

SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (JHARKHAND), 2009-10

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA):
Sir, I beg to lay on the Table, a statement (in English and Hindi) of the estimated receipts and expenditure of the State of Jharkhand for the year 2009-10.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, we shall take up the Short Duration Discussion on Price Rise. Mr. Kalraj Mishra.

SHORT DURATION DISCUSSION

Situation arising out of continued rise in prices of essential commodities in the country

श्री कलराज मिश्र (उत्तर प्रदेश) : उपसभापति महोदय, मूल्य वृद्धि जिस स्तर से हो रही है उसको देखने के बाद यह लगता है कि सामान्य गरीब व्यक्ति ही नहीं, मध्यम वर्गीय से लेकर सभी लोग इससे जबर्दस्त प्रभावित हो रहे हैं। हालात ऐसे होते जा रहे हैं कि सरकार जितनी बार घोषणा करती है कि हम नियंत्रण करेंगे, जल्दी ही करेंगे, धैर्य रखना चाहिए, उतनी तेजी के साथ महंगाई बढ़ती जा रही है। अगर हम अपने इस विशाल देश की स्थिति को देखें तो हमें दिखाई पड़ेगा कि अधिकांश लोग गरीबी की रेखा के नीचे की जिंदगी व्यतीत कर रहे हैं। ऐसे हालात हैं कि सामान्य समय में भी आजीविका की, भरण-पोषण की जो उनकी व्यवस्था होनी चाहिए, वह भी कर सकने में सक्षम नहीं हो पाते हैं। ऐसी स्थिति है। इसलिए देश का हर चौथा व्यक्ति एक ओर भूखा रहता है। चार वर्षों में देश में भूख से मरने वालों की तादाद चार हजार आठ सौ हो गई है। संयुक्त राष्ट्र खाद्य एवं कृषि संगठन UNFAO की जो रिपोर्ट है, उन्होंने कहा है कि दुनिया के सबसे ज्यादा गरीब तथा भूख और कुपोषण से पीड़ित तेइस करोड़ तीस लाख लोग भारत में हैं। देश में गरीब आदमी की आमदनी खाद्य मूल्य वृद्धि के अनुपात में नहीं बढ़ी। एक तरफ अमेरिका के राष्ट्रपति ने कहा था कि भारत के लोग ज्यादा खाते हैं। लेकिन जो आंकड़े हैं, आंकड़े तो यह बताते हैं कि जब आम आदमी को खाद्य पदार्थ ही उपलब्ध नहीं हो पा रहा है तो वह खाना कहां से खाएगा। 1999 में खाद्य खपत प्रति व्यक्ति प्रति वर्ष 186 किलोग्राम था, आज खाद्य खपत प्रति व्यक्ति प्रति वर्ष 152 किलोग्राम है, यानी खाद्यान्न खपत प्रति व्यक्ति प्रति वर्ष 45 किलोग्राम कम हो गई है। सरकार के आंकड़ों के अनुसार ही आबादी का 28.5 फीसदी इतने लोग गरीबी रेखा के नीचे की जिंदगी व्यतीत कर रहे हैं, अर्थात् सात करोड़ परिवार, अर्थात् 35 करोड़ से ज्यादा लोग गरीबी रेखा के नीचे की जिंदगी व्यतीत कर रहे हैं। भारत सरकार ने अर्जुन सेन गुप्ता कमेटी गठित की थी। कमेटी की रिपोर्ट के आधार पर देश के 77 फीसदी नागरिकों की आय प्रतिदिन बीस रुपया है। इस प्रकार 77 परसेंट नागरिकों की आय बीस रुपया है। बीस रुपए में आम आदमी आटा, दाल, तेल, चावल क्या खरीद पाएगा, उसकी क्या हालत होगी। मान्यवर, देश में जो गरीबी की स्थिति है, उसमें बहुत ज्यादा सुधार तो नहीं दिखाई पड़ता, यद्यपि हम जरूर यह कहते हैं कि हमारी विकास दर बढ़ती जा रही है, परचेंसिंग पावर बढ़ती जा रही है, लेकिन गरीबी भी उसी तरह से बढ़ती जा रही है। सर, मैं जो आंकड़े दे रहा हूं, ये आंकड़े 11वीं पंचवर्षीय योजना की वार्षिक योजना की रिपोर्ट तथा आर्थिक सर्वेक्षण की रिपोर्ट से लिए गए हैं, ये अन्यथा आंकड़े नहीं हैं। 35 राज्यों और संघ राज्य क्षेत्रों में तीन राज्यों -बिहार, मध्य प्रदेश और उत्तर प्रदेश में आबादी का 40 फीसदी लोग गरीबी की जिंदगी व्यतीत कर रहे हैं। गरीबों की कुल संख्या का दो तिहाई छः राज्यों में उड़ीसा, पश्चिम बंगाल, बिहार, मध्य प्रदेश, महाराष्ट्र और उत्तर प्रदेश में है।

ग्रामीण भारत के कुछ भागों में गरीबी अफ्रीका के अत्यधिक वंचित देशों से भी ज्यादा है और इतना ही नहीं, प्रति व्यक्ति जीडीपी में भारत से अच्छी स्थिति श्रीलंका, ब्राजील, मिस्र, वियतनाम, थाइलैंड और इंडोनेशिया की है।

मान्यवर, बहुत से ऐसे प्रदेश हैं जिनमें बड़ी तादाद ऐसी है जिनको खाना नहीं मिल पाता है। इस बारे में, मैं बताना चाहूंगा कि परिवार स्वास्थ्य सर्वेक्षण के अनुसार 2005-06 के अनुसार तीन वर्ष से छोटे बच्चों में कुपोषण 45.9 फीसदी है और अपर्याप्त भोजन पाने वाले प्रदेशों की जो सूची है, वह इस प्रकार है - असम में पांच फीसदी है, पश्चिमी बंगाल में नौ फीसदी है, उड़ीसा में 5.3 फीसदी है, केरल में 2.3 फीसदी है, बिहार में 2.7 फीसदी है, छत्तीसगढ़ में 2.2 फीसदी है। एनएसएस ने आंकड़ों के हिसाब से गरीबी के बारे में बतलाया है, उन्होंने कहा है कि 20 रुपया प्रति व्यक्ति खपत प्रतिदिन की होती है। वर्ष 2004-05 में शहरी में 32.3 फीसदी की और ग्रामीण क्षेत्र में 71.9 फीसदी ही केवल 20 रुपया प्रति दिवस और इससे भी कम व्यक्ति के पास पैसे हैं। मान्यवर, यह आंकड़े मैंने वही दिए हैं, जो आर्थिक सर्वेक्षण के हिसाब से हैं।

इस समय देश में महंगाई की स्थिति कैसी है ? इस समय देश का चित्र तो यह है कि महंगाई बढ़ रही है। जहां इस चित्र को बदलने की कोशिश करनी चाहिए, जिससे देश के लोगों के जीवन में उन्नयन हो सके, उसके लिए प्रयत्न करने चाहिए, लेकिन रूप कैसा बनता जा रहा है ? अब हालत ऐसी बनती जा रही है कि जो थोक मूल्यों पर आधारित आंकड़ों के अनुसार महंगाई दर 17.5 प्रतिशत को पार कर गई है, जबकि सरकार जीडीपी की दर 7.9 फीसदी पर अपनी पीठ थप-थपा रही है और कह रही है कि जीडीपी बहुत बढ़ गई है। आलू का दाम एक वर्ष के अंदर 111 प्रतिशत बढ़ा है, प्याज 27 फीसदी बढ़ी है, दाल 35 फीसदी बढ़ी है, चीनी 54 फीसदी बढ़ी है और नवम्बर के प्रथम सप्ताह से जो दाम बढ़ने शुरू हुए हैं - गेहूं में 12 फीसदी की बढ़ोत्तरी हुई है, चावल में 12 फीसदी की बढ़ोत्तरी हुई है, दूध में 11 फीसदी की बढ़ोत्तरी हुई है, फल में 11 फीसदी की बढ़ोत्तरी हुई है, तेल 50 प्रतिशत बढ़ा है, नमक 50 प्रतिशत बढ़ा है। बहुत सारी चीजों का नाम लिया जा सकता है, लेकिन जो प्रमुख चीजें सामने आई हैं, उनके बारे में बता रहा हूं। हर खाद्यान्न का दाम बढ़ा है। जो भी आवश्यक उपभोक्ता की चीजें हैं, जिनका प्रयोग आम आदमी करता है, उन सब चीजों के दाम बढ़े हैं। महंगाई आसमान छूने लगी है। आश्चर्य इस बात का है कि वैश्विक मंदी की बात कही जाती है, लेकिन हमारे यहां महंगाई आसमान छू रही है। महंगाई इस ढंग से आसमान छू रही है कि लगने लगा है कि अगर ऐसी हालत बनी रही, तो कैसी स्थिति आगे चलकर होगी। इसीलिए उच्चतम न्यायालय को कहना पड़ता है कि सरकार महंगाई रोके। लेकिन महंगाई नहीं रुक पा रही है, तो सरकार क्या कर रही है ? सरकार के मंत्रीगण अलग-अलग वक्तव्य दे रहे हैं। मंत्रीगण कहते हैं कि महंगाई और बढ़ेगी। भारत के प्रधान मंत्री जी कहते हैं कि महंगाई और बढ़ेगी, माननीय कृषि मंत्री जी बैठे हुए हैं, आप भी कहते हैं कि महंगाई और बढ़ेगी। वित्त मंत्री जी भी कहते हैं कि महंगाई और बढ़ेगी। हम इसको रोक नहीं पा रहे हैं, आखिर सरकार महंगाई को रोक क्यों नहीं पा रही है ? सरकार कहती है कि सटोरियों के कारण महंगाई बढ़ रही है, कालाबाजारियों के कारण महंगाई बढ़ रही है। कालाबाजारियों और सटोरियों पर सरकार नियंत्रण नहीं कर पा रही है, इसलिए महंगाई बढ़ रही है। सरकार क्या इतनी असहाय हो गई है कि वह कालाबाजारियों और सटोरियों को नियंत्रित करने में अक्षम है, अपने को असहाय महसूस कर रही है। जब सरकार अपने को असहाय महसूस कर रही है, तो आम आदमी की सुरक्षा कैसे हो सकती है।

मान्यवर, मंत्रिमंडल में भी आपस में भी इस बारे में दो विचार हैं। एक तो यह है कि इसको बाजार पर छोड़ दो, बाजार जैसे बढ़े-चढ़े, वैसे चलने दो, लेकिन अपनी जीडीपी बढ़नी चाहिए। जीडीपी बढ़े, लेकिन बाजार जैसे भी चलता रहे, उसको चलने दो, महंगाई आसमान छूती रहे, लोग त्राहि-त्राहि करते रहें, उसे

उनके भाग्य पर छोड़ दो। केन्द्र सरकार महंगाई के प्रश्न पर इन सारी चीजों को देखते हुए, जितनी गंभीर होनी चाहिए, शायद उतनी गंभीर नहीं है। NDA के जमाने में भी महंगाई थोड़ी सी बढ़नी शुरू हुई थी, लेकिन उस समय सामूहिक प्रयत्नों के आधार पर महंगाई पर नियंत्रण रखा गया था और लोगों की लाइनें नहीं लगने दी थीं। लोगों को समुचित तौर पर सभी सामान वितरित करने में लोग सक्षम थे। उस समय किसी प्रकार की भी कठिनाई नहीं थी। इस समय तो यह हालत हो गई है कि BPL के लिए दो रुपए किलो गेहूं और चावल को वितरित करने के लिए भी एजेंसीज नहीं मिल पा रही हैं। यह लोगों को ढंग से वितरित हो जाए, इसके लिए भी एजेंसीज नहीं मिल पा रही हैं, इसलिए हालत बहुत खराब है।

