insensitivity that is the problem, but it is intolerance also that is

the problem. Therefore, the problem is until the economic fundamentals are not corrected, we cannot get out of the vicious circle of stagnation and inflation. There is to be a long-term plan. There is to be a long-term strategy. We would like to know from the Government what is the long-term strategy to tackle the situation, arising out of stagnation and inflation. How are you going to correct the growing anarchism and imbalance within the economy, without which no short-term measure can succeed?

Sir, while coming to the end, I would like to know what the impact of inflation has been? What has been the impact of stagnation? There has been no creation of jobs. There has been down-sizing of industry. There has been retrenchment. Only in the service sector 25 per cent of the total employment opportunities have been reduced. In many of the private sector and public sector companies the annual increment has not been given. As a result, there is a stagnation of income on the one hand, and an inflationary situation on the other hand. The Finance Minister has been armed with a double-barrel gun. Sir, the most important point is that it is not only a question of increase in the price of vegetables, but the prices of medicines have also increased by 25 per cent. To speak the least, not only that, the hon. Minister knew the fragile condition of the economy. Why the increase in petroleum prices was given effect to; Why was there such a Railway Budget? They have increased the cost of transport. So, that must be considered to be an important factor to bring about cost push inflation in the country. Therefore, the point is that the Government abdicated its responsibility, and it is absolutely clear that the Government has no political conviction. It is a sinking directionless economy. The Government seems to be a lone spectator, just looking at the scenario of the country. Sir, I would like to know from him what steps is he going to take to correct the economic fundamentals? I would like to know from him what steps are being

taken to revive the economy, to improve the economic performance, the general economic performance of the country, without which inflationary situation cannot be tackled? I would like to know whether it is true that traders believe that there are people in power, who are friendly to them? What is the Government going to do to discipline traders? What have they done in Delhi itself? What are they going to do to discipline traders because taking the advantage of scarcity, they are increasing the prices and hoarding essential commodities, and minting money in the country? What action does the Government propose to take, at least in Delhi? Let us know what the Government is doing. Thirdly, I would like to know from them why there has not been a ban on the export of agricultural products? Since the prices of all the agricultural commodities are on the rise, why cannot there be a temporary ban? I would like to know from the Government why stringent action is not sought to be taken against the traders who have been found to be delinquent. Sir, I would like to know whether the Government is interested in immediately calling a meeting of the State Governments. And together with the State Governments, chalk out a collective strategy to face the situation.

Lastly, I would like to know why the PDS has been completely liquidated and why subsidized rationing cannot be arranged at least for the people living below the poverty line. Why has it not been done?

Lastly, I would like to know whether Government will ensure that, taking advantage of the situation, the attack that is being mounted on the working population of the country by stagnating their income by not giving effect to bilateral agreements, it is going to take up this matter with the private sector as well as with the public sector. (*interruption*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is all right. Now, Shri Gopalsinh Solanki. All the

Members who will now be called will get only three minutes each.

SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI (Gujarat): It is a fact that prices of all the commodities have risen like anything. So far as the market is concerned, it is a matter of grave concern. The prices of almost all the commodities have risen like anything. Even the common class of the people have been affected. If we consider the aspect of vegetables, inflation, of course, has come down in comparison to the last four years. But, at the same time the prices of vegetables have gone up. The price of onion has gone up by Rs. 40, potato Rs. 20. Then for the other items like lemon, the price has gone up from Rs. 25 to Rs. 40, beans from Rs. 28 to Rs. 40, capsicum from Rs. 20 to 40. But, at the same time I would like to refer to some Gujarati items also. It is not that the prices have not risen right from 1948. I will refer to one Gujarati article in which it has been stated that in 1948. (interruption)

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU (West Bengal): Are we discussing the price rise in 1948? (interruption)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do not waste time. When your turn comes, you can speak. (interruption).

SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: There is no need for intervention. If you can compare the inflation of two or three years, I can compare right from 1948 onwards.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: We have no problem. (interruption)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do not waste time. (interruption)

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Why only post-independence prices, you can even compare the prices of pre-independence period. (interruption)

श्री मोहम्मद सलीम (पश्चिमी बंगाल): इंडस सिविलाइजेशन से ही महंगाई बढ़ी है (व्यवधान) अरे छोड़िये, 50 साल से राज कर रहे हैं (व्यवधान) आप किस की बात कर रहे हैं? (व्यवधान) चेहरा तो वही है (व्यवधान) क्वालिटी तो वही है (व्यवधान)

† श्री मोहम्मद सलीम: انڈس سivilization سے ہی مہنگائی بڑھی ہے۔ "بمداخلت" ارے چھوڑو 50 سال سے راج کر رہے ہیں۔ "بمداخلت"۔۔۔ آپ کس کی بات کر رہے ہیں۔ "بمداخلت"۔۔۔ چہرہ تو وہی ہے۔ "بمداخلت"۔۔۔ کوالٹی تو وہی ہے۔ "بمداخلت"۔۔۔

श्री रामदास अग्रवाल (राजस्थान): हमारी क्या जिम्मेदारी है (व्यवधान) जिम्मेदारी आपकी है। (व्यवधान)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, please sit down. (interruption) Let him speak. There is nothing unparliamentary.

SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: Ghee was available for 75 paise in 1948. The rate of ghee at present is Rs. 140 per kg. Then potato was available for just 25, naye paise, it was known as four annas. We were able to live with less money in our hands during those days. (Interruptions)

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: You can also talk about the position before 1947, when the British were there! (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Why are you getting into arguments with them? You go on with your speech.

SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: It was a surprising thing for me that with one rupee, we were able to purchase two kg. of ghee during those days.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: He is narrating some fairy tale here. (Interruptions)

श्री मोहम्मद सलीम: सोलंकी जी को मालूम होगा कि गुजरात में एक जगह है वहां पर लोथल कौड़ी से खरीदा जाता था... (व्यवधान)

† [Transliteration in Arabic Script]

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۱۱ شہری محمد سلیم : سولانکی جی کو معلوم  
ہو گا کہ تجرات میں ایک جگہ ہے وہاں  
بروز قتل کوڑی سے خریداجاتا تھا۔۔  
۔۔۔ مداخلت۔۔۔

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: He is saying things which my grandfather used to say. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would ask hon. Members not to interrupt Mr. Solanki.

SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: Sir, I would like to draw your attention to one thing. I am not going to compare other things. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Solanki, I do not know why you are responding to them and becoming a victim.

SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: I will not.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA (West Bengal): It has become a joke. He is saying things which my grandfather used to say. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: Sir, my Communist friends are in the habit of interrupting not only during the other part of the proceedings, but during the Question Hour also. They are known for encroaching upon the rights of the other Members. They do not allow us to speak. It has become a tradition on their part. I am sorry to say all these things.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please continue with your speech.

SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: When they speak, we never interrupt. (*Interruptions*)

Of course, the prices of some vegetables have gone up. But Sir, the rate of inflation has been contained during the BJP rule. Three years, before, it was eleven per cent or so. This year it has stopped at 8 per cent. (*Interruptions*) That is admitted by you also.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Again, you are responding. Why do you respond?

SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: At the same time, I would like to know from the Government as to what steps they are going to take to bring down the prices of vegetables to the earlier position. I would like to point out here that the Congress Government had failed to fulfil their promise that they made in their manifesto that they would bring down the prices to the level which existed before 1990. They could not do it.

The rates have gone up because of the introduction of cold storage in the case of vegetables. The rates have gone up because of the introduction of five per cent discount charged by the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee. The rates have gone up because of the intermediaries with the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee who are taking a higher rate of brokerage, to the tune of 8 per cent, as is happening in Ahmedabad.

The Government has to adopt a common approach, applicable throughout the nation, by means of which the prices could be brought down. The cold storage must be stopped. Not only that. We need to amend the Co-operatives Act also. The NDDB, for example, has a large storage. There is no provision in the Co-operatives Act by which they can compel them to declare their stock during the season. Therefore, sometimes, the price of groundnut oil goes up. That is why I suggest that the Co-operatives Act should be amended. We should also bring in amendments to the Essential Commodities Act. I would like to know whether the Government is thinking of bringing forward amendments to these two Acts.

At the same time, the common class of people is not concerned with groundnut oil. Those who are poor do not need groundnut oil. Even if they do not have it, they would pull on. Such people would pull on with just some loaves or bread, chillies and onion. But it is a very sorry

state of affairs that the prices of onion also has gone up. If a person is there whose family consists of, say, four persons, and if he gets Rs. 45/- per day as a manual labourer, it is very difficult, for him to pull on and feed his family members. Actually, they do not want luxurious things. They do not want oil, etc. They do not want to have a tasteful food.

Even if they eat bread, onion and chillies, they cannot provide two meals, lunch and dinner, to their families in just Rs. 45/-. So, the Government should think of the common man.

Thank you.

SHRI S. PETER ALPHONSE (Tamil Nadu): Thank you, Sir, for this opportunity to participate in this discussion.

There is a steep increase in prices. The statement of the Finance Minister gives all the relevant details, including the present rate of inflation.

One thing which I do not understand from the Minister's statement is that he says that the inflation is due to seasonal factors and that this Government cannot do anything. He says that the present situation is something which was inherited from the previous regime. I want to ask of the Finance Minister whether they were aware of these signals. I think the Government should have known these things, anticipated the pressures and devised strategies to ward them off. Instead of blaming the season, less agricultural production and other factors, the Government should have anticipated all these things, and it should have found ways and means to contain the inflation.

Various friends who participated in the discussion gave so many reasons for this. I find that the only reason for the present state of affairs is non-governance by the present Government, the BJP Government. There is no governance at all. The Government has got 20 wheels in 20 directions. You have time only for coalition politics. You do not have time

to attend to the people's problems. That is the reason. Every year there was monsoon or failure of monsoon. The agricultural production goes up and down. But it is the duty of the sitting Government to see what can be done. You cannot simply say that the monsoon is not sufficient and that it is a seasonal failure.

I do not blame the Finance Minister for deliberately ignoring this. This is the case not only with vegetables but other commodities also. The prices of dry cells have gone up. The price of paint has gone up. There is an article in "THE ECONOMIC TIMES" today. It says that the cement price is rising because of reduction in the output. What is the reason? Cement does not need rains for production. It does not depend on agricultural production or on seasonal factors. The cement industry is deliberately cutting down the production.

What is the reason? When the production goes down and the prices go up, what is the net result? Ultimately, the common man in the street suffers. It is a pitiable situation in India that prevails today. The common man is neither looked after by the Government nor looked after by the Opposition. He is on the street. Nobody takes care of him. This is the situation. Therefore, we ask for direct intervention by the Government.

In his statement, the Finance Minister says that the inflation is caused by some factors beyond the control of the Government. The fall in the agricultural production may be one of the reasons. But I want to ask of the Minister whether he does not think that the hike in the import surcharge and excise duties has also contributed to the inflation marginally. Then, the Government's huge borrowing target for the year has already put pressures on the interest rates. Is this not a reason for the inflation? There is rise in the money supply also. It is at present 17 per cent, and it is likely to overshoot further. As the Government resorts to more and more monetisation

and the depreciating rupee pushes the import prices, all these things contribute to the inflation. Most of the them are deliberate acts of the Government.

Even when the Budget was presented, we were able to warn the Government that the trend of the Budget was inflationary. I can take the credit. It was the UF Government which had kept the prices at a stable and steady level for 20 months. The rate of inflation was 4.5 per cent. Immediately after we left the Government, within two months, the rate of inflation is 8.8 per cent now.

The effect of the Budget has not been reflected in the price index. Once the effect of the Budget is also passed into the price index, inflation will gallop and the commonest of the common man will suffer a lot. Therefore, I warn this Government in this regard. The Government should have a basic instinct to survive. You can survive a falling down of the Rupee, you can survive the increase in the price of petrol, you can survive anything, but you cannot survive if there is an increase in the prices of commodities of daily use like vegetable, edible oil, all other grocery items, cement, paints and so on. If prices of these items go up, people will not support your Government. You have to see the writing on the wall.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is all right. Please conclude now.

