SHRI SILVIUS CONDPAN: Madam, here I would like to refer to the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme. This Act, which was brought about by the present Government, has sent a very encouraging message to the people, right to work for the people in the remotest areas of our country to be able to earn their bread, to be able to manage their economic hardship, at least for 100 days. I know, in my own State, while implementing this very NREG Programme, the landless people and poor have come out, the women have come out in large numbers to participate in the implementation of NREG programme as they have no other means to maintain their family. They have been highly benefited by this Programme. So, I thank the President for mentioning this very popular programme of this Government in her Address. Madam, there are many other programmes through which the present Government has brought relief to the common man. The present Government gave relief to the farmers by waiving of their loans. The agriculturists have heaved a sigh of relief, from economic point of view. They were unable to repay the loans that they had taken for their agricultural activities. This waiver has gone to a great extent to give them relief from the indebtedness that they were undergoing for a long time.

Madam, the other point I want to mention here is that this Government in its term has also improved the rural economy by implementing various popular schemes through which our rural people are being benefited. From the education point of view, we have seen that huge amounts of financial assistance are being sent to different States and the States are being assisted to give educational upliftment to the rural people. Wherever there were no school building, schools have been built there. Educational institutions have been provided to those needy areas. During the term of this Government, financial assistance has gone to different States. There are roads in every village under the PMGSY, under the National Highway Authority and under the Four-Lane Road System. This Government has given a lot of money to different States and the picture of different States, mostly in the rural areas, is undergoing a change. You can see roads are coming up and people are also busy in construction of roads under State Highways and National Highways authorities. In this way, Madam, the present Government has been able to change the rural picture by constructing roads, constructing school buildings, rural development, Rural Employment Guarantee Programme, etc. This is the way, this Government, the UPA Government, under the leadership of Dr. Manmohan Singh and also under the Chairmanship of the UPA Chairperson, Shrimati Sonia Gandhi, has done a lot to change the economic picture of our country as a whole. So, I support the Motion of Thanks, as has been brought by my learned friend, Shri J.P. Aggarwal in his speech. Thank you, very much.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): Shri Bhagat Singh Koshyari. Your party has no time at all. Please be brief.

SHRI BHAGAT SINGH KOSHYARI (Uttarakhand): Madam, so many speakers have gone out and you can allow me now because.....

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): The time is limited. Please, therefore, take minimum time.

SHRI BHAGAT SINGH KOSHYARI: Time is not limited because there are not many speakers. I think, Madam, you will allow me.

आदरणीय उपसभाध्यक्षा जी, आपने मुझे बोलने के लिए समय दिया, थोड़ा सा राइडर लगा दिया, मैं सोचता हूं कि अगर राइडर हटा देंगी, तो मुझे बोलने में सुविधा होगी। मैं बहुत लंबा वैसे भी नहीं बोलूंगा, क्योंकि मेरी पार्टी के सभी वक्ता बोल चुके हैं।

माननीया, जब राष्ट्रपति जी का अभिभाषण पढ़ा जा रहा था, क्योंकि मैं पहली बार अपने सामने माननीय राष्ट्रपति जी का अभिभाषण सुन रहा था और मुझे अपेक्षा थी कि मैं संसद में हूं, जो सबसे बड़ी संस्था है और हमारे इस देश के सर्वोच्च पद पर राष्ट्रपति जी हैं, तो जब उनका अभिभाषण होगा, तो मुझे लग रहा था... कभी मैं राजेन्द्र प्रसाद जी के अभिभाषणों को पढ़ता था, कभी डा. राधाकृष्णन जी के अभिभाषण को पढ़ता था और अभी थोड़े समय पहले मैंने डा.ए.पी.जे. अब्दुल कलाम के अभिभाषण भी पढ़े। मैं जानता हूं कि यह अभिभाषण सरकार का होता है, राष्ट्रपति जी उसको नहीं लिखते हैं, लेकिन उस भाषण में कहीं तो यह लगना चाहिए कि शरीर भले ही सरकार का है, उसकी बॉडी भले ही सरकार की है, लेकिन उसकी spirit तो राष्ट्रपति जी की है, क्योंकि वे देश के सर्वोच्च पद पर हैं और उन्होंने ...(व्यवधान)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): Please do not make any remarks about the President.

श्री भगत सिंह कोश्यारी : मैं आपसे निवेदन यह कर रहा हूं ...(व्यवधान)... मेरा आपसे निवेदन यह है ....(व्यवधान)....

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): I understand that it is your maiden speech. Please refrain from making remarks about the President.

श्री भगत सिंह कोश्यारी : मैं पूरे आदर के साथ, पूरे सम्मान के साथ यह कह रहा हूं। मैं राष्ट्रपति जी का अपमान नहीं कर रहा हूं। मैं यह इसलिए कह रहा हूं कि कम से कम हम जो सुनने वाले हैं, सारा देश जो उस भाषण को पढ़ रहा है, तो मैं जानता हूं कि उसका major portion किसी भी सरकार की पिछली ...(व्यवधान)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): You are repeating it. Please refrain from making remarks.

श्री भगत सिंह कोश्यारी : किसी भी सरकार की उपलब्धियों ...(व्यवधान)... I am not repeating, I am telling something. Try to follow me. Why will I cast any aspersions on our respected President? Try understand me. हो सकता है कि आप हिंदी कम समझती हों। माननीया, मेरा आपसे अनुरोध है कि मैं निवेदन यह कर रहा हूं कि आखिर इस अभिभाषण के माध्यम से अगर हमें कोई प्रेरणा मिलती, चाहे वह सरकार का अभिभाषण है, मैं कहता हूं कि सरकार का है, तो सरकार के इस अभिभाषण के माध्यम से यह एक catalyst होना चाहिए, उत्प्रेरक होना चाहिए कि भविष्य के लिए अगले साल हम क्या करने वाले हैं? क्योंकि यह राष्ट्रपति जी का इस साल का पहला भाषण है, तो सरकार की मंशा उसमें प्रकट होती है, लेकिन इस सारे भाषण के अंदर ऐसा लगता है कि यह भाषण कोई आगे के लिए प्रेरक नहीं कि सरकार की कोई ऐसी योजनाएं हों, कोई इस प्रकार की बातचीत हो, जिसके माध्यम से हम यह कह सकें कि आगे आने वाले वर्ष में हम कुछ ऐसा करने वाले हैं, जिससे देश प्रगति के आगे आयाम को पकड़े, जिससे देश का सम्मान बढ़े, जिससे देश की समृद्धि बढ़े, जिससे देश की सुरक्षा बढ़े। मैं सोचता हूं कि इस अभिभाषण के अंदर ऐसा लगता है कि कुल

मिलाकर यह अभिभाषण सरकार की विदाई का भाषण मालूम पड़ता है। ऐसा लगता है कि सरकार का यह जाने का समय है और इसीलिए कुल मिलाकर एक फॉर्मेलिटी करके, एक ritual के रूप में यह भाषण दिया गया है।

मान्यवर, मैं आपके माध्यम से यह अनुरोध करना चाहता हूं कि आखिर किसी सरकार का जब राष्ट्रपति जी का अभिभाषण होता है, तो उस अभिभाषण के अंदर हमारी सरकार क्या करना चाहती है, इसका एक संकल्प होता है, लेकिन इस अभिभाषण के अंदर कहीं पर भी सरकार की किसी संकल्प शक्ति का, किसी विल पॉवर का कि सरकार कुछ करने जा रही है, आभास नहीं होता है। मैं एक उदाहरण देना चाहता हूं। इस सदन में सौभाग्य से मैं आ गया था। सब लोगों ने मुम्बई की आतंकवादी घटना के बाद एक कानून पास किया, लेकिन इस प्रस्ताव में कहीं पर भी कोई ऐसा दृढ़ निश्चय दिखायी नहीं देता है। सारा सदन एकमत है कि आतंकवाद के खिलाफ हमें कड़े कदम उठाने चाहिए। महोदया, हमारे मित्र अरुण जेटली जी ने अभी शाहबानो के केस का उदाहरण पेश किया था, लेकिन इस सदन में मैं बड़े दुख के साथ कहना चाहता हूं कि पार्लियामेंट पर आक्रमण करने के लिए, संसद पर आतंकवादी हमला करवाने के लिए सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने जिस व्यक्ति को फांसी की सजा दे दी, आज ढाई साल बीत जाने के बाद भी अगर उसको फांसी की सजा नहीं होती है, उसको दया की अपील पर सरकार रोके रहती है तो इसका सीधा अर्थ है कि सरकार वास्तव में अप्रत्यक्ष रूप से कहीं न कहीं आतंकवादियों को आश्रय दे रही है। अगर इस प्रकार की संकल्प शक्ति हमारी सरकार में नहीं है, जिसको संसद पर हमला करने के लिए हमारे सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने फांसी की सजा दे दी, यदि हम उसको फांसी की सजा नहीं दे सकते तो यह तय है कि एक उदाहरण पर्याप्त है, जो इस हिन्दुस्तान के अंदर आतंकवादियों के उत्साह को हमेशा बढ़ाता रहेगा और आतंकवादी उससे निश्चित रूप से प्रेरणा लेते रहेंगे कि इस सरकार के अंदर इतनी हिम्मत नहीं है कि जिसे सुप्रीम कोर्ट सजा दे देती है, उसको यह सरकार माफ कर रही है या उसको सरकार फांसी नहीं लगा रही है। एक प्रकार से मैं कह सकता हूं कि जहां तक आतंकवाद का सवाल है, सारा देश आतंकवाद को खत्म करना चाहता है लेकिन वोट की खातिर या कहीं न कहीं अपनी कमजोरी की खातिर यह सरकार उस आतंकवादी को फांसी देने से रुकी हुई है। महोदया, अभी अरुण जी बोल रहे थे, कल हमारे नेता जसवन्त सिंह जी बोले, मैं भी आपसे निवेदन करना चाहता हूं कि आज वास्तव में देश के अंदर जिस प्रकार का संकट है, हम लोग बार-बार कह रहे हैं कि तालिबानी फलां जगह आ गए, फलां जगह संकट है, लेकिन आज आवश्यकता इस बात की है, जिसका मैं आपसे आग्रह कर रहा हूं कि न केवल सरकार के लिए बल्कि हम सबके लिए इस देश में ऐसा नेतृत्व होना चाहिए। हम कल्पना करें कि जिस समय हमारी एनडीए की सरकार ने, अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी जी की सरकार ने परमाणु बम का विस्फोट किया था, उस समय सारी दुनिया ने प्रतिबंध लगा दिया था लेकिन हम झुके नहीं। अंत में दुनिया को हमारे सामने झुकना पड़ा। इस प्रकार की संकल्प शक्ति होनी चाहिए। मैं यह बात इसलिए कह रहा हूं कि वास्तव में शासन केवल रूलिंग पार्टी का नहीं है, केवल यूपीए का नहीं है। हम अभिभाषण पर इसलिए बोल रहे हैं, अपना मत इसलिए व्यक्त करते हैं कि सारे देश की चिंता हो और सारे देश की चिंता यह है कि अगर इस देश को सुरक्षित रखना है, अगर इस देश को समृद्ध बनाना है तो कहीं न कहीं ऐसी संकल्प शक्ति की आवश्यकता है, इस प्रकार की लीडरशिप चाहिए जो देश को दिशा दे सके, जो सही समय पर निर्णय ले सके। कुल मिलाकर मुझे ऐसा लगता है कि हम सब लोग इस प्रकार का निर्णय नहीं ले पा रहे हैं। मुझे ऐसा लगता है कि हमारे कुछ वक्ता शाइनिंग इंडिया को व्यंग्यात्मक रूप से ले रहे थे। पिछली सरकार ने शाइनिंग इंडिया का लक्ष्य रखा, समृद्ध भारत का लक्ष्य रखा, मैं समझता हूं कि अगर ऊंचा लक्ष्य ही नहीं रखोगे, अगर शाइनिंग इंडिया नहीं रखोगे तो क्या diminishing

इंडिया रखोगे, क्या बुझता हुआ हिन्दुस्तान रखोगे? कम से कम आप किसी मामले में फेल होते हो तो बात समझ में आ सकती है, असफल होते हो तो बात समझ में आ सकती है लेकिन अगर हम लक्ष्य ही ऊंचा न रखें, हमारा aim ही ऊंचा न हो तो इसका सीधा अर्थ है कि हम वास्तव में देश का नेतृत्व नहीं कर रहे हैं बल्कि शायद हम अपनी सरकार को किसी प्रकार से आगे घसीट रहे हैं। मुझे कभी-कभी लोग कहते हैं कि यूपीए सरकार की सबसे बड़ी उपलब्धि आपको क्या लगती है? अगर बहुत अच्छे काम हों, जैसे इंदिरा जी के समय में पाकिस्तान के साथ लड़ाई लड़ी गयी और बांग्लादेश के संबंध में कदम लिया गया, उसकी सबने तारीफ की थी। इसी प्रकार लाल बहादुर शास्त्री जी के समय में पाकिस्तान द्वारा हमला किया गया तो हमने सफलता प्राप्त की तो सबने उसकी तारीफ की थी। अगर कोई तारीफ करने लायक काम किया होगा तो तारीफ होगी ही। मैं समझता हूं कि इस सरकार की केवल एक उपलब्धि है, वह उपलब्धि यह है कि जैसे-तैसे यह सरकार अपने पांच साल पूरे करने जा रही है, शायद यही इसकी सबसे बड़ी उपलब्धि होगी। इसके अलावा मैं समझता हूं कि हर फील्ड में यह सरकार असफल हुई है। महोदया, मैं आपके माध्यम से केवल दो-तीन बिन्दुओं पर अपनी बात रखना चाहता हूं। कल हमारे कम्युनिस्ट मित्र माननीय सदस्य बोल रहे थे, आखिर कहीं पर भी सरकार की ओर से बेरोजगारी के बारे में जिक्र नहीं है, सारे देश के अंदर रिसेशन आ रहा है, यह तो सब बोल रहे हैं, लेकिन अगर अमेरिका से लड़के खाली होते हैं, ब्रिटेन से तथा जापान से भी खाली हो रहे हैं और इस देश में भी लोग बेरोजगार हो रहे हैं तो क्या उसके लिए हमारा कोई रोड मैप है, कोई प्लान हमने बना रखा है, इस भाषण के अंदर? माननीया उपसभाध्यक्षा जी, माननीया राष्ट्रपति जी के अभिभाषण के अंदर मुझे कहीं नहीं लगता कि यहां पर किसी प्रकार का जिक्र हो कि हम बेरोजगारी को कैसे दूर करेंगे। देश से बाहर, हमारे जो लड़के रोजगार के लिए गए हैं, अगर ऐसे लाखों की संख्या में लोग वापिस आएंगे तो उनका किस प्रकार से मुकाबला करेंगे, उनको किस प्रकार से रोजगार देंगे, इसका कहीं पर भी जिक्र नहीं है।

माननीया उपसभाध्यक्षा जी, अभिभाषण में बहुत वर्णन किया गया है कि हमने खेती में इतनी उन्नति की है, हमने इतना प्राप्त कर लिया है, हमने ज्यादा फसल प्राप्त कर ली है, गेहूं का इतना ज्यादा उत्पादन हुआ है और हमने इतनी बड़ी-बड़ी योजनाएं बनाई हैं, लेकिन सारी योजनाएं बनाने के बाद भी.....(**समय की घंटी**)

महोदया, पांच मिनट और लूंगा। महोदया, मैं आपसे निवेदन कर रहा हूं कि आखिर हमको इतना कहने के बाद भी मैं आज प्रणब जी को बहुत धन्यवाद देता हूं कि कम से कम उन्होंने यह तो कहा कि हमने दसों चीजें कर दीं हैं, लेकिन उन्होंने अपने बजट में स्वीकार किया है कि चालू वर्ष में हमको राजकोषीय घाटा अपेक्षा के प्रतिकूल चार सौ प्रतिशत हुआ है। इसी प्रकार से जो फिस्कल डेफिसिट है, वित्तीय घाटा है, वह भी चार सौ प्रतिशत से अधिक है। अगर आपका फिस्कल घाटा, रेवेन्यू घाटा चार सौ परसेंट ज्यादा है तो मैं सोचता हूं कि हाथ कंगन को आरसी क्या, घाटा यह बताता है कि वास्तव में हम कोई प्रगति नहीं कर पा रहे हैं और प्रगति इसलिए नहीं करेंगे, क्योंकि मैं फिर कह रहा हूं कि देश के सामने लक्ष्य नहीं है। पार्टी जो शासन कर रही है, उसके सामने कोई लक्ष्य है ही नहीं। कहने को तो हम सब लोग कहते हैं कि हम लोग चांद पर चले गए हैं। बहुत अच्छी बात है। हमारे वैज्ञानिकों ने उन्नति की, हमने परमाणु विस्फोट किया। चांद पर हमारा चंद्रयान चला गया है। चांद पर हम अपना चंद्रयान तो पहुंचा रहे हैं, लेकिन राजग के शासनकाल में जो महंगाई पहले नियंत्रित थी, वही पिछले चार-साढ़े चार वर्षों में वह महंगाई चांद पर नहीं, मंगल पर पहुंच चुकी है। अगर शनि उससे ऊपर है तो वह शनि पर भी पहुंच गई है। लगता है सरकार पर भी शनि की दशा आ गई है। यह महंगाई इतनी बढ़ चुकी है कि लोग परेशान हैं।

महोदया, मैं आपसे निवेदन करना चाहूंगा कि आज जरूरत इस बात की है कि रूलिंग कांग्रेस पार्टी के लोग कहते हैं कि कांग्रेस का हाथ जनता के साथ। काम कांग्रेस का हाथ जनता के साथ होने से नहीं होगा, काम तब होगा जैसे अटल जी के साथ दो सौ करोड़ जनता के हाथ थे। जनता के हाथ हमारे साथ हों, तब जाकर देश उन्नति करेगा। आपका हाथ अगर जनता में किसी चार व्यक्ति के साथ चला गया तो उस हाथ से कुछ होने वाला नहीं है, जब तक ये सवा दो सौ करोड़ हाथ हमारे साथ नहीं होंगे, सरकार के साथ नहीं होंगे, इस देश को बनाने के लिए नहीं होंगे, तब तक मैं नहीं सोचता हूं कि हमारा देश प्रगति कर सकता है। जिस रफ्तार से इस देश के अंदर हमारे सामने विपत्तियां आ रही हैं, जिस प्रकार से इतने संकट सारे देश के अंदर आ रहे हैं, मैं नहीं सोचता कि जब तक हम जनता के अंदर एक प्ररेणा नहीं लाएंगे, जनता के अंदर इस प्रकार का भाव नहीं लाएंगे, तब तक किसी भी प्रकार से हम जो लक्ष्य प्राप्त करना चाहते हैं, जिस भारत को हम बनाना चाहते हैं, उस भारत को हम बना पाएंगे। संक्षेप में मैं बस इतना ही कहूंगा कि कहीं न कहीं, जिस पोइंट पर जो मेरा स्ट्रेस है, चूंकि आगे संकट बहुत खड़ा है, आज जिस प्रकार से अमेरिका जैसा देश त्रस्त है और पाकिस्तान भी कहने लग गया है कि हम भी तालिबान से परेशान हैं, जबकि वह खुद तालिबानियों को प्रशिक्षण देता है, जिससे वह भी खुद परेशान है। इसका सीधा अर्थ है कि इस भारत का कितना महत्व बढ़ गया है और भारत के नेतृत्व का और भारत की सरकार का कितना महत्व बढ़ गया है कि कहीं-न-कहीं इस भारत में आज ऐसे नेता की जरूरत है। चर्चिल ने 1947 में प्रधान मंत्री का पद ग्रहण करते हुए अपने संक्षिप्त भाषण में एक वाक्य कहा था, "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat." इस प्रकार से जो वास्तव में अपना सर्वस्व बलिदान करने के लिए तैयार हो, जो अपना पसीना बहाने के लिए तैयार हो, जो अपना खून देने के लिए तैयार हो, तो कहीं न कहीं इस प्रकार की दृढ़ इच्छा शक्ति को लेकर चलने वाले नेतृत्व के साथ हम आगे बढ़ेंगे, तभी यह देश आगे बढ़ सकता है। चूंकि आपने कहा है कि कम बोलो इसलिए इस सरकार के अभिभाषण से असहमति व्यक्त करते हुए, अपने संशोधन प्रस्तुत करते हुए, मैं अपनी बात समाप्त करता हूं। आपने मुझे बोलने का समय दिया, इसके लिए आपका बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद।

DR. BARUN MUKHERJI (West Bengal): Madam Vice-Chairperson, while extending my support to the Motion of Thanks on President's Address, delivered on 12th February, 2009, I would like to point out some of my reservations and disappointment on some issues relating to the needs of poor and common people.

The hon. President has rightly raised the most pertinent question 'Aam Aadmi ko kya mila?' But, *Aam Aadmi* is hardly convinced of the benefits that have been accrued to him as suggested in her Address. The Government may feel happy and proud to publicise that, 'It has acted on nearly all the commitments made to the people through the National Common Minimum Programme.' But, quite a few vital commitments like 'right to education' or 'reservation for women in Lok Sabha and State Legislatures' are still confined in Bills as they have been merely introduced in Parliament. The Bills, as such, may sound vibrating for election campaign. But the people's aspirations are not fulfilled merely by introduction of Bills. Madam, more than 30 per cent of our population is still illiterate and the women are deprived of much needed social and economic rights. Even the question may be raised as to how far the right to work, as has been guaranteed through the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, is implemented.

Unemployment and poverty levels are steadily rising. Due to recent global economic meltdown we have already lost about 5 lakh jobs. In spite of an Act, millions of workers belonging to the unorganised sector are still deprived of minimum social security provisions and also a large number of people are miserably dependent on a meagre income of Rs. 20 a day. Unfortunately, all these hard realities are not reflected in President's Address. It has, rather, tried to list out a handful of works done by the UPA Government during its near completed tenure. The Address, Madam, has thus become more like an election manifesto than the realistic assessment of the situation concerning the *Aam Aadmi.*

Madam, in spite of the claims of increase in agricultural production, the country is now depending more and more on imported foodgrains which will not speak well of our food security. Moreover, if the production is so high, why could not more quantity of foodgrains be distributed through the PDS?

The newly initiated National Rural Health Mission is far from eradicating diseases of millions of our people. On the contrary, health care facilities of international standards are available in our country, but at such a high cost that it is far beyond the reach of the common man. This basic inequality in our society in respect of money, health, education and other social benefits is still a positive hindrance to inclusive growth that the Government claims to have achieved. The Special Economic Zones, which the UPA Government claims to be a unique achievement, is, in fact, the biggest land-grab move in the recent times. It is discriminating in nature. It is creating a special privileged group that enjoys many undue exemptions from taxes and fees. In the name of export promotion and employment generation, the SEZ people are exploiting the resources of the country and are enjoying undue privileges. The sooner it is abolished the better would be the prospects of inclusive growth. Although the Indo-US nuclear deal has been highly praised as, "One of the manifestations of the transformation in our relationship with the United States of America". We are afraid, it would eventually prove as a detrimental to the interest of our country. The US nuclear reactor business is heading to flourish at our cost. At the same time, the strategic partnership with the US would eventually tarnish India's traditional image of a non-aligned country and would adversely affect our independent foreign policy. The UPA Government's high hopes that 'our young people have never been more confident about the future' as manifested in the Address is rather very difficult to accept. Unemployment, poverty, price rise, ill health, illiteracy, deficiency in the PDS, continuing threats of job loss are constantly haunting our young generation. It is better to be more realistic in our assessment and find out means of socialistic reconstruction of our country. Thank you very much.