मान्यवर, मैं यह कहना चाहूंगा कि मानसून सत्र के समय मैंने इस ओर ध्यान दिलाया था कि लाखों टन दाल और लाखों टन चीनी बंदरगाहों पर सड़ गई और उसका ठीक से उपयोग नहीं हुआ। वह इसलिए नहीं हुआ कि उनको अनापत्ति पत्र प्राप्त नहीं हुआ था। उसका समुचित तौर पर जो वितरण होना चाहिए था, वह नहीं हो पाया। रबी की फसल और खरीफ की फसल का उत्पादन ढंग से बढ़े, इसके लिए भी सरकार को जिस प्रकार से ध्यान देना चाहिए, उसमें कमी दिखाई पड़ती है। पानी ठीक से नहीं मिल पाता है और खाद भी ठीक से नहीं मिल पाती है, तो फिर उत्पादन कहां से होगा? हालत ऐसी हो गई है कि कृषि की हालत बड़ी खराब होती जा रही है। कृषि पर 70 प्रतिशत लोग आधारित हैं। सरकार ने वार्षिक योजना 2007-08 में कृषि की विकास दर 4 प्रतिशत तय की थी, किन्तु वह दर आज भी एक से दो प्रतिशत के आसपास है। वर्ष 1999-2000 में कृषि निवेश 11.9 प्रतिशत था। आज वह 6.6 प्रतिशत से भी कम हो गया है। लगभग 24 कृषि जिनसों को वायदा कारोबारों से मुक्त करने की आवश्यकता है और इस पर तत्काल रोक लगनी चाहिए। वहीं घटती पैदावार प्रति हेक्टेयर उपज को बढ़ाने के प्रभावी कदम उठाने होंगे। ऐसे बीजों को विस्तृत करना पड़ेगा, जो पानी की खपत करें तथा पैदावार ज्यादा दें। आज भी 73 फीसदी किसानों को सस्ते कृषि ऋण उपलब्ध नहीं हैं। उनको अन्य साधनों से ऊंची दरों पर ऋण लेना पड़ता है, जिससे वे लगातार कर्ज के बोझ से दबते जा रहे हैं तथा वे बेबस और लाचार हैं। मान्यवर, मैं यह कहना चाहूंगा कि कृषि के खाद्यान्नों का उत्पादन लगातार घटता जा रहा है। सरकार के आर्थिक सर्वेक्षण की जो रिपोर्ट है, उसमें लिखा है कि चावल का उत्पादन 1 फीसदी, गेहूं दो फीसदी, गन्ना 14.9 फीसदी और दाल का 9 फीसदी उत्पादन गिरा है। अनाज का उत्पादन लगातार गिर रहा है और प्रति व्यक्ति हेक्टेयर उपज भी कम हो रही है। जो 2008-09 की आर्थिक समीक्षा की रिपोर्ट है, इसके अनुसार 2007-08 की तुलना में अनाज .8 मिलियन टन पैदा हुआ, गेहूं 1.1 मिलियन टन, मोटा अनाज 7.9 मिलियन टन, दाल 8.5 मिलियन टन और कुल खाद्यान्न 1.4 मिलियन टन की पैदावार कम हुई। अभी बफर स्टॉक की बात भी है। सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली और अन्य कल्याणकारी योजनाओं के लिए बफर स्टॉक रखते हैं। उसके मानक के हिसाब से कम से कम गेहूं, चावल क्रमशः 122 लाख टन, 40 लाख टन होना चाहिए। इसके सापेक्ष में कुल स्टॉक 350.33 लाख टन, गेहूं का 216.04 लाख टन और चावल का 134.29 लाख टन बफर स्टॉक है। मैं चीनी के बारे में भी बताना चाहूंगा कि “इंडियन शुगर मिल्स एसोसिएशन” की रिपोर्ट के अनुसार 2009-10 में भी चीनी के दाम कम नहीं होंगे। किसान मिलों में गन्ना कम ला रहा है और चीनी की मांग 230 लाख टन है।

मांग और उत्पादन में सत्तर लाख का अंतर इसकी कीमत को बढ़ाने का मौका दे रहा है। सरकार ने चीनी का आयात करने से पहले ही हाथ खड़े कर दिए हैं। मान्यवर, जो आयात है, सरकार ने जो आयात किया है, वह वर्ष 2006-07 में गेहूं का आयात 5.5 मिलियन टन था, वर्ष 2007-08 1.8 मिलियन टन आयात किया था। कृषि मंत्री के अनुसार, नेफेड के लिए सफेद चीनी का दस लाख टन आयात करने के लिए कहा गया। चीनी मिलों ने लगभग कच्ची चीनी के आयात का समझौता किया है, जिसमें चालीस लाख टन आयात होना है। इसके बाद भी इसके दाम बढ़ना तय है, ऐसा कृषि मंत्री जी का वक्तव्य भी आया था। कृषि मंत्री जी के

अनुसार प्रति वर्ष पच्चीस से तीस लाख टन दाल आयात होती है, जबकि अभी तक छब्बीस लाख टन दाल आयात हो चुकी है।

मान्यवर, वायदा बाजार की बात कही जाती है। वायदा कारोबारियों, सटोरियों और बड़ी कंपनियों के खेल में महंगाई उलझ गई है। वायदा कारोबारियों ने केवल दाल और चीनी के कारोबार से करोड़ों रुपए का मुनाफा कमाया है। एक बार, एक दिन सरकार ने 2008 में वायदा कारोबार में चना, सोया, तेल, आलू पर रोक लगाई थी, 4 दिसम्बर, 2008 में उसे पुनः चालू कर दिया गया। यह क्यों किया, यह समझ में नहीं आया। वैट में महंगाई कितनी बढ़ी है, इसकी भी समीक्षा होनी चाहिए। मान्यवर, वायदा बाजार को लेकर अखबारों की सुर्खियां रंगी रहती हैं, जैसे दालों में सट्टेबाजों ने कमाए पांच सौ करोड़ रुपए, इसी ढंग से सुर्खियों में और भी आता रहेगा। महंगाई इसी कारण बढ़ रही है। आयात किया बफर स्टॉक में है, लेकिन जिस तरीके से सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली होनी चाहिए, कौन सी एजेंसी वितरण करे, इसकी व्यवस्था होनी चाहिए। इस व्यवस्था की लापरवाही का दुष्परिणाम है कि भयंकर तरीके से महंगाई बढ़ती जा रही है। यह उसके दुष्परिणाम के कारण है और उसी का नतीजा है कि वित्त मंत्री आरोप लगाते हैं कि राज्य सरकारें हमें सहयोग नहीं दे रही हैं। राज्य सरकार सटोरियों और काला बाजारियों को गिरफ्तार नहीं कर रही है। यह तो बड़ा ही अजीब प्रकार का आरोप है। मेरा तो यह कहना है कि जहां एक ही पार्टी की केंद्रीय सरकार है, एक ही पार्टी की राज्य सरकार है, अगर उसी पार्टी की सरकार है तो ऐसे लोगों को गिरफ्तार करके दिखाए कि महंगाई कैसे रोकते हैं। यह कहकर केंद्र सरकार अपनी जिम्मेदारी से हट नहीं सकती है कि चूंकि राज्य सरकार सहयोग नहीं दे रही है, इसलिए हम महंगाई नहीं रोक पा रहे हैं। अगर राज्य सरकार इस प्रकार की बात करेगी तो क्या केंद्र सरकार टुकुर-टुकुर ताकती रहेगी, जनता को मरने के लिए विवश करेगी? मान्यवर, मैं यह कहना चाहता हूं कि मैंने आंकड़े दिए हैं, आंकड़ों के आधार पर बफर स्टॉक में क्या है, आयात कितना किया गया है, समुचित तौर पर वितरण प्रणाली की व्यवस्था की कमी के कारण जिस तरीके से आम आदमी को लाभान्वित करना चाहिए, नहीं कर पा रहे हैं। यह केवल इसलिए हो रहा है कि सरकार को महंगाई को नियंत्रित करने की दिशा में जितना गंभीर होना चाहिए, उस गंभीरता का पूर्णतया अभाव है। जो बातें बार-बार कही जाती हैं कि यह सरकार आम आदमी के साथ है, यह आम आदमी के साथ जबर्दस्त धोखाधड़ी है। गरीबों की दुर्दशा हो रही है और इसलिए लोग भूखों मरने के लिए मजबूर होते जा रहे हैं। इसलिए मैं चाहूंगा कि माननीय मंत्री जी, वित्त मंत्री जी, कृषि मंत्री जी, प्रधानमंत्री जी यहां अर्थशास्त्रियों की कमी नहीं है, प्रधानमंत्री जी भी अर्थशास्त्री हैं, प्रणब जी भी अर्थशास्त्री हैं, इनको अच्छी जानकारी है, हमारे पूर्व वित्त मंत्री श्री पी. चिदम्बरम् जी अर्थशास्त्री हैं, इतने योग्य होने के पश्चात् भी जिस बाजार को नियंत्रित करना चाहिए, जिस मूल्य को नियंत्रित करना चाहिए और जिस प्रकार की वितरण की व्यवस्था करनी चाहिए, उसको ढंग से न कर सकने के कारण मैं यही कह सकता हूं कि जिस राजनैतिक इच्छाशक्ति की आवश्यकता है, आम आदमी के प्रति जितनी संवेदनशीलता होनी चाहिए, उसका पूर्णतया अभाव होने के कारण ये सारी चीजें नहीं हो रही हैं और परिणाम यह हो रहा है कि महंगाई आसमान छूती जा रही है और आम आदमी मरने के लिए मजबूर होता जा रहा है। मैं चाहूंगा कि इस दिशा में केवल भाषण मात्र न रहे, जितनी भी सारी चीजें हैं, आपके द्वारा ही प्रदत्त जो आंकड़े हैं, उन आंकड़ों के आधार पर समुचित वितरण व्यवस्था और साथ ही साथ कृषि के बारे में मैं विशेष तौर पर जोर देकर कहूंगा, माननीय कृषि मंत्री जी यहां उपस्थित हैं, कृषि के बारे में विशेष चिन्ता करते हुए कहूंगा क्योंकि आज कृषि का उत्पादन घटता जा रहा है..। यह उत्पादन घटना एक खतरनाक संकेत है। इस उत्पादन को कैसे बढ़ाया जा सके और किस प्रकार की सुविधा प्रदान की जा सके, इसकी विशेष चिन्ता करनी चाहिए, तब शायद हम महंगाई को बाँध सकने में कुछ सक्षम, कुछ सफल हो सकेंगे। इतनी बात कह कर मैं यह अपेक्षा करता हूँ कि मंत्री जी इस दिशा में कड़ा-से-कड़ा कदम उठाएंगे।

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN (Tamil Nadu): Thank you, Sir. Sir, this is, undoubtedly, a very important issue for us to be discussing in the House. It is with a great deal of seriousness and concern that all of us are gathered here to discuss the issue of rise in prices. This Government, particularly, Sir, has come into Government and has formed the Government upon the promise and mandate that our concern lies with the most disadvantaged sections of the society and our entire focus and priority will be the most disadvantaged sections of the society, the poorest of the poor, the people who are at the edge and below the poverty line. Therefore, Sir, I believe, that the priority of the Government is and should be to moderate inflation, to moderate food prices, to increase inclusive growth, to give a substantial impetus to agriculture and, above all, to insulate the weakest and most disadvantaged sections of the society from all the issues of price rise that have been spoken about by the speaker before me and that the entire country is agitated about. However, Sir, at the same time, I would urge this House, through you, to take a look at the facts so that we may, in an atmosphere of calm, reasonableness decide and discuss together how best this problem should be addressed. First of all, Sir, the hon. Member who spoke before me was very passionate and emotional and gave a great deal of details and statistics. But I was surprised to find that he completely neglected to mention that, particularly, over the last year and also in recent times, 27 out of 36 meteorological districts in this country have been affected by moderate to severe drought. Also, Sir, the people of my State and the people of Karnataka have been devastated by floods. The loss of lives, the loss of livestock, the loss of crops, the loss of agriculture is incalculable. It appears to me that the hon. Member was speaking in a vacuum. Naturally in an atmosphere where you are concerned, your immediate instinct would be to address those issues to the Government and that is as it should be, that should be reasonable. But we should look at the broader picture. What is this Government battling with? This Government is not sitting upon a mountain of plenty and refusing to do its job. The fact of the matter is we have been hit hard; 27 out of 36 meteorological districts have moderate to severe drought in the country, while in such a large country as India, the other districts, particularly in Karnataka, to a lesser extent in Tamil Nadu and to a large extent in Andhra Pradesh also have been devastated by floods.