SHRI S. PETER ALPHONSE: So, I request the Government to take early steps to regulate the money supply and to find out ways and means to increase production and also to give more employment, as my learned friend has put it. Employment has not increased and there is a deliberate stagnation. With these words, I conclude.

**श्रीमती चन्द्रकला पांडेय (पश्चिमी बंगाल):** धन्यवाद, सभापति महोदय। एक बार मुझे फिर आज के ध्यानकर्षण प्रस्ताव पर मंत्री जी का जो जवाब मिला है, उसको पढ़कर बहुत घोर निराशा हुई है।

महोदय, इस सत्र के आरंभ के दिन से ही मूल्य-वृद्धि की समस्या पर हम लोग प्रश्न उठा रहे हैं और सोच रहे हैं कि सरकार इस मामले में जरूर कुछ पहल करेगी, लेकिन बड़े ही दुख और खेद का विषय है कि महंगाई जहां थी, वहीं है और हमारी बातें भी कोई नहीं सुनता। जनता की बातें हम यहां उठाते हैं, उस का जवाब हमें मौसम या और किन्हीं बातों पर दोष देकर मिल जाता है। सभापति जी, एक महिला होने के नाते मैं ने साधारण घर चलाने वाली महिलाओं से बात की है और उस से जो चीज उभर कर आई है, वह यह है कि चार सदस्यों वाले परिवार में एक महिला को अपना घर चलाने के लिए अन्य जरूरत की चीजों को छोड़ दीजिए केवल दाल, एक सब्जी और कुछ रोटियां या उतना ही चावल जिस से कि पेट न भर सके — इस सब के लिए 50 रुपए एक समय के भोजन पर खर्च करने पड़ते हैं अगर वह सौ रुपए प्रति दिन के भोजन पर खर्च करे तो 3 हजार रुपए मासिक वेतन पाने वाले लोग गरीबी की रेखा के नीचे आ जाते हैं। फिर आप कहते हैं कि विविध प्रकार की मांगें हो रही हैं — पोस्टल सर्विस वाले और हैल्थ सर्विस वाले मांग कर रहे हैं। उन के द्वारा अपनी तनखाह की बढ़ोतरी की मांग करना क्या बेवाजिब है? आप ने एक प्रश्न के उत्तर में जो आंकड़े दिए हैं, बजट के पहले और बजट के बाद, उन के अनुसार महंगाई काफी बढ़ गई है। महोदय, मैं आंकड़ों में नहीं जाना चाहूंगी, लेकिन आज मैंने इन सारी चीजों की कीमत बाजार से पूर्ण तो पता चला कि मार्च में जिस आलू की कीमत 6 रुपए थी, वह जुलाई में 16 रुपए हो गयी, टमाटर 8 से 40 रुपए हो गया, प्याज 5 से 16 रुपए, गोभी 15 से 30 रुपए, बंद गोभी 12 से 20 रुपए, भिंडी 10 से 20 रुपए, परमल 10 से 20 रुपए, टिंडा जैसी सब्जी 6 से 12 रुपए हो गई है। महोदय, हरी मिर्च जोकि प्राथमिक जरूरत हो गयी है और जब कुछ न हो तो नमक, मिर्च से ही रोटी खालें, वह भी 4 रुपए से 10 रुपए, अरहर की दाल 24 से 33 रुपए, काबुली चना 21 से 28 रुपए, मलका 25 से 29 रुपए और राजमा 28 से 40 रुपए हो गयी है।

सभापति जी, पता नहीं सत्ता पक्ष के लोगों को अतीत में झांकने की आदत क्यों पड़ गयी कभी एक जमाने में तो “वाटर इकॉनोमी” थी जबकि चीजों के बदले चीजें मिलती थीं। आप उस जमाने की बात छोड़ें, आज जो महंगाई हो रही है, महोदय, मैं आप के माध्यम से मंत्री जी से पूछना चाहूंगी कि आप ने ऐसा कौनसा कठोर कदम उठाया है जिस से कि यहां के जो व्यापारी मुनाफाखोर हैं, कालाबाजारी हैं जोकि बेलागाम इस

महंगाई को बढ़ाते चले जा रहे हैं, उन के विरुद्ध आप क्या कार्यवाही करेंगे? महोदय, हमारे कृषि मंत्री जी ने एक दिन एक प्रश्न के जवाब में कह दिया कि टमाटर खाने की जरूरत क्या है। सभापति जी, ऐसे प्रश्न हास्यास्पद हैं। मैं मंत्री जी से कैटेगोरिकल एश्योरेंस चाहूंगी कि इन सौ दिनों जो महंगाई बढ़ी है, आप आने वाले दस दिनों के भीतर इस पर कंट्रोल लगाने के लिए कौन से सख्त कदम उठाएंगे? दूसरा प्रश्न, मैं यह पूछना चाहूंगी कि आप की प्राथमिकता क्या है? सत्ता में आते ही सब से पहले आप ने यह सोचा कि देश का पहले नंबर का दुश्मन कौन है — चीन है या पाकिस्तान है? उस के लिए आप को शक्ति परीक्षण की जरूरत महसूस हुई, प्रो-एक्टिव तरीके अख्तियार करने की जरूरत महसूस हुई, पश्चिम बंगाल में केन्द्रीय टीम भेजने की जरूरत महसूस हुई।

इसमें आप बहुत ही तत्पर थे, लेकिन आपके ही इकोनोमिक सर्वे ने यह बता दिया था मूल्य वृद्धि के पूर्व आभास क्या है! तो मैं जानना चाहूंगी कि आपने उसके लिए क्या सतर्कता बरती और कौन से कारगर कदम उठाए, जिससे आप इस महंगाई पर रोक लगा सकें। सभापति महोदय, अभी महाराष्ट्र के उन गरीब जरी वर्कर को लेकर यह लोग परेशान हैं, लेकिन यह नहीं सोच रहे हैं कि देश की जनता, जो भूखमरी के कगार पर खड़ी हुई है, उनके लिए क्या करेंगे? आपने यह जो उत्तर दिया है, इसमें आपने कहा है कि सब्जियों के मूल्यों को नियंत्रित करने के लिए कुछ तात्कालिक उपाय भी किए गए हैं। मैं जानना चाहूंगी कि क्या तात्कालिक उपाय किए गए हैं और किस तरह वह कारगर होंगे? क्योंकि इसके बारे में आपने यहां कुछ नहीं बताया है। सरकार की ओर से पहले 11 जुलाई को एक वक्तव्य में यह जरूर बताया गया था कि कुछ दुकानों में छूट देकर और ठेलों के माध्यम से इस तरह की सब्जियों की सप्लाई करने की व्यवस्था की जाएगी। यह व्यवस्था तो भारत के कुछ बड़े शहरों तक ही सीमित हो जाएगी, लेकिन उन हजारों गांवों और कस्बों की जनता के लिए, जो इस प्रकार की महंगाई के शिकार हैं, उनके लिए आप क्या करेंगे?

[उपसभापति महोदय पीठासीन हुईं।]

महोदय, मेरा अन्तिम प्रश्न यह है, जो दुकानदार अपनी मनचाही कीमतें बढ़ाते जा रहे हैं, उनमें से अब तक आपने क्या किसी को गिरफ्तार किया है। और अगर गिरफ्तार नहीं किया है तो इसकी पहल आपको रनी चाहिए। सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली को सुदृढ़

करने के लिए आपने यहां कहा कि सोचा जा रहा है। मैं मंत्री महोदय से आपके माध्यम से जानना चाहूंगी कि कब आप इस बारे में सोचेंगे और कब इसे शुरू करेंगे? कृपया आप अपने उत्तर में इस बारे में बता दीजिएगा। आप यहां कह रहे हैं कि सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली आवश्यक वस्तुओं की उपलब्धता को सुनिश्चित करने के लिए सरकार द्वारा हस्तक्षेप के प्रमुख उपाय के रूप में बनी हुई है। लेकिन, आपने अब तक सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली को सुदृढ़ रूप से चलाने के लिए कोई भी कारगर कदम नहीं उठाया है। संयुक्त मोर्चा सरकार ने इस के लिए जो प्रावधान किया था, उस पर भी बिना गौर किए आपने उसे पूरी तरह ध्वस्त, नष्ट कर दिया है।

महोदय, मैं चाहूंगी कि मंत्री महोदय अपने उत्तर में मेरे इन प्रश्नों का भी उत्तर दें। धन्यवाद।

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES (Goa):  
Thank you, Madam. ... (Interruptions)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There can be walk-out and walk in. This House is free for Members to come and go.

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES:  
Madam, cutting across party lines, even Members from the Treasury Benches were a party to the Calling Attention notice. I have come to protest and object. But they have signed that notice just for the sake of speaking. ... (Interruptions) ... The Leader of the Opposition has already made a submission. In fact, Dr. Manmohan Singh was supposed to initiate the discussion. So, what I was mentioning was cutting across the party lines even the BJP Members were a part to this Calling Attention notice. So, I feel it is not a grievance of the Opposition. It can't be termed as a political canard or campaign against this Government.

Madam, the hon. Finance Minister has given the figures and I don't dispute his figures. But he has played some arithmetic jargon that even during Congress time the inflation was very high and it was 13 per cent. Madam, I do agree that in 1990-91 when the Government of Mr. V.P. Singh and the Government of Mr. Chandra Shekhar were there, the inflation had shot up to 16 per cent, not merely to 13 per cent but it went up to 16.3 per cent. It was almost 17 per cent.

Subsequently, when the Congress Government came to power, we saw that inflation was brought down to 5 per cent. Later on it came down to 3 per cent. When we left the Government, Dr. Manmohan Singh has said, "You will get the benefit of the fruits of liberalisation and globalisation not immediately but in five or ten years." That is how we could sustain this economy. That is how this Government can ride on the crest of this economy.

Madam, Member after Member, while speaking on the Finance Bill and the General Budget presented by the Finance Minister, has said that this Budget was inflationary. Now, you cannot blame the season for the rise in prices of fruits and vegetables. The Budget presented to this Parliament was an inflationary one. You have only supported the trading community. Under the ESSMA, the deterrent punishment was seven years. Now, the Government has reduced it to two years.

1.00 P.M.

As I have mentioned the other day, this Budget was basically to support the trading community in this country, not even the manufacturing community, because the Finance Minister has imposed a four-per-cent special tax on imports which will only hit the manufacturers and not the traders. Madam, it is a free day, free for all, for the trading community. It is alleged not only in this House but even in the market outside that this Government is surviving only on the trading community and the prices will go up by leaps and bounds because there is no control. This Government does not have to have any control.

The hon. Finance Minister has increased the price of petrol every time and there is no control. The economy is a free market economy. It is they who determine. The market determines the prices. Even if you increase the price of petrol by one paisa, they have the freedom to increase the prices of essential commodities. You have now increased the price by one

rupee. I do not think that it was necessary to increase the price by one rupee to give Rs. 500-700 crores to the National Highway Authority. But you have given them the pretext. You have given them the licence. They have the freedom to increase the prices because whatever is the increase on petroleum, almost the whole economy is hit in this country. More so with the essential commodities because they are being transported from one end to another. Now, we have spoken about the price of potato. Last year, there was a glut of potatoes in the country. One of the hon. Members from U.P. said that the farmers were begging of people to lift the potatoes free of cost so that they can get the sacks back for re-use. Now, there is shortage of oil in the country; there is shortage of potatoes and onions. What has the Government done to improve the position? Why has the Government to import these commodities from foreign countries? Because we export onions, we export potatoes and we export oilseeds. When we have the shortage, why did not the Government take any interest to see that these commodities were imported? Now the hon. Minister says in his statement that he is going to wait for the kharif crop. What are the people supposed to do in the interregnum period? You will have at least three months' gap. Is it not the responsibility of the Government to see that the States are permitted, that private parties are permitted, to import these commodities from neighbouring countries? We import oil, edible oil, from Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore. Why are not private parties allowed? That means, an artificial shortage has been created in this country to see that the people are swindled. Licence is given to them to swindle. Why are not the prices controlled by the Government?