DR. E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN (Tamil Nadu): Thank you, Madam Vice-Chairman, for having given me this opportunity to speak. I appreciate and thank the hon. President of India for making such an excellent Address by giving the comprehensive achievements of the

Government, and a vision for the new century on February 12, 2009. I commend the Motion moved by the hon. Member, Shri Aggarwalji.

First of all, I would like to draw the attention of the House that as a Member of Parliament anything in the space can be done. One more example for that is: as a Member of Parliament in the Lok Sabha during 2001, and also as a Member of the Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science & Technology, Environment and Forests, I had an opportunity to put questions to Dr. Kasturirangan, who is also an hon. Member of this House now. At that time, he was the Secretary, Department of Space. On 10th April, 2001, I suggested to him that since we have advanced the technology of cryogenic engine, why we can't make a Mission to Moon. As Secretary, Department of Space, he replied positively. He told that if the Committee recommends such a Mission, the Department was ready for that. On that basis, Report no. 91 on the Demands for Grants, 2001-02 for the Department of Space recommended this. I will just quote paragraph no. 36. Under the heading Lunar Mission, it is mentioned, "The attention of the DoS was drawn to consideration of last year's Demands for Grants when the Secretary, DoS, had mentioned in the context of lunar launch that it was possible only if requisite international cooperation was forthcoming in this regard. Asked whether any efforts have been made for securing international cooperation for the purpose or whether the project has finally been abandoned. If so, the reasons for abandoning the project." I will now quote paragraph no. 38. "The Committee is of the view that India's space programme having reached plateau in terms of technological development, it was time to consider exploring new horizons, the Mission to Moon being the one. The Lunar mission, the Committee feels, would not only boost the country's international standing but also provide new direction to the scientists to reach greater heights. The Committee, however, recommends that instead of sending a spacecraft with high cost involved in it, ISRO may initially consider sending a lunar orbiter equipped with sophisticated equipment's that would circle the moon for year, conduct scientific experiments and send feed back for analysis." This was made possible because of the democratic process, the process of parliamentary committees, and the parliamentary system followed in our country. Madam, once this recommendation was made, a task force was constituted. This task force took more one-and-a-half years to make a recommendation. It stipulated that it could be done within a five-year period, and that it would cost around Rs. 800 crores. On that basis, the then Prime Minister mentioned in his speech at the Red Fort that the Chandrayaan Project would be taken up as a project of the Government. This has become a reality. The UPA Government has made it possible. On 22nd October 08, the UPA Government made it really happen. It is a proud piece of scientific achievement for this country. I will just quote paragraph 29 of the President's Address. "Our scientists have demonstrated, time and again, that they have the capacity to be the best in the world. The successful placing into the lunar orbit of the Chandrayaan-1 spacecraft in November 2008 is a tribute to our talent pool in science and technology and heralded India's entry into a select group of countries that have successfully

undertaken lunar missions. India has also successfully accomplished eighteen missions which included eight launch vehicle missions and eight satellites launched by the PSLV and GSLV." I feel very proud of the achievements made by our scientists. Under the guidance of Smt. Sonia Gandhi, and under the Prime Ministership of Dr. Manmohan Singh, we have achieved this and it is one of the proudest moments of India in the international field. Similarly, we have entered into an agreement with the USA on the nuclear issues. This is also an achievement and we have shown to the world that our 65-years of research in atomic energy is also recognized throughout the world. Madam, the UPA Government has fulfilled all the promises which it made in the National Common Minimum Programme. And, this documentation was properly made by the hon. President of India in the President's Address. More specifically, I can say that, diplomatically, we have succeeded in propagating democracy in our neighbourhood. We saw that with our help, Nepal relinquished the monarchy and has come back to democracy by bringing an elected Government — not only an elected Government but also a Government led by a person who was leading an armed rebel against the Government. He suffered for 15 years to achieve this end. Democracy in India made them realise that instead of going for arms, it is better to go for ballot rather than the bullet. That has been achieved in Nepal. Similarly, India has sent its Armed Forces only thrice, though requests were made by many countries. One is Bangladesh. India helped the Mukti Vahini people who were fighting against a particular rule in West Pakistan in forming a separate State by way of Bangladesh. That was the success achieved by Madam Indira Gandhi, which the world recognised in the best possible manner. Similarly, we went even nearer to the capital of East Pakistan, but we withdrew our Army when there was a peace settlement and we have never taken even an inch of foreign land. We have shown to the world and the Comity of Nations that we never attack any other country to grab the land. But, at the same time, we have suffered because of our neighbours in certain cases.

[MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair]

Similarly, we went to Sri Lanka when the then Government wanted to have our interference to bring peace between the Jaffna Tamilians and Sinhalese.

Madam, here, I want to put on record that Sri Lanka was a part of our sub-continent. It is a country having a long history, more specifically for Tamils, the Tamils from South India, more specifically from Tamil Nadu. In ancient days, even from the days of Pandiya kingdom and Chola kingdom, the Sri Lankan part was ruled by Pandiyas and Cholas. It had got a very rich heritage showing the culture of Tamils. It was having a Shaivites system of culture. The great literature in Tamil was made as part of Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka is having four different types of ethnic groups. We can say that the Eastern part of the North half is occupied by Tamil speaking Muslims and

also the Jaffna Tamilians. We call it as Trincomalee. The other places were having a rich culture by way of their own business and trading. Similarly, in the Western part of North half, Jaffna Tamilians were having a very high rate of literacy even 100 years ago. They were having a very high level of education, having gone to Europe, more specifically, to London. They were having a pleasant life, but, at the same time, they were having a separate culture for themselves. If we take the Central part of Sri Lanka, that was more or less occupied by the States which are reclaimed by the Indian origin Tamilians, more specifically, from our district, that is Sivagangai, Pudukottai, Ramanathpuram and Tiruvelveli. These people are of Indian origin. There were 15 lakh people working in the plantation. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru in 1947 went to Sri Lanka to start a new Party, that is, the Ceylon Workers' Congress. That was made under the Presidentship of Thondaman who became the Minister of Sri Lanka subsequently. By way of an agreement, Shastri and Srimavo Bhandarnaike Agreement, five lakh people of Indian origin were given the Sri Lankan citizenship and another five lakh people were repatriated to India and were given good positions in India. ...*(Interruptions)*... Kindly hear me. ...*(Interruptions)*... Kindly hear me. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr. Natchiappan, there is time constraint. Please cooperate.

DR. E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Sir, I will conclude within ten minutes. I know the Congress Party has got sufficient time. Sir, I have to go to the history. They should have the tolerance to hear the history, at least.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please don't disturb.

DR. E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Sir, in the Central part of Sri Lanka, there are Tamil origin people. Even now, 13 lakh people are living there. Shrimati Indira Gandhi fought for the cause of the Tamil people and the Tamil origin people in the whole of Sri Lanka because the Sinhalese were chauvinistic in certain ways. They were killing certain Tamil Muslims in Triconmalee and also in some parts of the Jaffna area. The people were brutally killed and raped there. Indiraji made conscious efforts to bring peace to Sri Lanka primarily because it is in our neighbourhood and also because it has a huge population of Indian origin people. Late Shrimati Indira Gandhi also wanted to protect the people of Sri Lanka. Therefore, she helped it in all respects.

Sir, in 1980s, a large number of youth from both sides, the Tamil people and the Sinhalese people, started fighting on the street. But Indiraji persuaded them not to resort to street fighting, but have a peaceful settlement. We helped them a lot in this. We united the thirtyfive different groups of people who were fighting on the streets. They were called and given a proper direction by chalking out a common programme for them. As a result of her persistent efforts, Madam Indira Gandhi could bring peace to Sri Lanka, but, unfortunately, she was also assassinated. Subsequently, Rajivji also made efforts in this direction. He went all-out to follow the path shown

by Indiraji. When Shri Rajiv Gandhi was received as a guest in Sri Lanka, their own person, who was in a sailor's suit, attacked him, but just by his own intelligence, Rajivji managed to skip away from the death knell. However, forgetting that incidence, Rajivji helped the Tamil people. It brought real freedom for them and they got the right to rule the entire northern part of Sri Lanka, including the Eastern and the Western parts. At that time, that settlement was accepted by all the people. But, subsequently, the Sinhalese and certain Tamil groups started to fight and it became an armed conflict. It resulted finally in the death of our beloved Prime Minister who was about to be re-elected as the Prime Minister. He was killed on the soil of Tamil Nadu. We feel ashamed of it. Even then, we did not have the intention to grab or invade that country, just to protect the pride of India. But we allowed them to settle down there. The person, who was the leader of the banned organisation, LTTE, Mr. Prabhakaran, is the first accused in the assassination case of our Prime Minister, who was also our would-be Prime Minister in 1991. But India never went out of its way to take vengeance upon any people. We helped them in the process of their settlement and we also helped them in their rehabilitation. We even spent more than Rs. 2000 crores of Indian money for rehabilitating the people in Triconmalee and other places of Sri Lanka. When Tsunami hit Sri Lanka, Indian money was utilised for constructing houses, for giving new steamers, boats and fishing nets to the fishermen of Sri Lanka, more particularly, to the Tamil people. Similarly, we are helping them generate 500 megawatts of electricity through thermal power at Triconomalee, which is a Tamil-populated area. We have also provided help in the Western and Eastern parts of Sri Lanka.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Natchiappan, you must now conclude.

DR. E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Sir, we have been allowed sufficient time. I shall conclude within the allotted time. Please allow me.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If you do not cooperate, we would not be able to complete it by 4 o'clock.

DR. E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Sir, we do want to cooperate with the Chair, but at the same time, we need to bring out the problems.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Natchiappan, you have already spoken for 25 minutes. Mr. Narayanasamy, don't plead for him.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, we are cooperating with you. I have requested him to be brief.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Narayanasamy, don't plead for him. Please continue, Mr. Natchiappan.

DR. E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Thank you, Sir, for allowing me to continue.

Sir, the entire population of 103 crore Indians have concern for Sri Lanka; it is our neighbour. We would not like to support Sri Lanka's chauvinistic views. We are not providing arms to Sri Lanka for killing their own citizens, especially Tamils. But there is system through which terrorists function; they function through a three-phased programme. You are aware of what happens in Assam and other terrorist-infested areas and how the terrorists move. They first start by terrorising the common man by attacking VIPs at their houses and their offices. A Congress MLA, Gnanashekaran's house was attacked. One Congress MP, Shri Kharventhan's office was attacked. My office in Madurai was attacked. Attacks start occurring everywhere. Then, they had the effigies of Prime Minister and Shrimati Sonia Gandhi burnt in the public. They started pelting stones on the people and say that Indians are— I should not use that word; it is a very bad word that is normally used in Sri Lanka against Indians. Even then we are people who are peace lovers. We do not attack them. In the second phase, they target and attack people, even in court premises. Our friend from the BJP had raised the issue in the morning. This is the second level in which they attack physically. In the third stage, they bring forward a case that Tamils were killed and, therefore, Indians and Tamils living in Tamil Nadu are betrayers of the Tamil. This is what we wish to oppose. We have already banned the organisation. But we were very generous. I thank the hon. President for making the observation at para 73, which reads, "We are concerned at the plight of the civilians internally displaced in Sri Lanka on account of escalation of the military conflict. We continue to support a negotiated political settlement in Sri Lanka within the framework of an undivided Sri Lanka acceptable to all the communities, including the Tamil community. I would appeal to the Government of Sri Lanka and LTTE to return to the negotiating table. This can be achieved if simultaneously the Government of Sri Lanka suspends its military operations and the LTTE declares its willingness to lay down arms and to begin talks with the Government".

This is the greatest diplomatic effort made by India. We banned the LTTE organisation but in her Address, the Chief of the three Armed Forces, the President, has mentioned the banned organisation's name, and specifically asked Sri Lanka to suspend its military operations and asked LTTE to declare its willingness to lay down arms and begin talks with the Government. This is the democratic way that India is following. Why should the LTTE not designate a group of people in India or elsewhere to come to the negotiating table for talks? India can initiate it. Why are they not coming forward? Sir, I want to submit that it is high time the whole India has to be united that the President of India has come forward taking all the feelings away and we are not taking any vengeance. If India want to take any vengeance, one hour is sufficient to take vengeance from any particular individual who has killed the Prime Minister of India. But India has never allowed like that. For fifteen years, we allowed the LTTE to occupy the western part of Sri Lanka and rule the country because Rajiv Gandhi-Jayawardhane Agreement has allowed to have a separate province like that. We allowed it; India has allowed it. From 1991 to now, so many

years, so many Governments have come and gone, but none of the Government has gone for any armed conflict with the country. We love the peace. We want to have democracy. We allowed Nepal to come to democracy; we allowed Bangladesh to come to democracy by way of recent elections. We allowed Pakistan having Taliban in one part of it, but in other part we are allowing them to have democracy. We allow other countries to have flourished in the neighbourhood of India, to have peaceful settlement and have a civilised life, which is the motto of India. I thank again and again the President of India and the Government of India for making this effort. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, time of all political parties is exhausted. Time available is only for others. So, I request Dr. Bimal Jalan to speak.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA (Jharkhand): One maiden speech is still there.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will take it later on. First let the others complete.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: By what time there is voting?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: At 4'O clock.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: How is it possible? One hour for speech and one hour for reply.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, reply is for half-an-hour. I request the hon. Members not to interrupt speakers so that we can complete the debate within time.

DR. BIMAL JALAN (Nominated): Thank you, Sir, for giving me this opportunity and allowing me to join other Members of the House in conveying my deep gratitude to the President of India for the Address that she had given to both the Houses. Sir, I have listened to the speeches on both sides, from different party benches about the contents of the speech as well as what is missing, what is contained, what is right or what is wrong. Sir, with your permission, I don't want to make any substantive point about the contents of the speech itself. Sir, with your permission, I would refrain from adding or detracting from whatever has been said here. A lot has been said and I am sure that is all on the record, and I don't have anything further to add to it. But, Sir, with your permission, I would like to make a completely different point in this 62nd year of our Independence.

Very shortly we are going to have new elections, which is the tribute to India's great democratic traditions. This will be largest elections ever held in human history and would set a pattern for many, many more generations of Indians to keep this particular tradition. In this particular context, I would like, through you, to urge the leaders of both the Houses, the political leaders of both the Houses to consider whether we need to give a totally different context to the Presidential Address, to the sovereign Parliament of India. Sir, one cannot help feeling that colonial legacy still prevails. What we call the President's Address is not the President's personal Address. That Address was given on 25th January. ..*(Interruptions)*..

This is the different point that I am making and this is for consideration. This is the 62nd year of our Independence. This is not about any particular President and any particular speech, but it is about the tradition, it is about the colonial legacy and it is about the imperial traditions that we, in honour of the transition from the British Empire to the new democracy, are still carrying on in the 62nd year. And, I am taking this opportunity only because we are going to again pay our tribute to the big democracy that India is by holding the freest and the largest elections in the human history, where every citizen would have an equal voice. So, Sir, through you, my appeal to the political leaders of the two Houses is whether we can change the context and the way in which what we call is the President's Address. Now, Mr. Aggarwal, while introducing the Motion, had said that प्रेज़ीडेंट ने अपना यह संदेश दिया। This *sandesh* is not of the President. This *sandesh* is of the Cabinet. This *sandesh* is of the Government, whichever Government happens to be in power, whether from this side or from the entire side.

And, then, we hear the President saying, "my Government", as the first citizen of India, and we are also citizens of India. It is our Government. It is not the Government of Her Excellency, the President, or Her Imperial Excellency, the President. I am raising this in a somewhat blunt way because the elections are coming. We will be having elections, and it is the greatest democratic tradition that we have. My appeal to you is simply this that whether we can get over the colonial legacy and have an Address by the President, who is the first citizen of India, and we are also citizens of India, as the Address of the first citizen of India to the nation. That is what she did on 25th January and if you read that Address, it is not different in content; it covers the same ground, but in a different tone. It is her Address.

It is a very important point that I would like to pose before you and before the other leaders that when the next Address is made after the elections, can we make this difference; make it the President's Address to two Houses of Parliament? And, it does not have to go to the Cabinet. She can take the advice of everybody and say what the President of India, as the first citizen, has to say on the state of the nation before the people's representatives, whoever is elected, because this is not an inherited Office. Therefore, I would appeal to you, once again, and this is something which would set a new tradition whereby I am sure, that you would have a view of the President which will be extremely mature, extremely well considered and will not ruffle any feathers.

In this connection, Sir, if I may draw your attention that under certain circumstances, what kind of bizarre statement can take place if the Cabinet's address has to be read out by the President, or for that matter, by the Governor. Now, you remember, I was shocked as a citizen of India to hear the Governor of one State saying that the previous Government, that he had sworn in, was unconstitutional. Now, can you imagine in this great democracy of India, in this

great Constitution of India, there is a sovereign Government which is declared by the next Government, through the Governor, as being unconstitutional?

Today, we have a similar kind of treatment - my Government. Why 'my Government'? Why not 'our Government'? Why 'my Government says this', 'my Government says that'? The next Government may be any Government. It would say something different. How do the people of India believe of what it has done? This is not a personal issue. This is not an issue about the present President. This is not an issue about the previous President. This is not an issue about the future President. This is about the democratic country, the Republic of India that we are. Can we have a Presidential Address to the two Houses, who have elected that President to talk on the state of the nation? Then, it will be all right if you say 'President's Address'. Otherwise, it would be absolutely right to say what President has read out is somebody else's draft.

Why don't we set a new tradition to take a different approach to the President's Address to the nation, that it is the President's view of the state of the nation? Then, we can comment and we can pass the motion. And, there is no reason why it should not be done. This is an elected President by the representatives whom she is addressing. This is my appeal to you and I hope the leaders of the two Houses, when they meet again for next President's Address, would adopt this. This is not a political issue. This is an issue about our country. And, when we say that we are deeply grateful to the President for her Address, we really mean it. It is not that we are grateful to the Cabinet for Cabinet's Address. That has been given by the Prime Minister; that has been given by the Finance Minister. We are grateful for that also. It does not matter. So, Sir, this is my appeal to you. Thank you.

SHRI ARJUN KUMAR SENGUPTA (West Bengal): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I think, my esteemed friend Dr. Jalan's views are slightly problematic because in our system, the President cannot speak or say anything of her own. She has to follow what the Cabinet says. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You have six minutes.

SHRI ARJUN KUMAR SENGUPTA: Okay. So, I do not get into all this.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is why, I reminded you.

SHRI ARJUN KUMAR SENGUPTA: I wanted to raise another issue, which is meant mainly for my friends of the Congress Party but also for this august House. It is not a very well attended House today, and, so, I want to put this mainly on record.

Sir, as my friend Dr. Jalan says, we are now going to face the elections and so, naturally, the last speech of the President for this particular Parliament will talk about the achievements of the Government over the last five years, and, by all means, the achievements are substantial. This speech categorically points out the tremendous achievements in different fields. One is in

terms of total Gross Domestic Product, the rate of investment, the rate of savings and all this, and, the other one is a very large number of social development schemes, schemes that affect all kinds of people in the country. Really, the speech will show it as it has devoted a lot of time on those schemes, where, I think, the performance of the Government is unparallel.

Sir, I want to point out that this particular achievement is not, according to me, the only achievement of the Congress Government, which has come to power on a specific economic agenda, and, that agenda is based on a very simple principle that we would like to have economic growth, but with equity. We have initiated economic growth. Our Finance Minister in 1991, reformed the economic policies and we had economic growth started at a very rapid rate. So, we are proud of it. But this is not the only thing that the Congress Government aims at because this growth is nothing but an instrument. We would judge whether the growth has been successful only in terms of what has been done for the poor people or what you call *aam aadmi*.

Now, this is a very strong position and I want to put forward this question to my friends from this side. This particular approach was introduced in our system by Mrs. Indira Gandhi; for her, it was not just "inclusive growth"; it was not just a growth which would allow some of the poor people also to get some crumbs.

In fact, Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I would like to point out that quite sometime back, when we were young, the World Bank talked about, and its President McNamara posed this question of the basic needs. If you want to have a very high prosperity of the rich people, then, you must also do something for the minimum needs of the people. Then, this had different versions. The World Bank has again come out with its notion of "inclusive development" and the PPP, "Private-Public Partnership", which is more private than public. I want to mention all these things because in the mainstream of the Congress view, equitable growth was the most important thing. You have to build up from the grassroots, from the poorest of the poor. It is the question of "empowering" the poor. It is not a question that the poor are getting some charity. Now, this makes the approach of economic policy completely different. I would say, Mr. Deputy Chairman, that a growth-oriented policy, depending on how to increase investment, how to increase savings, can be done by all kinds of Governments. I find very little difference and I have said that again and again herewith, the policies of Yashwant Sinha's Government, which was very good from that perspective of growth. That Government, I am not talking about the NDA, I am talking about his Finance Ministry, raised rate of investment, raised rate of growth and everything. They knew how to control fiscal policy, fiscal deficit, how to see that the rate of interest is not going out of control, how to manage the monetary policy. These are nowadays what some people say neo-liberal policy. I am not using the term. But this is a policy which we all know, how to carryout. It has happened in many parts of the world. And, you don't need an ideological

background. But you do need an ideological push when you talk about the growth that empowers the people, that empowers the poor population. And, that is what was started by Mrs. Gandhi's, *Garibi Hatao*. *Garabi Hatao* was not just a few schemes; it is how to empower the *garib*, to demand that this policy is meant to do all this thing for us. I am saying this because, and here again some of my friends may or may not agree, some time again this Party's policies deviated from the mainstream of Indira Gandhi policy of the country. Instead the policy of the economy. It made itself so far much more neo liberal. There is nothing wrong technically with the neo liberal policy, nothing wrong in having that kind of a policy of market liberalization, provided it looked after the poor people.

I am mentioning this because in all these schemes that have been announced, the most important thing which is not very clear, and that is the essential part of empowering process, is how to deliver the schemes so that the poor people can claim that the schemes belong to them; they are the owners of those schemes. In fact, the Congress Manifesto of 2004 and the Congress Vision Document, 2004, which are the two documents that came out at that time, spelt out that we need to implement this programme through popular participation, through the participation of the popular forces and through cooperation with the State Governments and through a decentralised process. It requires a totally different approach to economic policy. Just saying that I raise the financial allocation of a scheme from X to X plus Y is not the intent of a kind of an approach that the mainstream policy that was adopted. And, I give the credit fully to the Congress President, Mrs. Sonia Gandhi. She brought Indira Gandhi back into the economic development theory, and economic development policy, and economic development approach. So today, we have a leader who has produced this. Unfortunately, not everybody has accepted this. Congress is like any other organisation. It is a coalition of different groups. A particular policy, a particular scheme of which you are so much proud is NREG. I was listening to Sitaram. He is right. It was initiated by none other but Mrs. Gandhi. (Time-bell rings) But it took more than three years just to mature in a Government whose leader was the Congress President. Similarly, the RTI, the Social Security, etc. The Social Security thing that they started, I played a small role in our Commission to give it a shape. But it was started by the leadership of Mrs. Gandhi. But it is still not in the proper shape because of the internal conflicts. So, what I wanted to point out, Sir, is now that we have done this achievement of expanding the social programmes, financial allocation, high rate of economic growth, let us all devote ourselves to completely change our approach to economic policy formulation. Empower the people, empower the poor so that poverty is eradicated, not as charity, but as a natural transformation of the economy. Sir, I want to spend two minutes on another subject.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Not more than two minutes.

SHRI ARJUN KUMAR SENGUPTA: Nor more than two minutes. I won't talk about finance. On that I will speak on the Budget. I want to talk about our Foreign Policy. And this is very important. Some of my stalwart friends from the BJP are not there.