Then, Sir, if you look at other issues, if you look at an international picture of global recession, the new driving forces of urbanisation, of consumption, of production market, of income growth, the issue of climate change, the changing factors in the climate all these have impacted severely upon agriculture, have impacted severely upon the most poverty-stricken of our people. Therefore, I would urge this House to look at the entire issue in that background and in that light, and to examine what the Government has done in that background and to see and suggest, we have every right in the House to suggest that Government has to perform

better. We have to perform better and we will perform better. But I would urge that we should first see what is the background.

Now, Sir, in this context, I would also like to say that an overly alarming picture has also been painted by the media in an attempt to sensationalise the issue. That too, Sir, to spread some kind of panic among people would be an entirely misguided effort and would be a great disservice to the people of this country is what I believe. Every time to come up with alarming statistics of how much the prices have gone up when actually that is not the correct picture is also doing some kind of disservice to the nation. I believe that the media should also exercise some kind of restraint. It should report productively and report facts correctly, as they are, and present them to the people, so that there is no scary situation.

Despite all the problems that he has mentioned, despite all the figures that have been given by the hon. Member who spoke before me, the fact remains that there is not even the remotest possibility of a food scarcity in our country. It is not as if we are going to have starvation in the country. We have buffer stocks of 153.49 lakh tonnes of rice as against the prescribed norms of 52 lakh tonnes. These are Government figures, given by the hon. Agriculture Minister. Our buffer stock for wheat stands at 284.57 lakh tonnes as against the norm of 110 lakh tonnes for wheat. Therefore, this question does not arise.

Sir, our procurement of rice and wheat has been the highest ever since Independence and that is another issue that we need to consider. Yes, we can distribute it better, but what are the constructive steps that we need to take? But let us not look at the entire picture as if everything is doom and gloom. Let us look at it in a spirit of constructive suggestion. Our procurement has been the highest ever with 33.1 million tonnes of rice as also 22.57 million tonnes of wheat. This is the highest ever since Independence.

Sir, consider also the fact that under the *Antyodaya* Scheme, 35 kg of foodgrains, rice at Rs.3 per kg and wheat at Rs.2 per kg, are being given to every family. (*Interruptions*) Whenever you get your chance, you surely bring to the notice of the House the issues and the *Antyodaya* Scheme. But the fact of the matter is that the Government has instituted the *Antyodaya* Scheme. The lapses, if any, are for us to address. The fact is that under the scheme, the issue price of rice, wheat, sugar, edible oil, and pulses has not gone up since this Government came to power in 2004. It has not gone up by one rupee. It has not gone up by even one paisa. The Government stands committed steadfastly to the fact that the most disadvantaged sections of society have to be insulated and given social security net in terms of poverty reduction.

Sir, the Government has taken tremendous pains. The hon. Member spoke about the agriculture sector. To me, one of the most important issues — I am not an expert — regarding

agriculture is the question of Minimum Support Price in terms of what a Government can do. The Minimum Support Price for rice has been increased by this Government by 79 per cent from Rs.560 to Rs.1,000. The MSP for wheat has been increased by 72 per cent from Rs.640 to Rs.1,100. The intention of the Government to help the farmer, to help the agriculture sector, and to take all steps to protect the disadvantaged people of the country is very clear and very, very transparent for the entire world to see. You look at the fiscal measures; you look at the administrative measures.

The hon. Member raised the question of futures trading. The futures trading has been stopped. When the entire issue became a very big problem, futures trading in four vital items, namely, rice, urad dal, tuar dal and sugar has been suspended. Also, the export of non-Basmati rice, edible oil, and pulses have been banned.

Fiscal measures have been taken by the Government. A large amount of money has been injected into the economy. I believe that whatever measures a Central Government can possibly take, those steps and those measures have been taken by the Government to good effect.

The hon. Member spoke about growth. Nobody wants jobless and inflated growth. Nobody wants growth where prices are beyond the reach of common man. That would be a complete anomaly in our democracy; that would make a travesty of our democracy. Nobody supports the issue of a GDP growth where prices are very high. And it is not that as if this Government is advocating a GDP growth where prices of essential commodities are very high, particularly of food items, and where food inflation is very high. We have to take all steps to bring that food inflation down.

However, Sir, growth is not a dirty word. We need growth. We need GDP growth. The fact of the matter is that we should be proud that despite a severing global economic crisis over the last several years, our economy has given very encouraging signals of recovery of growth from 6.7 per cent and is now projected to grow by 7.9 per cent. The infrastructure sector has gone up. Cement, steel, coal, etc. have all gone up. Electricity generation, according to official figures, has gone up by six per cent and infrastructure doubled to 4.3 per cent this year. It is because of the policies of this stable Government, the policies initiated by the Government that the GDP has grown to this extent. This is something that we should be quietly proud of while never losing sight of the fact that food inflation stares us in the face and food inflation needs to be brought under control. Now, Sir, I have already enumerated and I would like to enumerate once again the measures that have been taken on the fiscal and administrative side.

Sir, as far as the fiscal measures that have been taken are concerned, import duty has been reduced to zero for rice, sugar, wheat, pulses, edible oil and maize. For refined and hydrogenated vegetable oils, duty is 0.78 per cent. One million tones of sugar have been

allowed to be imported by this Government. Sir, regarding the administrative measures, the Government has banned the export of non-basmati rice, edible oil, pulses, the Government also imposed short limit orders on paddy, rice, pulses, sugar and edible oils up to 31.11.2010, enhanced minimum support price to maximise production and banned future trading which I have already mentioned.

Now, Sir, this is a country where we believe in cooperative federalism and nobody in this hon. House can deny that out of the two pillars of any food security issue or the main pillar of any food security issue, one has to be the strengthening of the public distribution system and the other has to be taking very strict action against black-marketeers and hoarders. Sir, as far as taking strict action against black-marketeers and hoarders is concerned, there is the Prevention of Black Marketing Act, the Essential Commodities Act and there are orders that have come under the Act. Sir, it is unfortunate that in the NDA rule, the hon. Member, who spoke before me, was referring to so proudly, the Essential Commodities Act was diluted. It was during their time. *(Interruptions)*

श्री प्रकाश जावडेकर : *

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: Mr. Javadekar, I am not yielding. *(Interruptions)*

श्री उपसभापति : अगर आप yield नहीं कर रही हैं तो nothing will go on record. *(Interruptions)*

श्री प्रकाश जावडेकर : *

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: I am not yielding. *(Interruptions)* I would like to continue. *(Interruptions)* It is obviously a problem which you cannot address. *(Interruptions)* They cannot address. It is also a fact that the public distribution system was virtually dismantled by making it a targeted public distribution system by dividing it into different colour cards for people. All this was done under the NDA Government. But, the fact of the matter is that I would like to say that whatever steps can possibly be taken by the Central Government have been taken by the Central Government in pursuance of our commitment of our mandate to the common man. Sir, what will the States do? The Central Government has no territory. It is the Union of India. In cooperative federalism, the States are expected to take action against black-marketeers and hoarders and to strengthen the public distribution system. Are the States doing that? I think, Sir, it is our responsibility in the Council of States to demand that the States also should actually take action in this very sensitive and most important matter. If a State Government does not take steps against black-marketeers and hoarders, and does not strengthen the public distribution system, I would say that the State Government has completely failed in its duty to the people. Sir, if you look at the records which have been provided by the

*Not recorded.

hon. Minister in another context, in the last year, with regard to the black-marketeers and hoarders, by the Delhi Government, 70 raids have taken place, 45 arrests have taken place and 49 prosecutions have taken place. Sir, in Bihar — 4 raids, 2 arrests, zero prosecution; in Gujarat — 18459 raids, 18 arrests, 71 prosecutions; in Himachal Pradesh -- 14946 raids, three arrests, two prosecutions; in Kerala, 33638 raids, 18 arrests, 2 prosecutions. In Maharashtra, Sir, there were 716 raids, 1,171 arrests and 756 prosecutions; in my State of Tamil Nadu, there were 11,535 raids, 3,532 arrests and 1,079 prosecutions, and in West Bengal, there were 56 raids, 58 arrests and one prosecution! Therefore, we can gauge from these details that Tamil Nadu has performed exceptionally well. I am very proud that in my State, very serious measures are being taken, very serious steps are being taken to address...*(Interruptions)*... Very, very serious steps are being taken to address this entire issue of black-marketeers, of hoarders and of strengthening the Public Distribution System, which is, undeniably, the pillar of a social security net as far as the most disadvantaged sections are concerned.

Sir, there is one final issue that I would like to bring to the notice of the House, and that, again, is wrong.....*(Interruptions)*... These are not some figures that I am pulling out of a hat. This is from a reputed daily newspaper. It projects very clearly how the retail prices are rising, the inflation is used by sellers as an excuse to hike rates, and the difference between the price in the wholesale market and the price in the retail market is going up. If you look at the comparative prices of vegetables, the price of ladyfingers is Rs.60/- in the retail market, and Rs.28/-, in the wholesale market; the price of bottlegourd is Rs.40/- in the retail market, and Rs.12/-, in the wholesale market, and the price of cauliflower is Rs.30/- in the retail market, and Rs.5/-, in the wholesale market. This is from *The Times of India*, which is not a paper particularly slanted in any political direction. I only use these figures and the newspaper to say that this is an issue which also has very serious political dimensions. Therefore, Sir, it is not merely a question of politics when I say that it is the State Governments which also have to step in. As I said, the Government of India has no territory of its own. It is the State Governments that have to take a very strong action and crack the whip against black-marketeers and hoarders. These people are doing a tremendous disservice to our national economy and to the people of our country. At the same time, we should address this entire issue of rising prices which also, Sir,. ...*(Interruptions)*... I have checked the figures. ...*(Interruptions)*... The point I would like to reiterate, Sir, is.....*(Interruptions)*... These are my final concluding remarks. The fact is that when I say this, I do not say this in a spirit of political blame game. I do not take the name of any State; I do not take the name of any political party. My issue is very simple. It is not a question of why should the States do it and why should the Centre do it. I believe that the Centre has to do its duty, and if it does not do its duty, they will be called to task by the people of this country. I have enumerated the steps which this Government has taken — the political party of which I

am a Member, is part of this Government — and the steps that this Government has taken, I very firmly believe, are good steps; those are steps being taken to ameliorate the suffering of the common man. I would ask any Member, from the other side, to give suggestions, constructive suggestions, on how this Government may improve their performance. However, Sir, the State Governments cannot run away from their responsibility of strengthening the Public Distribution and of taking a strong action against hoarders and black-marketeers, to see that the prices come down. I would like to request all concerned to stop spreading unnecessary sensationalism and panic when none is called for. Thank you, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Shyamal Chakraborty. Your Party has ten minutes and there are two speakers. Please keep this in mind.