Madam, again, we have seen that the inflation rate which was just three per cent had shot up to eight per cent. And again it will go up. I do not think you can arrest it because that is your Budget. You

have given a short-lived Budget thinking that you will be in Government for six months. You cannot mop up revenue. The tax revenue has gone down. You collection has gone down.

It will further go down. So I hope that the Government will be alive to the situation and they will see that some steps are taken to alleviate the suffering of the poor people.

We have the Ministry of Food-Processing. It was the vision of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, the late Prime Minister, that whatever perishable commodities we produce should be stored for the future so that artificial shortage were not created in the market. Nothing has been done by the Government in these areas, specially in the north-east, in the central part of India to see that whatever product, perishable commodity, we produce in excess is properly processed and kept in the country to be used, consumed, by the people in case there are shortages. This is happening in European countries. For the whole of winter, they are under snow. They can get fresh vegetables from cold-storages. They can get the best of vegetables. Why don't we invest a certain amount in this country? The Government should invest it. The other day, the hon. Minister said, "Let the private sector come and we will assist them". Why will the private sector come when there is no protection given to them? When there is no incentive that should go to the farmer, if you allow the private sector, they will come only to exploit the farming community. They will buy it cheap, they will buy it as good as not paying anything. Then the farming community will be exploited. I think the Government should step in. The Government should invest certain amounts under this Ministry. The Government, public, sector should come and invest. If you do not have proper infrastructure, I think you can float more and more public sector companies, to see that those people who are unable to get these products because these

products are beyond their reach, are able to get them. One of the main problems in this country is the problem of distribution. We may have ample raw material in one part of the country. But the question is that the people on the other side of the country do not get anything. They virtually starve because the distribution system in this country is a total failure. So, unless you put in certain money in the infrastructure sector from the production area or the non-production area and treat them on a priority basis, you will not be able to control the situation. The Government may come and the Government may go and you may have the best of the Finance Ministers, this problem cannot be sorted out. So, when you speak about the infrastructure, the infrastructure should be such that we are in a position to take the things produced in one part of the country to the other part of the country with the help of that infrastructure. So, I hope the hon. Finance Minister will be a visionary Finance Minister and see to it that certain initiatives are taken in this direction. We have a system of planning in this country. But I do not know as to what the Planning Commission is doing because all their plans are shortlived plans. In case you follow this master plan for the country, I think you will not only help the people who need the essential commodities but you will also help the farming community who are being exploited by the middle men. That farming community can survive and will not go in for suicides if there is failure of crop. Thank you, Madam.

**THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** Shri R. Margabandu. Mr. Margabandu, do you want to speak on this subject or do you not want to speak on this subject?

**SHRI R. MARGABANDU** (Tamil Nadu): Madam, Mr. N. Thalavai Sundaram from my party will speak on this subject.

**THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Sundram, you can speak when your turn comes. Let me call Mr. V.P. Duraisamy.

He is not present in the House. Shri C. Ramachandraiah.

**SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH** (Andhra Pradesh): Madam, I won't speak right now. I would like to speak after lunch.

**SHRI MD. SALIM:** But there is no lunch today.

**THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Ramachandraiah, you can speak after lunch provided we have lunch. All right, I will call you a little later. There won't be any lunch. You may go out and eat. Maybe, we will have. Shri Ish Dutt Yadav.

**श्री ईश दत्त यादव:** मैडम, वित्त मंत्री जी ने इस सदन में आज जो बयान दिया है उस बयान से मुझे निराशा हुई है और महंगाई पर नियंत्रण करने के लिए इन्होंने जो प्रयास बताए हैं मुझे नहीं लगता है कि उन प्रयासों से इस देश के अंदर जो कमरतोड़ और भीषण महंगाई है उस पर काबू पाया जा सकता है? मैडम, वित्त मंत्री जी को मैं बहुत करीब से और व्यक्तिगत रूप से जानता हूँ। इस सदन में जब हम उधर बैठते थे तो यह हमारे नेता थे, साथ में ही बैठते थे और मैं इनके विचारों को खूब जानता हूँ। सरकार में बहुत से लोगों को जानकारी नहीं होगी लेकिन वित्त मंत्री जी जानते हैं कि इस देश में 40 फीसदी ऐसे लोग हैं जो गरीबी में हैं, मजदूर हैं, किसान हैं, खेतीहर मजदूर हैं, सड़कों पर काम करने वाले हैं। उनका लंच और डिनर नहीं होता, उनका खाना होता है, उनका भोजन होता है—रोटी और प्याज से और कभी रोटी और आलू से। मैं आपके माध्यम से वित्त मंत्री जी को याद दिलाना चाहूँगा कि आपके राज में वह गरीब प्याज भी नहीं पा रहा है और आलू भी नहीं पा रहा है और नमक को भी आपने महंगा कर दिया। रोटी, प्याज और आलू जिस व्यक्ति का खाना था आज उस खाने को आपने छीन लिया है महंगाई बढ़ा करके। मैं नहीं समझता हूँ वित्त मंत्री जी जो व्यवस्था करने वाले हैं इससे कोई लाभ होने वाला है? वित्त मंत्री जी ने कांग्रेस के समय में क्या महंगाई थी, यूनाइटेड फ्रंट गवर्नमेंट के समय में क्या महंगाई थी, मुद्रा-स्फीति क्या थी इन सबको बताया है। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ वित्त मंत्री जी से कि आप तो बेहतर शासन के लिए आए थे आप दूसरों की क्या बात कर रहे हैं। आपने महंगाई क्यों बढ़ाई? आप महंगाई पर नियंत्रण कैसे करने जा रहे हैं? माननीय वित्त मंत्री जी, अभी इंडियन एक्सप्रेस में 26

तारीख को छापा था कि आपने जब बजट प्रस्तुत किया, उस दिन आवश्यक चीजों के दाम क्या थे। और जिस दिन आपने बजट प्रस्तुत कर दिया, प्रेजेंट कर दिया, उसके बाद दाम क्या हो गए। पांच-छः शहरों का इसमें उल्लेख किया गया है, मैं सब नहीं पढ़ूँगा क्योंकि समय नहीं है। इसमें दिल्ली, मुम्बई, कलकत्ता, चेन्नई, त्रिवेन्द्रम और गोवाटी के रेट दिए हुए हैं, उस दिन के जिस दिन आपने बजट पेश किया। उस दिन के भी हैं और 26 तारीख के भी हैं, जब आपने बजट पेश करके इसके पास करा लिया है। मैं केवल दिल्ली का उदाहरण देना चाहता हूँ और वित्त मंत्री जी की जानकारी में होगा कि उस दिन जिस दिन आपने बजट पेश किया, प्याज का दाम था 6 रुपए और अब हो गया है 17 रुपए। आलू का दाम था उस दिन 8 रुपए, आपके बजट पेश करने के समय में और अब हो गया है 12 रुपए। मूँगफली के तेल की कीमत थी 51 रुपए, अब 57 रुपए है, सरसों का तेल 44 रुपए था, अब 54 रुपए हो गया है और वनस्पति 51 रुपए था जो 56 रुपए से 60 रुपए तक है। ये अखबार वालों के भी आंकड़े नहीं हैं बल्कि दिल्ली सरकार के स्टेट फूड एंड सप्लाय डिपार्टमेंट के आंकड़े हैं जो इंडियन एक्सप्रेस में छपे हैं। तो मैं तो समझता हूँ कि यह आपके बजट का ही कमाल है, यह प्रकृति का कमाल नहीं है। प्रकृति तो तब भी खराब थी और अच्छी थी, आज भी खराब और अच्छी है। यह आपके बजट का ही कमाल है कि देश के अंदर यह भीषण महंगाई बढ़ गई है। माननीय वित्त मंत्री जी, मैं आपसे यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि आप बेहतर शासन देने के लिए इस देश में आए हैं। हमारी प्रार्थना है कि जिस दिन आपने बजट पेश किया है, उस दिन की ही महंगाई अगर वापस कर दें तो हम समझेंगे कि आपने इस देश के अंदर बेहतर शासन देने की कोशिश की है।

मैडम, आज गांवों की हालत सबसे ज्यादा खराब हो गई है। आदमी को खाने के लिए कुछ नहीं मिल पा रहा है। वित्त मंत्री जी आंकड़ों के जाल में पूरे सदन को और पूरे देश को ले आना चाहते हैं लेकिन मैं आंकड़ों पर बहुत धरोसा नहीं करता हूँ। वास्तविक स्थिति का मूल्यांकन करिए वित्त मंत्री जी कि आज स्थिति क्या है? यह जो आपका स्टेटमेंट तैयार किया गया है, निश्चित रूप से आप बहुत जागरूक हैं, चिंतक हैं, विचारक हैं। आपने तैयार किया होगा लेकिन मेरा पूरा विश्वास है कि इन आंकड़ों को और आपके इस बयान को उन अधिकारियों ने तैयार किया होगा जिन्होंने आज तक कभी गांव नहीं देखा होगा, जिन्होंने कभी गरीबी को नहीं देखा होगा, जिन्होंने झुग्गी-झोंपड़ी नहीं देखी होगी। उन लोगों

ने यह बयान तैयार किया है। आज इन्हीं आंकड़ों पर आप कह रहे हैं कि हमारे समय में मुद्रा-स्फीति कम हुई है, कांग्रेस के समय में ज्यादा थी, युनाइटेड फ्रंट गवर्नमेंट के समय में भी थी लेकिन हमारे समय में कम हुई है। यह आप कहना चाहते हैं लेकिन मैं यह स्टेटमेंट पढ़ रहा था, यह स्टेटमेंट बहुत डीटेल्ड है, मैं इसके डीटेल्ड में नहीं जाना चाहता। इसी पीरियड में, तीन महीने के पीरियड में या जितने दिन का आपका शासन है, इससे पहले मुद्रा-स्फीति केवल 4.4 प्रतिशत बढ़ी थी पर आपके समय में 8 प्रतिशत बढ़ी है। घंटी बज गई है मैडम, मैं ज्यादा समय नहीं लेना चाहता। मैं केवल वित्त मंत्री जी को कुछ सुझाव देना चाहता हूँ कि देश के अंदर होर्डिंग हो रही है, देश के अंदर ज़खीरबाज़ी हो रही है और ज़खीरबाज़ी करने वाले कौन लोग हैं? पूंजीपति लोग हैं, बड़े लोग हैं, बड़े बिजनेसमेन हैं। क्या आपमें यह साहस है कि इस ज़खीरबाज़ी को रोकें? इस होर्डिंग पर आप कंट्रोल करें? इनके खिलाफ कोई .... (व्यवधान) ....

श्री मोहम्मद सलीम: उनकी पार्टी की मैम्बरशिप की लिस्ट देखने से मालूम हो जाएगा। .... (व्यवधान) ....

श्री संघ प्रिय गौतम (उत्तर प्रदेश): गरीब आदमी ज़खीरबाज़ी कैसे कर सकता है?

उपसभापति: क्या बोल रहे हैं? .... (व्यवधान) ....

श्री ईश दत्त यादव: सुनिए, गौतम जी, सुनिए। .... (व्यवधान) ....

श्री ओंकार सिंह लखावत (राजस्थान): मैडम, ये लगातार रनिंग कमेंटरी कर रहे हैं।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I don't know.

क्या हो रहा है? बोलिए, क्या हुआ? .... यादव जी, क्या हो गया? ज़खीरबाज़ी हो रही है?

श्री ईश दत्त यादव: ज़खीरबाज़ी नहीं है। .... (व्यवधान) ....