This Government has clearly established that diplomacy is the answer to our problems. I shuddered after the very shameful events of Mumbai when the whole country was totally shattered. There was tremendous increase in jingoism, enough is enough. I can mention the name of my friend, because he is a Member of this House. Mr. Arun Shourie says, 'Who says eye for eye and tooth for tooth?' Then he says, 'two eyes for one eye and a jaw for a tooth.' This was the statement he made. Tremendous jingoism was there without realising that I can probably take a jaw out of them, but I lose half a jaw myself and I can lose half my eyes. In other words, this is not an answer. We may actually win a war. I am saying this, because still I find many people talk about how we can take revenge. We have a larger army. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please.

SHRI ARJUN KUMAR SENGUPTA: What I am saying is that we must realise that this is not the answer. The answer is diplomacy. And that is what Mrs. Indira Gandhi did even when she attacked Pakistan and liberated Bangladesh. She took two years before that to put up diplomatic pressure all over the world. Even 16 days before the final attack, she visited the United States and Europe to try and to tell them, 'Please do something. I do not want to attack. We don't want to do that.' But at the time Pakistan Government..*(Interruptions)*..

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI ARJUN KUMAR SENGUPTA: Today, they have made the first response. Credit must go to our present External Affairs Minister because he kept on saying, 'All options are open, but diplomacy is the answer.' As a result, Pakistan finally accepted the responsibility. So this is the beginning of a change in international situation. Now it is our part and I want to put this forward. I heard yesterday some person saying there that how could we be friends of Pakistan. This is the time for us to be friends of Pakistan. This is the time for us to say that if they are ready to fight their terrorists and we are ready to fight our terrorists, we are going to be fighting it together. This is the position that the Government has taken. This is a very, very commendable position that you should take— victory of diplomacy, not war, not violence. Thank you, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Raja, you have six minutes.

SHRI D. RAJA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I will try, but you can be magnanimous to me.

Sir, the President's Address lacks vision which the country needs very badly today. The President's Address lacks introspection which the Congress-led UPA Government needs very badly today. I would like to confine myself to four major issues. One, country's independent Foreign Policy. Two, internal security. Three, issues related to our economic development. Four, issues of social justice.

Coming to our independent Foreign Policy, I won't quote anything else. I will quote from the National Common Minimum Programme of the Government. I quote, "Even as it pursues closer engagement and relations with the USA, the UPA government will maintain the independence of India's foreign policy positions on all regional and global issues." The country stands humiliated as far as its conduct of international policy is concerned. I do not want to go into other issues. But I would like to tell that the country has lost its moral authority. In the past, whenever certain development took place anywhere in the world, the entire developing world used to look up to India, what India says on a particular development. But now even the neighbouring countries do not listen to India.

Due to constraint of time, I come to the issue of Sri Lanka. I have spoken on Sri Lanka enough in this House and several speakers spoke on Sri Lanka, including Members from the Congress Party. I cannot explain the unimaginable sufferings that Sri Lankan Tamils are undergoing today. I do not want to go into the details of how many people have been killed there. It is known to everybody.

As far as Sri Lanka is concerned, there is a particular policy framework pursued by Sri Lankan Government. Many people have quoted what many people wrote in Indian newspapers about what Sri Lanka is saying. I would also quote something. "The Sinhalese are the only organic race of Sri Lanka. Other communities are all visitors to the country, whose arrival was never challenged out of the compassion of the Buddhists. But they must not take this compassion for granted. The Muslims are here because our kings let them trade here and the Tamils because they were allowed to take refuge when the Moguls were invading them in India. What is happening today is pure ingratitude on the part of these visitors."

Sri Lankan Tamils are considered as visitors by Sri Lankan Government. This is the official position of the Government, and I can quote what the Army Chief of Sri Lanka said. He said, "Sri Lanka is a land of Sinhalese. Tamils can live there but they should not demand undue rights." This is what their Army Chief said in Sri Lanka. If that is so, how are we going to deal with Sri Lanka?

I agree with the Congress speakers that India and Sri Lanka have certain special relationship; they are not just like any other neighbour. We have special relationship with Sri Lanka. The Government of India and the Government of Sri Lanka have entered into several bilateral agreements since the days of Dudley Senanayake, Shashtri-Sirimavo Bandaranaike Agreement, and then Rajiv-Jayavardhana agreement. I can go on quoting all those agreements. That is why I say that the Government of India has a moral and ethical responsibility to tell the Sri Lankan Government to stop the war, resume peace talks, and try to find a political solution to the problem. Military solution is not the answer. Why cannot India tell this to them? I am asking simple questions. I want simple answers. The President's Address does not give this answer. I

want to know whether the Government of India at any point in time asked the Sri Lankan Government to stop the war. I am asking the Government this simple question. It is not there in the President's Address. I am asking the Government: Are you not giving military assistance to Sri Lanka? If not, say no. It is not clear in the President's Address. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI B.S. GNANADESIKAN: Sir, the hon. External Affairs Minister in his *suo motu* statement has clearly stated it. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI D. RAJA: No. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What?

SHRI B.S. GNANADESIKAN: Sir, Pranabji in his *suo motu* statement has said that war is not the solution and war must be stopped.

SHRI D. RAJA: No. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI B.S. GNANADESIKAN: No weapons are being given to Sri Lanka. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI D. RAJA: No, it is not there. I have seen that. I have got the copy of his *suo motu* statement which you are referring to. My point is whether at any point in time, the Government of India has asked the Sri Lankan Government to stop the war. If yes, you say yes. It is not there in the President's Address. You are supplying military arms. Why are you supplying military arms? Why are you giving military assistance? This is what I am trying to ask the Government. The UPA Government should stop giving military assistance to the Sri Lankan Government... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Where is the evidence?

SHRI D. RAJA: All reports have appeared in the media...*(Interruptions)*... You have given radars. You have sent military expertise.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: It was given long back.

SHRI D. RAJA: What do you mean by long back? You tell me the time. The Congress-led UPA Government has given radars; they have sent military expertise. If you say no, say no. This is what I am saying. You understand the problem in Sri Lanka.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, when the External Affairs Minister, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, makes a *suo motu* statement on Sri Lanka, he can raise these issues at that time. The hon. Minister can answer all the points which he is raising. There is a separate discussion on that.

SHRI D. RAJA: Right now, I am speaking on the President's Address. I don't find anything on this subject in the President's Address.. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please listen to him. Let him complete.

SHRI D. RAJA: I bring this fact to the notice of this House that the war in Sri Lanka is not a military operation as it is claimed by the Congressled UPA Government. It is a war and the D.M.K., an important partner of this Government, has admitted that it is genocide, it is a war, and you are saying that it is a military operation. It is a war. How can this war be stopped? The

Government should tell us this thing because there is no reference to such a thing in the President's Address. That is why I am asking this question. This is time we realize that our diplomacy has failed. You can claim that the diplomacy has succeeded. What diplomacy has succeeded and who looks up to India and who cares for India, whether it is Sri Lanka or Pakistan? Why? Your over-dependence on U.S., your closeness to the U.S. imperialism, your strategic partnership with the U.S. imperialism, that has undermined our independent foreign policy, that has eroded the moral authority of India in the international arena. That is why on Sri Lanka, your position. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, if you go on like this, he will take maximum time, and others will be affected. When your turn comes, you can speak. Don't interrupt him.

DR. E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN (Tamil Nadu): But weapons from China have been given. That was not opposed.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You should have said that in your speech.

SHRI D. RAJA: We talk about China also. Let us discuss China. Now, I am discussing Sri Lanka.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Raja, you address the Chair. Don't address them.

SHRI D. RAJA: It is good that they have been reacting to me. But the point is, they are reacting to my references, but they are not acting to stop the war. The UPA Government is not acting to stop the war there. The UPA Government is not acting to stop the killings of the Sri Lankan Tamils there; the UPA Government is not acting to protect the interests of the Sri Lankan Tamils. That is what I am saying, and the President's Address does not give answers to these questions. I ask whether the Government is giving military assistance or not. I asked this question several times in this House. As a Government, you come clean. If you give arms, you admit that you are giving arms. If you do not give arms, say no. What is your stand on Sri Lanka? You have never said that India is not giving military assistance, and there are reports that India is giving military assistance. So, these are the issues, and as stated by the Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Shri V. Narayanasamy, a few minutes ago, we can further discuss these issues when a *suo motu* statement is made by the External Affairs Minister.

Coming to the next point, the internal security, the President's Address speaks about the Left extremism. We understand the problem of the Left extremism, and even in this House, we do not agree with the method adopted by the naxalites. At the same time, what is the approach of the Congress-led UPA Government? Our Government should pursue a two-fold strategy. The Government should pursue a two-fold strategy. The Government should initiate a dialogue with the naxalites. The Government should have.....*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: From the distance you speak, it causes a lot of disturbance. If you have to speak loudly, as I have told you earlier, either go to the lobby or don't speak from such a short distance. If you speak loudly, it disturbs the speaker, please.

SHRI D. RAJA: The Government should have a two-fold strategy. One is, the Government should initiate a dialogue with the concerned movement. And the second is, the Government should undertake development programmes in those areas where the naxalites are functioning. Sir, "dialogue and development" should be the strategy of the Government. But what does the Government do? The Government encourages non-State players like Salva Judum. It was said on this floor. The Home Minister said, "Salva Judum is a non-State player." If that is so, how could the Government patronise Salva Judum? The Supreme Court has entitled Salva Judum. But the Government is patronising, justifying what Salva Judum is doing in some parts of the country! Why should Dr. Binayak Sen be imprisoned? We claim we are the largest democracy in the world. Isn't it a shame for our democracy that if such a person is kept in prison for so long without any trial? I would like to know this from you. Why should he be in prison, Dr. Binayak Sen?, I ask on the same floor of the House. The Home Minister said, "I am seized of the issue. I will look into it." How long will it take for the Government to look into such issues? ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Minister is here. Either address it to him or to me, not to those sitting there!

SHRI D. RAJA: This is what I am asking. Why should the human right activists, the activists who are dedicated, who are committed to the people's cause, be kept in prison?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr. Raja, please conclude now.

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD (Bihar): Sir, those who were killed by naxalites in hundreds.....*(Interruptions)*... Do they have given rights or not?

SHRI D. RAJA: Yes, we will discuss. We will discuss.

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: I had gone to Chhattisgarh; I have seen how many tribals have been killed.

SHRI D. RAJA: We will discuss. ...*(Interruptions)*... We will discuss about that. My point is, the Government is overworked up with Left-Wing extremism. I don't think it has equal concern for the growing menace of Right Wing extremism in this country. What is happening in Mangalore? What is happening in other parts of the country? It is nothing but Right Wing extremism. Who has given them the authority to defend the Indian culture? What do they know about the Indian culture? Indian culture is not monolithic, one dimensional culture. Indian culture is a composite one. It is a union of cultures. Tamil Nadu has a culture; Maharashtra has a culture; Punjab has a culture; Bengal has a culture; Manipur has a culture; Assam has a culture;

Jammu and Kashmir has a culture. We should know how to respect the cultures of our country. We must be proud of the diverse culture of our country. But what is happening in Mangalore? What is the response of the Government towards this Right Wing extremism? There, I find, the President's Address fails to take note of the growing menace of this Right Wing extremism.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude, Mr. Raja.

SHRI D. RAJA: I am concluding, Sir. And I can say it is cultural terrorism which is emerging in India. If we do not contain it at the appropriate time, it can do more damage.

Sir, the third issue relates to our economy. I will finish it quickly, Sir. I know that since there is a discussion on the Budget, we will be discussing it. But I must tell them this thing, Sir. My friend, Mr. Arun Jaitley, has raised some pointed questions. The Left has been supporting the Government for the last four-and-a-half years; so, the Government could not decide anything. In fact, the Left saved the country from the economic turmoil by stopping the Government which wanted to completely make itself subordinate to the vagaries of world economic order. It is because of the continuous efforts made by the Left, repeatedly warning the Government, sometimes stopping the Government, stalling the plans of the Government to sell profit-making PSUs or opening up of the economy of our country, even in the background of repercussions.....(Time Bell rings).

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI D. RAJA: I will conclude, Sir. I will conclude. There were so many interruptions. Anyway, Sir,.....

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There are ten speakers more. What can I do? Kindly cooperate.

SHRI D. RAJA: I will obey you. If you want me, I can sit down. There were interruptions also. This is one issue which we will have to keep in mind. I don't want thanks from the Government. I don't want any gratitude from the Government. But we think the Left has played its role in protecting the economy.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN (Kerala): Why do you stop playing that role?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Kurienji, if you go on dragging, my problem will increase.

SHRI D. RAJA: In the wake of the recession, I think, the Left saved the economy. If the Government claims that the fundamentals are strong, it is because of our strong public sector for which the Left played its role.

The final point is that President's Address refers to inclusive development and social issues. But I must refer to a couple of issues. The apathy of the Government towards the Dalits and the Adivasis is clearly visible. The best example is the recent Reservation Bill passed amidst chaos in

the Rajya Sabha. It has atrocious provisions against the Dalits and the Adivasis and it was designed to block all opportunities of the Dalits' and the Adivasis' entry into the Government jobs. This is, in fact, a reflection of the mindset of the UPA Government towards the weaker sections. The National Common Minimum Programme talks about affirmative action which includes reservation in the private sector. But nothing has been done on that count. But what is being done is to take away all the reservations which have been given to the Dalits and the Adivasis. That is why I ask: What is your sensitivity towards social justice and to the cause of the Dalits and the Adivasis? As regards the scholarships to the Dalit children and the Adivasi children, it is very sad that the UPA Government is trying to mislead the House by placing facts on social inclusion about the scholarships mentioned in paragraph 19 of the President's Address. There is nothing new in these schemes and some of the schemes were implemented since 1944 like the post-metric scholarship which was initiated by Dr. Ambedkar. The Government failed to liberate the Safai Karmacharis.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, Mr. Raja, you please conclude. I think everything can't be mentioned now.

SHRI D. RAJA: Sir, I will finish. I am completing, Sir. In five years the scholarships have not been increased to meet the current prices and they are in no way a relief to them. There were no efforts either to liberate them or to educate their children. We don't speak about the common school system. We talk about increasing the number of IITs and IIMs. We don't speak about the common school system and we don't try to improve our primary education, elementary education, etc. That is where, I think, the Congress-led UPA Government has failed. The President's Address doesn't make any serious introspection about the performance of the Government and the failures of the Government. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Sardar Tarlochan Singh to speak in Punjabi.

SARDAR TARLOCHAN SINGH (Punjab): First of all, I must thank you and the Chairman for providing a Punjabi Interpreter many years after raising the demand. So, I am going to make my first, maiden speech in Punjabi language in this House.

†Hon'ble Deputy Chairman sir we all are here discussing the Hon'ble President's address before both the Houses of Parliament we all are thankful to the President for her address before the members of both Houses of Parliament. This issue towards which I want to draw attention is that after the tragedy of Mumbai whatever incidents took place it was tragic that the people to people movement that was taking place between India and Pakistan which was started by Mr. Atal Behari Vajpyee and Dr. Manmohan Singh it has been stopped; the people from Pakistan whether they were artists, journalists or other people. We have made advisory note that visas be reduced which is causing great damage in which the people of Pakistan have no fault, whatever fault, it is of the terrorists and the Government of Pakistan. So we should not stop the people. Like all the members know that on the night of 14th and 15th August thousands of people of

†English translation of the original speech delivered in Punjabi.

Pakistan come to the Wagah border and light candles, from our side Mr. Kuldip Nayyar, Sardar Tejinder Singh, Ritarjeet, Satnam Manick and thousand of people go. So people to people should not suffer any damage. The Government should carry on other efforts so that there is mutual benefit to both nations. This Punjabi which I am speaking is language of the people of Pakistan, about 8 or 9 Crores their also speak Punjabi. So I appeal to the Government of India that they should not stop this movement and should move forward.

Second point which I want to say is that the Government has made a foreign N.R.I. department which is commendable. That Indians living in foreign should be helped the most.

I had earlier put a question to which the Home Minister replied that in last two and half years about out 1020 people who came to India were deported back by air. They came by valid visas which were given by our embassies in foreign countries but in our immigration office'' computer their name did not appear and were deported back. I don't understand that person who after getting both ticket is sent back with financial and mental loss. I don't understand in this century of internet that the computers on the airport don't show their names and they have got valid visa from Canada. Every year 400 people are deported back it would give bad name to India and would cause loss to tourism.

I want to say one more thing that there is one secret list of Home Ministry which is known as Black list what it constitutes that those Sikhs who had demonstrated against the attack on golden Temple their names were put on the Black list, and they are not given visa to even pay obeisance at golden Temple. I had taken this matter as Chairman Minority Commission National Minority Commission has also raised this up, but the Government has not given permission even to those people who have now passed away so that they can pay their obeisance at Amritsar. So through your medium I appeal that the Black list be reviewed and a temporary visa to visit Golden Temple be given.

Sir, a major portion was not a part of this address which was regarding population. All the people of India know that the main disease is of ever increasing population. We had set up population commission and taken measures but population could not be controlled. We have example of China in front of us that it has controlled population growth, they had made laws to control it. But our targets of curtailing population upto 2.1% has not been achieved and is growing at the rate of 3.5%. Until and unless all the political parties take action whatever plans we make we won't achieve anything.

Sir, we have such figures that 58% of our population is in reproductive age, this means that the population would grow further and the Government is not doing anything about it this was the major omission in the address of the President.

We say that India is great but nutrition especially in children in less than 3 years of age is about 40% and they are undernourished. That we are behind Africa *i.e.* 44% is here and in Africa 25% it is a total failure that we have not taken care of children's health or made any policy regarding this.

Sir, one more issue is of infant mortality *i.e.* the children who die during their birth which in India is 58 per thousand but in developed countries its 5 per thousand. We are saying that everything is being achieved but why we are behind in health and nutrition.

I want to raise one more important issue that government is doing lot about minorities. There is Minority Commission and number of other commissions in the name of minorities. But I am very saddened about one thing; we are happy regarding the work done for Muslim minorities and their necessity has to be fulfilled. It is saddening that when four other communities are minorities we have forgotten them. That 90 districts were elected as minority districts and out of these there is no district which is Christian, Sikh and Buddhist. All go to one community. I appeal that in the name of minority justice should be done for other minorities who also have needs. Sikhs are poor, Christians are also poor; Buddhist are the poorest. What is the government doing about them, there is no mention about it in any program.

Sir I had asked a question that Maulana Azad foundation has given grant to minority institution and it is given every year.

In response to the question that I had asked I came to know that total grant given to 170 institution in last two years *i.e.* 161 Muslims and 9 Christains, not given anything to Sikh or Buddhist. I appeal that Government while working for Muslims should not ignore other minorities and should protect their rights as minorities. Even in minority finance corporation except one community there is no role of other communities. Even in corporations there is no equal representation.

Sir, in this house the law minister had promised 6 months back that there is an order of the Supreme Court that all marriages be registered compulsorily. Our marriage act is known as Anand marriage Act and there is no clause in it that the marriage be registered. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Law and Justice had also sent a recommendation but I don't understand that only a line has to be added and about which all the Skih MP's had written, the standing Committee had passed it and the law minister had agreed to it. But when it comes to action he forgets it. We our a minority but the government is not doing anything about it.

Sir two points more that Government of India had made a Constitution Review Commission which constituted of top judges and people. They have given a report after 2 years. Where is that report? The Government has not implemented any clause of the Constitution Review Commission. There was one clause which dealt with 3 minorities *i.e.* Sikh, Buddhist and Jain, it was written that in Section 25 instead of 'that is' 'and' should be replaced, which would make

the 4 communities happy. We had put a bill but nothing happened, the Government should do something about Section 25.

Lastly the demand of Ex Serviceman of "one rank one pay" be implemented by all the members. About 35 lakh Ex-Serviceman are demonstrating on roads including 19 lakh soldiers and nothing has been done about it. The formula of "one rank one pay" be implemented. This would raise the morale of our existing army and strengthen it. I don't understand that benefits have been given to other services but army has been ignored. It is need of the hour that army be encouraged. This issue be immediately sorted out. By saying this I take your leave and say to all the members that I have spoken in my mother tongue that even if they have not understood it they'll encourage.

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN) in the Chair]

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA (Assam): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, thank you for giving me this opportunity to express my views on President's Address. Firstly, I regret to say that President's Address has left out many of the major problems being faced by the people of our country today. This is an incomplete Address, as far as I am concerned, Sir. There is no mention in the Address about the rise in prices of essential commodities. The price rise has made things difficult for the common people. They are facing a lot of hardships. The Central Government has failed to control this rise in prices. Then, Sir, due to the global economic crisis, many people of Indian origin have lost their jobs abroad, just as people have lost jobs in India. Many such people took the extreme step of committing suicide. Sir, unemployment is a very serious problem in the country. We have millions of unemployed youth here. But the Government has not taken any serious steps to solve this problem. There is no mention in President's Address about the unemployment problem in the country.

Sir, the biggest ever corporate scam, the Satyam scam, involving more than seven thousand crores of rupees took place. It brought a bad name to our corporates and markets in India and abroad. But there is no mention of this scam in the Address. Then, Sir, due to the negligence of successive Central Governments, regional imbalances in the country have been widening. No steps have been taken to rectify these regional imbalances. There are serious problems being faced by many States. But there is no mention of these in the President's Address. Climate change and global warming are other major current problems. According to the World Scientists Forum, organised under the banner of the UN, floods would be on the rise in India, and especially in the State of Assam. The situation is going to be very serious. But there is no reference to it in the Address. Assam faces this problem of floods every year. Lakhs of people become homeless. Lakhs and lakhs of hectares of cultivated land are destroyed. The economy of Assam collapses due to floods every year. It is a national problem. It is not possible for any State to tackle the flood problem alone. It is the duty of the Government of India to solve this problem. It should declare the flood problem of Assam as a national problem. There is no

mention about this problem in the Address. Sir, there is insurgency problem in Assam. All the time, we speak about the insurgency problem of Assam. Sir, without political dialogue, it is not possible, at all, to solve the insurgency problem of Assam and of the North-Eastern Region. Sir, this problem cannot be solved by the gun; this problem cannot be solved by the bullet. Sir, only political dialogue is necessary to solve this problem. And, I hope, the Government of India will come forward to talk to the ULFA and other extremist organisations of the North-Eastern Region to solve this problem. (*Time-bell rings*) Sir, please allow me to speak for some more time. Sir, my next point is, six communities of Assam, for long, long years, are demanding ST status. Sir, from those six communities, the Koch Rajbonhsis community was earlier given the ST status by the Government of India. But, later on, the Government of India withdrew it. This is the genuine demand of the people of Assam. So, I request the Government of India to kindly give tribal status to these six communities, namely, Koch Rajbonhsis, Morans, Muttocks, Tea tribes/Advasis, Tai Ahoms and Chutias in Assam.

Sir, the entry of illegal immigrants from Bangladesh to Assam is a great threat to the country's sovereignty and integrity. Sir, today, the population of Assam is increasing like anything due to the influx from Bangladesh. Sir, if this process continues, if this illegal immigration to Assam continues, then, very soon the Assamese people, the sons-of-the-soil, the indigenous people, will be in a minority in their own mother land. Sir, it is the duty of the Government of India to protect indigenous people. But the Government of India is not doing anything, in this regard. Sir, I hereby demand that the Government of India should give, at least, the constitutional safeguard to the indigenous people of Assam; otherwise, these people will become a minority in Assam.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Yes, please conclude.

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Sir, please give me two-three minutes because I want to mention some very important points here. Sir, the historic Assam Accord was signed by the then Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhiji along with the leaders of the Assam Movement. Sir, even after 24 years of the signing of the Assam Accord by the then Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi along with the leaders of the Assam Movement, this Act is not yet implemented. The Government has failed to implement this Act. So, in order to look into the problems being faced by our State, the Government should seriously think in terms of implementing the Assam Accord.