SHRI SHYAMAL CHAKRABORTY (West Bengal): Sir, on such an important issue extra time will have to be given.

Thanks for allowing me to participate in the discussion. Sir, we are very proud of our best space scientists who are sending rockets to the space, and are also proud of most of those scientists who were able to send their rockets and strike in the lunar surface and extract water from the moon surface. But, unfortunately, our Government has tied the prices of essential commodities with the rocket and as the rocket goes high the price also goes high. When the rocket hits the moon, the price rocket is hitting the human being and extracting tears from the eyes of the *aam admi*. So, this is the situation in our country. Now I am sure that there is one problem which we are facing in India. It is drought. No doubt about it. Flood is a regular phenomenon. It happens every year. So, when the planners and the Government make the plans for the benefit of the people, they have to take into consideration these things. Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, drought is this year's phenomenon. But price rise is a regular phenomenon and it is rising almost every year.

My previous speaker attributed the responsibility to the State Governments, without naming or blaming any State or any political party. Okay. That is her privilege. But what I would like to say is that the anti-hoarding clause has been diluted in such a way that it prevented the State Government from taking steps against the hoarders and black-marketeers and they can't be arrested and punished. Raids can be organised. It is the West Bengal people who opened their eyes against the black-marketeers and tried to see that the land is fragmented in such a way that it is not possible for some people, the black-marketeers, to hoard their stock. But that is a different case. The problem is that it is the State Government which is increasing the price of inputs of agriculture. Take the price of fertilizer. Who is determining the price of fertilizer?

It is the Central Government. Who is raising or determining the price of electricity? That is done as per the Electricity Bill which was introduced in 2003 and passed by the previous Government. The electricity rate is growing every year. Electricity is such an ingredient that both agriculture and industry are dependent on that.

The next point is the support price. The support price is fixed in such way that it is too inadequate to compensate the production cost of today. That is most important. What are the hoarders doing? They are paying bigger amount than the support price for the agricultural product. The peasants or farmers are compelled to sell their products to them. The reason is that the Government ordered support price is too inadequate for them.

Then comes the question of oil. It is an essential commodity for transporting agricultural and industrial products. The price of oil is regularly rising in our country. When we ask the Government, they used to say that it depends on international price. But it is a travesty of truth. What is the international price of oil today? It is 72 dollars per barrel. If you convert it into the Indian currency, then, it comes to Rs.22 per litre. But what is the selling price in the market? It is Rs.33 per litre for diesel and Rs.45 per litre for petrol.

As regards electricity, I have already referred to the price of electricity. My previous speaker has mentioned that growth is not a dirty word. Yes, I appreciate that growth is not a dirty word. But certainly the growth in the price of essential commodities is a dirty word. No doubt about it. That is what we want to say.

Now I come to BPL, which has been referred to repeatedly by several speakers. What is BPL? According to the Government reports 77 per cent of our population earns below Rs. 20 per day, that means, actually, 77 per cent of our people are poor. So the Public Distribution System should be introduced for those 77 per cent people at subsidised rates. If you can provide tax concession of Rs. 4,20,000 crores to the corporators, why a portion of that can't be transferred for subsidising agricultural and industrial products which are essentially meant for common people? What prevented the Government from doing that? Actually, the people have been cheated and exploited by the policies framed by the successive Governments. If the Government brings all the essential commodities under the PDS at subsidised rates, then the prices in the open market will be compelled to go down.

Sir, today a cartoon was published in *The Hindu*. The cartoon says, "We can promise a 100 per cent cut in emission because with the ever rising prices, there will be no cooking". Thank you.

श्री बृजभूषण तिवारी (उत्तर प्रदेश) : उपसभापति महोदय, यह महंगाई कितनी गंभीर है, इसका इसी से अंदाजा लगाया जा सकता है कि आज अखबार में एक खबर छपी कि हिमाचल प्रदेश में जो गरीब लोग हैं, वे

रसायन युक्त गेहूँ का बीज खरीद कर और उसी को पिसवा कर, उसी आटे की रोटी खाते हैं। इससे उनके जीवन को खतरा पैदा हो गया है। यह इसलिए खाते हैं, क्योंकि बीज वाला गेहूँ नौ रुपए प्रति किलो मिल रहा है और गेहूँ का दाम बीस रुपए प्रति किलो है। मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि जो महंगाई है, वह हमारी नियति बन गई है। हम हर साल महंगाई पर चर्चा करते हैं ..(व्यवधान) ..

श्री राजनीति प्रसाद (बिहार) : क्या खाते हैं?

श्री वृजभूषण तिवारी : गेहूँ के बीज को पिसवा कर खाते हैं। रसायन युक्त गेहूँ के बीज की कीमत नौ रुपए प्रति किलो है और अगर बाजार में गेहूँ खरीदने जाएं, तो उसकी कीमत बीस रुपए प्रति किलो है। नौ रुपए प्रति किलो सस्ता है, इसलिए वह नौ रुपए वाली गेहूँ के बीज खरीद कर, उसी को पिसवा कर, उसी आटे की रोटी खाते हैं। आज यह खबर अखबार में छपी है। मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि यह जो महंगाई है, यह महंगाई घटेगी नहीं, बल्कि यह महंगाई तो बढ़ेगी। केवल फर्क यह है कि उसका दर ऊंचा-नीचा होता रहता है, लेकिन दाम घटता नहीं है। इस महंगाई का हमारे जीवन पर कितना असर है, इस संबंध में एक पूंजीवादी बाजार के प्रबल समर्थक अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति Ronald Reagan ने एक बार कहा था कि “कीमत स्फीति बढ़ाने की तेज रफ्तार राहगीरों की धुनाई करने वाले बदमाशों की तरह हिंसक हथियारों से लैस डाकुओं की तरह खुंखार या हत्यारे निशाने वालों की तरह मौत की सौदागर होती है” यह है महंगाई। यह Ronald Reagan का कहना है।

अब सवाल यह है कि सरकार द्वारा महंगाई को मापने का जो तरीका है, वह अभी तक थोक सूचकांक पर आधारित है। वह आंकड़ेबाजी के चक्कर में लोगों को भरमाते रहे और लोगों को भूलाते रहे, परंतु मैं इसके लिए समाचार पत्रों का बहुत योगदान मानता हूँ... और यह अखबारों में बहुत प्रचारित होने लगा। अर्थशास्त्रियों ने भी समझाया कि जो थोक सूचकांक है, उसमें जिन जिनसों का, जिन वस्तुओं का आम आदमी के जीवन से संबंध है, वे तो केवल 22 फीसदी हैं और उद्योग व कारखानों से उत्पादित जो अन्य सामान है, वह 63 प्रतिशत है। तो आप अगर उसका एक आधार बनाते हैं, तो आदमी के जीवन में और भी जो चीजें हैं - शिक्षा है, परिवहन है और जो सेवा क्षेत्र है, वह सेवा क्षेत्र हमारे सकल घरेलू उत्पाद का 50 प्रतिशत है, परंतु जो थोक सूचकांक तैयार किया जाता है, उसमें इसका कोई समावेश नहीं होता। महोदय, आप जानते हैं कि जीवन की जो आवश्यक वस्तुएं हैं, यहां पर केवल उन्हीं की महंगाई की चर्चा होती है, परंतु जो आदमी निम्न-मध्यम वर्ग का है या निम्न वर्ग का है, उसको भी रेल से जाना होगा, बस से जाना होगा, उसको बच्चे की पढ़ाई का भी इंतजाम करना होगा, दवा खरीदनी होगी, तो आप समझिए कि उसके परिवार की जो मासिक आय है, उसका 50 प्रतिशत वह इन चीजों में खर्च कर देता है। आप यह देखिए कि यहां पर किसी प्रकार का कोई नियंत्रण नहीं है। मैं एक छोटा सा उदाहरण आपको देना चाहता हूँ। आप अगर नई दिल्ली रेलवे स्टेशन से आए और अगर आप टैक्सी या श्री व्हीलर hire करें, तो किसी भी टैक्सी या श्री व्हीलर में मीटर काम नहीं करता है। वे मनमाने तरीके से आपसे दाम मांगते हैं, जबकि दिल्ली की मुख्य मंत्री का रोज़ बयान आता है कि मीटर के बिना कोई नहीं चलेगा। अब आप यह समझिए कि उस महंगाई का असर हमारे ऊपर पड़ा या नहीं पड़ा। जो उपभोक्ता है, वह कोई नोट तो छापता नहीं है, क्योंकि आमदनी नहीं बढ़ रही है। आमदनी किसकी बढ़ रही है? हमारे समाज में एक बहुत बड़ा तबका है जो easy money कमाता है, जो भ्रष्टाचार करता है, जिसकी कमाई के अन्य स्रोत हैं। तो जिसकी कमाई के अन्य स्रोत हैं, उसी की आर्थिक गतिविधियों से तड़क-भड़क देखने को मिलती है, इसलिए हमें महंगाई का जो असर है, वह असर दिखाई नहीं देता, परंतु जो गरीब लोग हैं, जिनकी बंधी हुई आमदनी है, जो मजदूरी करते हैं, तनख्वाह पाते हैं, जिनकी आय का कोई अन्य साधन नहीं है, महंगाई का

असर उन पर दिखाई देता है। महोदय, मैं अभी स्विट्जरलैंड गया था। वहां पर लोगों ने बताया कि वे नौ-नौ घंटे, दस-दस घंटे काम करते हैं। हमने पूछा कि कारण क्या है? उन्होंने कहा कि यहां आम आदमी को easy money की गुंजाइश नहीं है। अगर ईजी मनी किसी को मिल जाएगा, तो वह काम क्यों करेगा? उसको महंगाई की क्या चिंता है, चाहे जितने भी दाम बढ़ जाएं? आज सोने की खरीद सबसे ज्यादा है और इन चीजों की.... आप यह जानिए कि दुनिया की जो सबसे कीमती और महंगी कारें हैं, जो बहुत से यूरोपीय देशों में भी नहीं मिलेंगी, वह सात-आठ के करीब केवल दिल्ली में हैं। तो हमारे समाज का और हमारी स्थिति का यह जो ढांचा है, उसको देखते हुए हमें नहीं लगता कि महंगाई पर किसी प्रकार का कोई अंकुश लगेगा।