श्री मोहम्मद सलीम: मैडम, वे ज़खीरबाज़ों के बारे में बता रहे थे कि ज़खीरबाज़ी पूंजीपति, बड़े-बड़े मुनाफ़ाखोर लोग कर रहे हैं। गौतम जी का कहना था कि गरीब लोग कैसे करेंगे ज़खीरबाज़ी, मुनाफ़ाखोरी? पूंजीपति ही करेंगे। मैंने कहा कि उनकी पार्टी की मैम्बरशिप की लिस्ट वे देख लें तो ज़खीरबाज़ों का नाम सामने आ जाएगा। And I stand by this.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let us go ahead. Whoever is doing Zakhirebazi, he will find out. Let him finish.

श्री ईश दत्त यादव: मैडम, मैं वित्त मंत्री जी से कहना चाहता हूँ कि देश के अंदर जो होर्डिंग हो रही है, जब तक इन होर्डर्स का आप पर्दाफाश नहीं करेंगे, सख्ती नहीं करेंगे, सज़ा नहीं देंगे, जेल नहीं भेजेंगे तब तक प्रकृति को आप इसी तरह से दोष देते रहेंगे।

प्रकृति सरकार के बस में या किसी के बस में नहीं है। प्रकृति की एक नियति है, एक रास्ता है, वह प्रकृति चलती रहेगी लेकिन जो आपके अधिकार में है, उन अधिकारों का आप प्रयोग करें। यह सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली जो है, क्या कभी सरकार ने इस पर गंभीरता से विचार किया? आपने वितरण प्रणाली की व्यवस्था कर दी, सस्ते गल्ले की दुकानों पर जो गेहूँ जा रहा है, चीनी जा रही है, जो वितरण करने वाले लोग हैं, जो दुकानदार हैं, सब उसको ब्लैक करते जा रहे हैं। क्या किसी की आज तक गिरफ्तारी हुई? क्या राज्य सरकारों को आपने कोई निर्देश दिया कि इस पर कड़ाई की जाए, इस पर नियंत्रण किया जाए? आज आपकी सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली टोटली फेल हो गयी है, केवल कागज़ों में आपकी वितरण प्रणाली रह गयी है। इसलिए मैडम, मैं वित्त मंत्री महोदय से कहना चाहूँगा—मैं सिर्फ एक मिनट और बोलूँगा, ज्यादा नहीं बोलूँगा।

उपसभापति: चोयरमैन साहब का ऑर्डर है कि तीन मिनट से ज्यादा मत बोलिए।

श्री ईश दत्त यादव: एक ही मिनट और मींग रहा हूँ।

उपसभापति: आपने एक मिनट नहीं मांगा, आप काफी देर से बोल रहे हैं। सब लोग ज्यादा बेस्तर रहे हैं।

श्री रामगोपाल यादव (उत्तर प्रदेश): मंहगाई मार गयी या चोयरमैन साहब की कड़ाई मार गयी।

उपसभापति: तब, जब लोग 6-6 या 9-9 मिनट बोलेंगे।

श्री ईश दत्त यादव: इसलिए मैं कहना चाहूँगा कि ऐसी वितरण प्रणाली पर आपको रोक लगानी पड़ेगी और अंत में मैं निवेदन कर रहा हूँ, अंतिम सुझाव वित्त मंत्री जी को दे रहा हूँ कि आप बहुत जानकार व्यक्ति हैं। आप फिजूलखर्ची पर रोक लगाइए। जब तक फिजूलखर्ची पर—और सरकार की फिजूलखर्ची पर आप रोक नहीं लगाएंगे .... (व्यवधान) .... इसलिए मैं आपके माध्यम से वित्त मंत्री जी से यही कहते हुए अपनी बात

समाप्त करता हूँ कि देश के अंदर जो भयंकर महंगाई है, कमरतोड़ महंगाई है, आसमान को छूती हुई महंगाई है, इस महंगाई पर आप कंट्रोल करें, इसके लिए सख्ती करें, इसके लिए प्रयास करें। और मैं फिर दोहरा रहा हूँ कि जिस दिन आप वित्त मंत्री हुए हैं और माननीय अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी जो इस देश के प्रधान मंत्री हुए हैं, उस दिन की महंगाई पर ही अगर आप कंट्रोल कर दें तो मैं आपको बहुत-बहुत मुबारकबाद दूंगा। धन्यवाद।

**उपसभापति:** मैं यह कहना चाहूँगी कि इन्होंने बड़ा अच्छा सजेशन दिया है कि जो यह फिजूलखर्ची हो रही है, उस पर नियंत्रण लगाना चाहिए। हाउस में रैपिडीशन करके टाइम की फिजूलखर्ची हो रही है। उस पर भी नियंत्रण लगाना चाहिए। मैं आपको सजेशन मानकर इस पर अमल करूँगी। टाइम की फिजूलखर्ची नहीं होनी चाहिए।

**SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY (Tamil Nadu):** Thank you very much, Madam, for giving me this opportunity to speak on the Calling Attention motion. The steep rise in the prices of essential commodities has affected all the sections of the society. For example, last year the price of tomato on an average was Rs. 24 per kilogram in Delhi. This year you can buy only half a kilo of tomato with the same amount of money. Last year the price of potato was Rs. 7 per kilogram. This year it has gone up to Rs. 13 per kilogram. Last year price of mango the king of fruits, was Rs. 30 per kilogram. This year it is Rs. 60 per kilogram. Last year the price of onion was only Rs. 8.40 per kilogram. This year it is Rs. 30 per kilogram. Now the housewives are shedding tears when they buy onions. Potato is also used by the common people. Now onion is not the cause for the tears. The rise in the price of onion is the cause for the tears. Generally, when the housewives cut the onions for cooking food, they shed tears. Now seeing the rise in the price of onion they are shedding tears. The prices of these commodities are very high. The Government should explore the possibility of supplying these things through the public distribution system. The Government should open more retail outlets like bazaar on wheels to bring down the prices. The hoarders and

black-marketeers should be dealt with severely. Surprise checks should be conducted very often.

Madam, I am pleased to inform the House that the Tamil Nadu Government has already started providing all the essential commodities through the Public Distribution System at a lesser price. The Tamil Nadu Government has also taken steps to bring down the prices of essential commodities. Prices of essential commodities have never gone up this much earlier in a span of one year. Madam, it is attributed to unseasonal rains, over-cautious policies and fall in the value of rupee. The Government has reduced the Public Distribution System and has raised the Excise Duty. Prices are going up because of all these things.

The price of tea has gone up by 40 per cent in the last one year. There is scarcity of tea at home because of the increase in exports and imposition of duty. The prices of edible oils have gone up due to less imports from Malaysia and Indonesia where economic turmoil has affected production and supply. I do not know whether this inflationary trend is due to the fallout of sanctions after the nuclear tests or it is due to rise in procurement prices of crops.

This Government has failed miserably to curb the prices. There is an economic misrule. In Taiwan the rate of inflation was the highest. Now India has the highest rate of inflation. The industrial workers are suffering because of high prices. When the UF Government was in office, the price-rise was kept under control and the rate of inflation was 4 per cent. There were no protests from the public or from any party. The UF Government rehabilitated many sick industries by providing crores of rupees. The industrial workers and the middle-class people are very unhappy. Under the UF Government the purchasing power of the middle-class people was very high and the per capita income also increased. Now I have come to know from the newspapers that the rate of inflation has touched 8.8 per cent

in the last week. This is the highest rate of inflation since November, 1985. Madam, the current rise in inflation is due to increase in prices of vegetables which have gone up by 72 per cent. The BJP-led Government has failed on economic front and foreign front. The law and order situation in BJP-ruled States is very bad. The Government should own moral responsibility and make way for another coalition Government.

The hon. Minister has mentioned so many reasons for the rise in prices and inflation. I don't agree with him. The Finance Minister is accountable to the country. Shifting this responsibility on a Congress Government or any other Government will not help the ruling party. Anyhow, the Government should own moral responsibility for not being able to curb the prices. The Finance Minister also stated that the Government was inviting NRIs to invest in industries. I don't think any NRI is going to come here. Thank you.

**मौलाना ओबैदुल्ला खान आजमी (बिहार):** शुक्रिया मैडम। मंहगाई पर हमारे फाइनेंस मिनिस्टर साहब ने एक बयान दिया है जिस पर हमारे साथियों ने तफसील से चर्चा भी कर ली है। वक्त का लिहाज रखते हुए मैं यह कहना चाहूंगा कि पैरा नम्बर 6 में यह कहा गया है कि कुछ चीजों की कीमतें घटी हैं या कंट्रोल में आई हैं। कंट्रोल में आई है तो बहुत अच्छी बात है, बहुत खुरशी की बात है मगर हमें उन दुकानों का पता दिया जाता तो हम लोग उन जगहों से आगाह हो जाते जिन जगहों पर कम कीमत पर वे चीजें मिल रही हैं तो ज्यादा बेहतर होता। ....(व्यवधान)....

मसला यह है कि जिस माहौल में हम लोग बात कर रहे यह जो कुछ भी मंहगाई बढ़ी है इससे शायद हम लोगों की सेहत पर ज्यादा असर न हो। मगर जो लोग मंहगाई से जुझते हैं, उनके लिए आज के दिन जीने का कोई अवसर नहीं रह गया है। किसी के ऊपर इल्जाम लगाया जाए, पार्टी का मुंह देखकर और हुकूमत का मुंह देखकर बात की जाए, इससे तो मसायल हल नहीं होंगे। जाहिर है जिसके ऊपर जिम्मेदारी है उसे ईमानदारी के साथ जिम्मेदारियों को कबूल करना चाहिए और मसायल का हल ढूंढना चाहिए। जिससे हालात सामान्य हो सकें।

बहस इस बात पर हो रही है कि 50 रुपए कमने वाला रोज किस तरह से खाएगा, किस तरह से जीयेगा। मैं कहता हूँ कि 100 रुपए पाने वाला आदमी भी आज के दौर की बढ़ती हुई मंहगाई के पेशेनजर जी नहीं सकता। वह आपको दुवा क्या देगा, दिन-रात आपको बददुआ करेगा। जब मैं लखनऊ में था तब यहां मंत्री जी यह कह रहे थे कि आम आदमी टमाटर खाते ही क्यों है जब 40 रुपए किलो हो गया है, इससे तो पथरी होगी। मैं तो कहता हूँ कि जीते ही क्यों है आप, मर जाइये इससे बेहतर है। आवाम के साथ इस तरह का भ्रजक करना कोई अच्छी अलामत नहीं है। लोग टमाटर उठाते हैं तो देखकर कहते हैं ....(व्यवधान)....

**श्री नीलोत्पल बसु:** टमाटर के बारे में ....(व्यवधान).... मंत्री जी कह रहे हैं कि सेहत के लिए ठीक नहीं है।

**मौलाना ओबैदुल्ला खान आजमी:** मैं इल्जाम नहीं लगा रहा हूँ।

**उपसभापति:** उन्होंने नहीं बोला। फाइनेंस मिनिस्टर नहीं बोले।

**मौलाना ओबैदुल्ला खान आजमी:** नहीं, नहीं मैं उनको कह भी नहीं रहा हूँ। ....(व्यवधान)....

**श्री रामदास अग्रवाल:** उन्होंने मैडिसिन के आधार पर ये बात कही थी। ....(व्यवधान)....

**श्री जीवन राय (पश्चिमी बंगाल):** बंगाल के चीफ मिनिस्टर ने बोला था कि चावल नहीं खाना चाहिए, केला खाओ। ....(व्यवधान)....

**श्री रामदास अग्रवाल:** ....(व्यवधान).... हम जाने वाले नहीं हैं।

**मौलाना ओबैदुल्ला खान आजमी:** मैं यह कहता हूँ कि लोग टमाटर....(व्यवधान).... खाना भी नहीं चाहिए। इसलिए कि आपने कहा था। एक मिनिटर....(व्यवधान)....

**THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** Let him speak on price rise.

**मौलाना ओबैदुल्ला खान आजमी:** मुझे तीन मिनिट तो पूरे कर लेने दीजिए। मैं कह रहा हूँ कि जाना भी नहीं चाहिए, मत जाइये। आपने तो कहा भी था कि सबको देखा बार-बार हमको देखो एक बार। आप लोग क्या सोच रहे हैं। आदमी टमाटर उठाता है तो कहते हैं सबको देखो बार-बार, हमको देखो एक बार। प्याज उठाता है तो कहते हैं कि सबको देखो बार-बार, हमको देखो एक बार। आप नहीं जाना चाहते हैं तो मत जाइये।

सारे गरीबों को मारकर जाइये, सारे गरीबों को सुलाकर जाइये। उनका भोजन छीनकर जाइये बल्कि छीनने के बाद भी मत जाइये। कौन कहता है कि आप जाइये। मैं इस पर बहस नहीं करता। मैं तो सिर्फ यह कह रहा हूँ कि देखिये, आतंकवाद की भी बातें होती रहती हैं। नौजवान लुटते हैं, फूंकते हैं, कल्ल करते हैं, रुपए छीन लेते हैं। हमें इसकी बैकग्राउंड में जाना चाहिए कि आखिर ऐसा क्यों हो रहा है? अगर रोटी मिले तो ऐसा नहीं होगा। अवसर मिले तो ऐसा नहीं होगा। हालात सामान्य रहे तो ऐसा नहीं होगा, कानून की बहाली हो तो ऐसा नहीं होगा। जाहिर है कि ये सारी चीजें जब नहीं हो पाती हैं तो कुछ लोग कमजोरी से फायदा उठाते हैं और कुछ लोग मजबूरी से ऐसे कुकर्म करते हैं। कुछ लोग हुकूमत की कमजोरी से ये कुकर्म करते हैं और कुछ लोग मजबूरी से ऐसे गलत काम करते हैं। क्या यह सच नहीं है कि धनासेठ लोग सारे माल को स्टोर कर लेते हैं, क्या यह सच नहीं है कि वे महंगाई का इंतजार करते रहते हैं? क्या यह सच नहीं है कि लोगों की गरीबी से नाजायज फायदा उठाते हैं और उस माहौल में भी अगर यह कह दिया जाए कि साहब पुरानी हुकूमत के जामाने में जो कुछ था वैसा कुछ नहीं है। पुरानी हुकूमत ने हमारे सिर पर एक मुसीबत लाद दी थी, जिस मुसीबत को हम यहां दोहरा रहे हैं। मैं यह कहना चाहूंगा कि ऐसे धनासेठों का हौसला इन बातों से बढ़ेगा, जो स्टोर करते हैं, जो मुनाफाखोर हैं, ब्लैकमेलर हैं, उनका हौसला इन सब बातों से बढ़ेगा। जरूरत इस बात की है कि ईमानदारी से इन बातों को मान लिया जाए कि यकीनन महंगाई बढ़ी रही है। हमारे बड़े भाई जनाब ईश दत्त यादव साहब ने तो ऐसा असला दे दिया है जो सवालिया निशान कायम कर रहा है कि आखिर जिस दिन फाइनेन्स मिनिस्टर बिल, पेश कर रहे थे उस दिन कीमतें कुछ थी और 2-3 महीने में कीमतें आसमान पर पहुंच गई। कोई कांग्रेस पर इल्जाम नहीं लगायेगा। जो कुछ भी इल्जाम लगेंगे, आपकी फ्रंट पर लगेंगे, आपकी हुकूमत पर लगेंगे। इसलिए कि आपने कहा था कि हम एक अच्छा शासन देंगे। आपने कहा था कि हम गरीबी से मुक्त भारत बनायेंगे। आपने कहा था कि हम दूध की नहरें बहायेंगे। आपने कहा था कि हम देश में बेरोजगारी को खत्म करेंगे। जो दावे आपने किए उन दावों पर दलील भी आप दीजिए वरना दावे कन्टेम्प्ट आफ कोर्ट हो जायेंगे। जब कन्टेम्प्ट आफ कोर्ट हो जाएगा तो आप सजा भी पायेंगे और अवांम की दी हुई सजा से भी मुक्त नहीं हो पायेंगे। मेहरबानी करके भोजन उन तक पहुंचाइए वरना आज जो भोजन आपके हाथ में है, वह आपके हाथ से जाता रहेगा। शुक्रिया।

۱۱ مولانا عبید اللہ خان اعظمی بہارہ  
 شکر یہ میڈا، مہنگائی پر ہمارے  
 فائنٹس منسٹر صاحب نے ایک بیان  
 دیا ہے، جس پر ہمارے ساتھیوں  
 نے تفصیل سے چرچہ بھی کر رہی ہے۔  
 وقت کا لحاظ رکھتے ہوئے میں  
 یہ کہنا چاہوں گا کہ پیرائے ۹ میں یہ  
 کیا گیا ہے کہ کچھ چیزوں کی قیمتیں  
 گھٹی ہیں، یا کمزور ہیں آئی بی سی کنٹرول  
 میں آئی بی سی یہ بلیٹ اچھی بات ہے،  
 بہت خوشی کی بات ہے مگر ہمیں ان  
 دو کانوں کا بہت دیا جاتا تو ہم لوگ  
 ان جگہوں سے اٹھا رہے جاتے جو  
 جگہوں پر کم قیمت وہ چیزیں مل رہی  
 ہیں تو زیادہ بہتر ہوتا... مدافلت  
 مسئلہ یہ ہے کہ جس ماحول میں ہم  
 لوگ بات کر رہے ہیں، یہ جو کچھ  
 مہنگائی بڑھی ہے اس سے شاید ہم  
 لوگوں کی صحت پر زیادہ اثر نہ ہو،  
 مگر جو لوگ مہنگائی سے جو جھجھک رہے  
 ان کے لئے آج کے دن پیسے کا کوئی  
 اوسر نہیں رہ گیا ہے، کسی کے اوپر  
 الزام لگایا جائے، پارٹی کا منہ دیکھ  
 کر اور حکومت کا منہ دیکھ کر بات  
 کی جائے، اس سے تو مسائل حل نہیں

ہوں گے ظاہر ہے جس کے اوپر ذمہ داری ہے اسے ایمان داری کے ساتھ ذمہ داری کو قبول کرنا چاہیے اور مسائل کا حل ڈھونڈنا چاہیے جس سے حالات ناول ہو سکیں۔ بحث اس بات پر ہو رہی ہے کہ ۵۰ روپے کمانے والا روز کس طرح سے نکلتے گا، کس طرح سے بنے گا، میں کہتا ہوں ۱۰۰ روپے روز پانے والا آدمی بھی آج کے دور کی برصغیر ہوئی ہندوستان پیش نظر جی نہیں سکتا، وہ آپ کو دعا کیا دے گا، دن رات آپ کے لئے بد دعا کرے گا، جب میں لکھنؤ میں عقاب یہاں منتری جی یہ کہہ رہے تھے کہ عام آدمی ٹھائے ہوئے ہی کیوں ہیں، جب ۱۰ روپے ملو جو گیا ہے، اس سے تو بھری ہوگی، میں کہتا ہوں کہ جیتے ہی کیوں ہیں آپ، مرجائے اس سے بہتر ہے۔ عوام کے ساتھ اس طرح کا مذاق کرنا کوئی اچھی علامت نہیں ہے۔ لوگ ٹھائے ہوئے ہیں تو دیکھ کر کہتے ہیں: ”مداخلت“۔

شری نیلونیل بسو: ٹھائے ہوئے بارے میں ”مداخلت“۔ مंत्री جی کہہ رہے ہیں کہ صحت کے لئے ٹھیک نہیں ہے۔

مولانا عبید اللہ خاں اعظمی: میں الزام نہیں لگا رہا ہوں۔

اپ سبھا پتی: انھوں نے بھی نہیں بولا۔ فائنٹس منسٹر نہیں بولے۔ مولانا عبید اللہ خاں اعظمی: نہیں نہیں میں ان کو کہہ بھی نہیں رہا ہوں۔ شری رام داس انگریز وال: انھوں نے میڈیس کے آدھا پر یہ بات کہی تھی... ”مداخلت“۔

شری جیوند اس: ہنگال کے چیف منسٹر نے بولا تھا کہ چاول نہیں کھانا چاہیے، کیلا کھاؤ۔ ”مداخلت“۔ شری رام داس انگریز وال: ”مداخلت“ ہم جانے والے نہیں ہیں۔

مولانا عبید اللہ خاں اعظمی: میں کہتا ہوں کہ لوگ ٹھائے ہوئے ہیں جانا بھی نہیں چاہیے۔ اس لئے کہ اپنے کہا تھا۔ ایک منٹ... ”مداخلت“۔ اپ سبھا پتی: لیٹ ہم اسپیک آن پرائس رائس۔

مولانا عبید اللہ خاں اعظمی:

مجھے تین منٹ تو پورے کرنے دیجئے۔ میں کہہ رہا ہوں کہ جانا بھی نہیں چاہیے، مت جائیے۔ آپ نے تو کہا بھی تھا کہ سب کو دیکھا بار بار ہم کو دیکھو ایک بار۔ آپ لوگ کیا سوچ رہے ہیں؟

لوگ سارے معاملے کو اسٹوڈنٹس کے ہاتھ میں دے دیئے ہیں، کیا یہ سچ نہیں ہے کہ وہ مہنگائی کا انتظار کرتے ہوئے ہیں؟ کیا یہ سچ نہیں ہے کہ لوگوں کی غریبی سے ناجائز فائدہ اٹھاتے ہیں اور اس ماحول میں بھی اگر یہ کہہ دیا جائے کہ صاحبِ برائی حکومت کے زمانے میں جو کچھ تعاون کیا ہے اس میں ہے۔ برائی حکومت نے ہمارے سر پر ایک مصیبت لادی تھی، اس مصیبت کو ہم یہاں دہرا رہے ہیں۔ میں یہ کہنا چاہوں گا کہ ایسے دھنساہٹوں کا حوصلہ ان باتوں سے بڑھے گا جو اسٹوڈنٹس کرتے ہیں، جو منافع خود ہیں، جلیک میٹر ہیں، ان کا حوصلہ ان سب باتوں سے بڑھے گا۔ ضرورت اس بات کی ہے کہ امانداری سے ان باتوں کو

مان لیا جائے کہ یقیناً مہنگائی بڑھی ہے اور بڑھ رہی ہے۔ ہمارے بڑے بھائی جناب ایبٹن دت یادو نے تو ایسا مسئلہ دے دیا ہے جو سوالیہ نشان قائم کر رہا ہے کہ آخر جس دن فائنل منسٹر بل پیش کر رہے تھے اس دن قیمتیں کچھ تھیں اور ۳-۲ مہینے میں قیمتیں آسمان پر پہنچ گئیں۔ کوئی کانگریس پر الزام نہیں لگائے گا۔ جو کچھ بھی الزام لگیں گے، آپ کی فرمائش

آدی ٹرانس اعٹا ہے تو کہتے ہیں کہ سب دیکھا بار بار ان کو دیکھا ایک بار اٹھاتا ہے تو کہتے ہیں کہ سب کو دیکھا بار بار ہم کو دیکھو ایک بار۔ آپ نہیں جانا چاہتے ہیں قوم چاہیے۔ سارے غریبوں کو مار کر جائیے، ہمارے غریبوں کو سلا کر جائیے۔ ان کا بوجھ چھین کر جائیے بلکہ جھیننے کے بعد بھی مت جائیے۔ کون کہتا ہے کہ آپ جائیے۔ میں اس پر بحث نہیں کرتا۔ میں تو صرف یہ کہہ رہا ہوں کہ دیکھو ٹرانسکوڈ کی بھی باتیں ہوتی رہتی ہیں۔ نوجوان لڑکے ہیں، پھونکے ہیں، قتل کرتے ہیں، رو بہ چین لیتے ہیں۔ ہم کی اس کے ہیک گروڈ میں جانا چاہیے کہ آخر ایسا کیوں ہو رہا ہے؟ اگر وہی ملے تو ایسا نہیں ہوگا، اور میرے تو ایسا نہیں ہوگا۔ حالات سامانہ رہیں تو ایسا نہیں ہوگا، قانون کی بحالی ہو تو ایسا نہیں ہوگا۔ ظاہر ہے کہ یہ ساری چیزیں جب نہیں ہو جاتی ہیں تو کچھ لوگ کمزوری سے فائدہ اٹھاتے ہیں اور کچھ لوگ مجبوری سے یہ کوئی کام کرتے ہیں اور کچھ لوگ مجبوری سے ایسا غلط کام کرتے ہیں۔ کیا یہ سچ نہیں ہے کہ دھنساہٹ