Sir, in the last Winter Session, in reply to my question, the hon. Home Minister categorically said that the HUJI and the ISI activists are very much active in Assam. This is what the hon. Home Minister stated in this House in the last Winter Session. But, no action has been taken by the Government of India, in this regard. So, it is the duty of the Government of India to protect us.

Sir, on 2nd October, the Pakistani national flag was hoisted in the Mohanpur village of Udalgudi District of Assam. Again, Sir, very recently, the Pakistani national flag was hoisted at

Laluk in Lakhimpur District of Assam. We raised this issue in the Winter Session of Parliament. But, the Government has not taken any action in this regard. Sir, only for that reason, again, they hoisted the Pakistani flag in Assam. In the interest of sovereignty, integrity and security of our country, Sir, it is the duty of the Government of India that they look into this matter very seriously.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Yes, Mr. Baishya, please conclude.

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Sir, another very important point which I want to raise is this. Sir, Assam is the transit camp for extremists. Generally, it is known to everybody that extremists take shelter and training either in Pakistan or in the Pakistan-Occupied- Kashmir or in Bangladesh. Sir, in Assam, the Indo-Bangladesh border is open, as there is no border fencing there. With the help of open Indo-Bangladesh border, the extremists come to Assam as a transit. First they destroy Assam, then, they move to other parts of the country.

So, without sealing the Indo-Bangladesh border, it will not be possible at all to solve the problem of insurgency of Assam and of India. But, I am very sorry to say and I regret to say, Sir, that there is nothing mentioned anything in the Address.

Sir, give me just a minute. The Brahmaputra civilisation is one of the ancient civilisations of the country. Not only our country, Sir, the Brahmaputra civilisation is one of the ancient civilisations of the world also. The river Brahmaputra is everything for us. But, Sir, China is planning to divert river Brahmaputra at the source in that country. If it is diverted, if they successfully do it, then, downstream, States like Assam and many other parts of India, will not get water. The entire Assam and the entire northern India will be in disaster. Sir, this not only affects Assam, but it would affect Ganga also because there is a link between the river Brahmaputra and the river Ganga.

It is the duty of the Government of India, the duty of the External Affairs Ministry, to take up the matter with the Chinese Government immediately. I am very sorry to say that though I have very important points, I am not getting the time. Sir, I regret to say that though there are various problems faced by the country, they are not being solved and nothing is mentioned in the President's Address. So, I strongly oppose the Vote of Thanks moved by Shri Aggarwal. Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Hon. Members, there are eight more hon. Members to speak. I request each Member to take five minutes and a maximum of seven minutes. At the completion of five minutes, I will press the first bell and before the seventh minute, kindly stop. Shri Rahul Bajaj.

SHRI RAHUL BAJAJ (Maharashtra): Thank you, Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I assure you that I will not speak longer than my previous speaker.

I also rise to thank the President for her very comprehensive Address to the nation covering many national issues. The approach in her Address was very positive, very appropriate.

4.00 **P.M.**

I would like to speak on three major issues and I am not talking of this State or that State or this specific matter. All the three are general macro-issues. The first will be about the economy, the second, I would explain by what I mean 'performance', and the third, about social inclusion.

First, Sir, on economy. Enough has been said in a way, and we will say a little more when we talk of the General Budget, but the world has been hit by a tsunami. We have not been spared. We have also been hit. But I do find an element of denial in the Government's statements even in the President's Address, Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir. We have heard our former Finance Minister say very often that we are not suffering from recession because there is a 7.1 per cent growth rate in the current year. But, Sir, from 9 per cent to 7 per cent is the first point. In the first half, it was 7.6, and in the second half, it will not be that much. Sir, agriculture and service sector are also suffering. December was negative growth for industry. It is no consolation for industry and the people who are losing their jobs that there is a recession or not. That is an academic thing which the economists talk about. We are suffering, the industry is suffering, jobs are being lost in small and medium enterprises and in many sectors. I do not want to name them all — garments, textiles, gems & jewellery, automotives, etc., etc. In such a situation, what is the world doing? The world is trying to protect itself. Only yesterday, it is very rightly said that many things were wrong in the latest bailout package by President Obama. That H1B visa are not going to be allowed for some time is a wrong decision and it is said that this is an irreversible protectionism. I share that view, Sir. I do not want India to become protectionist. I am as much a liberaliser as anybody else but for 15 years I have been asking for a level playing field. I go to Davos, I go all over the world, the chairmen and other members in the industrial community there do not want even a level playing field, they want a field tilted in their favour and their governments support them. When we in Indian industry ask for a level playing field, we do not even get that. We do not get proper infrastructure, we still have unnecessary procedures, and we have to tackle corruption. But external liberalisation, we favour; I am not against external liberalisation, I am with Sitaram Yechuryji on that point, but prefer Indian industry, foreigners are all right, it is very easy to do external liberalisation. For years I have been maligned as the Bombay club, Mr. Vice-Chairman. I am not protectionist; I am an industrialist, I am a capitalist and I am proud of being an industrialist because I produce wealth for the country. Industrialists produce wealth for the country, produce employment for the country, but we want a level playing field. So, please take care. Let us not talk of globalisation when Europe, America and Japan are closing their borders to our goods, to our people by non-tariff barriers and things like that. I repeat that we want to be a part of the global empire. Second, why were we saved a little? I do not fully agree with my friend, Mr. Raja, that because of them we got saved because

they were supporting the Government for four-and-a-half years. I am one of those who feel like Mr. Jaitley that our Government was prevented from doing many things, which were good. But, yes, certain things we were prevented or the Government was prevented from doing including full capital account convertibility, including some regulations, which helped us. I must admit it was not all that bad, there was some good out of what the Left did, their intentions may have been different, Sir. So, this is my first point on the economy, Sir.

The second point, we need expenses. I am not unduly worried about fiscal deficit in the current year, which is 6 per cent. It is stated that next year we will have 5.5 per cent or it can be even more than 6 per cent. It depends on the Government whoever it is. But we need outcomes. The former Finance Minister has often said that outcomes are more important. How do we get outcomes, Sir? It does not drop from heaven, Sir. Spend money, but there must be performance, Sir. There is no performance. How can performance come when the work is not rewarded? When absence of work or negative work is not punished, when the corrupt are not put in jail, we do not see performance; we only see influence mongering, etc., etc. This point, I believe, needs repetition a hundred times. Without performance, you will not get proper outcome. So, we need not only infrastructure, we also need to handle corruption. Sir, even today in the case of doing business, Sir, and human development indicators, India unfortunately ranks among the bottom half of the countries in the world. Where do we rank near the top? I am ashamed to admit as an Indian, Sir, for corruption, we are near the top. What are we doing about it, Sir? The President's Address does not mention this. These are, maybe, soft topics and they are not specific topics. I want a road here and I want a bridge there, but, I think, without these things, Sir, neither will there be road properly built nor will the bridge. Sir, I think we have forgotten merit. (*Time-bell rings*) We cannot forget merit. If we forget merit, we are not going to get results. My third and the last point, — Sir, I have heard your first bell — is about social inclusion. I am all for inclusive growth, Sir. We cannot grow as islands; we have to go as a community, as one nation. But to grow as a community, we need to empower the weak. Yes, we need to enable the weak, but they must also earn it. It is not only empowerment, it is not only enabling, it is also earning. Today I find the freebies we give, the differential prices we maintain, the desire to work hard sometimes — I am not saying for everybody — the desire to strive for achievement, that desire is diluted and this is not good for the nation as a whole, Sir. So, we have to strive, we have to earn our place in this great country, Sir. Change has come, more change will come, Mr. Vice-Chairman. We Indians all believe in our nation, we believe in ourselves, we believe in Satyamev Jayate.

In conclusion, I would say, it is my hope that in the forthcoming Parliamentary elections every Indian votes for the right candidate. I am not saying the right party for the right candidate. Thank you.

SHRI Y.P. TRIVEDI (Maharashtra): Thank you very much. It is said that not merely the individuals but also nations learn from past, live in present and plan for future. The President's Address probably tries to comprehend the vision which is before the nation, the lessons which we have learnt from the past and how we have lived during the current year. The economic growth, which has been seen, and I will confine myself only to some limited items because it is a very comprehensive statement I will not go into everything. On the economic front, we have got a very heartening spectacle of a growth rate which comes to almost seven per cent and even though it has declined slightly now, but, still it is very well compared to other countries, more specially the developing countries and the developed countries which are shown, including Japan, a negative growth rate. Still we have got a positive growth rate and we and China are the only two countries to which the world looks for economic revival because here are countries which are growing very fast, the economic growth rate is very good and at the same time the demand will come from here and that is why the economy will be revived. Then, we have seen about the Foreign Direct Investment which is also at a very high scale. The per capita income also — now that the new figures have come — shows that India has done extremely well. The progress, which we have achieved, is noticed even by the developed countries and we are now the important Member of the G-20 group. The very fact is we have done excellent strides in Civil Aviation, where all expectations were belied and we have now reached so many parts of the country where airports have been built and air services have been started. The agricultural growth is something which is phenomenal because even though there is industrial recession in some parts but the agricultural growth and the growth in the service sector is very heartening. At the same time, we must also see that the nuclear treaty for which America was so keen, — I am not going into the merits or otherwise of the treaty — but, the very fact that America was keen shows that India has emerged as an economic power. Even when we had dispute with Pakistan about what happened in Mumbai, it is world's active support and pressure on Pakistan which shows that we have got the economic strength and India has to be recognised as an economic power. We are not an economic super power but certainly we are an economic power. The same thing has been stated in the Address about the launching of the Chandrayan project and the planting of the Indian Flag on the lunar soil. These are things, which are very heartening. But, at the same time, there are two or three things on which I would like to draw your attention. One is about the judicial backlog which has reached a dismal proportion. The Supreme Court judge has said that we have got two and a half crores of cases which are lying in the court and the Delhi High Court says that if the pendency has to be cleared it will take more than 400 years. There is no mention in the Address about how we are going to tackle this problem which can be very, very severe in the days to come. We might reach a stage when we might have to say that the entire judicial machinery has collapsed. Something should have been done. Some effort was

made by the Law Minister by presenting the Bill. Some mention should have been made about that Bill and about the other steps which are in contemplation to somehow remove the judicial backlog. Then, there is something we have overlooked. The Indians are coming back because of recession in the world market. The Indians who are coming back are coming in large numbers. These are the people who have remitted large amounts of money which had helped us in swelling our foreign exchange reserve. When they are coming back we should have some plan for rehabilitating them. We should advice the banks that they should lower the interest rates for those who want loan for starting some industry, starting some business. Those Indian repatriates are coming back because of recession and because they have been sacked from their jobs. They are coming from Saudi Arabia. They are coming from the USA and other developed/developing countries. And, there is no scheme which is formulated in order to rehabilitate them in some form or the other. They have to be given some financial assistance which is very necessary. Otherwise, by and large, I personally believe, the Address is summarised in a very nice way. Best of the brains have gone into the preparation of the Address and I wholly support the Address. Thank you.

SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS (Assam): Thank you Vice-Chairman, Sir. The Government has now covered the whole country with the NREG Scheme and presently guaranteed employment for a specific number of days to any category of citizens. But, some of the districts of Assam like Barpeta, Chirang, Bongaigaon are still lagging behind. In Barpeta district, the authorities concerned failed to provide consumption expenditure for the poor as well as improving rural productivity and income. A meagre amount of fund has been released under various schemes. In some cases, a part payment has been made under the programme. In the last six months, no such programme has been implemented. So, I urge upon the Government of India to give a serious look at the matter and do the needful. It is high time that parameters of this Act are to be extended. A limited employment can be generated by doing only 'earth work' and it helps only a limited class of people. Sir, the weavers, pottery worker, iron workers do not have any opportunity to work. They all come under the Below Poverty Line category. Now, as per the existing parameters, they cannot be provided with employment. Employment can be provided to them only if the parameters are changed. So, I request the Government to change them so as to help these people.

Sir, the Government has promised a new deal to rural India through the revival of agriculture in the President's Address. But, in Assam, the picture is very gloomy. In Assam, due to perennial problem of floods, our agriculture lands are submerged under flood water for nearly about six months every year. Every year our farmers suffer a lot due to floods. The Government has promised to waive off Rs. 65,000 crores of outstanding credit owed by 3.7 crore farmers

who had fallen under on bad times to revive their credit cycle. But in case of floodaffected farmers, the Government is silent. No such permanent policies have been announced by the Government for the benefit of the farmers who have lost their crops and lands due to perennial problem of floods in Assam. It is necessary for the revival of our agricultural economy.

The gap in elementary education in various elementary educational institutions in Assam has become higher and higher. Sir, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in Assam has never included those primary schools which have been set up under the authority of the Government of Assam. The Government of Assam has given permission to set up hundreds of such primary schools. The students of those schools are deprived of free books and Mid-Day Meal and the teachers are getting only Rs. 100 or Rs. 200 as remuneration per month. It is pertinent to mention here that a large number of such schools are meant for specific categories like Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and Minorities. Sir, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan implementing authority must look into these issues and keep our promise to safeguard the Constitutional duty.

To curb the insurgency problem in the North-East, the Government must give a serious look at three major aspects. The first one is economic development and regional imbalance. The second one is unemployment and the third one is illegal migration from neighbouring countries like Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan. Influx of illegal foreign nationals to the North-East is still unabated. In 1985, through the Assam Accord, the then Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, promised to fence the borders. We are in 2009. Even today, the Government is saying that fencing would be completed only by 2012. The Government will take 37 years to complete fencing of Indo-Bangla borders! Where is the Government? What is the Government doing? Whether the Government will be able to assess the magnitude of the problem.

Sir, I now come to the industrial growth in the State of Assam. Sir, Assam is, probably, the richest State in India, because it is rich in minerals, forest and agricultural resources. Unfortunately, there is little industrial growth. But, the Central Government is flooding Assam with promise-after-promise. In 1985, through the Assam Accord, promises were made to reopen the Asok Paper Mill. But, till date, the promises remain only on paper. This is one of the examples. It is a serious point to note that the Government has come out with a new policy for promoting investment in petroleum, chemicals and petro-chemical sector through development of investment region. And, significant progress has been made towards setting up of petroleum, chemicals and petro-chemical investment regions in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and West Bengal. It has been mentioned in the President's Address. But what about Assam? Assam produces 50 per cent of India's natural oil and gas. The Government of India has clearly exploited and discriminated against Assam. Assam has a small fertilizer factory at Namrup. The machinery of

this factory has become outdated. In 2006, Government had promised to set up the fourth unit at Namrup, but till date nothing has been done. This attitude of the Central Government adds to the feeling of insecurity and neglect in the minds of the people of Assam.

Aam aadmi is facing acute problem of price hike. The UPA Government has failed to curb the price rise.

The Government should also take concrete steps to harness the potential of the public and private sectors to minimise the dependence on foreign sources.

Sir, in a report, tabled in Parliament recently, the Committee noted that the statistics made available to it failed to reflect the true picture since these did not include the foreign component that went into manufacturing defence products indigenously. The Armed Forces currently source 65 to 70 per cent of their equipments from foreign vendors.

Thank you, Sir. With these words, I oppose the Motion.

श्री राजनीति प्रसाद (बिहार) : धन्यवाद सर, हम लोगों ने बहुत पुराने समय से समाजवादी पार्टी से, सोशलिस्ट पार्टी से अपना ताल्लुकात रखा है। हम लोगों ने यह मांग की थी तथा बचपन से यह मांग कर रहे थे कि बेरोजगारों को काम दो, नहीं तो बेराजगारी भत्ता दो। सर, इस अभिभाषण के बारे में यह कहना चाहता हूं कि ग्रामीण रोजगार गारंटी योजना के तहत हम लोगों के जो नारे थे, उसमें साढ़े चार साल में कुछ न कुछ फैलाव हुआ है और ग्रामीण रोजगार गारंटी योजना के तहत बेरोजगार करोड़ों लोगों को काम मिला है। मैं यह भी कहना चाहता हूं कि जिनके बारे में कोई सोचता नहीं था, हमारी सरकार ने उनके बारे में विचार ही नहीं किया, बल्कि इसको धरती पर उतारा भी है। सरकार का यह काम लोगों को अच्छा लगा है। लेकिन सर, मैं यहां यह भी कहना चाहता हूं कि ग्रामीण रोजगार गारंटी योजना पर कहीं-कहीं बहुत बढ़िया अमल हुआ है, लेकिन कहीं-कहीं इसका इम्प्लीमेंट ठीक से नहीं हुआ है। उदाहरण के तौर पर मैं यह बतलाना चाहता हूं कि बिहार, जहां से मैं आता हूं, वहां पर ग्रामीण रोजगार गारंटी योजना का सही तरीके से इम्प्लीमेंटेशन नहीं हो सका। उसका कारण यह नहीं था कि हम लोगों की नीति में या नीयत में कोई कमी थी, बल्कि वहां एडमिनिस्ट्रेशन के लोगों ने अच्छे ढंग से यह काम नहीं होने दिया।

सर, हम लोगों ने एक और नारा दिया —"जब तक भूखा इंसान रहेगा, धरती पर तूफान रहेगा ।" हम लोगों ने, हमारी केन्द्र की सरकार ने एक योजना बनाई थी, अंत्योदय योजना में लाल कार्ड, पीला कार्ड बनाकर अनाज दिया। इससे पूरे देश में गरीबों को राहत मिली है।

लेकिन मैं यह कहना चाहूंगा कि जहां से मैं आता हूं, वहां पर पर्ची लेकर लोग खड़े रहते हैं और बिहार की सरकार एक-एक साल तक लोगों को राशन मुहैया नहीं कराती है। हम लोगों ने तो धन दे दिया, हम लोगों ने तो अनाज दे दिया, लेकिन उसके बारे में हम लोगों ने कोई ऐसा काम नहीं किया, जिस गरीब को लाल कार्ड दिया, जिसके लिए अनाज दिया, वह सब उधर गड़बड़ हो जाता है और उसको लोग इधर-उधर कर देते हैं।

उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, अंत्योदय योजना है, इसमें गरीब को लाल कार्ड मिलेगा, तो उसको अनाज बिना पैसे के मिलेगा। इसके बारे में भी सरकार ने विचार किया है और यह योजना सही है। लेकिन जो राज्य सरकारें हैं, उनको इस योजना को अच्छी तरह से इम्पलीमेंट करना चाहिए।

उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, हम लोगों ने एक और नारा दिया था - रोटी, कपड़ा और मकान, मांग रहा है हिन्दुस्तान। सर, मैं सरकार को धन्यवाद देना चाहता हूं कि रोटी, कपड़ा और मकान के लिए सरकार ने लाल कार्ड, पीली कार्ड की तरह रोटी भी दी और लाखों लोगों के लिए इंदिरा आवास योजना में धन उपलब्ध करवाया। सर, यह राज्य सरकार का काम है, इसमें हमारे पैसे तो होते हैं, इस पैसे का राज्य सरकार को इस्तेमाल करना चाहिए। इंदिरा आवास योजना में धांधली हो रही है, राज्य सरकार के कर्मचारी इसमें किस तरह से धांधली कर रहे हैं, उसके बारे में विचार करना चाहिए। हम लोगों ने, केन्द्र सरकार ने तो अपना काम किया है, इंदिरा आवास योजना में लाखों-करोड़ों रुपये दिए हैं।

सर, मैं एक और अंतिम बात कहना चाहता हूं। सर, साढ़े चार साल में रेल में काफी मुनाफा हुआ है। मैं इस सदन के माध्यम से रेल मंत्री श्री लालू प्रसाद जी को धन्यवाद देना चाहता हूं, क्योंकि इसके बारे में अभिभाषण में भी बात आई है। सर, जो रेल साढ़े चार वर्ष पहले बिल्कुल मुनाफे में नहीं थी, बल्कि सरकार द्वारा यह तय हो चुका था कि इसका प्राईवेटाइजेशन करना है, उसमें 90 हजार करोड़ रुपये का मुनाफा इस सरकार ने दिया है। सर, इस सरकार ने एक विचित्र काम किया है, एक फ्रेट कॉरिडोर बनाने का काम किया है और उस फ्रेट कॉरिडोर से माल ढोने का काम होगा तथा उससे रेलवे को ज्यादा मुनाफा होगा। इतना ही नहीं किया, बल्कि कई जगह, सैकड़ों जगह रेलवे की फैक्ट्रियां खोलीं, केवल बिहार में नहीं खोली, हिन्दुस्तान के कई प्रदेशों में, कई जगहों पर फैक्ट्रीज़ खोलने का काम किया है। सर, रेलवे में काफी तरक्की हुई है।...(**समय की घंटी**)... सर, रेलवे में इतनी तरक्की हुई है - यात्रियों के लिए सुविधा बढ़ी है, यात्रियों को रेलवे में सफर करने का अच्छा अनुभव हो रहा है, गाड़ियां ठीक टाइम से चल रही हैं। सर, मैं इस धन्यवाद ज्ञापन पर राष्ट्रपति के अभिभाषण का समर्थन करता हूं कि इन्होंने बहुत बढ़िया-बढ़िया कार्यक्रम के बारे में जिक्र किया है। इन्हीं शब्दों के साथ, मैं अपनी बात समाप्त करता हूं। धन्यवाद।

SHRI BHARATKUMAR RAUT (Maharashtra): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity. I take this opportunity to oppose the Motion of Thanks on President's Address because those are not President's personal views, opinion or statement. She spoke of the Government's mind, so, I am opposing it. Sir, the hon. President, in her Address, has mentioned many topics and touched many issues. But, because of paucity of time, I would touch only a few of them. I am a journalist and, therefore, I would like to make a point about media. Sir, in modern times, aggression and invasion on the nation need not come from boundaries alone. It can come from various sources. It can come through media, radio waves, television signals, Internet, and; it can come through newspapers also. Therefore, I feel that it is my duty to express the fear that I have in my mind. The Government has allowed 100 per cent FDI on foreign editions as facsimile editions. The contents and advertisements should not be changed but editions can come to India. I think there is a danger in this. I do not know when this enactment was passed. The point is, now the Government says that since the contents cannot be changed, so, it will not have any impact on Indian mind and Indian society. But is it true? If you see various foreign magazines, foreign newspapers, and foreign channels, you will find that they still show incomplete map of India. Even now, part of Kashmir is not shown in the map of India. How do we allow that? Our Indian laws are strong enough to control this. Can't we

protect our sovereignty and integrity through our laws? I think the Government has to take proper care that while allowing this type of 100 per cent FDI, they should not do aggression on Indian culture, Indian mind and Indian society. This is a very serious issue. There is a possibility, I am just expressing the fear that some newspapers publish paper in foreign land and they come to India as facsimile editions. There was a case when a newspaper was published in Dubai. Just 200 copies were sold there and the rest of the edition came here as a facsimile edition. How do we control that type of aggression? I think it is the duty of the Government to take cognizance of this.