दूसरी बात यह है कि जो खुदरा सूचकांक है, वह खुदरा सूचकांक ही असली पैमाना है कि हमारी जो क्रय-शक्ति है, हमारी जो खरीदने की ताकत है, हमारा जो रुपया है, वह खरीदने की ताकत के हिसाब से ही हमारी पहुंच से कितना बाहर होता जा रहा है? उसी के साथ-साथ यह महंगाई का त्रिशंकु सूचकांक न तो उत्पादन के काम आने वाले साज-सामान की कीमतों के स्तर और परिवर्तन की गति बता पाता है और न ही वस्तु सेवाओं की कीमतों का सूचकांक बन पाता है — यह मैंने कहा, क्योंकि यह जो सेवा क्षेत्र है, वह इस सूचकांक में शामिल नहीं होता है। अब आप यह देखिए कि जो कीमतें बढ़ रही हैं, उसका कारण क्या है? उसका कारण अभी माननीय सदस्यों ने बताया कि जो वायदा कारोबार है, वह वायदा कारोबार पिछले चार वर्षों के पूर्व 65 हजार करोड़ रुपए का था। आज वह 37 लाख करोड़ तक पहुंच गया है। इसका मतलब यह है कि देश के सकल घरेलू उत्पाद का 92 प्रतिशत जो टर्न ओवर है, वह वायदा कारोबार में है। महोदय, बड़ी और बहुराष्ट्रीय कम्पनियां भी जमाखोरी करती हैं। आप छोटे-मोटे व्यापारी को तो पकड़ लेंगे — अभी माननीय सदस्या आंकड़े दे रही थीं — लेकिन ये जो बड़ी-बड़ी कम्पनियां हैं, बहुराष्ट्रीय कम्पनियां हैं, ये जिस प्रकार से जमाखोरी करती हैं, इनको कोई नहीं देखता है क्योंकि सटोरिए, जमाखोर, बड़े अफसर और राजनेता — इनकी जो साठ-गांठ है, यह साठ-गांठ भी दामों की बढ़ोत्तरी का बहुत बड़ा कारण माना जाती है। इसलिए मैं कहना चाहता हूं कि हमारी कोई दाम नीति नहीं है। उसी दाम नीति के न होने का यह कारण है। आज खाद्य सुरक्षा की बात बहुत कही जाती है, आज हमारा उत्पादन निरंतर घट रहा है। खेती घाटे का धंधा हो रही है। हम पहले संतुलित खेती करते थे, लेकिन हरित क्रांति के बाद हमने केवल गेहूं और चावल पर सबसे ज्यादा जोर दिया तथा जो हमारा दलहन है या दूसरी फसलें हैं, उन पर जोर कम हो गया। मगर आज हम देखते हैं कि गेहूं और चावल के उत्पादन में भी कमी हुई है। इसलिए आज आवश्यकता इस बात की है कि खेती में निवेश बढ़े और निजी निवेश बढ़े। खेती में निजी निवेश जहां 1999-2000 में 11.9 प्रतिशत था, वह आज घटकर 6.6 प्रतिशत रह गया है। किसानों को सस्ती दरों पर कर्ज मिलना चाहिए लेकिन आज 73 प्रतिशत किसान सस्ती दरों पर कर्ज मिलने की सेवाओं से मुक्त हैं, दूर हैं, उनका कोई मतलब नहीं है। जब तक आप उनको पैसा उपलब्ध नहीं कराएंगे, जब तक आप उनको बैंकों के trap में, बैंकों के घेरे में नहीं लाएंगे, तब तक उनकी स्थिति में किसी प्रकार का सुधार नहीं हो सकता। गोदाम उद्योगों को भी बुनियादी उद्योग का दर्जा देना पड़ेगा। अंत में, मैं यह कहना चाहता हूं कि जो कीमतें हैं - हम लोग हमेशा इस प्रकार की बात करते रहे कि दाम बांधों - उन कीमतों को नियंत्रित करने की कोई वास्तविक, कोई बुनियादी नीति होनी चाहिए। हमारी समाजवादी पार्टी बराबर कीमतों को रोकने के लिए जिन नीतियों पर विश्वास करती है, मैं उनका उद्धरण करना चाहता हूं। किसी भी आवश्यक विनिर्मित वस्तु की कीमत असली लागत के डेढ़ गुणा से अधिक नहीं हो। यह कानून बनना चाहिए कि जो भी चीज बने, उसकी जो असली लागत है, उस पर जो असली खर्च आया है, अगर वह बाजार में आए तो वह डेढ़ गुणा के अंदर fluctuate करे। आज उसका कोई हिसाब नहीं है। आज जो maximum rate है, उसकी cost accountancy की कोई transparency नहीं है, कोई जानकारी नहीं है कि उसकी असली लागत क्या है। आज कीमतें दो-ढाई गुणा से लेकर 5 या 6 गुणा तक हैं।

4.00 P.M.

श्री उपसभापति : कृपया समाप्त कीजिए।

श्री वृजभूषण तिवारी : खाद्यान्नों की कीमतों का उतार-चढ़ाव दो फसलों के बीच, एक आना प्रति सेर या 15 प्रतिशत से ज्यादा न हो। आज आप देखते हैं कि किसान जब फसल तैयार करता है तब उसका रेट क्या होता है और उसके बाद जब फसल खत्म हो जाती है, जब बनियों के हाथ में या सरकार के गोदामों में वह चली जाती है, तब उसका दाम कितना होता है। इसलिए हम लोग यह मानते रहे हैं कि दो फसलों के बीच में कम से कम 16 प्रतिशत के अंदर उतार-चढ़ाव होना चाहिए। आज वह 6 और 7 गुणा ज्यादा हो गया है। तीसरा, किसान को अपनी फसल की इतनी कीमत मिलनी चाहिए जिससे उसकी लागत भी पूरी हो तथा उसे साधारण तौर पर सम्मानजनक जीवन-स्तर मिले। ..(समय की घंटी).. कृषि वस्तुओं की कीमतों तथा औद्योगिक वस्तुओं की कीमतों में औचित्यपूर्ण समानता बनी रहे। स्वामिनाथन कमेटी ने भी अपनी रिपोर्ट में संस्तुति दी है कि किसानों को उनकी लागत से कम से कम 50 प्रतिशत लाभ मिलना चाहिए। इस पर भी कोई ध्यान नहीं दिया गया है। अंतिम बात यह कही गयी है कि कृषि वस्तुओं और निर्यातित खाद्य पदार्थों एवं आयातित विनिर्मित माल की कीमतों में औचित्यपूर्ण बराबरी हो। यानी हम जो एक्सपोर्ट करें और जो बाहर से इम्पोर्ट हो, अगर उनमें कोई बराबरी नहीं है तो हम तो लुट जाएंगे।

श्री उपसभापति : तिवारी जी, खत्म करिए।

श्री वृजभूषण तिवारी : मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि कीमतों के बारे में जब तक इन बुनियादी आधारों पर बुनियादी नीतियां तय नहीं की जातीं, दाम बांधा नहीं जाता, तब तक केवल आरोप-प्रत्यारोप से काम नहीं चलेगा कि यह राज्य सरकारों की जिम्मेदारी है। हमारे वामपंथी साथी ने ठीक ही कहा कि जो बुनियादी चीज है, मूल चीज है, उसका दाम तो आप ही तय करते हैं। आप चीनी का दाम तय करें, लोहे का दाम तय करें, सीमेंट का दाम तय करें, अनाज का सपोर्ट प्राइस तय करें और सारी जिम्मेदारी राज्य सरकार को दें, यह उचित नहीं है।

श्री उपसभापति : समाप्त कीजिए। आपने ज्यादा समय ले लिया है।

श्री वृजभूषण तिवारी : इसलिए मेरा फिर कहना है कि जब तक आप आर्थिक नीतियों में, कृषि नीतियों में बुनियादी परिवर्तन नहीं करेंगे, दाम बांधने का उपाय नहीं करेंगे, तब तक महंगाई रुकेगी नहीं, केवल बहस का मुद्दा बनी रहेगी। महोदय, मैं इन्ही शब्दों के साथ अपनी बात खत्म करता हूँ। बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद।

SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, can I speak for a moment? Sir, I just would like to bring to the notice of the Minister a fact. I was driving from Nasik to Mumbai. It was in the evening, about 8 P.M. Two truckloads of onion were being thrown off the flip. This is so much for the Member who was speaking on behalf of the Public Distribution System. Thank you.

श्री अवतार सिंह करीमपुरी (उत्तर प्रदेश) : सर, बहुत ही गंभीर मुद्दे पर विचार-विमर्श हो रहा है। महंगाई का जो इश्यू है, इसके बारे में पूरा देश चिंतित है। हमसे पहले भी जो हमारे आदरणीय मेंबर्स साहबान बोले हैं, उन्होंने भी अपनी संवेदना और चिंता जाहिर की है। कबीर साहब ने अपनी वाणी में कहा है कि — “भूखे भजन न कीजे, यह माला अपनी लीजे।” आज हम देख रहे हैं कि हमारे जो आंकड़े हैं, पिछले साल नवम्बर के और इस साल के नवम्बर के, उसमें पिछले साल नवम्बर में जो चीनी 22-23 रुपए प्रति किलो थी वह इस साल 38 रुपए प्रति किलो है। इसमें 65 परसेंट की बढ़ोतरी है। जो गुड़ पहले 20 रुपए किलो था

और जिसको गांव वाले ज्यादा यूज करते थे, जिनके लिए सरकार कहती है कि हम आम आदमी के लिए नीति बनाते हैं, जिस गुड़ को आम आदमी ही इस्तेमाल करता था, क्योंकि चीनी उनकी पहुंच से बाहर है, इसलिए वे गुड़ से ही काम चला लेते थे, लेकिन आज वही गुड़ चीनी से आगे निकल गया। आम आदमी की सरकार की कृपा हुई आम आदमी के ऊपर और आज वह गुड़ 40 रुपए किलो है। चाय की पत्ती 149 से 215 रुपए किलो पर पहुंच गई है। गुड़ में सौ परसेंट की बढ़ोतरी है। आलू 18-20 रुपए पर गया है।

जो रूलिंग पार्टी है, उसके अंदर भी मतभेद हैं। जब कोई क्रेडिट लेना होता है, फिर तो बोलते हैं कि कांग्रेस पार्टी की सरकार है और जब डिसक्रेडिट देना होता है तो कहते हैं कि महंगाई तो सिर्फ शरद पवार जी की वजह से है। जिम्मेदारी तो उनकी भी होगी, हम नहीं कहते कि उनकी जिम्मेदारी नहीं है। लेकिन महंगाई के लिए जिम्मेदार अकेले पवार साहब और स्टेट गवर्नमेंट है और जो रूलिंग पार्टी है वह यूनाइटेड रेस्पॉसिबिलिटी के लिए तैयार नहीं है, डिसक्रेडिट औरों को देना चाहते हैं और क्रेडिट जो हमारे एक युवा नेता हैं, जो झुगियों में आजकल चाय पी रहे हैं और उनको उस झुग्गी की चाय स्वादिष्ट लगती है जहां कांग्रेस पार्टी की सरकार न हो। जहां कांग्रेस की सरकार न हो, उस झुग्गी की चाय स्वादिष्ट लगती है, झुगियां तो दिल्ली में बहुत हैं, लेकिन यहां की झुग्गी की चाय अच्छी नहीं लग रही।