پر نہیں گئے، وہ اپنی حکومت پر نہیں گئے۔  
 اس لئے کہ آپ نے کہا تھا ہم ایک ایجا  
 شناسن کریں گے۔ آپ نے کہا تھا  
 کہ ہم غریبی سے ملک بھارت بنائیں گے۔  
 آپ نے کہا تھا کہ ہم دودھ کی ہنوس  
 بہائیں گے۔ آپ نے کہا تھا کہ ہم دیش  
 میں بے اعتباری کو ختم کریں گے۔ جو  
 دعوے آپ نے کئے تھے ان دعووں  
 پر دلیل بھی آپ دیکھئے ورنہ دعوے  
 کنٹینٹ آف کورٹ ہو جائیں گے۔  
 جب کنٹینٹ آف کورٹ ہو جائے گا  
 تو آپ سزا بھی پائیں اور عوام کی دی  
 ہوئی سزا سے بھی ملے ہو جائیں گے۔  
 مہربانی کر کے بھوجن ان تک پہنچائیے  
 ورنہ آج جو بھوجن آپ کے ہاتھ میں  
 ہے وہ آپ کے ہاتھ سے جاتا رہے گا۔ شکریہ

SHRI N. THALAVAI SUNDARAM  
 (Tamil Nadu): Madam, I thank you for  
 giving me this opportunity. I would like  
 to know from the hon. Minister what the  
 Government is doing to control the rising  
 prices of essential commodities and  
 vegetables. A number of Members have  
 spoken on the subject. My learned  
 friends, Shri Peter Alphonse and Shri  
 Duraisamy, clearly mentioned that when  
 the United Front Government was there,  
 the public did not protest against the  
 increase in prices. I would like to know  
 what the position is of the public in Tamil  
 Nadu. They did not vote for your party.  
 What is the reason? (Interruptions) No,  
 no. The public have not protested. And I  
 did not interfere when you were  
 speaking. (Interruptions)

SHRI. V.P. DURAISAMY:  
 Everything cannot be politicised.

SHRI C.P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU  
 (Pondichery): Let him speak what is  
 relevant to the subject. Let him not ravel  
 to Tamil Nadu.

SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY: He is  
 speaking only for newspapers. He is not  
 speaking for the public.

SHRI N. THALAVAI SUNDARAM:  
 Madam, he said that... (Interruptions) I  
 never interfered when he was speaking.  
 (Interruptions)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is  
 he saying? (Interruptions) Let me hear. It  
 is his viewpoint. How can you object?

SHRI N. THALAVAI SUNDARAM:  
 I would like to address the Chair.  
 Madam, when the United Front  
 Government was there, the public did not  
 protest against the increase in prices. I  
 would like to know, when the public did  
 not protest against the rising prices of  
 essential commodities and vegetables,  
 why the public did not vote for your  
 party. (Interruptions)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Are we  
 discussing... (Interruptions) Mr.  
 Sundaram, just now we are discussing the  
 issue of price rise. Whether the people  
 protested or not, is another point. Today  
 the people are protesting outside. That is  
 not the point. The point here is that the  
 prices are going up, what we should do.  
 So, you talk about that.

SHRI N. THALAVAI SUNDARAM:  
 My point is, how to control the rising  
 prices of essential commodities. Now, we  
 have in our country the Public  
 Distribution System, which is the joint  
 responsibility of the Central Government  
 and the State Governments. The Public  
 Distribution System has not been  
 properly implemented in our country.  
 PDS must be revamped. It must function  
 properly. I would like to know what the  
 Government is doing. The Government  
 of India issued instructions in October,  
 1994 to all the Chief Ministers for proper

supply of foodgrains to SCs, STs and OBCs throughout the country. My point is that so far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, when our Madam was the Chief Minister, foodgrains meant for SCs, STs and OBCs were supplied adequately and properly. Now, after their Chief Minister has assumed office in Tamil Nadu, they have not supplied foodgrains to SCs, STs and OBCs properly. *(Interruptions)* This is my point. You are not getting the foodgrains from the Government of India properly. You can instruct your Government of Tamil Nadu to get the foodgrains. Why should you worry?

**SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY:** This is not an issue of PDS. *(Interruptions)*

**SHRI N. THALAVAI SUNDARAM:** The foodgrains production is reducing. Production of edible oil is also reducing. We are allowing all sorts of imports. 345 items are there. They have reduced the Customs Duty. But, they have increased the Excise Duty. I want to know from the Finance Minister as to what benefit the poor people would get by reduction in Excise Duty and increase in Customs Duty.

Madam, as far as sugar is concerned, its prices are also increasing. The previous Government had appointed Mahajan Committee to decontrol sale of sugar. What purpose did that Committee serve? The Committee has recommended that sugar should be taken away from PDS. I want to know from the Finance Minister whether you are going to control the prices of sugar or not. I also want to know whether the Government is going to accept the report of that Committee or not. If you accept the report of that Committee, then you will have to take away sugar from the PDS. Madam, the poor people of our country are getting rice, wheat and sugar through co-operative societies and PDS at reasonable prices. I want to know whether you are going to sell sugar through PDS or you are going to take away sugar from PDS, as per the recommendation of that Committee.

Madam, the price of one kilogram onion in 1997 was Rs. 8.40 and in 1998 it increased to Rs. 15.30. The price of edible oil in 1997 was Rs. 47 per litre and in 1998 it increased to Rs. 59 per litre. I want to know from the hon. Minister as to how he is going to control these prices. Whenever a new Government assumes power, the Opposition parties blame it for the rise in prices. The Government says that this price rise is due to inflation. The statement of the hon. Minister states that this price rise is seasonal in nature. How are you going to control the prices of essential commodities? As far as PDS is concerned, it is the joint responsibility of the Government of India and the State Governments. I request the hon. Finance Minister to revamp the PDS and control the prices of essential commodities.

**THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** Shri C. Ramachandraiah-absent. Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu.

**SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU** (Karnataka) Madam Deputy Chairperson, the issue of price rise is an issue concerning the people of the country. It has no political affiliations. But, unfortunately my friends who spoke from the other side tried to suggest as if the prices have gone up just now.

**DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA:** This statement is surely politics.

**SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU:** Yes, I have seen the statement. I have heard the speeches of hon. Members with rapt attention. I even heard the comments made about the membership of my party. My party's membership is going up. My strength is increasing and I have come to power. You have been relegated to such a small position. You must understand the message of the people. I don't want to go into that. As my friend Salim had referred to that, I am making this remark. You are being reduced day by day in every sphere of public activity.

**DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA:** You don't want to discuss the price rise? You want to discuss politics?

SHRI MD. SALIM: Madam, since my name has been mentioned, I just want to say something.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: No, problem. I yield to him.

SHRI MD. SALIM: I did not make a comment about the size of the BJP. I talked about the quality of membership of the BJP. I said...(Interruptions)...

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: There is a great quality...(Interruptions)... Madam, their point is so high that it is rejected by the people...(Interruptions)...

SHRI MD. SALIM: Madam, I stand corrected. After the BJP Government came to power, as the prices are going up, the membership of their party is also going up. I said in that list hoarders and traders are the maximum.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: The traders are part of this country. People who support the infiltrators should really feel ashamed. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Madam, that remark should not form part of the records.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Traders do support me. They are honourable people. What is wrong in this?

उपसभापति: अग्रवाल जी बैठिये, वह जवाब दे रहे हैं। (व्यवधान) Mr. Salim, please sit down. ...(Interruptions)... बैठिए ... (व्यवधान)

Mr. Venkaiah Naidu was holding the fort for your party during election. He is capable of holding your fort in the House also. Let him speak. I do not think if there is any person as he is who needs anybody's support. ...(Interruptions)...

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Madam, unfortunately, it has become a practice to condemn traders wholesale. It is like condemning all the politicians because one man is caught in the sugar scam, one man is caught in the Urea scam, one man is caught in the telecom scam and one man is caught in the bank

scam. So, you cannot condemn all members of Parliament and all members of the political community. So, it is like that. Madam, he was mentioning about the quality. Their quality is such that they have been rejected by the people. Our quality is such that it has been accepted and appreciated by the people. This is the quality for which the mandate of the people speaks for itself. Madam, when there is a price rise, it affects everybody. I heard Shri Ish Dutt Yadavji. He was quoting some figures. I would have been happy. (Interruptions)

श्री ईश दत्त यादव: हम यू०पी० के बारे में ज्यादा कह रहे थे ... (व्यवधान)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We are not discussing .... (Interruptions).... We are not discussing the professions of people. .... (Interruptions)....

SHRI MD. SALIM: He is trading charges. .... (Interruptions)...

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: You should not do that. .... (Interruptions)... Madam, Ish Duttji was mentioning some figures. I would like my friends to ponder over the whole situation. As has been rightly pointed out by Mr. Sundaram, the Public Distribution System is the joint responsibility of the Government of India and the State Governments. It is our responsibility. Now, the BJP is in power in eight States. Leftists are in power in two States. .... (Interruptions)... The Congress is in power in two States. .... (Interruptions)... I do not know whether it is in power in two States or in two-and-a-half. .... (Interruptions)... I stand corrected. Three States are being ruled by the CPM. The Congress Party is ruling in two or two-and-a-half, I do not know exactly. .... (Interruptions)... Mr. John F. Fernandes has gone out. Otherwise, we would have been able to get the latest information. .... (Interruptions)... The point is as to who is responsible for this. The Minister of Finance while mentioning about the present situation made a point to which I would like to draw the attention of the House. He said that there is a

decline of 13 lakh tonnes in oilseed production. This is an issue which should be pondered over by all of us. How has it happened? It has happened because there were no remunerative prices to the farmer who is producing oilseed. So, the production of oilseeds has gone down. It may be on account of the vagaries of the monsoon which also contributes to some extent. But, the basic reason is that there was no remunerative price to the farmer to produce oilseeds. Therefore, the production of oilseeds has gone down by 13 lakh tonnes resulting in the increase of prices of groundnut oil and other oils in a big way. We are all very concerned about it. My submission to my friends is that this production has not gone down during our regime. This production went down when Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta and other friends were in power. During the last season you were in power. You did not encourage the farming community. That is why *...(Interruptions)...* That is why there is a decline in production and this has become one of the major reasons *...(Interruptions)...*

AN HON. MEMBER: Now you are in power.

SHRI MD. SALIM: They are not in power. Their other coalition partners are in power. They are yet to realise that they are in power. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: I would like to know as to what has been done by the Government of Kerala and the Government of West Bengal with regard to controlling the price rise. I have the figures with regard to prices in West Bengal and Kerala. The prices in Kerala are higher than what they are in Delhi. I challenge my Communist friends to join in a debate with me. Let them go through the figures which were given to the Parliament. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI MD. SALIM: Madam, I am on a point of order. *...(Interruptions)...* Madam, we are discussing the rise in inflation. But, he is discussing what happened in other States. So, his candidature

is fit for any Assembly and not for this Parliament. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: I never need a certificate. *...(Interruptions)...* I do not want a certificate whether I am fit for an Assembly or the Parliament. *...(Interruptions)...* If people want, I may be fit for a Panchayat body. Both are respected bodies. *...(Interruptions)...* whether I am fit for an Assembly and you are fit for a Municipality, it is not for you to decide. *...(Interruptions)...*

श्री रामदास अग्रवाल: लाखों करोड़ों लोग वहां भी होते हैं *...(व्यवधान)...*

उपसभापति: अग्रवाल जी आप बैठिए। आप क्यों खफा हो रहे हैं *...(व्यवधान)...*

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES: Madam, I am on a point of order. *...(Interruptions)...* Madam, when the Finance Minister was making a statement the other day, the Vice-Chairman, Shri Adhik Shirodkarji gave a ruling that we cannot mention the name of any State and that ruling has been upheld. Now Mr. Naidu is mentioning the names of two States, namely, West Bengal and Kerala. *...(Interruptions)...*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What was the ruling?