Secondly, Sir, now it is envisaged, I am told, that the Government wants to bring a content code for television in India. The reason being given is that many channels are irresponsible in their news coverage and news transmission. I accept that on 27/11 Mumbai attack, many channels showed what should not have been shown. So, I accept that criticism and I also say that those types of channels should be severely punished. But does that mean that the Government takes the arms, the Government takes the tools and weapons to control the media by bringing in code of conduct? I think that by doing this we are bringing in pre-censorship again. Are we going back to emergency days? Do we intend to bring in emergency through backdoor? If it is not so, the Government has no business to bring in code of conduct as an instrument of the Government. There are many media houses. Each media house has its own code of conduct, written or unwritten. They adhere to that. There is National Broadcasting Organisation. They have come with a code of conduct that is on the website. So, the Government should encourage and facilitate this type of code of conduct which comes from media houses themselves, individually and collectively, and help them. There is no point in Government making the policy. There are laws in India which can control this if anybody goes beyond the limits. So, why should Government come into the picture and bring in this type of a code of conduct? Again, that is likely to be a totally defeated instrument because once the signals are aired, then, how can one control it? So, that is only a post-mortem. Does the Government wants to give the control of news channels to the rank of Collector? A Collector in a district is empowered to stop the beaming of channels. I think this will be creating more troubles to democracy than not. I think that these are the issues which the Government should take into account. I would make my last point and then stop, Sir. The President in her speech mentioned about the attack on Mumbai and she saluted the heroes who fought and laid down their lives. Some of them have been given Ashok Chakra and some of them have been given Kirti Chakra. But I do not know why Shashank Shinde, who laid down his life fighting terrorists with a *lathi* in his hands and saved lives of thousands of passengers, was not given any medal. Kasab, in his own confession, says that he wanted to keep some of the passengers/commuters under his control, but because Shashank Shinde gave a big fight, they had to leave the railway station and

go. The Police and the Government have completely forgotten this unsung Hero. There is no medal for him. His widow and children are fighting for justice. It is shameful. As a human being, as a citizen of this country and as a Member of the House, I felt ashamed when I met the widow of Shashank Shinde. She said, "What was my husband's fault? Since my voice could not reach the English newspapers, my voice could not reach those who came with candles, that is why my husband is not being treated as a Hero." He has not been given any medal. The Chief Minister of Maharashtra had also made a request, still nothing has happened. I think this is not the way we treat the martyrs of the attack. If this is the way we treat them, why should any *Havaldar*, with a *lathi* in hand, fight for the nation?

Having said so, I would say that still the time has not gone, ...(*Time-bell rings*)... still the Government can come forward and do something for those who, really, remain under shadow and are forgotten.

Thank you very much. So, Sir, with these words, I oppose the Motion.

श्री बिश्वजीत दैमारी (असम): धन्यवाद उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, राष्ट्रपति के अभिभाषण पर मुझे कुछ विषयों पर ही कहना है, बाकी विषयों पर हमारे ऑनरेबल मैम्बर्स बोल चुके हैं। अनुसूचित जाति, जनजाति, और बैकवर्ड क्लासेज़ के बारे में जो जिक्र किया गया है, उसमें स्टूडेंट्स की स्कॉलरशिप को ही मेंशन किया गया है। मैं सोचता हूं कि इस हिसाब से या इस तरह की किसी पॉलिसी से जनजाति, अनुसूचित जाति या बैकवर्ड क्लासेज़ का डेवलपमेंट संभव नहीं है। भारत के स्वाधीन होने के साथ-साथ ही अनुसूचित जाति, जनजाति, बैकवर्ड क्लासेज़ के लिए सरकार द्वारा कोई स्पेशल प्रोग्राम बनाने के लिए कुछ प्रोविजन रखे गए, इसी तरह काम भी किया है, लेकिन जनजाति के लोग जिस स्तर पर पहले थे, उसी स्तर पर आज भी हैं। इसीलिए ऐसा होना जरूरी है, हमारी सरकार को यह चिंता करना जरूरी है कि हमारी जनजातियों, अनुसूचित जाति, बैकवर्ड क्लासेज़ को डेवलप करने के लिए, उन लोगों को डेवलपमेंट में लाने के लिए कुछ टाइम पीरियड के लिए कुछ प्रोग्राम बनाने चाहिए, कोई परिकल्पना करनी चाहिए। जैसे शिक्षा की व्यवस्था, अर्थनीति की व्यवस्था और समाज व्यवस्था के ऊपर अगर शिक्षा ही नहीं होगी, उन लोगों को केवल ठेला गाड़ी देने से, सिलाई मशीन देने से, सूअर पालने के लिए दो हजार, तीन हजार रुपए देने से ट्रायबल लोग कैसे डेवलप हो सकेंगे? यह कैसे पोसिबल है? इसके ऊपर थोड़ा ध्यान देना चाहिए और इस विषय पर सरकार को कोई परिकल्पना करनी चाहिए। इसी तरह से वहां पर गरीबी की बहुत प्रॉब्लम है, जिसका हम यहां पर जिक्र नहीं करते हैं, उसकी बात भी नहीं करते हैं। हम सिर्फ धनी आदमी के लिए बात करते हैं, गरीब के लिए बात नहीं करते हैं। हम केवल शहर की बात करते हैं, गांव की बात हम नहीं करते हैं। हम बड़ी-बड़ी शिक्षा की बात करते हैं, लेकिन गांव में आज भी लोग स्कूल नहीं जा पा रहे हैं, उसके ऊपर हमारा ध्यान नहीं है। इसका थोड़ा जिक्र करना चाहिए था, यह बहुत जरूरी था। आज के दिन यह हो रहा है कि जो लोग फुटपाथ पर हैं, वे लोग इंडियन हैं कि नहीं हैं, हमारे नागरिक हैं कि नहीं हैं, जो लोग दिल्ली में टैक्सी पर जाकर पैसा मांगते हैं? मैं कभी-कभी यह सोचता हूं कि यहां जितने लोग हैं, हम उनके बारे में कभी नहीं सोचते हैं, उनको उठाने के लिए कोई पॉलिसी भी हमारे दिमाग़ में नहीं आती है। यहां हमारे नोमिनेटिड मैम्बर्स की सुविधा है, जो फुटपाथ पर रहते हैं, हमें उनमें से भी एक को नोमिनेट करना चाहिए। वह उन लोगों के लिए रोटी, कपड़ा और मकान के लिए एक अच्छी पॉलिसी लाने की बात कर सकता है। यह भारत में बहुत जरूरी है। हमारे यहां इन्सर्जेन्सी की प्रॉब्लम भी है। आज असम में तीस साल से ज्यादा हो गए हैं, वहां जो इन्सर्जेन्सी की प्रॉब्लम हो रही है,

वजह से सारे भारत की जो अर्थ नीति व्यवस्था है, इसके ऊपर भी उसका बुरा प्रभाव पड़ रहा है। लेकिन इसको हल करने के लिए, इस समस्या का समाधान करने के लिए आज तक हमारी कोई पॉलिसी नहीं है। हमारे राष्ट्रपति जी के भाषण में जिक्र किया गया कि बातचीत के जरिए उसका समाधान किया जाएगा। यह तो पुरानी बात है। बात तो कर रहे हैं, दस साल से ज्यादा हो गए, एनएससीएन (आई) के साथ बात कर रहे हैं। आज उल्फा के कुछ और ग्रुप्स के साथ बात कर रहे हैं, आज एनडीएफबी के साथ बात कर रहे हैं, आज दीमा हलाम दाउगा (डीएचडी) के साथ बात कर रहे हैं। DHD का problem तो इतनी बड़ी नहीं है, लेकिन इतने साल हो गए, अभी तक सरकार इस समस्या का समाधान कर नहीं पाई। दिमासा का प्रॉब्लम यह है कि दिमासा अरुणाचल के जैसी एक हिल ट्राइब है, जैसे खासी, खासी हिल्स की हिल ट्राइब है, उन जैसा है। लेकिन एक ही देश में रहते हुए अगर अरुणाचल प्रदेश में 15-20 हजार के पॉपुलेशन पर एक एमएलए बन सकता है, तो दिमासा में 1.5 लाख में सिर्फ एक ही प्रतिनिधि है। उन लोगों को जो political rights मिलने चाहिए थे, जो social rights मिलने चाहिए थे, वे नहीं मिल रहे हैं। एनसी हिल्स में एक एमएलए सीट को पाँच सीटें बनाने में हमें क्या प्रॉब्लम है! हम जो खासी के लिए कर सकते हैं, हम जो अरुणाचली के लिए कर सकते हैं, हम जो नागालैंड के लिए कर सकते हैं, वह N.C. Hill में क्यों नहीं कर सकते! वहाँ हॉफलांग से गुवाहाटी तक आकर लोग यूनिवर्सिटी में पढ़ नहीं सकते हैं। वहाँ यूनिवर्सिटी बना कर पढ़ने के लिए एक मौका देने में भारत सरकार को क्या प्रॉब्लम है! सरकार यह तो कर सकती है। वहाँ तक रास्ता तो बनाया जा सकता है। जो रेलवे ट्रैक है, उसको थोड़ा improve किया जा सकता है। हम extremists की बात तो बार-बार करते रहते हैं, लेकिन जब हम जम्मू-कश्मीर में इतनी problem होने पर भी 5-6 साल में एक रेलवे लाइन को complete कर सकते हैं, तो नॉर्थ-ईस्ट में क्यों नहीं! हॉफलांग में क्यों नहीं! सिलचर में क्यों नहीं! त्रिपुरा में क्यों नहीं! जहाँ सारे भारत में MG रेलवे को improve करके broad guage किया जा रहा है, त्रिपुरा में meter guage करने का मतलब क्या है! इसमें वहाँ के लोगों को क्या चिन्ता होगी? आज नॉर्थ-ईस्ट की जो problem है, उस problem को solve करने के लिए हमारी भारत सरकार को बहुत गम्भीरता से सोचना जरूरी है। आज भी उल्फा में recruitment हो रही है, आज भी एनडीएफबी में recruitment हो रही है। अगर सरकार यहाँ development के लिए कोई पॉलिसी नहीं लेगी, तो यह recruitment होती रहेगी। इसके लिए पॉलिसी लेना बहुत जरूरी है। मैं सोचता हूँ कि इसी तरह की परिकल्पना, इसी तरह की चिन्ता भी इस राष्ट्रपति जी के अभिभाषण में आनी चाहिए और भविष्य में इस बारे में, जो लोग सरकार के पक्ष में हैं, वो लोग इस पर चिन्ता करेंगे। मैं आशा करता हूँ कि वे उसके लिए पॉलिसी लाएंगे। धन्यवाद।

श्री अहमद सईद मलीहाबादी (पश्चिमी बंगाल): सर, हमारी सदर-ए-जम्हूरिया ने जो ख़िताब फरमाया था, उसमें उन्होंने हमारे मुल्क की एक तस्वीर हमारे सामने पेश की है। इस तस्वीर के बहुत से रंग हैं, जिन पर हम सब लोग यहाँ चर्चा कर रहे हैं। मैं उसके सिर्फ एक-दो आइटम के ऊपर बात करूँगा।

हमारी सदर-ए-जम्हूरिया ने अपने ख़िताब में अक़लियतों का भी ज़िक्र किया है, माइनोरिटीज़ का भी ज़िक्र किया है और यह बताया है कि उनकी हुकूमत ने, यूपीए की हुकूमत ने माइनोरिटीज़ के लिए क्या-क्या किया है। आज से पाँच साल पहले जब यह हुकूमत बनी थी, पाँच साल होने को आ रहे हैं, इसे बाहर से भी लेफ्ट पार्टियों की मदद हासिल थी, तो इसका जो common minimum programme बना था, उसमें खास तौर पर इस पर ज़ोर दिया गया था कि माइनोरिटीज़ के जो problems हैं, उनके ऊपर खास ध्यान दिया जाएगा। हमें इस बात की खुशी है कि यूपीए गवर्नमेंट ने पहली दफा सच्चर कमेटी के नाम से एक कमेटी कायम किया और उसने अपनी एक बहुत ही comprehensive report पेश की। लेकिन उस रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक जो recommendations आईं और जो सिफारिशात आईं और फिर उन्हीं सिफारिशात के ढाँचे के अन्दर हमारे वज़ीर-ए-आज़म साहब ने जो 15 प्वाइंट प्रोग्राम माइनोरिटीज़ के welfare के लिए रखा, तो हम लोग ऐसा

महसूस करते हैं कि वह काग़ज़ की जीनत तो ज्यादा बनी है, लेकिन उस पर उस तरह से अमल नहीं हुआ, जैसा होना चाहिए था। इसलिए कि माइनोरिटी मिनिस्ट्री को जो फंड allot किया गया, मुल्क के अन्दर इतनी बड़ी माइनोरिटीज़ हैं, मुस्लिम माइनोरिटी, जिसका अभी हमारे सरदार जी यहाँ ज़िक्र कर रहे थे, दूसरी माइनोरिटीज़ हैं, उनके लिए जो फंड दिया गया है, वह तो ऊँट के मुँह में जीरे के बराबर है। उसके अलावा फंड का जो allocation हुआ, उसमें से hardly 40 परसेंट ही खर्च हुआ है। बाकी पैसा खर्च भी नहीं हो सका और उसका बुनियादी सबब यह है कि यह स्टेट गवर्नमेंट्स के थ्रू जो कुछ जा रहा है, वहां क्या हो रहा है, यह तो वही लोग बता सकते हैं, लेकिन आम आदमी तक वह बात नहीं पहुंच रही है। हम इस बात से बहुत मुतमइन थे कि यह हुकूमत जो बनी है, इसने मुल्क के अंदर फिरकापरस्ती का, कम्युनलिज्म का लेवल बहुत नीचे चला गया था और मुल्क के अंदर एक बहुत अच्छा माहौल बना था। बदकिस्मती से हमारे मुल्क के अंदर फिरकापरस्ती तो घटी, लेकिन दहशतगर्दी का लेवल हाइ हो गया। उसने इस atmosphere को बहुत कुछ खराब किया है। यह बात हम लोग मानते हैं और उसके खिलाफ लड़ाई भी चल रही है। वह लड़ाई किसी एक कम्युनिटी की नहीं है, किसी एक फिरके की लड़ाई नहीं है, यह नेशनल लड़ाई है, पूरी कौम की लड़ाई है। हम सब को मिलकर इस लड़ाई को लड़ना है और हम मिलकर इस लड़ाई को लड़ रहे हैं, लेकिन सवाल यहां यह है कि अगर आम आदमी जिसकी तादाद करोड़ों-करोड़ में पहुंचती है, अगर वह उसी तरह से परेशानहाल रहेगा - तालीम में, रोजगार में, उसके accommodation का, रिहायश का मसला हल नहीं होगा, तो इस तरह से मुल्क का माहौल ज्यादा दिन तक कैसे पुरअमन रह सकेगा।

[**श्री उपसभापति** पीठासीन हुए]

हमारे यहां तरह-तरह के मसले उठ रहे हैं - नक्सलाइट मूवमेंट है, वहां ये मसले चल रहे हैं कि वहां जो गरीब, पिछड़े हुए लोग हैं, उनके अंदर improvement नहीं हो रहा है। उसके लिए सही तौर पर कोशिश नहीं हो रही है। तो इन मायनॉरिटीज के लिए भी जब तक अमली कदम नहीं उठाया जाएगा और common आदमी तक वे चीजें नहीं पहुंचेंगी, उसका improvement नहीं होगा। हुकूमत ने अभी तक जो कुछ किया है, उसके लिए हम जरूर शुक्रगुजार हैं क्योंकि पहली दफा ऐसा हुआ है कि सच्चर कमेटी ने यह रिपोर्ट पेश की है। हमारे सामने एक document आया है, उसको accept किया गया है, realize किया गया है कि हां यह एक बहुत बड़ा मसला है। हिंदुस्तान के 20 करोड़ मुसलमान ऊपर के लेवल से घटकर नीचे के लेवल पर आ गए हैं। यह एक बहुत बड़ा चार्ज है हमारी डेमोक्रेसी के ऊपर, इस सेकुलर इंडिया स्टेट के ऊपर एक बहुत बड़ा चार्ज है कि हमारे यहां की इतनी बड़ी मायनोरिटी दलित के लेवल पर पहुंचा दी गयी। ठीक है, जो हुआ सो हुआ, लेकिन अब हम जिस तरह से दलित को उठा रहे हैं, हम scheduled castes/scheduled tribes को उठा रहे हैं, उतनी ही कोशिश के साथ, उतनी ही मेहनत के साथ हमको इस मायनोरिटी को उठाना होगा। लेकिन हम यह देख रहे हैं कि मायनोरिटी के सिलसिले में, खास तौर पर मुस्लिम मायनोरिटी के सिलसिले में सच्चर कमेटी की मार्फत, प्राइम मिनिस्टर का जो 15 निकासी प्रोग्राम है, उसकी मार्फत जो भी काम होना चाहिए था, अब तक वह आम आदमी तक नहीं पहुंच पा रहा है और अगर वह कहीं पहुंचा है तो इतना कम है कि उसको गिनती नहीं किया जाता। मैंने अभी जिक्र किया कि जो छोटासा काम किया गया है, उसमें भी 40 पर्सेंट खर्चा नहीं हो रहा है।

हम तो यह चाहते थे कि सच्चर कमेटी की मार्फत, अब तो वक्त नहीं रह गया है, अगर हमारा एक प्लान रखा जाता जिस तरह से scheduled tribes वगैरा के लिए रखा गया है तो यह जो 60 वर्ष का backlog था, उसको पूरा किया जा सकता था। यह एक बात हुई, बहरहाल हम इस बात के लिए, हम अपनी सदर-ए-जम्हूरिया के शुक्रगुजार हैं कि उन्होंने अपने address में मायनोरिटीज का पूरा जिक्र किया। उन्होंने एहसास किया है, उनके लिए हुकूमत ने कोशिश की है, लेकिन उस कोशिश का फल आम आदमी तक नहीं पहुंच पाया है, यह बात बिल्कुल सच्ची है क्योंकि हम क्या कह रहे हैं, आप क्या कह रहे हैं, यह अहम नहीं

है बल्कि जिसके लिए बात कही गयी है अगर वह उससे मुतमइन नहीं है, तो उसकी बात हमको सुननी पड़ेगी। वह हमसे कहता है कि मेरी जिंदगी में कोई खास तब्दीली नज़र नहीं आ रही है, मेरी जो परेशानियां थीं वे उसी तरह जारी हैं, मेरे बच्चों को जिस तरह वजीफा मिलना चाहिए था, नहीं मिल रहा है।

अभी 90 जिलों की बात आई कि 90 जिले लिए गए हैं, वहां क्या काम हो रहा है, कितने स्कूल्स कायम हुए हैं? हम एजुकेशन में पिछड़ गए, रोजगार में पिछड़ गए, मुलाजमतों में 2-3 परसेंट रह गए। यह तो एक अंधेर की बात है। अरे साहब, आप व हम एक सेकुलर स्टेट को चलाएंगे तो उसको implement भी करना होगा। तो मैं यह बात अर्ज़ करना चाहता था कि हम सदर-ए-जम्हूरिया के शुक्रगुजार हैं कि उन्होंने यह provision किया है। मैं सिर्फ एक बात और यह अर्ज़ करना चाहता हूं कि हमारे मुल्क के अंदर जो परेशानी इस वक्त चल रही है, उस परेशानी का हमको सामना है और खास तौर पर हमारे पड़ोसी मुल्क पाकिस्तान की वजह से हम जिन परेशानियों का निशाना बने हैं, उसके लिए हमारी पूरी कौम एक साथ है और उनकी तरफ से जो परेशानी आ रही है, मेरा अपना ख्याल यह है कि वह मुस्तकबिल करीब में खत्म होने वाली नहीं है। वजह उसकी यह है कि वह खुद बहुत बड़ी मुसीबत में पड़े हुए हैं और उनको मुसीबत में डालनेवाले उनकी internal forces भी हैं और उससे ज्यादा external forces हैं।

अब अफगानिस्तान की जो लड़ाई है, वह फैलकर पाकिस्तान तक आ रही है और अफगानिस्तान की उस लड़ाई को आगे बढ़ाने के लिए बाहर से और भी फौजें आ रही हैं। वहाँ जब लड़ाई बढ़ती जाएगी तो वहाँ यह मुसीबत बढ़ती जाएगी। उस मुसीबत की आँच हम तक भी पहुँचती है, यह बात हमारे कई साथियों ने यहाँ कही है और मैं भी उसकी सपोर्ट करता हूँ। पाकिस्तान की जनता हिन्दुस्तान के खिलाफ नहीं है। पाकिस्तान का जो feudal class है, जो वहाँ के politicians हैं, जो उससे belong करते हैं और वहाँ की आर्मी-आर्मी भी दो हिस्सों में बँटी है, एक प्रोफेशनल र्मी है और दूसरी तालिबान आर्मी है। जो रेगुलर आर्मी में हैं, उसमें आधी फौज तालिबान की है, तो वे लोग एक मुसीबत हैं। वहाँ की जनता खुद बहुत परेशान है। पाकिस्तान खुद बहुत बड़ी मुसीबत में है और हमारे लिए भी मुसीबत बन गया है। एक सूरत यह हो सकती है कि हम पाकिस्तान की उस तरह से थोड़ी मदद कर सकते हैं जिस तरह से हमने मुम्बई वाले मामले में झेला है, हमने पूरी टेंशन को बर्दाश्त किया है। शायद वे डर गये थे और डर की वजह से उन्होंने तलवार घुमानी शुरू कर दी थी। लेकिन हमने उनके जवाब में तलवार नहीं घुमाई। हमने उनको सीधे रास्ते पर आने के लिए diplomatic संदेश दिया। हम खुश हैं कि वे सीधे रास्ते पर आ चले हैं। अगर वे इसी रास्ते पर चलते रहे तो हम मुतमइन रहेंगे। हम उनकी इस तरह से मदद कर सकते हैं कि पाकिस्तान की democratic forces को मजबूत किया जा सके, वहाँ पूरी तरह से जनता की हुकूमत कायम हो और आर्मी का जो अमल-दखल है, वह कम से कम हो जाए। मैं इन अलफाज़ के साथ सदर-ए-जम्हूरियत का शुक्रिया अदा करता हूँ कि उन्होंने हमारे मुल्क की एक अच्छी तस्वीर पेश की है।

आखिर में, मैं वजीर-ए-आजम की सेहत के लिए दुआ में शरीक हूँ। उन्होंने हमारे मुल्क का खजाना रुपये से भी भरा है और डॉलर से भी भरा है। आज जो इतना बड़ा Global turmoil चल रहा है, उसमें हमारा मुल्क इतनी मजबूती से खड़ा है और हम यह उम्मीद करते हैं कि यह इसी मजबूती से खड़ा रहेगा। हमारा यह जो खजाना भरा है, उसका पैसा उन लोगों तक भी पहुँचना चाहिए जो भूखे और गरीब हैं।

बड़ी-बड़ी कंपनियों के जो स्कैम हो रहे हैं, उनके ऊपर पूरा चेक होना चाहिए। अरबों रुपयों का जो घोटाला होता है, उससे न जाने कितने घरों के चिराग जल जाएंगे, कितनी बस्तियाँ आबाद हो जाएंगी, कितने कॉलेज खुल जाएंगे और कितने अस्पताल खुल जाएंगे। हम उम्मीद करते हैं कि हमारे वजीर-ए-आजम साहब ने जो किया है, चंद महीनों के बाद आने वाली नई हुकूमत भी इसी पॉलिसी पर चलेगी। बहुत-बहुत शुक्रिया।

شری احمد سعید ملیح ابادی (پچھمی بنگال) : سر، ہماری صدر جمہوریہ نے جو خطاب فرمایا تھا، اس میں انہوں نے ہمارے ملک کی ایک تصویر ہمارے سامنے پیش کی ہے۔ اس تصویر کے بہت سے رنگ ہیں، جن پر ہم سب لوگ یہاں چرچہ کر رہے ہیں۔ میں اس کے صرف ایک دو آئٹم کے اوپر بات کروں گا۔

ہماری صدر جمہوریہ نے اپنے خطاب میں اقلیتوں کا بھی ذکر کیا ہے، مائنارٹیز کا بھی ذکر کیا ہے اور یہ بتایا ہے کہ ان کی حکومت نے، یو۔پی۔اے۔ کی حکومت نے مائنارٹیز کے لئے کیا کیا ہے۔ آج سے پانچ سال پہلے جب یہ حکومت بنی تھی، پانچ سال ہونے کو آ رہے ہیں، اسے باہر سے بھی لیفٹ پارٹیوں کی مدد حاصل تھی، تو اس کا common minimum programme بنا تھا، اس میں خاص طور پر اس پر زور دیا گیا تھا کہ مائنارٹیز کے جو پرابلمز ہیں، اس کے اوپر خاص دھیان دیا جائے۔ ہمیں اس بات کی خوشی ہے کہ یو۔پی۔اے۔ گوورنمنٹ نے پہلی دفعہ سچر کمیٹی کے نام سے ایک کمیٹی قائم کی اور اس نے اپنی ایک بہت ہی comprehensive report پیش کی۔ لیکن اس رپورٹ کے مطابق جو recommendations آئیں اور جو سفارشات آئیں اور پھر انہیں سفارشات کے ڈھانچے کے اندر ہمارے وزیر اعظم صاحب نے جو 15 پوائنٹ پروگرام مائنارٹیز کے ویلفئر کے لئے رکھا، تو ہم لوگ ایسا محسوس کرتے ہیں کہ وہ کاغذ کی زینت تو زیادہ بنی ہے، لیکن اس پر اس طرح سے عمل نہیں ہوا، جیسا ہونا چاہئے تھا۔ اس لئے کہ مائنارٹی منسٹری کو جو فند الاٹ کیا گیا، ملک کے اندر اتنی بڑی مائنارٹیز ہیں، مسلم مائنارٹی، جس کا ابھی ہمارے سردار جی یہاں ذکر کر رہے تھے، دوسری مائنارٹیز ہیں، اس کے لئے جو فنڈ دیا گیا ہے، وہ تو اونٹ کے منھ میں زیرے کے برابر ہے۔ اس کے علاوہ فنڈ کا جو ایلوکیشن ہوا، اس میں سے ہارڈلی 40٪ ہی خرچ ہوا ہے۔ باقی پیسہ خرچ بھی نہیں ہو سکا اور اس کا بنیادی سبب یہ ہے کہ یہ اسٹیٹ گوورنمنٹ کے تھرو جو کچھ جا رہا ہے، وہاں کیا ہو رہا ہے، یہ تو وہی لوگ بتا

†[]Transliteration in Urdu Script.