ये गरीब की गरीबी का मज़ाक उड़ा रहे हैं। आपने 62 साल राज किया और जिन 12 करोड़ लोगों को झुगियों में रहने के लिए मजबूर किया, आज उनकी गरीबी की सेंटिमेंट से भी पॉलिटिक्स कर रहे हैं। उसका समाधान नहीं कर रहे हैं। आज मैं आपको यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि देश के 270 से ज्यादा जिलों में नक्सलाइट मूवमेंट आगे बढ़ी है, आप उसके लिए वैपन्स खरीद रहे हैं, आप उसके लिए कानून बना रहे हैं, बड़ी-बड़ी मशीनरी बना रहे हैं, नहीं जीत पाएंगे हम मशीनरी से, यह हम दावा करते हैं। आप जिम्मेदार हैं। कबीर साहिब ने कहा था “भूखे भक्ति न कीजिए, जै माला अपनी लीजिए।” अगर हम लोगों के पेट में से रोटी निकाल लेंगे, तो उनके अंदर देश-भक्ति का जज्बा पैदा नहीं कर सकेंगे। इसलिए हम यह कहना चाहेंगे कि एक साल में क्या हो गया है ? पिछले साल के नवम्बर से इस साल के नवम्बर में पवार साहब की नीतियों में क्या अंतर आ गया है ? सरकार को क्या हो गया है ? ..(व्यवधान).. हम यह बताना चाहते हैं कि हमारे देश में डेमोक्रेटिक सिस्टम है, जिसको हम दुनिया की सबसे बड़ी डेमोक्रेसी कहते हैं, हमारे देश के नेताओं ने हमारे देश के इलेक्ट्रोरल प्रोसेस को 62 साल में इतना भ्रष्ट बना दिया है कि पूंजीपतियों से चंदा लेकर इलेक्शन लड़ा जाता है और मई, 2009 में जो जनरल इलेक्शन हुआ, जिनसे चंदा लेकर इलेक्शन लड़ा गया, गरीबों का पेट काटकर उनका पेट भरा जा रहा है। इसलिए हम सरकार से कहना चाहेंगे, महंगाई के बारे में आंकड़े तो आप और हम रोज पढ़ते हैं। ..(व्यवधान).. हमें मालूम है कि जो राज करने वाली पार्टी है, यह डा0 अम्बेडकर को भी संसद में नहीं देखना चाहती थी, इसलिए आपने उनका बुत भी नहीं बनाना चाहा। ..(व्यवधान).. जिस डा0 अम्बेडकर को आपने संसद में बोला था ..(व्यवधान).. कि हमने डा0 अम्बेडकर के लिए एक-एक मन के ताले लगा दिए हैं, अब वह संसद में नहीं आएंगे, अब वह पाकिस्तान की असेम्बली में जाएंगे। डा0 अम्बेडकर ने बोला था ..(समय की घंटी).. सुनो, मैं मन-मन पक्के के ताले अपने जूते से तोड़कर संसद में आया हूँ, कोई मुझे रोक नहीं पाया। अब आपको उनका statue भी बुरा लग रहा है। ..(व्यवधान)..

श्री उपसभापति : करीमपुरी जी, आप प्राइस राइज पर बोलिए।

श्री अवतार सिंह करीमपुरी : आप गांधी जी को पूरे देश में नोट में भी ले आए। ..(व्यवधान).. सर, मैं प्राइस राइज पर ही बोल रहा हूँ। ..(व्यवधान)..

श्री उपसभापति : नहीं, नहीं। प्राइस राइज तो हम भी सुन रहे हैं। ..(व्यवधान)..

श्री अवतार सिंह करीमपुरी : डा0 अम्बेडकर साहब ने देश की इकानामी के लिए एक बड़ी दूर-दृष्टि की नीति देखी।

श्री उपसभापति : अब आप समाप्त कीजिए।

श्री अवतार सिंह करीमपुरी : डा0 अम्बेडकर साहब ने आर्थिक क्षेत्र में जो दिशा रखी थी, अगर सरकार उस दिशा को मान लेती, उसको अपना आदर्श और मार्गदर्शन मानकर चलती, तो आज जो हमारे देश का हथ्र है, यह नहीं होता। ..(व्यवधान).. आज 70 परसेंट लोग ..(व्यवधान).. उत्तर प्रदेश में अभी तो तीन साल भी नहीं हुए हैं। आप देखिए कि आपने 62 साल में क्या किया है ? ..(व्यवधान).. उससे थोड़ा-बहुत मुंह छुपाओ, तभी इलाज होगा। उपसभापति महोदय, मैं यह कहना चाहता हूं कि इसका कुछ परमानेंट इलाज किया जाए। जब हम सब कुछ तय कर रहे हैं, तो फिर हम कीमतें तय करने से क्यों डर रहे हैं? हमने प्रोड्यूसर की मर्जी पर छोड़ रखा है कि तुम जो चाहे तय कर लो।...(व्यवधान)..सर, एक-दो मिनट। ..(व्यवधान)..

श्री उपसभापति : करीमपुरी साहब, आपका समय समाप्त हो गया है। ...(व्यवधान)... समाप्त कीजिए।

श्री अवतार सिंह करीमपुरी : सर, एक-दो मिनट और दे दीजिए। हम तो कभी बोलते ही नहीं हैं। ...(व्यवधान)...आज बोल रहे हैं, तो बोलने दीजिए। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री उपसभापति : कभी बोलते नहीं हैं, मगर समय भी कम है। ..(व्यवधान).. समय क्रेडिट, डेबिट नहीं होता। ...(व्यवधान)..

श्री अवतार सिंह करीमपुरी : जो प्रोड्यूसर है, उसको फ्री हैंड दिया है कि आप जितना चाहे कंज्यूमर को एक्सप्लॉएट कर सकते हो।...(व्यवधान)... हमारा यह सजेशन है कि इकानॉमिक एक्सप्लॉएटेशन बंद किया जाए ...(व्यवधान).. और इसके ऊपर एफेक्टिव नीति तैयार की जाए।...(व्यवधान)..हम यह कहना चाहेंगे कि जो हमारे पास एग्रीकलचरल लैंड है, वह हर दिन कम होती जा रही है। यह हमारे लिए एक बड़ी चिंता का विषय है। ...(व्यवधान)..

श्री उपसभापति : अब आपको समाप्त करना पड़ेगा। You have taken more time than the time allotted to your party. आप समाप्त कीजिए। Shri Malaisamy.

श्री अवतार सिंह करीमपुरी : जो साधन सम्पन्न लोग हैं, बड़े-बड़े मॉल्स, बड़े-बड़े ...(व्यवधान).. इसलिए हम यह चाहेंगे कि एग्रीकलचरल लैंड को बचाया जाए और कीमतें निर्धारित करने की नीति तय की जाए। सरकार महंगाई के लिए हाउस के अंदर एक कलैक्टिव रिस्पासिबिलिटी ले कि हम महंगाई के फ्रंट पर फेल हुए हैं और इस देश के गरीब आदमी का उत्पीड़न हुआ है, इस देश के कंज्यूमर का आर्थिक शोषण हुआ है। हमारे देश के दस-बारह करोड़ लोग झुग्गियों में रहते हैं, क्या हम सर्दियों में उनको अपनी आंखों से मरते हुए देखना चाहते हैं? हमें उनका भी कोई न कोई बंदोबस्त करना होगा।

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr. Malaisamy. Your party has got five minutes.

DR. K. MALAISAMY (Tamil Nadu): Thank you Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, for calling me on behalf of the AIADMK to join my colleagues here to speak on this very important subject — price rise. Due to paucity of time...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You are entitled only to that. What can I do? Had it been in my hands, I would like to give you more.

DR. K. MALAISAMY: I am fully conscious of it. Sir, I may not be able to complete my task, except to touch and go to the issues.

Sir, coming straight to the subject, the macro-level challenges or threats like global meltdown, global warming, global recession, etc., have got a direct impact on inflation also, but, not to the extent, as others have highlighted. I agree that it has a marginal affect. This is how I look at it. I am saying this by taking hint from the hon. Prime Minister's observation, followed by the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, who had said that all these threats and challenges have got an affect on India. But, it has got only a marginal affect. That is how they look at it. In such a situation, one cannot take excuse that it is due to things beyond their control. As far as I can see, the macro-level issues have a limited impact. I come straight to inflation which is very much talked about by all. Look at inflation at the international level and inflation at the Indian level. Inflation at the Indian level, sometime back, had reached to a double digit. Of course, now, it has come down to 8 per cent and odd and will continue like that. A lot has been talked about inflation. Sir, it is not occurring for the first time. Inflation is in existing for quite a long time in India.

Coming to price rise, as my colleagues have highlighted, the prices of essential commodities have gone up by leaps and bounds. They have gone up from one peak to another. The prices in the domestic market have gone up like anything. For example, the price of onion has gone up to several times, potato has gone up by 44 per cent, primary articles have gone up by 9 per cent, pulses have increased by 23 per cent, milk by 10 per cent, rice by 12 per cent, etc. In other words, the prices of essential commodities used by human being have gone up and up.

Sir, according to me, in this particular case, with regard to any issue, there are controllable factors and uncontrollable factors. As far as controllable factors are concerned, they are within the reach of human beings. On the other hand, in the wake of science and technology, we are able to do something even with regard to uncontrollable factors. If that be the case, I could cite one or two reasons. One is the mishandling of the issues which are faced by us.

It is on record that the Government has gone to the extent of exporting rice, wheat and pulses recently when the prices are going up like anything. When the prices in India are shooting up, why have they gone for export? This is my first point.

Secondly, Sir, there is corruption. In the rice export, a scam has also occurred. The sugar prices could not be controlled even during festival season. Sir, the Minister the other day told us that he has to make a balance between the interest of the agriculturists and the consumers. While I agree that the interests of both should be protected, but, at the same time, balancing has to be done without affecting the interests of either side.

Sir, due to paucity of time, instead of dilating on the various causes and reasons for the price rise, etc., I would like to come straightway to the measures to be taken so that the prices can be contained because I am more concerned about it.

Coming to point no. 1, they should go to the root cause instead of looking upon the periphery. I used to cite even a couplet from *Thirukkural* on this score but I don't repeat it here. I think, first the root cause of any issue has to be found out and then its solution can be found out. Now, Sir, coming to point no. 1 ...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: How many times you would say, 'number one'?

DR. K. MALAISAMY: Sir, when I am talking about the measures, I have got three or four measures which, I think, are very relevant for the Minister. Sir, you had given me five minutes. But so far I could have taken only two-three minutes.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Unfortunately, the clock is right here in front of me. You have already taken five minutes.

DR. K. MALAISAMY: Sir, kindly bear with me. I will try to finish in two-three minutes. Sir, I am very conscious about my time.

Sir, coming to inflation, the Government and the Reserve Bank of India can do wonders to control inflation. They should ensure money flow and they should also reduce the interest rate and lower the tax to boost the demand and induce savings and investment. The Government should spend on infrastructure and social programmes. This is the way the Government and the Reserve Bank can do it. This is number one.

Then, secondly, Sir, they should deal with — some of the hon. Members have also mentioned it — unscrupulous elements strictly. They should not have any sympathy for them. On the other hand, they should deal strictly with the unscrupulous elements and anti-social elements like middlemen, hoarders, black marketeers and unscrupulous traders who are mainly responsible for artificial creation of demand and supply resulting in price rise.

Thirdly, Sir, there is a need to streamline the corruption-ridden Public Distribution System. Madam, Jayanthi Natarajan was saying that it looks as if everything is okay in Tamil Nadu. Where is Mr. Siva? ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, he should not interrupt me. ...*(Interruptions)*... They say that everything is okay. According to me, the PDS is meant for the poor people, the card holders. But whatever is given under the PDS is being siphoned off and taken away by some people and *en block* it is blackmarketed. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please sit down. ...*(Interruptions)*... It is not necessary that everybody should get up. Please.