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES: The ruling of the Vice-Chairman was that we can say anything but cannot mention the name of any State. *...(Interruptions)...* That ruling was upheld. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI MD. SALIM: Madam, when Members from this side took part, he has correctly referred, they have also levelled some charges against the Government, failure of the Government and all that. He is entitled to do that. But, Shri Ish Dutt Yadavji has pointed out what were the prices in Delhi at the time of presentation of the Budget and what are the prices today *...(interruptions)...* I challenge it. I challenge Mr. Naidu with regard to price level, whether it is in Calcutta in Bengal or Trivandrum in Kerala or Lucknow in U.P. *...(interrup-*

tions)... Then only you pass remarks ...*(interruptions)*... You cannot pass any comment without any basis ...*(interruptions)*...

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: I am coming to that point ...*(interruptions)*... I accept your suggestion ...*(interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Just one second ...*(interruptions)*... Let me give my ruling ...*(interruptions)*... Please, we are discussing the price rise, we are discussing about the economic situation due to steep rise in inflation and its adverse affect on the economy. That is the title of this debate. I would like you to please consider the millions of people in this country who are affected by this. If there is any price rise in Tamil Nadu or if there is any price rise in U.P. or in West Bengal or in Delhi, it is the people who are suffering and we are all part of those people. Now, let us not make it a political issue. Let us rise above political considerations and consider about the poor people of this country. Everybody should confine himself to the price rise and how it can be tackled and give suggestions to the Finance Minister ...*(interruptions)*...

बैठिए ...*(व्यवधान)* कोई बात नहीं, बैठिए।  
...*(व्यवधान)*

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: No problem ...*(interruptions)*... People are watching. They are hearing the debate ...*(interruptions)*... Ish Duttji was referring to the prices in Delhi. My friends from the other side are challenging, you give the figures then, we can have a debate. Let us have a healthy debate. There are also senior leaders from the Marxist Party sitting here. The figures are, before the Budget, the price of onions in Calcutta was Rs. 8 per kg. and now it is Rs. 16 per kg.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: What is the source?

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: In Trivandrum, it was Rs. 7 per kg. and now it is Rs. 14 per kg ...*(interruptions)*...

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: You should quote the source from which you have got the figures ...*(interruptions)*...

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: What is it that are you doing there? ...*(interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is happening? ...*(interruptions)*...

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: The source is the Government of West Bengal ...*(interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please sit down. Just one second ...*(interruptions)*...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Madam, I am on a point of order. Under the rules, speeches have to be relevant. Under the rules, if somebody makes any irrelevant discussion, it is out of rules. Keeping that in mind, I only pray, I only request, the hon. Members through you, that a national crisis arising out of an all-round price rise cannot be a matter of ridicule and cannot be a matter of trading charges between this side and that side and if it is done by an hon. member who happens to be an important functionary of the Party that is ruling the country, there is going to be a wrong signal ...*(interruptions)*... Yes, it will give a wrong signal and the people will believe that the party does not take the matter seriously ...*(interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta ...*(interruptions)*... Just one second ...*(interruptions)*...

आप बैठिए ...*(व्यवधान)* अग्रवाल जी, आप बैठिए।  
...*(व्यवधान)*

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: What about the situation in West Bengal and Maharashtra ...*(interruptions)*... I have heard from the hon. Members from the other side that ...*(interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I also heard it ...*(interruptions)*... Please sit down ...*(interruptions)*... Agarwalji, please sit down. Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta, I must remind you that this was my

ruling. Are you giving a ruling on my ruling or is it an elaboration of my ruling? I did not understand what point of order you have raised ...*(Interruptions)*... Just one second ...*(Interruptions)*... Do not interrupt me ...*(Interruptions)*... I do not like this kind of interaction while I am talking. What I said us, let us rise above political considerations and talk about the price rise and the effect which it is having on the economy of the country. This includes the entire House. If anybody has made any speech before I came over here, I do not know what he had said. While I am here, I would like the discussion should be for redressal of the problems of the people and not to say, in your State or in my State ...*(Interruptions)*... Please, no clapping ...*(Interruptions)*... I am not saying anything in favour of or against anybody...*(Interruptions)*... I am saying this only in favour of the people of this country, for which both the Opposition as well as the Ruling Party have given this Calling Attention. This Calling Attention is moved not only by the Opposition, but I find a large number of Member from the Ruling Party also, who have given their names. So, they are also concerned about the rise in prices. If you want a meaningful debate and redressal of the problems of the people, for which this Calling Attention has been admitted, please speak about the problems, which the people are facing, and then continue again. Price rise is not only in Delhi State, which is only a Union Territory, it includes the entire nation, whether it is Maharashtra, UP, Bihar or West Bengal. So, the decline in our economic system is not affecting Delhi only, it is affecting the entire nation. So, please confine yourselves to the subject. Now, let us be very serious about it.

SHRI M. VENKAIHA NAIDU: Madam, I am very serious and I will go by your advice. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I would not like that he is interrupted. He is presenting his viewpoint. If he speaks irrelevant, I am here to protect you. But,

if he speaks relevant, in concern of the people, I will allow him to speak. So, Please do not disturb him now.

SHRI M. VENKAIHA NAIDU: Madam, the prices before the Budget in various cities of the country, say, Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta, Chennai, Thiruvananthapuram and Guwahati, definitely show an upward trend. We, sitting here in the Council of States, are equally concerned about not only what is happening in Delhi, but also what is happening in the entire country. Of course, Delhi is the capital, naturally there will be more focus and more attention. But, at the same time, problems of the people of Calcutta, problems of the people of Chennai, problems of the people of Guwahati, problems of the people of Thiruvananthapuram, should also be discussed and debated in this House because, as I said earlier, it is the joint responsibility of the Government of India as well as the State Governments. If you go through the figures, the price of onion before the Budget, in Calcutta was Rs. 8/- per Kg., now it is Rs. 16/- per kg.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes, that is the concern because the prices have gone up after the Budget, not only in Delhi, but everywhere in the country. He is absolutely right. He is not saying anything which is irrelevant ...*(Interruptions)*... Please do not disturb him.

SHRI M. VENKAIHA NAIDU: The price of onion before the Budget in Guwahati, that is, in Assam was Rs. 7/- per kg., now it is Rs. 15/- per kg. With regard to Thiruvananthapuram, it was Rs. 7/- per kg. at that time, now it is Rs. 14/- per kg. With regard to Mumbai, where my party is also a part of the Government, the price of onion before Budget was Rs. 5.50, now it is Rs. 11/- per kg. There is an increase in Mumbai, there is an increase in Calcutta, there is an increase in Guwahati. My friends were asking me. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please do not interrupt him. I do not want a running commentary. He has a right to speak in this House.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: My only point is, these people do not have respect for others' point of view. That is my problem. I do not know what provokes them to always interrupt me, obstruct me, when I am making my submission. After all they are senior people, they are seasoned people, they are well-experienced. They are here for two-three terms.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: May be, they are thinking that you are still the spokesperson. So, they have to reply to you. Better we allow him as a Member of Parliament. He is not a spokesperson now.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: I have all admiration and high respect for Gurudas Das Guptaji, who is a senior Member. When he speaks I really pay my full attention to his speech, and then take notes. I am admitting it because he is a senior Member. He has got enough experience in this House. But when he refers to one side of the view and excludes the other side, it is the responsibility of even junior Members, who have just come, to make the other point of view also in this House, so that a comprehensive picture is put before the people. But, Guptaji, hailing from West Bengal has not even mentioned about the plight of the common man in Calcutta, the plight of the common man in West Bengal, the plight of the common man in Thiruvananthapuram. I am not making a charge against him, he is a senior Member. I have respect for him. My point is, just now as the Chair said, we should really be agitated about the actual impact on the people, rather than going by politics. If you try to fix me, and then I try to fix you, what will happen to the problem of the people. That is what exactly I am trying to say. So, my submission to the Government is you have to compare inflation. There is nothing

wrong in comparing. Our friends were saying that under the U.F. regime everything was under control. I am at a loss to understand, I am not a student of economics, and I would like the Finance Minister to enlighten me. Last year, as opposition activists, we organised a demonstration. Every party has got a right to organize demonstrations. Today some other party is organising a demonstration outside. Last year there was an increase of 35 per cent in the petroleum products. Even with regard to diesel there was an increase of 20 per cent. With regard to LPG there was an increase of 25 per cent. Under the progressive Government of the United Front, there was direct bearing and effect on the common man of the country. But still the criticism outside and the figures with regard to inflation, how do these two things correlate? This is one thing about which I would like to be enlightened. And the people of this country have every right to know. But the women were practically crying. *(Interruptions)* Even if the onion costs Re. one, then also you will get tears. The onion is hard for the eyes. *(Interruptions)*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I think Mr. Saleem had his meals, that is why he is so energetic today.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: When you increased the price of LPG by 25 per cent at one stroke, imagine how much water had gone from the eyes of our Indian housewives. Twenty five per cent at a time! LPG is a thing which you need every month and middle class depends on that. My suggestion is that, coming back to the original question, I would like the Finance Minister and also the Government of India to evolve a policy to see that the procurement prices or the support prices that are fixed from time to time are fixed in the beginning of the season so that the farmers can take a hint and they can go in for that particular crop so that the production is increase and the prices are stabilized.

With regard to onions and potatoes some efforts are being made by the Delhi Government. I hope that similar efforts will be adopted by various State Governments. Also in the metropolitan cities, organise them to procure the things through NAFED and distribute them through super bazars or through local retail outlets. This number has to be increased.

The problem is not confined to Delhi alone. Even the Delhi Government has got a greater responsibility. Delhi being the capital, naturally, the impact will be more. A lot of people come here. People come to see Delhi for various reasons. I need not mention here. But, at the same time there is a greater responsibility on the part of the Central Government to come to the rescue of the States which come with a proposal for additional procurement of potatoes, additional procurement of onions or for additional procurement of other essential commodities which are in short supply.

Secondly, Madam, unless the Planning Commission, the Government, the political parties, change their priorities and look into the plight of the farmer who is the producer in this country, there will be no solution to this problem. Every year, I can tell you, in every season we will come here and we will discuss the same issue again and again. We have discussed it earlier also a number of times for the simple reason that there is no direct connection between production and supply. There are no facilities for storage because it is a perishable item. The moment it comes here, the prices go down.

Next, I come to the Essential Commodities Act. Some friends were asking: why not take action against hoarding? Yes, but the action, to my knowledge, has to be taken by State Governments. Who prevented State Governments from taking action against hoarders? Who prevented action against people who are storing things and raising

problems for the common man? So, I request the Finance Minister to get in touch with the State — all States, left, right, straight, forward, backward — all States and see to it that the States move in the right direction. *(Interruptions)*.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is the problem? Mr. Virumbi what is the problem?

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI (Tamil Nadu): He is speaking about the States. Just five minutes ago regarding petroleum prices, he said that the prices had increased under the United Front Government. What I say is that the LPG, petroleum and diesel prices were based on the recommendations of the Jaswant Committee.