سکتے ہیں، لیکن عام آدمی تک وہ بات نہیں پہنچ رہی ہے۔ ہم اس بات سے بہت مطمئن تھے کہ یہ حکومت جو بنی ہے، اس کے ملک کے اندر فرقہ پرستی کا، کمیونلزم کا لیول بہت نیچے چلا گیا تھا اور ملک کے اندر ایک بہت اچھا ماحول بنا تھا۔ بدقسمتی سے ہمارے ملک کے اندر فرقہ پرستی تو گھٹی، لیکن دہشت گردی کا لیول ہائی ہو گیا۔ اس نے اس atmosphere کو بہت کچھہ خراب کیا ہے۔ یہ بات ہم لوگ مانتے ہیں اور اس کے خلاف لڑائی بھی چل رہی ہے۔ وہ لڑائی کسی ایک کمیونٹی کی نہیں ہے، کسی ایک فرقے کی لڑائی نہیں ہے، یہ نیشنل لڑائی ہے، پوری قوم کی لڑائی ہے۔ ہم سب کو مل کر اس لڑائی کو لڑنا ہے اور ہم مل کر اس لڑائی سے لڑ رہے ہیں، لیکن سوال یہاں یہ ہے کہ اگر عام آدمی جس کی تعداد کروڑ کروڑ میں پہنچتی ہے، اگر وہ اسی طرح پریشان حال رہے گا۔ تعلیم میں، روزگار میں، اس کے accommodation کا، رہائش کا مسئلہ حل نہیں ہوگا، تو اس طرح سے ملک کا ماحول زیادہ دن تک کیسے پر امن رہے سکے گا۔

(شری اپ سبھا پتی صدر نشیں ہوئے)

ہمارے یہاں طرح طرح کے مسئلے اٹھہ رہے ہیں۔ نکسلائڈ موومنٹ ہے، وہاں یہ مسئلے چل رہے ہیں کہ وہاں جو غریب، پچھڑے ہوئے لوگ ہیں، ان کے اندر امپرومنٹ نہیں ہو رہا ہے۔ اس کے لئے صحیح طور پر کوششیں نہیں ہو رہی ہے۔ تو ان مائنارٹیز کے لئے بھی جب تک عملی قدم نہیں اٹھایا جائے گا اور کامن آدمی تک وہ چیزیں نہیں پہنچے گی، اس کا امپرومنٹ نہیں ہوگا۔ حکومت نے ابھی تک جو کچھہ کیا ہے، اس کے لئے ہم ضرور شکر گزار ہیں کیوں کہ پہلی دفعہ ایسا ہوا ہے کہ سچر کمیٹی نے یہ رپورٹ پیش کی ہے۔ ہمارے سامنے ایک document آیا ہے، اس کو ایکسیپٹ کیا گیا، realize کیا گیا ہے کہ ہاں یہ ایک بہت بڑا مسئلہ ہے۔ ہندوستان کے 20 کروڑ مسلمان اوپر کے لیول سے گھٹ کر نیچے کے لیول پر آ گئے ہیں۔ یہ ایک بہت بڑا چارج ہے ہماری ڈیموکریسی کے اوپر، اس سیکولر انڈیا اسٹیٹس

†[]Transliteration in Urdu Script.

کے اوپر ایک بہت بڑا چارج ہے کہ ہمارے یہاں کی اتنی بڑی مائنارٹی دلت کے لیول پر پہنچا دی گئی۔ ٹھیک ہے، جو ہوا سو ہوا، لیکن اب ہم جس طرح سے دلت کو اٹھا رہے ہیں، ہم schedule castes/schedule tribes کو اٹھا رہے ہیں، اتنی کی کوشش کے ساتھہ، اتنی ہی محنت کے ساتھہ ہم کو اس مائنارٹی کو اٹھانا ہوگا۔ لیکن ہم یہ دیکھہ رہے ہیں کہ مائنارٹی کے سلسلے میں، خاص طور پر مسلم مائنارٹی کے سلسلے میں سچر کمیٹی کی معرفت، پرائم منسٹر کا جو 15 نکاتی پروگرام ہے، اس کی معرفت جو بھی کام ہونا چاہئے تھا، اب تک وہ عام آدمی تک نہیں پہنچ پا رہا ہے اور اگر وہ کہیں پہنچا ہے تو اتنا کم ہے کہ اس کو گنتی نہیں کیا جاتا۔ میں نے ابھی ذکر کیا کہ جو چھوٹا سا کام کیا گیا ہے، اس میں بھی 40٪ خرچہ نہیں ہو رہا ہے۔

ہم تو یہ چاہتے تھے کہ سچر کمیٹی کی معرفت، اب تو وقت نہیں رہ گیا ہے، اگر ہمارا ایک پلان رکھا جاتا جس طرح سے شیڈول ٹرائبس وغیرہ کے لئے رکھا گیا ہے تو یہ جو 60 سال کا backlog تھا، اس کو پورا کیا جا سکتا تھا۔ یہ ایک بات ہوئی، بہرحال ہم اس بات کے لئے، ہم اپنی صدر جمہوریہ کے شکرگزار ہیں کہ انہوں نے اپنے ایڈریس میں مائنارٹیز کا پورا ذکر کیا۔ انہوں نے احساس کیا ہے، اس کے لئے حکومت نے کوشش کی ہے، لیکن اس کوشش کا پھل عام آدمی تک نہیں پہنچ پایا ہے، یہ بات بالکل سچی ہے کیوں کہ ہم کیا کہہ رہے ہیں، آپ کیا کہہ رہے ہیں، یہ اہم نہیں ہے بلکہ جس کے بات کہی گئی ہے اگر وہ اس سے مطمئن نہیں ہیں تو اس کی بات ہم کو سننی پڑے گی۔ وہ ہم سے کہتا ہے کہ میری زندگی میں کوئی خاص تبدیلی نظر نہیں آ رہی ہے میری جو پریشانیاں تھیں وہ اسی طرح جاری ہیں، میرے بچوں کو جس طرح وظیفہ ملنا چاہئے تھا، نہیں مل رہا ہے۔

ابھی 90 ضلعوں کی بات آئی کہ 90 ضلع لئے گئے ہیں، وہاں کیا کام ہو رہا ہے، کتنے اسکولس قائم ہوئے ہیں؟ ہم ایجوکیشن میں پچھڑ گئے، روزگار میں پچھڑ گئے، ملازمتوں میں 2-3 فیصد رہ گئے۔ یہ تو ایک اندھیرے کی بات ہے۔ ارے صاحب،

†[]Transliteration in Urdu Script.

آپ وہ ہم ایک سیکولر اسٹیٹ کو چلائیں گئے تو اس کو implement بھی کرانا ہوگا۔ تو میں یہ بات عرض کرنا چاہتا تھا کہ ہم صدر جمہوریہ کو شکر گزار ہیں کہ انہوں نے یہ provision کیا ہے۔ میں صرف ایک بات اور عرض کرنا چاہتا ہوں کہ ہمارے ملک کے اندر جو پریشانی اس وقت چل رہی ہے، اس پریشانی کا ہم کو سامنا ہے اور خاص طور پر ہمارے پڑوسی ملک پاکستان کی وجہ سے ہم جن پریشانیوں کا نشانہ بنے ہیں، اس کے لئے ہماری پوری قوم ایک ساتھ ہے اور ان کی طرف سے جو پریشانی آ رہی ہے، میرا اپنا خیال یہ ہے کہ وہ مستقبل قریب میں ختم ہونے والی نہیں ہے۔ وجہ اس کی یہ ہے کہ وہ خود بہت بڑی مصیبت میں پڑے ہونے ہیں اور ان کو مصیبت میں ڈالنے والے ان کی internal forces بھی ہیں اور اس سے زیادہ external forces ہیں۔

اب افغانستان کی جو لڑائی ہے، وہ پھیل کر پاکستان تک آ رہی ہے، اور افغانستان کی اس لڑائی کو آگے بڑھانے کے لئے باہر سے اور بھی فوجیں آ رہی ہیں۔ وہاں جب لڑائی بڑھتی جائے گی تو وہاں یہ مصیبت بڑھتی جائے گی۔ اس مصیبت کی آنچ ہمارے تک بھی پہنچتی ہے۔ یہ بات ہمارے ساتھیوں نے یہاں کہی ہے اور میں بھی اس کا سپورٹ کرتا ہوں۔ پاکستان کی جنتا ہندوستان کے خلاف نہیں ہے۔ پاکستان کا جو feudal class ہے، جو وہاں کے politicians ہیں، جو اس سے belong کرتے ہیں اور وہاں کی آرمی، آرمی بھی دو حصوں میں بنٹی ہے، ایک پروفیشنل آرمی ہے، اور دوسری طالبان آرمی ہے۔ جو ریگولر آرمی میں ہیں، اس میں آدھی فوج طالبان کی ہے، تو وہ لوگ ایک مصیبت ہیں۔ وہاں کی جنتا خود بہت پریشان ہے۔ پاکستان خود بڑی مصیبت میں ہے اور ہمارے لئے بھی مصیبت بن گیا ہے۔ ایک صورت یہ ہو سکتی ہے کہ ہم پاکستان کی اس طرح سے تھوڑی مدد کر سکتے ہیں کہ جس طرح سے ہم ممبئی والے معاملے میں جھیلا ہے، ہم نے پوری ٹینشن کو برداشت کیا ہے۔ شاید وہ ڈر گئے تھے اور ڈر کی وجہ سے انہوں نے تلوار

†[]Transliteration in Urdu Script.

گھمانی شروع کر دی تھی۔ لیکن ہم نے ان کے جواب میں تلوار نہیں گھمائی۔ ہم نے ان کو سیدھے راستے پر آنے کے لئے diplomatic سندیش دیا۔ ہم خوش ہیں کہ وہ سیدھے راستے پر آ چلے ہیں۔ اگر وہ اسی راستے پر چلتے رہے تو ہم مطمئن رہیں گے۔ ہم ان کی اس طرح سے مدد کر سکتے ہیں کہ پاکستان کو ڈیموکریٹک فورسز کو مضبوط کیا جا سکے کہ وہاں پوری طرح سے جنتا کی حکومت قائم ہو اور آرمی کا جو عمل دخل ہے، وہ کم سے کم ہو جائے۔ میں الفاظ کے ساتھ صدر جمہوریہ کا شکریہ ادا کرتا ہوں کہ انہوں نے ہمارے ملک کی ایک اچھی تصویر پیش کی ہے۔

آخر میں، میں وزیر اعظم کی صحت کے لئے دعا میں شریک ہوں۔ انہوں نے ہمارے ملک کا خزانہ روپے سے بھی بھرا ہے اور ڈالر سے بھی بھرا ہے۔ آج تو اتنا بڑا Global turmoil چل رہا ہے، اس میں ہمارا ملک اتنی مضبوطی سے کھڑا ہے اور ہم یہ امید کرتے ہیں کہ یہ اسی مضبوطی سے کھڑا رہے گا۔ ہمارا یہ جو خزانہ بھرا ہے، اس کا پیسہ ان لوگوں تک بھی پہنچنا چاہئے جو بھوکے اور غریب ہیں۔

بڑی بڑی کمپنیوں کے جو اسکیم ہو رہے ہیں، ان کے اوپر پورا چیک ہونا چاہئے۔ اربوں روپوں کا جو گھوٹالہ ہوتا ہے، ان سے نہ جانے کتنے گھروں کے چراغ جل جائیں گے، کتنی بستیاں آباد ہو جائیں گی، کتنے کالج کھل جائیں گے اور کتنے اسپتال کھل جائیں گے۔ ہم امید کرتے ہیں کہ ہمارے وزیر اعظم صاحب نے جو کیا ہے، چند مہینوں کے بعد آنے والی نئی حکومت بھی اسی پالیسی پر چلے گی۔

بہت بہت شکریہ۔

श्री प्रभात झा (मध्य प्रदेश): माननीय उपसभापति महोदय, राष्ट्रपति महोदय के अभिभाषण के ऊपर धन्यवाद प्रस्ताव पर आपने मुझे बोलने का जो मौका दिया है, उसके लिए मैं आपका आभार व्यक्त करता हूँ। मेरे दल के नेता ने कल कहा था कि उन्होंने अपने 30 वर्षों के संसदीय जीवन में 30 बार राष्ट्रपति जी का अभिभाषण सुना होगा, लेकिन इतना लम्बा और उबाऊ भाषण उन्होंने कभी नहीं सुना। हमें तो पहली बार सुनने का मौका मिला था। मुझे आप सब को धन्यवाद देना है कि इतने लम्बे और उबाऊ भाषण पर जो धन्यवाद प्रस्ताव चल रहा है, उस पर आप सब लोग यहाँ टिके हुए हैं। मैं आपके इस धैर्य को धन्यवाद देता हूँ। क्रिकेट में जो आखिरी बल्लेबाज होता है, या तो वह छक्का लगाता है या क्लीन बोल्ड हो जाता है। शायद मैं इस अभिभाषण पर अंतिम वक्ता हूँ। पिछली बार राष्ट्रपति महोदय ने जो भाषण दिया था उसमें 65 बिन्दु और 20 पेज थे। इस

†[]Transliteration in Urdu Script.

बार के भाषण में 31 पेज, 767 पंक्तियाँ और 12,997 शब्द रखे गए हैं। इतने लम्बे-चौड़े भाषण में यथार्थ से दूर बहुत सारी बातें हैं। उन्होंने पहले भाग में देश के प्रधान मंत्री को शुभकामनाएँ दी हैं, जो कि देनी भी चाहिए थी। उनका स्वास्थ्य खराब है, वह ठीक होना चाहिए। वह देश के प्रधान मंत्री हैं। यह अच्छी बात थी। लेकिन मैं सदन का ध्यान आकर्षित करना चाहता हूँ कि उसमें अगर एक बात और आ जाती तो राजनीति में जो बौनापन आ गया है, राजनीति में जो छोटापन आ गया है, शायद वह दूर होता और भारतीय राजनीति में जो संकीर्णता आ गई है, वह लोगों की समझ में आती। अगर उसमें एक लाइन यह भी लिखी जाती कि भारत माता का एक लाल, पूर्व प्रधान मंत्री, जो इस सदन का नहीं बल्कि लोक सभा का सदस्य है, श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी, वह भी बीमार हैं, उनके स्वास्थ्य की भी कामना की जाती तो मुझे लगता है कि राजनीति में शायद एक नया मोड़ आता और लोग कहते कि यह उदारता की राजनीति है। ऐसा नहीं हुआ। शायद हम कहते कुछ हैं और करते कुछ हैं। दूसरी पंक्ति में देश के सैनिकों को, सुरक्षा बलों को धन्यवाद दिया गया है, अभिवादन किया गया है। मेरा मानना है कि यह सरकार नैतिक बल खो चुकी है, उसे ऐसा करने का, धन्यवाद करने का, अभिवादन करने का कोई अधिकार नहीं है। इस शासन में दो बार सुरक्षा बलों के परिजनों को और पूर्व सैनिकों को अपने मैडल वापिस करने पड़ रहे हैं! आखिर ऐसी नौबत क्यों आई? आपके ही एक प्रश्न के उत्तर में है कि सेना में 12,000 अधिकारियों के पद खाली हैं और ऐसे समय में, जब आप पाक से वाक युद्ध कर रहे हैं, सैनिकों का असम्मान हो, तो यह सोचने का विषय है। उनकी मांगें जायज़ हैं, वाजिब हैं या नहीं हैं, मैं उसमें नहीं जाना चाहता, कल मेरे नेता ने इसके बारे में कहा था, लेकिन मैं यह कहना चाहता हूं कि आने वाली संतति कैसे भर्ती होगी सेना में, उसका मनोबल टूटेगा और जो सेना में लोग हैं, यदि उन्हें पदक लौटाने पड़ें, तो यह बड़े दुख की बात है। वह पदक उन्हें क्यों लौटाने पड़े, इस पर सरकार को सोचना चाहिए। यह देश के लिए सोचने का विषय है, यह किसी राजनीति का मसला नहीं है। मुझे दुख के साथ कहना पड़ता है कि लोग आर्मी पर, सेना पर भी आज राजनीति करने पर उतारु हो गए हैं। मैं इसकी पूरी तरह से भर्त्सना करता हूं और सरकार से आग्रह करता हूं कि वह पूर्व सैनिकों की भावना को जरूर देखे।

इस सदन में बहुत सी बातें हुई हैं। लोकतंत्र की बात की गई कि आपने लोकतंत्र की बड़ी हिफाज़त की। NDA सरकार के समय तीन राज्य बने थे - झारखंड, उत्तराखंड और छत्तीसगढ़। आप उत्तराखंड और छत्तीसगढ़ को देखिए, वहां पर हो रहा नैसर्गिक विकास देखिए। छोटे राज्य की परिकल्पना थी, वे राज्य विकास कर रहे हैं। झारखंड में हमने आपका लोकतंत्र देख लिया, आप लोकतंत्र के कितने बड़े हिमायती हैं, यह हमने वहां पर देखा। सबसे अधिक सदस्य जिनके पास थे, आपने उनकी सरकार नहीं बनने दी! झारखंड में आपने लोकतंत्र की ऐसी हिफाज़त की है कि आते-आते आपको राष्ट्रपति शासन लगाना पड़ा। आज उत्तराखंड और छत्तीसगढ़ प्रगति के पायदान पर हैं, लेकिन झारखंड किस मुहाने पर खड़ा है, यह आपको सोचना होगा। आपने बड़ी अच्छी लोकतंत्र की हिफाज़त की है! आप जब बने थे तो आपने कहा था कि शहादत और समर्पण से बनी यह सरकार है। मैं यहां कहना चाहता हूं कि ये दो शब्द डिक्शनरी के आपने बहुत अच्छे उपयोग में लाए थे। शहादत किसकी? आपने शहादत ले ली आम जनता की और सभी मोर्चों पर आपने घुटने टेक दिए, समर्पण कर दिया, किसी भी मोर्चे पर आप देख लें। अभी मैं आपको स्वास्थ्य के एक मामले पर बताता हूं, बहुत ज्यादा बातें की गई हैं स्वास्थ्य के बारे में। मैं दो मुद्दों पर बात करुंगा - स्वास्थ्य और शिक्षा।

शिक्षा के बारे में कहा गया कि तमाम, सारे IIT, IIM, की संख्याएं बढ़ाई जा रही हैं, हम सुपर पावर होने जा रहे हैं। 11,34,000 शिक्षकों की भर्ती होनी थी, अभी तक 8,08,000 शिक्षकों की भर्ती हुई है, 3,00,000 से अधिक शिक्षकों की आप भर्ती नहीं कर पाए हैं। कहां पर? जहां छोटे-छोटे गांव में स्कूल हैं, मास्टर हैं, वहां आप भर्ती नहीं कर पाए हैं, गांव के गांव आज शिक्षक विहीन हैं, शाला विहीन हैं। भारतीय उद्योग संगठन, ASSOCHAM, की एक रिपोर्ट आई है, जो चौंकाने वाली है। भारत से जर्मनी, सिंगापुर, आस्ट्रेलिया, कनाडा,

अमेरिका, इंग्लैंड पढ़ने कितने लोग जाते हैं, पता है आपको? इस रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि 4,50,000 विद्यार्थी यहां से वहां पर पढ़ने जाते हैं। उन पर कितना खर्च होता है? जो 4,50,000 विद्यार्थी उच्च शिक्षा के लिए वहां जाते हैं, वे प्रतिवर्ष 48,000 करोड़ रुपए खर्च करते हैं। मैं इस सरकार से पूछना चाहता हूं कि आपका शिक्षा का बजट क्या है, बताइए? 48,000 करोड़ रुपए का धन यदि प्रति वर्ष रुक जाए तो विश्वस्तर के यहां पर 20 इंजीनियरिंग कॉलेज खुल सकते हैं, मेडिकल कॉलेज खुल सकते हैं और मैनेजमेंट का कोर्स यहां पर शुरु हो सकता है। लेकिन, दुर्भाग्य है कि हम IIT की घोषणा कर देते हैं, IIM की घोषणा कर देते हैं, NIT की घोषणा कर देते हैं - 14 NIT की घोषणा, लेकिन जरा देखिए कि वहां कौन पढ़ा रहा है? जो M.Sc. पास हैं, जो पढ़ाने के लिए एलिजिबल नहीं हैं। शिक्षा का यह हाल आपने कर दिया है। अब मैं स्वास्थ्य की बात करना चाहता हूं। अभी तक हमने सुना था कि देश के किसान सिर्फ फसल के लिए कर्ज़ा लेते हैं, लेकिन आपको यह सुनकर आश्चर्य होगा कि आज जो स्थिति देश में बनी है, देश की आबादी एक दशक में 16 प्रतिशत से अधिक बढ़ी है, लेकिन प्रति एक हजार में 66 प्रतिशत मरीज बढ़ रहे हैं। आपके अस्पतालों में कितने बिस्तर हैं? आप केवल 5 फीसदी बिस्तर बढ़ा पाते हैं, ऐसी हालत में जो 72 फीसदी आबादी गांवों में है, वह क्या कर रही है? किसान को साहूकारों से केवल फसल के लिए कर्ज़ा नहीं लेना है, आज वह अपने इलाज के लिए कर्ज़ा ले रहा है। आपको आने वाले दिनों में यह रिपोर्ट मिलेगी कि किसान सिर्फ फसल के लिए आत्महत्या नहीं करता, वह अपनी दवाई के लिए भी कर्ज़ लेता है और वह उस कर्ज़ के कारण मर रहा है।