DR. K. MALAISAMY: Sir, they should ensure that it should go to the right persons at the right time. ...*(Time-bell rings)*...

Sir, coming to revamping the Food and Civil Supply Department, it is white elephant. They are not doing its job properly and they should be made to work. You should also think to reorganize and review its working so that they can do their work effectively. Sir, a mass consumer movement should be started so that whenever there is arbitrary increase in prices, they protest and see to it that the Government is made to understand what the public wants. The untimely increase in oil prices has led to the rise in prices of so many articles. What I am trying to say is, they have increased the oil prices retrospectively; instead, they should have timed it timely correctly in such a way that they need not have combined it with this.

Sir, one or two points more and then I shall conclude. The rate of inflation to be negative and rise in prices, are two things that should not go together. Unfortunately, in India, they go together. Correct prediction of monsoons is an important factor. In such a situation, they must build on their stocks and properly store them, so that in case of deficient monsoons, the needs are taken care of. In case of a delayed monsoon and deficient rains, there is speculation. So, hoarding is taking place. We must think about how to avert such things.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

DR. K. MALAISAMY: Wastage of food and pilferage should be avoided by improving storage and processing facilities.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I think I have given you sufficient time. Please conclude.

DR. K. MALAISAMY: Too much dependence on rains and irrigation for agriculture should be avoided and more and more agricultural products like pulses and maize must be grown, so that food production can be increased. Water scarcity is another problem. Last but not the least, Sir, there should be rationalisation and reduction in import and increase in exports.

Let me conclude with the fervent hope and request to the hon. Minister and the Government that the system must be reviewed and tightened in such a way that the measures take care of price rise whenever it occurs. They have been saying that they have been doing this and doing that. But the ground reality is otherwise.

SHRI N.K. SINGH (Bihar): Mr. Deputy Chairman Sir, I think that the hon. Minister for Agriculture, who is such a consummate, keen watcher of sportsmen, must be finding himself a bit bewildered that in such a short session of the Rajya Sabha, to be bowled twice over completely, once on the sugarcane stuff, and then on this stuff about prices, both of which

seem to have somewhat taken him by surprise. For an astute player of his kind, fortunately, Sir, unlike Don Bradman, this is not his last innings and he can hope to really salvage his reputation.

Sir, couple of things are very clear. First and foremost, the current rise in prices is a combination of several factors; combination, first and foremost, of endemic, long-term disequilibrium between demand and supply, changing consumer preferences, plateauing of our productivity and disruption of global markets and distribution. Some of these lend themselves to short-term solutions. There are others, Sir, where the causes are more endemic. But there is no getting away, Mr. Minister, with the fact that unless supply side responses are significantly improved, it will be difficult to make a short-term dent in the situation. One unhappy thing is that, unfortunately, this does not seem to be a spike in the prices from 2007-08; this seems to be an endemic long-term trend driven by three important factors. First and foremost, Sir, driven by the fact that meat consumption is going up at a rate which is unprecedented. Second, Sir, population, which is six billion today, even with the best of efforts, will hit 9.2 billion by 2050. And, thirdly, Sir, the inability for global productivity patterns, cropping systems to sustain higher levels of productivity in the light of the changing dynamics of climate changes seem to be insurmountable.

My suggestion to the Minister is, concentrate on two types of measures. First of all, concentrate on some short-term measures. What can you do in the short run? In the short run, I think that the most important thing he can do, Sir, and the London Economist, about which I had the privilege of mentioning to you, which carried a special supplement only two weeks ago, said, as far as India is concerned, how do we minimise 35 per cent waste in fruits and vegetables and 44 per cent waste in a whole range of other crops. This can be done by, of course, concentrating on something which he is doing, but accelerating it in terms of marketing linkages, prolonging the shelf life and enabling the advantages of cold chain to small and medium farmers. This will give some short-term returns which will be very gainful and beneficial. I come, Sir, to some long-term factors since the time available to me is very short. Fortunately, investments in agriculture, which in a 25-years cycle went down significantly to just 1.2 per cent, has cropped up in the last 18 months. It has again gone up from about 1.2 per cent to 8 per cent. Will it make up the past? Historically speaking, perhaps not. But I think along with the challenge of making up the investment deficiency, one sad part is, Sir, that the per capita availability of foodgrains in the last five years, and particularly, in the last two years, to the poorest population of the world, has gone down. That is why, Mr. Minister, I am sure you are aware that the FAO Conference on Hunger, that we just concluded one week ago, ended its last Resolution to say, "Tonight in the

world more than one billion people will sleep hungry.” As far as India is concerned, in the last 18 months, 250 million people, according to the UN statistics, have gone under deeper poverty. That is one of the factors that we need to attack ourselves. We need to attack ourselves on adaptation of cropping patterns. Mr. Swaminathan spoke day before yesterday in Parliament and he mentioned about the findings of his inter-Governmental Report how crop productivity and protein yields in crops are falling dramatically. Is our research and development keeping pace with how to adapt with this inevitable phenomena? How to change cropping patterns which are more drought resistance, which require less water and which are less dependent on chemical fertilizers to be able to sustain the plateau of productivity? Let me give you one example which is alarming. Do you know Minister that the world is gripped by bees’ virus? Bees are dying all over the world and that this decline in the bee population is leading to this huge problem of pollination. In case of China, we are resorting to hand pollination. What are we doing in terms of research and development to ensure that this bee virus, which has afflicted the world, does not afflict India, which, even the most severest knock, we can receive in terms of trying to seek crop productivity? So, there are challenges of a short-term nature. There are those which you can do in the immediate future to improve supply side responses. But there are more important challenges which you have. They are challenges of demography, challenges of change in consumer preferences as meat consumption puts greater pressure on the food chain, changing pastoral habits and adaptation to the problems of global warming and climate change. Thank you.

SHRI Y.P. TRIVEDI (Maharashtra): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, the topic which we are discussing today is of paramount importance, namely, price rise. In economic terms, it would mean spiralling inflation. Inflation can be of many types. It may be cost-push inflation or it may be other type of inflation where too much money is chasing too few goods and that is what we call the price rise. The price rise is visible in all spheres. I might point out that in my city, Mumbai, one square foot of area in a flat in some parts of the city costs as much as Rs.1 lakh. The prices are rising in real estate; prices are rising of industrial goods. Today’s morning paper says that the car prices are also going to see a very steep rise. But we are concerned here today with the price rise in essential commodities which concerns the common people. The common people are affected because of the price rise of essential goods. What is the position? If you look at the statistics — I have got plenty of them, but I do not intend to rattle them because much has been spoken about the statistics — there is a wide gulf between the Wholesale Price Index, the Consumer Price Index and the actual price paid by the householder for buying his commodities. Even the Consumer Price Index is also not one index, but there are

so many. There is consumer price for industrial workers, for agricultural labour, for non-manual labour and for rural people.

(THE VICE-CHAIRMAN, Prof. P.J. Kurien, in the Chair)

These types of indices also sometimes create some confusion. So, we should have some narrowing down between the Wholesale Price Index, the Consumer Price Index and the price actually paid by the householders while buying the commodities. Now, I think, this House, rather than trying to put blame, should try to find out what are the causes, what is the effect, and what are the remedies available. I would submit that if you look at the causes, one should not forget that there was a failure of monsoon in West Bengal, U.P. and there was cyclone and floods in the southern parts of India. Today, you are talking about rising price of potatoes which has gone almost hundred per cent higher. But, we may not be aware that 40 per cent of the potatoes production come from West Bengal, 30 per cent from U.P. and 30 per cent from the rest of the country. Because of failure of monsoon in West Bengal and U.P., the potato crop has been affected. The tomato crop has been affected because of the cyclone and floods in southern India. Under those circumstances, there are remedies which we can think about. The same Agriculture Minister was proud to say last year that there used to be a queue before him in his Office of people from other countries who wanted to import rice from India. So, we had buffer stock in all respects. How is it that suddenly, the situation has worsened? What are the causes and what are the remedies which can be worked out? I think, what is necessary is that we must have some provision for perishable goods for a buffer stock. We have got the Agriculture Produce Market Act. But, under this Act, the *mandis* are at a far distance. And, that is why, *adotis* come in the way and they pocket a large amount of money. There should be *mandis* or the collection centres near the farm house where the farmers can immediately bring the products and they can be kept in cold-storage for a longer period. If the buffer stock is created, this type of scarcity, which has arisen because of the failure of monsoon, would not arise because then the things can be taken out from the buffer stock.

Much has been said about imports and the Agriculture Minister is quite open for the imports to be made at a subsidised rate or without any duty at all. I think, this is a policy which has to be supported.

Then, much has been stated about sugar. But, when we are discussing sugar, we must realise that it is also a political issue. (*Time-bell rings*). I will only take two more minutes, and I will only give positive suggestions. So far as sugar is concerned, one has to be mindful of the fact that there is a grower of sugarcane, there is a consumer who is consuming the sugar and there are also sugar mills. Interests of all of them should be taken into

consideration. There must be remunerative price for the sugarcane grower. There must be affordable price of sugar for the consumer. At the same time, you must see to it that sugar mills do not die out automatically.

We must also think in terms of another Green Revolution. For that, it is very necessary that we must think in terms of water maintenance, or, water harvesting. Water is going to be a perennial headache for all of us. I think, we all must think in terms of preservation of water. In the city of Mumbai, the Municipal Corporation has started tapping the wells and they have found that large amount of water will be available by tapping of those wells.

We must think of fertilizers. There are barren lands. The barren lands can be converted into cultivable lands. India can have the largest amount of cultivable lands. There is Desert of Kutch in Rajasthan. If the Government does not have the resources, they should be given to industrial houses which can convert them into fertile lands like on the sides of...*(Interruptions)*.

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

SHRI Y.P. TRIVEDI: Much has been stated about the hoarders and profiteers. Some figures have been given as to how many places were raided, and, how many people were prosecuted. Sir, prosecution is not important. The important thing is to see how many of them have been convicted. The number is much less. The real reason is that the Essential Commodities Act is very faulty. What we need to do is fast-track courts to deal with the hoarders. I have no doubt that our Agriculture Minister, who himself is a farmer, is conscious of all these facts and he will be able to find a remedy to the situation. Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Mr. M.P. Achuthan. You have to conclude in five minutes. *(Interruptions)* His party has three minutes time. I am giving five minutes.

SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN (Kerala): Thank you, Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir. I will try to conclude within the allotted time. Sir, there is no need to quote figures to highlight the price rise. Everybody is concerned about the price rise, and, people are on the move. All over the country, people are agitating. Yesterday, in Tamil Nadu, thousands of persons were court-arrested. This is not an issue of one party. Rising above the political affiliations, people are agitating against the price rise. Hon. Minister of Agriculture assured this House that there is no shortage of foodgrains and that we have ample stocks of rice, wheat and other essential items. According to the figures released by NAFED, during the first six months of this year, India exported ten lakh tonne onion. That shows that we have got ample foodgrains and other essential items. Still, we are facing shortage or scarcity of essential items and having price rise. What is the reason? The reason is: the economic policy of this Government, and, the unbridled

liberalisation policy of the Government. The philosophy which guides this Government is that the market forces will decide everything; market forces will decide the price. The measures taken by the Government are in tune with this philosophy. That is why, still, the Central Government is allowing future trading in many essential items. So, the big traders and the corporate houses in retail trade are able to corner the food items, create artificial scarcity and increase the prices. Another factor is the commodity exchange. Here also, big players are able to manipulate the market. The Government is not taking any measure to prevent hoarding and black-marketing. The Government says that it is the concern of the State Governments. Sir, in 2002 and in 2003, there were two amendments in the Essential Commodities Act. That notification was repealed only partially. Still, the Government is not ready to repeal it totally, and, coordinate with the efforts taken by the State Governments to prevent hoarding and black-marketing. Sir, everybody concedes that to contain price rise, and, to give relief to the common man, the only viable solution is extending and strengthening the public distribution system. I am very thankful to the hon. Minister for commending the Kerala Government's performance in the public distribution system. But this House must know what the Central Government is doing to the Kerala Government. Kerala is a State, a consumer State, which is depending on other States for every item, rice, vegetables and everything. In such a situation, we are able to contain the price rise, and, the price rise in Kerala is comparatively low.