2.00 P.M.

Mr. Jaswant Singh was the Chairman of the Standing Committee. He made the recommendation in regard to the price increase. Now he is charging the UF Government. Unfortunately, or, fortunately, it has boomeranged on his own Government. How can he accuse the UF Government? *(Interruptions)*

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: I was not ruling at that time. You were in power then. You remained silent. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Madam, he cannot accuse us. The recommendation was made by Mr. Jaswant Singh, belonging to the BJP. *(Interruptions)*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please sit down, Mr. Virumbi. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Who recommended it? You recommended the increase. How can you accuse us?

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: This is the pity, Madam. *(Interruptions)*

श्री रामदास अग्रवाल: महोदय, किसी भी सरकार के लिए उस रिपोर्ट को मानने की बाध्यता नहीं है ...*(व्यवधान)*

**उपसभापति:** अग्रवाल जी, बैठिए आप ...**(व्यवधान)** अग्रवाल जी, आप कृपया बार-बार खड़े मत होइए। अगर कोई मॅबर इजाज़त लेकर बोले तो यह जरूरी नहीं है कि आपको ही उसका रिप्लाई देना है ...**(व्यवधान)** कृपया आप बैठ जाइए ...**(व्यवधान)**

I could have told him. Please. He did not refer to you. You were not in the UF Government. Please listen to the Member from your own party. I am trying to give him protection. I am protecting everybody. Please don't do this. Please don't do like this. Please remember that it is being telecast live. You should understand as to what the people would think. They will think that while a serious issue like price rise is being discussed, Members of Parliament are behaving like this. Let us be serious, at least, on some issue. Why don't we just stop accusing each other, while people are going hungry? Now, I would not allow anybody to interrupt him.

**SHRI M. VENKAIAH NADIU:** Madam, the problem is that when I am ruling, I am responsible. Apart from this, I am also responsible for whatever happened when they were ruling. I am also responsible for whatever happened during the regime of the party which is now on the other side and which is empty now. I am also responsible for the increase in the percentage of the population living below the poverty line to 52. I am being held responsible for whatever that has happened during all these years. I have just come to power. *(Interruptions)*

**SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:** Madam, there is a rule that Members have to speak relevant things. We are discussing the issue, skipping the lunch recess.

**THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** Please sit down, Mr. Basu.

**SHRI M. VENKAIAH NADIU:** Madam why can't they be made to sit in the Chair so that they can decide about everything and expunge everything, as they do in Communist countries?

**THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Basu, he is a member of this House. He has a right to make his point. When your turn comes, you can criticise the Government. You can criticise the Finance Minister. But have patience. When your turn comes, you can reply. Please don't interrupt when others are speaking.

**SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:** I am not interrupting him, Madam. I am only pointing out that he should say relevant things.

**THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** You don't have to point it out. If he says anything irrelevant, I will tell him. He says that he cannot be held responsible for everything. That is his viewpoint. Why do you object to it? I don't understand what you are objecting to? Let him speak. Now, Mr. Venkaiah Naidu, please conclude.

**SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU:** The problem with my friends is that they are intolerant to ideas other than theirs. This is the problem with them.

Madam, my suggestion is that the Government of India should take all the States into confidence to check hoarding. If necessary, they should call a meeting of the State Food Ministers/State Civil Supplies Ministers. We should see that wherever there is shortage, it is met by supplies from the surplus areas. If there is a shortage in one part of the country, the other part of the country which has a surplus should come to its rescue so that the State Governments can really provide relief to the people.

Today, we are in a situation where the country is confronted with such a challenge on the economic front, not because of Pokhran alone, but because of various other reasons. Unfortunately, however, even the issue of country's security has been dragged into politics and it is being taken very lightly. I am really pained. My friends should know that because of the Pokhran tests, the image of the country abroad, in the international community,

has gone up. Everywhere, we are being respected. *(Interruptions)*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I would adjourn the House if anybody interrupts him. I am here to control the House. I am here to point out. If you think that you can do it better, come here and do my job. Please do not interrupt him. I feel very sad to say something rude to my senior colleagues.

I can tell him. I can tell the hon. Member that we are not discussing Pokhran. We are discussing the question of price rise. We are only discussing the rocketing prices, not the rockets. Okay?

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: I totally go by your suggestion, Madam. But before you came, three times, Pokhran was referred to during the discussion.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: They should not have brought it up.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: I agree. I am ready to withdraw the reference from my side. I am only pointing out that after the nuclear tests, the country's prestige has gone up and we are being recognised and respected all over the world.

Coming to the issue, Madam, the problem of cold storage, the problem of godowns in the rural areas and the problem of rural credit are all directly connected with the price rise. The availability of rural credit to the agricultural community, storage facilities in the rural and the urban areas, cold storage facilities in the major towns in the country, the allocation made to agriculture, the role of the Agricultural Prices Commission in deciding about and declaring in advance the prices so that the farmers get an incentive to produce — all these things are interrelated and interconnected. Therefore, I would request the hon. Finance Minister. This is not going to be the end of this issue. There is going to be some effect. That being the case, the Finance Ministry, the Agriculture, Ministry and the Food Ministry should sit together and discuss

the issue, come to some meaningful and concrete conclusions and evolve a long-term action plan to boost production, to increase food production. Another point that was made by our friends is to put a ban on the exports of agricultural products. I am sorry, I am not in agreement with that. This will send a wrong signal to the rural community of the country. You allow industrial products to be exported. You allow all other persons who have got the advantage of capital from financial institutions and every other facility, including insurance, to export their products. This is a helpless sector of the society, which is sick because of the natural vagaries of monsoon. They have to be given protection. Export of agricultural products should also be encouraged. They should be given incentives. We should encourage them to the extent that they produce enough for internal consumption and also for exports so that the problems of Indian consumers and producers are taken care of.

I do not want to take much of the time. Much of my time was consumed by my friends. Still, I am thankful to you for having given me protection from time to time.

I would like the Finance Minister to concentrate on the points raised by me.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ramachandraiah.

SHRI MD. SALIM: Madam, there is a business listed at two o'clock.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He will lay it. Let this be over. Let us finish this. He is the last speaker. *...(Interruptions)...*

Yes, there is one more person.

श्री रामदास अग्रवाल: मैडम, मेरा भी है।

उपसभापति: अभी बहुत लोग बोल चुके हैं, अभी कोई इसमें एड करने को नहीं है।

श्री रामदास अग्रवाल: मैडम, मैं तो दूसरे विषय पर बोलूंगा।

उपसभापति: नहीं, दूसरा विषय यहां नहीं ... (व्यवधान) यहां दूसरा विषय है नहीं, यहां प्राइस

रइज का विषय है ... (व्यवधान) उनको तो बोलने दीजिए अभी वह खड़े हैं, उनको तो बोलने दीजिए। ... (व्यवधान)

श्री रामदास अग्रवाल: इस पर तो कोई बोला नहीं है मैडम, खाली प्राइस रइज पर बोलकर रह गए हैं। इन्फ्लेशन पर तो कोई बोल नहीं रहा है। वह भी एक विषय है आपका।

उपसभापति: चलिए, बोलने तो दीजिए उनको।

श्री ओंकार सिंह लखावत: मैडम,

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no, I will not allow discussions to go on. I am sorry, please.

श्री ओंकार सिंह लखावत: मैडम, मैं तो गांव से आया हूं, सारे शहर वालों ने बोला है ... (व्यवधान)

उपसभापति: आज आप गांव से आइए, शहर से आइए ... (व्यवधान) उनको बोलने दीजिए। आप क्यों डिस्टर्ब कर रहे हैं उनको। प्लीज बोलिए।

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Thank you, Madam, for giving me this opportunity.

Madam, I thought that there would be at least some unanimity in the august House on the steps that have to be initiated to fight this menace.

It is true that the prices are skyrocketing. It has become nightmarish for the housewife to go for shopping. But the Central Government alone is not responsible for this. The State Government are equally responsible for this. All of us put together have to create a congenial atmosphere and explore all possibilities to contain the prices. Most of my esteemed colleagues have suggested very concrete measures.

Madam, there should be a comprehensive distribution system throughout the country. Some States grow some products in more quantities. They are not grown in some other States. So, because of the lack of a proper distribution system, the parts which are not growing some products, are facing the scarcity of those products. So, this has to be taken care of.

There is an allegation that the BJP is very friendly with traders. That has to be taken note of. If at all there is any substance or truth in the allegation, the Government should be instructed to initiate very stringent measures so that the black-marketing and hoarding is stopped.

Madam, the inflation is a temporary phenomenon. It will be fast changing. We may suggest some measures for temporarily containing it. If the inflation continues to be on the rise—today I am told that it is more than 10.5 per cent as per the consumer price index—it will have a tremendously adverse impact on the economy.

A number of proposals have been initiated by the hon. Finance Minister, which are yet to be absorbed by the economy. They are yet to be absorbed by the economy. If the levies imposed by the hon. Finance Minister are going to have their effect in the economy, the price rise will be totally at a higher level as compared to what obtained last week or a week before the last week. The Government may say they are not responsible for that, because they came to power only a couple of months back, but they cannot absolve themselves of the responsibility. The Government is a continuous entity and it has to take into account the welfare of the people. So, the present Government cannot simply say that the previous Government was responsible for this. The present Government cannot convince the people just by searching scapegoats. I would advise the Finance Minister to have a consultation with all the Chief Ministers and evolve a method to contain inflation because it is an all pervasive phenomenon. Price rise is affecting all the States. It is not confined to the capital alone. It is there in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and in other States. The Government should take all the political parties into confidence and elicit their views on how to contain inflation.

Madam, there are two aspects to inflation. One is how to contain it immediately and another is how to prevent its recurrence in future so that it does not affect the economy. During the discussion on the Finance Bill, the Finance Minister had said that he would contain inflation. I had asked specifics on how to contain inflation. There are three specifics to contain inflation. One is to reduce expenditure. Under the present scenario, you cannot do that. Second aspect is to mobilise more resources. That too you cannot do under the present conditions. Last year also the Government could not mobilise resources. The present scenario is also not that buoyant and the conditions are not congenial. So, the question is how to overcome all these constraints. Therefore, I suggest call a meeting of all the political parties, take them into confidence and seek their advice. At least let there be a consensus on building the national economy.

Madam, I need not speak on the percentage of inflation. Every product has got its own percentage of price increase. While in some items there has been an increase by 50 per cent, in others it has been 30 per cent, 10 per cent or eight per cent. These are all facts. One thing the Government has to take note of is that unless it takes its management on a war footing, inflation will go on like an unbridled horse. You will not be able to manage the economy. Tentacles of inflation are spreading very fast and they are having a detrimental effect on our economy. Prices of onion, tomato etc. have gone up. It is said that it is a temporary phenomenon and that they can be contained, but if this trend continues, the target which the Government wants to achieve, will be very difficult to achieve. I advise the Government to introduce an efficient marketing system, have more cold storage network, which we had been planning to do during the Ninth Plan to store 50 lakh tonnes of vegetable and other perishable commodities. Unless you put your heart

and soul into the problem, you are not going to solve the problem. Take it with all your seriousness. It is not that easy. Inflation is a very dangerous thing.

We are not at all confident that you are going to achieve the proposals which you have initiated in your Budget. So, the Essential Supplies and Maintenance Act can be made more stringent. You can instruct Chief Ministers to enforce this Act sincerely in order to control black marketing and hoarding. All possible steps should be taken to contain inflation.

The second aspect is that this should not have an adverse impact on the economy. The Government should take a note of it. The Government should be very sincere in fighting this menace.

Madam, I thank you for having given me this opportunity to speak.

#### **PAPER LAID ON THE TABLE**

##### **White Paper on Railway Projects**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): Madam, I want to lay the White Paper, listed as item No. 3 in the Papers to be laid on the Table. It is listed against my colleague, Shri Nitish Kumar. He could not come to the House because he is ill. I have already communicated it to the Secretariat.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay, lay it.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Madam, on behalf of my colleague, Shri Nitish Kumar, I lay on the Table, a copy in English and Hindi of the White Paper on Railway projects. [Placed in Library. See No. LT. 1397/98]