उपसभापति जी, मुझसे कहा गया है कि 10 मिनट में अपनी बात खत्म करूं, ताकि घंटी न बजानी पड़े। मैं यह कहना चाहता हूं कि आप बखान करते हैं कि आपने बहुत अच्छा काम किया, आपने बहुत बड़े-बड़े काम किए, तो मैं पूछना चाहता हूं कि आप उड़ीसा में क्यों हार गए, आप जम्मू-कश्मीर में क्यों रह गए, आप महाराष्ट्र में समर्थन से सरकार क्यों चला रहे हैं, आप तमिलनाडु में क्यों हार गए, आप आसाम में क्यों हार गए, आंध्र प्रदेश में ...(**व्यवधान**)... आंध्र प्रदेश में आप जीते थे। मैं कह रहा हूं कि पिछले 5 वर्षों में 22 राज्यों के चुनाव हुए हैं और उनमें से आप 17 राज्यों में हार गए हैं। बहुत अच्छी सरकारें थीं आपकी, आपने बहुत अच्छी सरकारें चलाईं, मैं कहना चाहता हूं कि पिछले 5 वर्षों में आप जितने राज्यों में चुनाव हारे हैं, आने वाला चुनाव यह तय करेगा कि हारती हुई सरकार जिस तरह से आंकड़ों के माध्यम से लोगों को गुमराह करती है, बताती है कि हम यह प्रगति कर रहे हैं, लाल किले के प्राचीर से यह सब कहा जाता है, ये सब बातें तय हो जाएंगी, अप्रैल और मई में चुनाव होने वाला है, अगर आप बहुत अच्छा काम करते, तो इन 22 राज्यों के चुनाव में से आप सिर्फ 5 राज्यों में चुनाव नहीं जीतते, आप सभी राज्यों में चुनाव जीतते और आने वाले समय में देश यह तय करेगा।

उपसभापति जी, मैं आखिरी बात यह कहना चाहता हूं कि इस भाषण में "पंथ निरपेक्ष" शब्द का प्रयोग किया गया है और जब भारतीय जनता पार्टी के अध्यक्ष ने अपने प्रस्ताव में कहा था कि सेक्यूलर का हिंदी अनुवाद "पंथ निरपेक्ष" होता है, तो बड़ा बवाल खड़ा किया गया था। मैं राष्ट्रपति महोदया को धन्यवाद देना चाहता हूं कि उन्होंने "पंथ निरपेक्ष" शब्द का प्रयोग किया है और आज चूंकि किसी ने इसका विरोध नहीं किया है, इसलिए मुझे लगता है कि इस शब्द को मान्यता मिली है।

उपसभापति जी, मैं एक बात और कहकर अपनी बात समाप्त करूंगा कि जब अमरीका के 44वें राष्ट्रपति ने बाइबिल पर हाथ रखकर शपथ ली, तो उनके देश में किसी ने इसका विरोध नहीं किया। उन्हें मन में शंका हुई, तो वे दोबारा गए और बाइबिल पर हाथ रखकर शपथ ली। क्या यह हमारे देश में संभव है कि मैं गीता पर हाथ रखकर शपथ लूं ...(**व्यवधान**)... क्या मुझे रामचरितमानस पर हाथ रखकर शपथ लेने दी जाएगी? मैं यह इसलिए कहना चाहता हूं कि कहीं न कहीं अमरीका में ढूंढने पर दो-चार कम्युनिस्ट लोग तो मिल ही जाएंगे, लेकिन उन्होंने भी इसका विरोध नहीं किया। काश, अगर मैं गीता पर हाथ रखकर शपथ

5.00 P.M.

लेकर यहां कुछ कहता, तो वृंदा कारत जी क्या से क्या कह देतीं ...(**व्यवधान**)... कौन से लोग हैं ये, ये सांप्रदायिक लोग हैं ...(**व्यवधान**)... हमारे देश में धर्म को क्या कहा गया है? क्या हमारे देश में धर्म वे सिखाएंगे? इन सब चीजों को देखते हुए मैं इस अभिभाषण से अपनी असहमति प्रकट करता हूं और अपने संशोधनों के साथ आग्रह करता हूं कि मेरे संशोधन स्वीकार किए जाएं। धन्यवाद।

DR. RADHAKANT NAYAK (Orissa): Thank you very much, Sir. I rise to support the Motion of Thanks whole heartedly and only a very few points I could raise for reflection of this House. Sir, the main point that comes to my mind is that the achievements of this Government during the last four-and-a-half years are phenomenal, and therefore, I don't think anyone can comment adversely about its spectacular achievements of the last four-and-a-half years. Only a few points deserve serious consideration, Sir. The first thing is about the development of an inclusive society and inclusive economy in our country. Sir, as you are aware, the word 'inclusion' has been borrowed from the World Bank document, but I am still unable to find out where and how an inclusive growth can be achieved in this country, and whether this term gives more emphasis on a shibboleth rather than the substance. It is my request that the Planning Commission at least, should come out what exactly it means by an inclusive growth, an inclusive development, who are being excluded and who are not being excluded, who are being included, and all that the term stands for need to be explained, and at the same time, a comprehensive programme of implementation of inclusive growth and inclusive development policy needs to be communicated.

The second point I would raise is, the very basis of the market economy which has been grounded in our country. Certainly, this is the process of globalization and we are not free from this process, and naturally, we have to develop markets so that we integrate ourselves to the rest of the world for better development. Now, in that a question arises whether we are losing or whether we are gaining, and that is a very big question, no doubt. But, at the same time, a study needs to be carried out by someone so that the country knows by giving more emphasis on market we would not gain, but only on aspects like the mixed economy system which was evolved by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru himself, which should be invoked with certain modifications, in keeping with the time.

The third point I would raise is about the regional imbalances in the country which are growing very fast, wherein some States or some communities are growing faster than the others. Regional balancing is very basic to any development if it is to be equitable and if it is to be harmonious. Whether the principle of the Gadgil Formula in allocation of resources is being implemented in its very letter and spirit or not, needs to be examined even at this stage. There are some States like Orissa, for example, very poor, where successive Governments have been requesting for a special package because of the State's lower level of development, which needs to be examined in depth in the context of the overall development national goal of the country.

The third point I thought to raise whether we are giving more emphasis on hardware infrastructure rather than social infrastructure in the country. We are very happy to note that we have spent a lot of money and now we have planned to spend much more on the infrastructure development of the country to keep pace with the speed of development and also with the processes of globalisation, but we need to reflect whether our social indicators are making a match with the economic indicators. To my mind, more emphasis should be given now on human and social development rather than merely or to the exclusion of these indicators only on hardware infrastructure. Sir, the final question that I want to ask or suggest is this. Are we busy more in merely following procedures or in evolving procedures, rather than in getting into the substance? One example is this, Sir. A friend of mine, here, has raised a point about our human development index which is very low in terms of international standards. If we see the social indicators like the happiness index, Bhutan happens to be the happiest country in the world. I want to know whether an average Indian is really happy; whether his normal basic needs are met, and whether, to make him really happy, we are achieving those indicators. If this is not the case I would suggest that most of our needs and priorities have to be re-examined, and a coordinated social and economic development has to be achieved. Thank you, Sir.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I express my gratitude to all the hon. Members who have participated in the debate on the Motion of Thanks. In order to express gratitude to Rashtrapatiji for her inspiring speech delivered to a Joint Session of both the Houses on the 12th of February, Sir, I, along with the Leader of the Opposition and the other hon. Members, who participated in this discussion, thank the Rashtrapatiji for the Address which she has delivered to the Joint Session.

Sir, in a democracy, divergence of views, dissensions are inevitable, and it is encouraging. The informed debate and the critical analysis of the issues from different sides, from different viewpoints, always help to arrive at the right decision. And I do also believe, like many others, that the job of the Opposition parties is to oppose, to expose, and also to depose, if possible. But, at the same time, we shall have to keep in mind that there are certain issues on which, despite the divergences of the views and dissensions of the opinion, we always try to drive at the mid-day course in which a maximum accommodation of the maximum viewpoints is possible. I have taken this debate in that spirit. It is, primarily, the responsibility of the Prime Minister to reply to the debate on the Motion of Thanks. But, as all of us are aware, because of his surgery, from which he is recovering fast,—and I have no doubt that very soon, he will be able to take the responsibility and come back to his routine work, daily work, in full swing—and before going to the hospital for surgery, this responsibility he entrusted to me, and he also wrote to the hon. Chairman of this House, and also to the hon. Speaker of the other House.

I did not have the privilege of listening to all important speeches. But I have heard most part of the speech of the Leader of the Opposition as also the first part of the speech of my friend, Shri Sitaram Yechury. But my colleagues have kept a copy of the notes as the debate was taking place simultaneously in both the Houses. As the Leader of the House, I had to remain present most of the time in the other House.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, certain general issues have emerged and I will try to address them in my response and reply. Of course, the issues of global financial crisis, its impact on the Indian economy and how India is going to respond to it have emerged. The basic strength of the Indian economy, agriculture, the contribution of farmers and what measures we should take to strengthen it further have also been highlighted. The terrorist attack on Mumbai, emanating from across the border, has rudely shaken us, though it was not for the first time that a terrorist attack took place in India. The magnitude, the depth and the audacity of the terrorist attack on Mumbai, perhaps, have crossed the threshold level. Naturally, the sense of outrage of the Indian people can also be gauged from this attack, reactions and responses which we have seen.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, first of all, I would like to deal with the impact of the world financial crisis. It is not that the crisis emerged suddenly. It was going on. But substantially it was confined to the subprime lending. Some of the important insurance companies and certain banking institutions were primarily held responsible for this. It was confined to the USA and the US administration responded to this by coming out with a bail-out package. But very soon the impact was felt over the major economies in North America, Europe, some of the important South-East Asian countries like Singapore and far-eastern countries like Japan. Some of them like the USA, European countries, Japan and Singapore, have already declared a recession in their States with a negative GDP growth in the last two quarters. They have already declared a recession. In India also we felt its impact, particularly from the month of October onwards. The quick estimate of the CSO in the last round has downgraded the GDP growth of India from previous year's 9 per cent to 7.1 per cent or 7 to 7.1 per cent. The Reserve Bank of India, in its quarterly review, has downgraded it thrice; in the first quarter, 8 to 8.5 per cent; in the second quarter, 7 to 7.5 per cent and in the third quarter, they are sticking around 7 per cent. It is not unusual because the full impact is not fully disclosed or is not unfolding itself. There are two other areas apart from growth where the impact is being felt. Exports have come down. We were having a steady export growth, around 26 per cent in US dollar terms, for quite some time. In fact, the composition of export, external trade as a whole, around 330 billion US dollars, constituted almost 37 per cent of our GDP and it moved from 32-33 per cent. Up to the October figure which was available, the growth was around 17.7 per cent. But there has been further decline which is being felt in some of the important sectors, which are largely employment-

oriented like textiles, and gems and jewellery, in which a large number of workers are involved. The industrial growth has also come down, as per the latest figures available, by two percentage points. But as I mentioned, and when I presented the Interim Budget, there too I mentioned, that the situation is still unfolding and we shall have to wait how we can respond and what would be the ultimate impact of it. As our economy is also linked to the global developments, if there is any major impact in the global economic scenario, we cannot insulate our economy from that. But still, as per the experts, 7.1 per cent or around 7 per cent GDP growth would be the second fastest in the world economy, perhaps next to China, including most of the developed countries. Now what measures have we taken? We did not wait to make the assessment for the full impact of it. Two stimulus packages were announced by the Prime Minister; one on 7th December, 2008 and the second on 2nd January, 2009. This include macro economy. An additional Plan expenditure of Rs. 20,000 crores for the social sector scheme was made in the financial year 2008-09; duty reductions took place across the board - 4 percentage points in *ad valorem* cenvat rate, except in petroleum products, was announced. The full financial impact for the financial year would be about Rs.8700 crores. Certain sector specific measures were also taken, like, measures to support exports, housing, micro, small and medium enterprises and textile sectors. To support the PPP mode of infrastructure, the IIFCL was authorised to raise Rs.10,000 crores through tax-free bonds in the market in 2008-09. In addition, the IIFCL is being enabled to access, in tranches, an additional Rs.30,000 crores by way of tax-free bonds once the funds raised during the current year are exhausted. Refinancing credit facilities to the Exim Bank has been given on the line of credit of Rs.5,000 crores for providing both pre-shipment and post-shipment credit in rupees or dollars. We have also liberalised the external commercial borrowings and enhanced the limit of FII investments in rupee denominated corporate bonds which were originally 6 billion US dollars to 15 billion US dollars. To ensure the flow of credit to the micro, small and medium enterprises, the RBI has announced a refinance facility of Rs.7,000 crores for SIDBI which will be available to support the incremental lending either directly to MSMEs, or, indirectly via banks, NBFCs and SFCs. An additional allocation of Rs.1400 crores will be made to clear the entire backlog of PSUs. The Reserve Bank has announced that it will shortly put in place a refinance facility of Rs.4,000 crores for the National Housing Bank. In addition, one of the areas where plan expenditure can be increased, relatively easily, is the Indira Awas Yojana. As a further measure of support for this sector, the public sector banks will shortly announce a package for borrowers in these categories, particularly, for the labour intensive industry, namely, textiles, handlooms, carpets, handicrafts, leather, gems and jewellery, marine products. And, the SME sector is being made more attractive by providing interest subvention of 2 per cent up to 30th September, 2009, subject to a minimum rate of interest of 7 per cent. In addition to that, the hon. Members will recall that when I presented the Interim Budget, I

projected a fiscal deficit for the current year, 2008-09, at 6 per cent of GDP against 2.5 per cent of GDP. No doubt, we are not fulfilling the obligations under the FRBM Act. But, in this extraordinary situation, as I mentioned in my observations in the Budget, extraordinary situations requires extraordinary solutions. Therefore, this year, this would not be possible. And I have also provided an opportunity that when the new Finance Minister will present the new Budget for the full year, — this is an Interim Budget for four months — he will be able to address it and he will be able to go ahead. That is why we have projected that our estimate is that the FRBM could be in terms of fiscal deficit of around 5.5 per cent. What does it mean in terms of money? In terms of money, it means, for the Budget of 2008-09, Rs. 1,93,228 crores, one of the largest financial packages for tackling the crisis.

Some hon. Members expressed their concerns, and, rightly so, about apprehensions and about actual happening, of retrenchment, of people losing their jobs, and so on. Therefore, this is the fiscal and monetary policy which we are adopting so that industries, particularly, employment oriented and employment-generating industries can take care of overcoming the crisis which they are facing. And it would be possible — which was not possible for me when I presented the Interim Budget because of the constitutional obligations that we cannot present the full Budget for 12 months when the mandate of the Government is coming to an end in the next financial year, within less than two months; it would have been improper for me — to make any major project announcements. For that, we shall have to wait. But we have already announced the measures and we did not wait, as the Prime Minister pointed out in his address to the G-20 leaders' meeting that the international community has also an obligation and, particularly, the developed economies. It happens more than often that developed economies respond in a particular way, which is more and more protective and the impact of this more and more protective approach would be that there would be a choking of the flow of FDI; there would be a choking of suppliers' credit which will affect the exports; and already the recession is in. They have declared it. Therefore, the export markets of the developing countries are going to be affected. Therefore, the recommendation was, and correctly, that we will have to ensure for our own interest, for the interests of the developing world, that adequate resources are made available to developing countries through various institutional arrangements by which it would be possible for them to keep their economy going, at a reasonable level of GDP growth, and also to have their export base intact, if not expanded. That is the need of the hour. And in this context, it is also perhaps time that we should clearly point it out; the dark reality, the stark reality stares at our face, that this is the time for the reform of Brettonwoods institutions, the World Bank, the IMF and the other international financial architecture which was established in the post Second World War period and which has almost become, if not antique, outdated. Recognising the ground reality, this international financial architecture which can play a very important role,

requires reforms and urgent attention is called for that. Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, during the debate certain other issues have come up. Price-rise, of course, is an important issue. In my Budget Speech, I myself admitted that we reached as high as 13 per cent of WPI in August 2008. But, after that, we took series of measures, both fiscal measures and monetary policies to adjust the prices. And, in 2008, we had energy crisis, we had food crisis, we had crisis on the commodity prices and on the top of this, we had a major financial crisis also. All these are coming together in very quick succession. Yes, energy prices have started coming down. But, please remember, in May 2004, the cost of one barrel of crude was 28 dollars, and in August, 2008 it reached as high as 147 dollars per barrel. Therefore, for importing almost the same level, around 100 million tonnes of crude, we had to pay more than two-and-a-half times. And, definitely, this had its impact on the economy as a whole. But, still we have been able to overcome it, to some extent. How? The country did not have a major food crisis, when a large number of countries had acute food crisis, we could avoid it. And, here, our real heroes are the Indian farmers. They have made immense contribution in terms of production, in terms of procurement. Our procurement of paddy has been more than 26 million tonnes and wheat more than 21 millions tonnes, and the total production of grains has reached 230 million tonnes. And, I do hope, it would be possible for us to have good crop and good harvesting even this year. How has it been possible? We had to take various measures. I do not ignore the problem of farmers. There are large number of cases of suicide. These are there. But, at the same time, we had to address these issues. The important measures that we took are these. From 2004-05 till date, we have stepped up the prices of the farmers' products almost on every item. I will just give examples of two items. One is wheat, another is rice. In 2003-04, the Minimum Support Price, MSP of per quintal of wheat was Rs.630, and we have increased it from Rs.630 per quintal to Rs.1080 per quintal. That means, in a span of four years, there is Rs.450 per quintal additional for the farmers. In paddy, we have increased it from Rs.550 to Rs.900 per quintal. That means, Rs.350 per quintal increase in the span of this period. The loan waiver has been discussed. It was more than Rs.65,000 crores. But, much more important is the credit. In 2003-04, the total institutional agricultural credit was a little more than Rs.87,000 crores. Now, it has reached Rs.2,37,000 crores. From Rs.87,000 crores to Rs.2,37,000 crores. That got reflected in this area and we have been able to solve the other problems — problems of indebtedness, partly it has been addressed, and, I have no doubt, when the full Budget is presented, it would be possible to address those issues more adequately. But, one point is quite clear that the farmers' interests will always have a dominant part in formulating the policies of the Government for many years. I was just a young junior Minister, Dr. Karan Singh was a Cabinet Minister in those days. What the then Finance Minister Yaswant Rao Chavan told while presenting his second Budget in 1974 was very relevant. He said, "The core of the Indian economy is food — its production, procurement

and distribution." No doubt, we have reached the Green Revolution; we have reached, as I mentioned 230 million tonne production. Around that time, our total production was much less. But, because of the policies and services which have been adopted, it has been possible to stabilise the situation to a considerable extent and much more stabilisation would be needed.

Coming to the areas of security concerns, both internal security and external security, much has been debated. Immediately after the terror attack, the Parliament met. Both Houses of Parliament passed the resolutions expressing their solidarity and, as in the past, this time also, on a major national critical situation, cutting across the party lines, the Members represented in the House spoke in one voice expressing their solidarity to fight against the biggest menace.

The question is how to tackle this issue. More than often, we are told that there should be tough laws. It is not the question whether the law is tough or tougher, strong or stronger. The question is how the law is being implemented. The question is that to tackle one problem, do we create another problem? Why was TADA repealed, why was POTA repealed? It is not the fancy of anybody. In this House, I was a Member. We did not agree to the proposal of enacting POTA. Ultimately, took a rare constitutional occasion. If I remember correctly, during the entire life of the Republic from 1950 till date, only thrice it happened that a joint session took the decision. I had the privilege, not on the first one, but on the second and third occasions, to participate in the joint session. It is not the fancy of anybody. It was also not to indulge in socalled vote bank politics. It was simply because a large number of instances of misuse and abuse came not only from the persons affected, but even from pronouncements of the courts.

Therefore, it was thought necessary that we should strengthen the existing law, that we should provide adequate penal provisions. I do not like to go into a debate by citing the number of instances when POTA was in operation, how major terror attacks took place. That is in the domain of knowledge of every one of us. We ourselves were there. I know on that very day because of our little disruptions and other things if the House was not adjourned and because of the supreme sacrifice of one of our security officers and many others, more than a dozen people sacrificed their lives to protect us, if that door was open, some of us who were sitting in this Chamber before moving to the Central Hall, we could have been completely eliminated. Coming there and having blasts from both sides, important leaderships belonging to both sides could have been eliminated, but it was not possible because our security forces, parliamentary security forces, and the mobilisation of other security forces who dealt with the situation correctly and we were saved. Therefore, it is not the question of having a tough law; the question is how you can implement it and for that series of measures have been taken, and you are fully aware of it. One point to which I would like to draw your attention is that the Home Minister, Mr. Chidambaram,

pointed out that at the end of every month he will come to the people through a Press conference and tell them what measures he has taken. He did so on 31st December and he has done so on 31st January. More often than not a complaint is being raised, which has been addressed adequately that there was no coordination among the various intelligence agencies and sharing of information among the intelligence agencies. He has established that. It was pointed out that it is not obligatory on their part to share intelligence. So, an administrative order has been issued to ensure that it is done and in the Chief Ministers' Conference it was highlighted that you please institute these mechanisms in the States at the level of a reasonable high officer so that this can be effectively operationalised and we are doing so. But, at the same time, Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, we shall have to keep in mind, perhaps, in this House itself, the then Home Minister while responding to a debate on one of the terrorist attacks pointed out and it was correct then and it is correct right now that no weapon has been evolved which is available at the hands of security forces which can effectively deal with the suicide squad. It can be prevented but if somebody is determined to kill himself or herself or to die himself or herself because death is the biggest deterrent and, if somebody overcomes it either by doctrinisation or by brainwashing, sometimes it becomes difficult to handle it. But that does not mean that this should be used as an excuse. It can make the situation more complex, more difficult but we shall have to deal with it and appropriate and adequate steps have been taken and are constantly being taken. Efficacy of the law, yes, it is nothing unusual in a parliamentary system, in our Constitutional mechanism that if a law is found ineffective, it is all subjected to corrections. But the law was passed in the month of December and to come to the conclusion on 1st of February that the law is not very effective, I think, it will be, to some extent, overreacting. I would like to elucidate a little bit on our responsibility to the terror attack in the context of Pakistan, I didn't ever say — nor my colleague the Defence Minister who is sitting here nor anybody in the Government did ever say — that we are launching war against Pakistan. It was never our intention. Whatever might have been propagated in Pakistan it is for them to make an assessment but all of us who are sitting here in this side or that side know very well that we did not heighten the tension, we did not mobilise a single soldier, we did not lay a single mine across the border. We firmly told Pakistan that it is your primary responsibility, the responsibility of the incumbent Government. Non-state actors are not coming from heaven. They are utilising your facilities. You dismantle those facilities, identify them, take action against them. Most respectfully, I would like to submit to the Leader of the Opposition that we could mobilise the international opinion in our favour. Everybody recognised. All the Foreign Ministers with whom I had interaction over phone or the messages we have received or who have come, have recognised and ultimately what happened you have seen. Their Home Minister has stated, in the Press Conference many of us have seen what he has stated. That, yes, they wanted to have

more information. My response has been that, 'yes, we are examining it.' At the level of the Home Ministry whatever information we can share we will share. Whatever more they want if need be, if we are in a position to do so we will be doing it. But, we are repeating, please do not try to divert the attention. Terrorism is an attack on India's sovereignty now. The Leader of the Opposition was rightly agitated and I share his anguish and his sense of anger when our mission in Kabul was attacked. It was an attack on our sovereignty. He wanted to go there. I requested him and he was gracious enough to listen to my request because I did not want to embarrass Afghanistan Government at that point of time. But, our problem is, immediately after that, when we took it up with Pakistan Prime Minister at the margin of SAARC Summit at Colombo, we were told that they themselves will investigate and let us know the investigation report which was available to us through the Afghan authorities which clearly pointed out the sources from where it emanated and we wanted Pakistan to cooperate with us. We are told by no less a person than a Prime Minister to our Prime Minister that, 'yes we ourselves will investigate and share with you the information'. It was in the first week of August and till today we have not received any information. This is the thing we pointed out. My point is very simple and which we have articulated a number of times and I am reiterating it.

I have no quarrel with the people of Pakistan. I have not deliberately disrupted people-to-people contact. But, at the same time, I cannot carry on with the business as usual unless these issues are adequately addressed and perpetrators of terror are brought to justice. The infrastructural facilities which are available to terrorists who are operating from their soil — they may be non-State actors, but they are using these facilities — have to be dismantled. Sir, dismantling not merely in words, but it should be verifiable, it should be credible to us and to the international community. This is plain and simple. For that, I do feel, our diplomacy has played its role and I am grateful to our diplomats who maintained this sustained level of pressure and mobilized the international opinion. We briefed all the Resident Heads of Missions. I myself sent letters to all the Foreign Ministers of the world and I had telephonic conversation with many of them. I explained and stated our position and it was totally credible. We shall have to fight against terrorism concertedly. The issue is not Indo- Pakistan relationship. The issue is not that India is going to pose any threat to Pakistan. The issue is terrorism. The issue is terror attack. It is a part of the global phenomenon. Pakistan has its responsibility as an important member of the international community, as a signatory to various international conventions, including the SAARC Convention. This is the point I thought that I should try to explain.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, my distinguished friend, Mr. Yechury, pointed out that their principal objection when they parted company with us was our Foreign Policy orientation that we are proAmerica. Most respectfully I would like to submit, we are pro-none, we are only pro-India. To me, I feel, the Foreign Policy is nothing but promotion of our national interest in the

international environment. As every country uses the phrase of 'supreme national interest' more often than not, I am not using that phrase. But it is a promotion of my national interest. Therefore, I shall have to promote the national interest.

Sir, questions have been raised why are we not condemning the attack on Gaza. Have we distanced ourselves from the legitimate demand of the Palestine to have its homeland? Please show me one single instance when the attack on Gaza has not been officially condemned by us. If one wants to dictate what language will have to be used, what phrases and nuances will have to be used and expects the Government to talk in a particular language, I am afraid, it is not correct. We have expressed our anguish. All the international initiatives — whether it is the United Nation Security Council's Resolution, whether it is the Arab League's initiative, whether it is the Quartet initiatives, we have participated. We have fully lent our support to them. The Secretary-General of the Arab League visited India before the end of last year. When I visited Egypt, I had another round of discussions with him along with the President. We said that we were fully with them. We are told that the USA is telling us and that's why we are ditching Iran. As the Foreign Minister, if I have visited any individual country maximum, it is Iraq. I have visited there three times in less than two years. We are told very frequently that we have civilizational links with Iran. With West Asia and the Gulf, we have linkage over the days of history. They are the principal suppliers of our fuel. Our people have contributed in building up the economy there. And, they are still working. At the same time, I do believe that this is not an acceptable standard of international behaviour that if two countries do not see each other that does not mean that I shall have to take a side. I can have friendship with both. And, in fact, we are having friendship with both. To talk of the subservience, Sir, to some extent, to my mind, it speaks of our own weakness. We were not weak in those days when we had to depend on PL-480. Why should we feel weak today when the Indian economy is emerging, when our granaries are full, when we know that major expenses of our development is coming from our own resources? What was the level of investment in the last four years in terms of GDP? It was around 29 per cent. And, what is our own contribution in that investment? Our rate of domestic savings is 33 per cent. From 29 per cent in 2003-04 we have gone up to 33 per cent. Similarly, we have stepped up the rate of investment. Substantially, it is coming from our own resources. Therefore, we are not afraid of anybody. But that does not mean that like Don Quixote I take a sword and go on fighting against the windmill? It is not the case. Our Foreign Policy is totally selfdependent. It is sovereign. As the Prime Minister pointed out, nobody can dictate us. What is in our interest, it is for us to decide. Whether the persons belong to this side or that side, they are our people.

In respect of our relations — shortly, after this, I shall have to make a statement on Sri Lanka; I will make a formal statement — with Sri Lanka, I would like to submit only one point.

Please make a distinction between the LTTE and the Tamil civilians. Sir, I have no hesitation to tell here that the LTTE is a banned organization here, it is a banned organization in Sri Lanka and it is a banned organization at many other places. We are not concerned with the members of a banned organization. But we are concerned if there is a gross violation of human rights. We are concerned if civilians are subjected to untold sufferings. And, more often than not, we have expressed our concerns. I myself went there. I had a detailed discussion with President, Mahendra Rajapaksa. His Excellency, the President, was kind enough to agree to my suggestion, of course, not on that day. I visited on 27th. On 29th, he announced, as I told him, to give a pause.

You allow the civilians to come out of the war zone. We told them to ensure that the safe zone they themselves demarcated could be expanded and there was no firing from their armed forces so that the safety and security of the civilian Tamil population could be ensured. From day one we have been telling them this. It is not now, for more than two decades, we have been telling them that military solution is no solution. The solution is to be found in the political context. What is the political solution? It came out of the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord of 1987, initiated by the then Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi and the then President of Sri Lanka. As a consequence of that, the Thirteenth Amendment took place. We requested the President that this was the time when he should show his magnanimity, and requested him to please do so. We told them to take Tamilians on their side and ensure them the full human rights. We told them to fulfil the legitimate aspirations of all minority groups, including the Tamils, within the framework of their constitution, without affecting their territorial integrity. We are for that. But, we don't believe, military solution is the solution for this problem. We believe that it will have to be a political solution and we shall have to work towards achieving that. I understand the feelings and anxiety of the Members because they are our brothers, they are our sisters. If they are subjected to suffering for no fault of theirs, everyone will feel hurt. I can assure the hon. Members, through you, Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, that whatever is possible will be done. I am constantly in touch with not only the Sri Lankan authorities, but also with the various Foreign Ministers who are interested and equally concerned about this issue. I am sharing this information with them and I am asking them to please try to impress upon the Sri Lankan authorities to take expeditious measures to protect the civilian Tamils. I will be giving some more details in the statement which I am supposed to make after this.

In respect of the other neighbours, I will very briefly touch and then conclude. I have taken a little more time than I intended. We have built up good relationships with Nepal, Bangladesh, — I have already discussed our relations with Sri Lanka - Maldives and Afghanistan. Recently, I went to Afghanistan. We have constructed a road there. During the construction of that road,

140 persons were killed or died because of the vagaries of weather. Eleven Indians and 129 Afghan people were killed while constructing around 270 or 280 kilometre stretch road. One hundred and forty people had to die. I made a reference that for construction of one-and-a-half kilometre road, one human life had to be sacrificed. I told this to President Karzai. Therefore, this road is significant. It is significant not only for linking Afghanistan with the rest of the West Asia, first Iran and through Iran to other parts, but it is significant because our people and their people sacrificed their lives for constructing this road of friendship. We are not engaged in peacekeeping in Afghanistan. Very often, allegations have been made against us that we are interfering. It is alleged that from there we are doing something wrong in some other country. We have no interest in it. It is the firm conviction of the Indian foreign policy makers, whoever may be in office, for whatever period in time, we have neither territorial ambitions nor do we export our own ideologies to others. We are a matured democracy, firm believer in Parliamentary system, but we have no problem in living with militant dictatorship, we have no problem in living with whatever form of Government is there, because it is for the people of the country concerned to decide what type of Government they want to have; we cannot interfere. International behaviour and norms demand that we shall have to be non-interfering. We encouraged the people of Nepal, particularly, when an important organisation which believed in armed revolution decided to give up arms and joined the mainstream of multi-party political system; naturally, we encouraged them and helped them in whatever manner we could do. The people of Nepal have elected a Government. The Government is functioning. The Constitution is being drafted and I do hope the Constituent Assembly will complete their work in scheduled time and that will help. Similarly, there has been a change in Maldives. After the multi-party democratic system was introduced, new President has been elected. They visited us and we extended all cooperation and promised them to do so. In Bangladesh, newly elected Government has assumed office. I visited Bangladesh and reiterated our relationships and bondage over the years which we have built up since the inception of Bangladesh, as a sovereign, independent country. Therefore, our relationships with our neighbours are expanding. We have good relations with major powers all over the world - in Europe, in Asia and in Africa. Members are aware and I would not like to take much of their time. For the first time, we had a Summit with the African Forum. A large number of African countries participated. While visiting some African countries, our President committed on E-connectivity, Telemedicine, Tele-education system which are now being fully operationalised. Mr. Deputy Chairman, Madam President in her joint Address gave an account of some of the issues, which I have literally explained. Perhaps, it is not possible to cover at this time, I think, I have taken the liberty of taxing the patience of my colleagues pretty long. Now, I should relieve them. With these words, once again, I express my gratitude to the President, to all the Members who participated in the debate including the Leader of the Opposition. Thank you, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I shall now put the amendments which have been moved to vote. Amendment Nos. 1-18, 20 and 21-31 by Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi. He is not present in the House.

Amendment Nos. 1-18, 20 and 21-31 were negatived.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, Amendment Nos. 32-80 by Shri Prabhat Jha. Are you withdrawing the amendments?

SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Yes, Sir.

Amendment Nos. 32-80 were, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Amendment Nos. 81 to 108 by Shri Bhagat Singh Koshyari. Are you withdrawing?

SHRI BHAGAT SINGH KOSHYARI: Yes, Sir.

Amendment Nos. 81 to 108 were, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Then there are amendment Nos. 139 to 164 and 171 to 173 by Shri Sitaram Yechury. Mr. Yechury, are you pressing?

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY (West Bengal): Yes, Sir. I press for these amendments to be voted upon.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay; I shall now put these amendments to vote. The question is:

139. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the failure of the Government to review its foreign policy."

140. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret that the Address fails to express serious concern over the global economic melt down affecting Indian industries and loss of jobs of lakhs of workers and employees ."

141. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the failure of the Government to take effective part in the Non-aligned Movement."

142. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the failure of the Government to take up the issue of terrorist attacks in Mumbai to U.N."

143. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret that the Address has failed in mentioning the Government step in liberalizing the guidelines for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)."

144. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret that the Address has failed to mention about the Government's move on Forward Trading."

145. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret that the Address has failed to mention the Government's abject failure to universalize Public Distribution System in the country."

146. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address has failed to mention about the non-availability of food to poor people in the country."

147. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the Government's failure to re-define poverty line thus wantonly deprive a majority section of people food in the country."

148. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the failure of the Government to tackle the huge unemployment problem in the country."

149. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address fails to mention about the passage of the Women Reservation Bill."

150. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the failure of the Government to review the Centre-State relations as per the demands of the State Governments."

151. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the failure of the Government to allot six per cent of GDP in education."

152. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address doest not mention about the failure of the Government to invest enough money in public sector and social sector to face the ongoing economic melt down."

153. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about failure of the Government to express serious concern over the communal, parochial and chauvinistic attacks on minorities, Christians and non-Maratha people in Maharashtra and other parts of the country."

154. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address fails to mention that 95 per cent of the 43 Crore unorgansied workers will not get any benefit of the Unorganised Workers Social

Security Act, 2008 owing to conditionality of BPL attached to the related social security schemes listed in the Act ."

155. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address fails to mention about the urgent need for drastically revising and/or correcting the official definition of 'poverty line' which has turned totally obsolete."

156. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention the innumerable cases of suicide by the farmers during last few years in the 'rural India' for whom 'a new deal' is promised."

157. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address fails to mention about the unprecedented price rise of essential commodities."

158. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address fails to mention about the crisis in availability of vaccines since the Government has closed down three public sector vaccine manufacturing units *viz*., Pasteur Institute of India, Central Research Institute and BCG Vaccine Laboratories."

159. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the disastrous impact of global slow down on millions of workers who have lost their jobs, livelihood and earnings due to closure, lay off, wage-cuts, retrenchment, etc., across the sectors and also the alarming trend of sharp decline in index of industrial production."

160. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address fails to mention about the lower cost of Aviation Fuel than the cost of diesel and petrol, due to flawed excise duty structure."

161. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address fails to mention about the fact that the Hyde Act is an integral part of the Indo-US Nuclear Agreement, which goes against the independent foreign policy of India."

162. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the cases of job loss of lakhs of workers engaged in diamond polishing industries in Gujarat and reported suicide of some 71 workers in Sourashtra alone."

163. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the biggest corporate scam in independent India involving more than 7000 crore by Satyam Computer Services."

164. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the Defence contract of Rs. 10,000 crore for the supply of Air Defence Missile Systems from Israel Aircraft Industries."

171. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the continuous bashing of people from North India in Maharashtra by MNS."

172. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the attacks on young women in a Pub in Mangalore by Sri Ram Sena."

173. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the failure of the Government in adequately identifying the BPL section of the population."

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Sir. I want division.

The House divided

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:

Ayes: 23

Noes: 75

AYES — 23

Amin, Shri Mohammed

Anbalagan, Shri S.

Chakraborty, Shri Shyamal

Chatterjee, Shri Prasanta

Elavarasan, Shri A.

Govindarajar, Shri N.R.

Karat, Shrimati Brinda

Madhu, Shri Penumalli

Maitreyan, Dr. V.

Malaisamy, Dr. K.

Mathur, Shri Om Prakash

Moinul Hassan, Shri

Mukherji, Dr. Barun

Pathak Shri Saman

Raja, Shri D.

Rajan, Shri P.R.

Rangarajan, Shri T.K.

Roy, Shri Tarini Kanta

Sarkar, Shri Matilal

Sen, Shri Tapan Kumar

Singh, Shri R.C.

Vijayaraghavan, Shri A.

Yechury, Shri Sitaram

Noes — 75

Aggarwal, Shri Jai Parkash

Ahluwalia, Shri S.S.

Anand Sharma, Shri

Antony, Shri A.K.

Ashwani Kumar, Shri

Bagrodia, Shri Santosh

Bajaj, Shri Rahul

Balmiki, Shri Krishan Lal

Bhardwaj, Shri Hans Raj

Chavan, Shri Prithviraj

Condpan, Shri Silvius

Darda, Shri Vijay Jawaharlal

Deora, Shri Murli

Dhawan, Shri R.K.

Dwivedi, Shri Janardan

Fernandes, Shri Oscar

Gill, Dr. M.S.

Gnanadesikan, Shri B.S.

Gupta, Shri Prem Chand

Hariprasad, Shri B.K.

Jha, Shri Prabhat

Jinnah, Shri A.A.

Kalita, Shri Bhubaneswar

Karan Singh, Dr.

Keishing, Shri Rishang

Khan, Shri Mohd. Ali

Khuntia, Shri Rama Chandra

Kidwai, Shrimati Mohsina

Kore Prabhakara, Dr.

Koshyari, Shri Bhagat Singh

Kshatriya, Prof. Alka Balram

Kurien, Prof. P.J.

Lepcha, Shri O.T.

Malihabadi, Shri Ahmad Saeed

Mangala Kisan, Shri

Mukut Mithi, Shri

Naik, Shri Shantaram Laxman

Nandi Yellaiah, Shri

Narayanasamy, Shri V.

Natchiappan, Dr. E.M. Sudarsana

Nayak, Dr. Radhakant

Patel, Shri Ahmed

Patel, Shri Praful

Patel, Shri Surendra Motilal

Patil, Shri Shivraj Vishwanath

Pillai, Shri Thennala G. Balakrishna

Prasad, Shri Rajniti

Ram Prakash, Dr.

Ramadoss, Dr. Anbumani

Rao, Dr. K. Keshava

Rao, Shri K.V.P. Ramachandra

Rao, Shri V. Hanumantha

Rashtrapal, Shri Praveen

Raut, Shri Bharatkumar

Ravi, Shri Vayalar

Rebello, Ms. Mabel

Rudy, Shri Rajiv Pratap

Sabharwal, Shri Dharam Pal

Sanghi, Shri Gireesh Kumar

Sangma, Shri Thomas

Seelam, Shri Jesudasu

Sharma, Shri Raghunandan

Shinde, Shri Sushilkumar Sambhajirao

Singh, Shri Arjun

Singh, Shri Ishwar

Singh, Shri Jaswant

Siva, Shri Tiruchi

Soz, Prof. Saif-ud-Din

Thakur, Shrimati Viplove

Tiriya, Ms. Sushila

Tiwari, Shri Brij Bhushan

Uikey, Miss Anusuiya

Vasan, Shri G.K.

Vora, Shri Motilal

Vyas, Shri Shreegopal

The Amendment Nos. (139 to 164 and 171 to 173) were negatived.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Amendment Nos. 174 to 195 by Shrimati Brinda Karat. Are you withdrawing the amendments?

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: No, Sir, there is no question of withdrawing them.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I shall now put amendments Nos.174 to 195 to vote.

The question is:-

174. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret that the Address has failed to mention that the Indo-US Nuclear Deal with other aspects has seriously eroded the strategic autonomy of India's Nuclear policy."

175. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret to note that the Address does not mention about the unfulfilled assurance of Government regarding the passage of the Women's Reservation Bill."

176. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret to note that the Address fails to mention about the continuing price rise of essential commodities."

177. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret to note that the Address fails to mention that lakhs of workers have already lost their jobs as a consequence of the global crisis and have not got any relief."

178. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the failure of the Government to counter the communal forces and to bring a suitable and appropriate legislation against communal violence."

179. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret to note that the Address fails to mention that during the last four years on an average every thirty one minutes a farmer committed suicide."

180. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret to note that the Address fails to mention that in spite of increased production, wheat was imported at prices higher than what was paid to Indian farmers."

181. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret to note that the Address fails to mention about food insecurity, increasing hunger and malnutrition which can be addressed by increasing the reach of BPL benefits to the 77 per cent of the population who spend less than twenty rupees a day."

182. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret to note that the address fails to mention that Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) are not being given any emoluments and that this must be remedied by giving them at least the equivalent of what Anganwadi workers received."

183. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret to note that the Address fails to mention about the need to universalise the ICDS as directed by the Supreme Court which will have to be done."

184. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret to note that the Address fails to mention that Government has accepted the argument that institutions of excellence must be exempted for scheduled castes reservations and has pushed through a legislation to this effect."

185. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret to note that the Address fails to mention that in several cases schedule 5 of the Constitution has been violated, tribal rights superseded and MNCs and big mining companies have been facilitated in taking over tribal and forest land."

186. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret to note that the Address fails to mention about the biggest telecom scam that has cost the Government exchequer of Rs. 1 lakh crore in granting 3G spectrum."

187. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret to note that the Address fails to mention that no steps will be taken to further liberalise the financial sector or to allow further FDI into banking and insurance sectors and pension funds of employees will be protected against any move to risk pensions by investment in the volatile stock exchange."

188. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret to note that the Address fails to mention that the strategic relationship with the United States of America has eroded our independent foreign policy."

189. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret to note that the Address fails to mention the necessity to break all military and security ties with Israel, as it is responsible for the Gaza genocide."

190. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret to note that the Address does not mention about the increasing acts of violence including sexual violence against women and children."

191. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret to note that the Address fails to mention about the need for a national mission mode to address the disturbing increase in female foeticide and declining sex ratios in the 0-5 year category."

192. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret to note that the Address does not mention about the cases of job loss of lakhs of workers engaged in diamond polishing industries and reported suicide of some 71 workers in Saurashtra alone."

193. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret to note that the Address does not mention about the biggest corporate scam in independent India involving more than 7000 crore by Satyam Computer Service, reportedly enabled through political patronage."

194. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret to note that the Address does not mention about the Defence contract of Rs. 10,000 crore for the supply of Air Defence Missile System from Israel Aircraft Industries."

195. That at the *end* of the motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret to note that the Address does not mention about the urgent need for Universalisation of Public Distribution System."

Amendment Nos. (174 to 195) were negatived.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There are fourteen amendment (Nos.196 to 209) by Shri Prasanta Chatterjee.

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE (West Bengal): Sir, I move:

196. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention that 95 per cent of the 43 crore unorganized workers will not get any benefit of the unorganized Workers Social Security Act, 2008 owing to conditionality of BPL attached to the related social security schemes listed in the Act."

197. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention that though the Constitution (One Hundred and Eighth Amendment) Bill, 2008 for reservation of women was introduced in 2008, the bill is yet to be passed."

198. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the urgent need for drastically revising and/or correcting the official definition of 'poverty line' which has turned totally obsolete."

199. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the innumerable cases of suicide by the farmers during last few years in the 'rural India' for whom 'a new deal' is promised."

200. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the unprecedented price rise of essential commodities."

201. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the crisis of unavailability of vaccines since the government has closed down three public sector vaccine manufacturing units *viz.*, Pasteur Institute of India, Central Research Institute and BCG Vaccine Laboratories."

202. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added,* namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the irregularities leading to huge financial loss to the Government exchequer in granting 3G spectrum."

203. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the disastrous impact of global slow down on millions of workers who have lost their jobs, livelihood and earnings due to closure, lay off, wage-cuts, retrenchment, etc. across the sectors and also the alarming trend of sharp decline in index of industrial production."

204. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention that the cost of aviation fuel is lower than the cost of diesel and petrol, due to flawed excise duty structure."

205. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the Hyde Act as an integral part of the Indo-US Nuclear Agreement, goes against the independent foreign policy of India."

206. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the cases of job loss of lakhs of workers engaged in diamond polishing industries in Gujarat and reported suicide by some 71 workers in Saurashtra alone."

207. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the biggest corporate scam in independent India involving more than 7000 crore by the Satyam Computer Services."

208. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the defence contract of Rs.10,000 crore for the supply of Air Defence Missile System from Israel Aircraft Industries."

209. That at the *end* of the Motion, the following be *added*, namely:-

"but regret that the Address does not mention about the urgent need for universalisation of Public Distribution System."

Amendment (Nos.196 to 209) were negatived.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There are seven amendment (Nos.259 to 265) by Shri Shreegopal Vyas.

SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS (Chhattisgarh): Sir, I am not pressing the amendments.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Has he leave of the House to withdraw the amendments?

Amendment (Nos. 259 to 265) were, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I shall now put the Motion to vote.

The question is:

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

'That the Members of the Rajya Sabha assembled in this Session are deeply grateful to the President for the Address which she has been pleased to deliver to both Houses of Parliament assembled together on February 12, 2009.'"

The motion was adopted.

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STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Situation in Sri Lanka

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): Sir, I rise to apprise this august House about the present situation in Sri Lanka.

Since I last addressed the House on this issue in October 2008, developments have unfolded rapidly in northern Sri Lanka. Sri Lankan Government forces have made significant advances into LTTE-held territory, restricting LTTE cadres to a small area of approximately 150 sq. km. adjacent to the coast. Sri Lankan forces have captured Kilinochchi, Elephant Pass and Mullaitivu town and have regained control of the A-9 highway.

A serious source of concern to us has been the condition of civilians and internally displaced persons, mostly Tamil, caught up in the zone of conflict. Estimates on the number of civilians trapped vary, but 70,000 or so are estimated to be there now. The LTTE were reportedly using them as human shields.

Hon. Members may rest assured that our strong concerns for the safety, security and welfare of civilians caught in the conflict have led us to stay actively engaged to prevent a further deterioration of humanitarian conditions. We have sent relief supplies to the civilians and the IDPs, facilitated access by international and UN organisations, and suggested ways for civilians and IDPs to escape from the conflict zone. Two batches of relief assistance have been sent so far including 80,000 family packs of food and non-food articles, collected and donated by the Government of Tamil Nadu and medicines. Another batch of relief material is being sent.

I personally visited Colombo on 27th January. In my discussions with Sri Lankan President, Mehinda Rajapaksa, I stressed the need to give an opportunity to civilians and IDPs caught up in the conflict to emerge from LTTE held areas and suggested a pause in hostilities to provide the necessary environment. On 29th January, 2009, the Sri Lankan President announced a 48-hour period for civilian safe passage to secure areas. He also appealed to the LTTE to allow civilians to leave and assured the safety and security of the civilians who did so.