Take the Consumer Price Index for rural goods, in Kerala it was 485 points in September whereas in Punjab, it was 568 points and in Andhra, it was 533 points. In the Consumer Price Index list, the position of Kerala is 17th. It is because of the market intervention and the effective steps taken by the Kerala Government that we are able to contain the price rise to a very large extent. I am not saying that there is no price rise in Kerala. It is there. But when compared to other States, Kerala is better due to existence of the public distribution system in the State. But what is the attitude of the Central Government? The Government of India cut 85 per cent of the ration quota for the APL sector in Kerala. When the new Government, the second UPA Government came to office ...*(Time bell rings)*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Okay. Your five minutes are over.

SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN: I need only three more minutes, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): No, no. No more time please. You have taken five minutes. *(Interruptions)* Okay, you take one more minute. Your five minutes are over. *(Interruptions)* No partiality for the Chair. *(Interruptions)* When in the Chair, no partiality. If I am there, I would support him. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN: The stock position improves. *(Interruptions)* Now, the Government says that there is enough stock in the Central pool. Still 85 per cent of the APL quota is reduced and the price of the APL rice has also risen. In this grim situation, here in Kerala, the Government is distributing 25 kilo of rice at 2 rupees per kilo to 26 lakh poor people. But according to the Planning Commission, there are only 10 lakh BPL households in Kerala. They are artificially creating a situation that there are very few BPL families in India and reducing the allocation to the State. So, if the Central Government is sincere ...*(Time-bell rings)*..

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Yes, you have taken seven minutes. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN: It says to contain the prices ...*(Interruptions)* They have to allot enough food-grains to Kerala. What pains me a lot is the ..*(Time-bell rings)*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Okay. You made your point. *(Interruptions)* Instead of three minutes, you have taken seven minutes. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN: Trying to politicise the food situation *(Interruptions)* and they are making agitation against the State Government. *(Interruptions)*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Yes, Mr. Achuthan, you have taken seven minutes. No more time please. *(Interruptions)* Please, Mr. Achuthan. *(Interruptions)* Please. *(Interruptions)* Okay, you have made your points. That is enough.

SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN: Okay. Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Okay, thank you. Shri M. V. Mysura Reddy. Reddyji, you have only five minutes.

SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): Thank you, Sir. Sir, this year, if my remembrance goes correct, this is the third time when we are discussing the price rise of essential commodities. Sir, every time the stereotype reply from the Government is that they are taking measures like export ban, zero import duty, imposition of ban on future trading, stock limit on hoarding, imports at substantial rates, bringing commodities under PDS, etc. But in spite of all these measures, the prices of essential commodities are skyrocketing. It has never come down. That means these *ad hoc* measures have neither protected farmers, nor have they helped the consumers.

Sir, recently, while replying to a question, the hon. Finance Minister said that it was because of mismatch between supply and demand, and also due to less production. If so, I

want to ask this question. Why is it that only consumer price is skyrocketing whereas the price at which a farmer sells his product is not increasing, if not skyrocketing?

I want to bring this issue to the notice of this august House. For rice, the farmer's sale price is Rs.18 per kg. But its retail price is Rs.40 per kg. For wheat, the farmer's sale price is Rs.15 per kg. But its retail price is Rs.39 per kg. For moong dal (green gram), the farmer's sale price is Rs.40 per kg. But its retail price is Rs.100 per kg. For arhar (yellow gram), the farmer's sale price is Rs.47 per kg. But its retail price is Rs.105 per kg. Shrimati Jaya Bachchan spoke about onion. I want to speak about chilly. For chilly, the farmer's sale price is Rs.10 per kg. But its retail price is Rs. 60 per kg. The farmer is not getting any benefit of increase in prices but the consumer is paying more.

Sir, I came to know that the Union Agriculture Minister is discussing this problem with the States. Of course, ours is a federal structure. There will be problems. I want to know if tangible measures have been discussed with the States; whether the States are willing to take any tangible action; and whether there is any tangible result to control the prices. I want to know this thing.

The Prime Minister has said this on record that the price rise is because of market forces. I want to know whether this price rise is due to market forces or due to middlemen. I have shown that there are variations in the price at which a farmer is selling his produce and its retail price.

When time is right, wrong decisions have been taken by this Government. When there is less production, it will allow export. When there is good production, they ban the export. For instance, the Ministry has prohibited in April 2008 export of non-Basmati rice and in four months, it changed this policy and allowed export of PUSA-1121 variety of non-Basmati rice to help a few companies.

When there was encouraging production of sugar in 2006, the Government of India banned the exports. Due to this, sugar mills failed to issue cutting orders. As a result of this, farmers burnt their sugarcane in the field. Now farmers have shifted from sugarcane to other crops. Because of this, there is this scarcity, which has pushed its price up.

The measures for development of infrastructure in agriculture on long-term basis are also not giving any results. This is happening because of the paradoxical approach of this Government. I am giving one example of it. When sugarcane growers do not get the remunerative price for their produce, they do not go in for sugarcane cultivation. Instead, they

go in for other alternative crop. It is not a cyclical disorder. It is due to paradoxical approach of the Government of India. That is why it is just like..(Interruptions)..

उपसभाध्यक्ष (प्रो. पी. जे. कुरियन) : आपका पांच मिनट हो गया है।

SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Sir, it is just like giving a pill for headache when the patient is suffering from stomach-ache. We have to overhaul the system, so that farmers get remunerative price for their produce and consumers get it at minimum price. Thank you, Sir.

उपसभाध्यक्ष (प्रो. पी. जे. कुरियन) : नजमा हेपतुल्ला जी, बोलिए।

डा. (श्रीमती) नजमा ए. हेपतुल्ला (राजस्थान) : सर, मेरी पार्टी का कितना टाइम है?

उपसभाध्यक्ष (प्रो. पी. जे. कुरियन) : आपकी पार्टी के दस मिनट बाकी हैं।

डा. (श्रीमती) नजमा ए. हेपतुल्ला : सर, हमारी पार्टी के प्रकाश जावडेकर जी का नाम भी है बोलने वालों में, इसलिए I will leave most of the time to him.

सर, आज हम price rise की बात कर रहे हैं और मैं अपने बनिये की रसीद साथ में लेकर आई हूँ। मुझे लगता है कि एग्रीकल्चर मिनिस्टर साहब की wife के पास भी ऐसी रसीद होगी, जिससे पता चले कि prices में कितनी बढ़ोतरी हुई है। अगर मैं यह बोलूँ कि 95 रुपए में अरहर की दाल है, और भी चीजें हैं, तो मैं उसमें समय नहीं लगाऊँगी, क्योंकि मुझे लगता है कि सभी सदस्यों ने अरहर, मसूर, दाल, चावल - सबका भाव बताया है, मगर जो सबसे अहम बात है, वह यह है कि आज तक कभी नमक के भाव इतने नहीं बढ़े थे - 45 परसेंट नमक का भाव बढ़ा है। अंग्रेजों के ज़माने में नमक पर चार-पांच पैसे टैक्स लगाया गया था, तो गांधी जी ने पूरी अंग्रेजी सरकार को हिला दिया था और नमक के लिए सत्याग्रह हुआ था। मेरी समझ में नहीं आ रहा है कि आज वह आम आदमी, जिसने आपको जिता कर यहां भेजा है, क्या कर रहा है? वह क्यों नहीं कुछ कर रहा है? शायद वह यह सोचता है कि बोलने से कुछ फायदा नहीं होगा। सर, इस हाऊस में यह तीसरी बार डिसकस हो रहा है। हम लोग डिसकशन करेंगे, चेयरमैन साहब से इजाजत लेगे, एग्रीकल्चर मिनिस्टर साहब यहां आएंगे और वही जवाब देंगे, जिसकी हमें उम्मीद है, जो उन्होंने पिछली बार दिया था। वे कोई नई बात नहीं कहेंगे। वे यह कहेंगे कि ग्लोबल वार्मिंग हो रही है, सूखा पड़ रहा है, पानी ज्यादा बरस गया, सैलाब आ गया, सेंटर और स्टेट्स में differences हैं, स्टेट गवर्नमेंट के हाथ में पब्लिक डिस्ट्रिब्यूशन है, सेंटर उसमें कोई हस्तक्षेप नहीं कर सकता, यह हमारा लड़ाई-झगड़े का मामला हो जाएगा - इस तरह की बातें कहकर यह सेशन खत्म हो जाएगा और हम लोग अपने घर चले जाएंगे। फिर जब बजट सेशन होगा, तो दोबारा यही होगा, prices बढ़ते रहेंगे, आम आदमी सेंटर-स्टेट के झगड़े में पिसता रहेगा, इसलिए इसमें ज्यादा बोलने को क्या है? सर, आप बताइए, हम इसमें क्या बोलें? आप चेयर पर आसीन हैं, अगर आप वहां होते, तो आप मुझे बताते कि क्या बोलूँ। मुझे यहां एग्रीकल्चर मिनिस्टर साहब से यह बात पूछनी है कि आप तो statistics जमा नहीं करते हैं, वह Programme Implementation Ministry के अंतर्गत आता है। जो economy को ठीक से चलाने की जिम्मेदारी है, management economy, वह फाइनेंस मिनिस्टर के हाथ में है, तो हर बार यह आपके पल्ले क्यों पड़ जाता है? एग्रीकल्चर मिनिस्टर से क्यों कहा जाता है कि आप price rise का जवाब दें?

सर, इसी पार्लियामेंट में हमने एक साल पहले एक बिल पास किया था -Collection of Statistics Bill. वह बिल एक साल पहले पास हुआ और मैं इस Government की non-seriousness के बारे में आपको बता रही हूँ। एक साल हुआ वह बिल पास हुए, लेकिन आज तक उस बिल के संबंध में कोई rules and regulations सदन के पटल पर नहीं रखे गए हैं। यह तो seriousness है आपकी ! सवाल यहां यह नहीं है कि आप वही जवाब दें, लेकिन इसका कोई permanent solution आपको ढूंढना है, जैसे श्री एन.के. सिंह ने कहा कि you have to find a permanent solution. It is not that we shout from this side or they shout from that side and you reply the same thing. The question is: How are you going to find a permanent solution?

सर, प्रणब मुखर्जी साहब यहां हाऊस में आकर बोलते हैं कि inflation तो marginally बढ़ा है, क्योंकि वे Wholesale Price Index बताते हैं। मैं आपसे यह पूछना चाहती हूँ कि वे जो Wholesale Price Index बताते हैं, उसकी basket में क्या-क्या commodities हैं? अगर आपने गेहूं और चावल के साथ कंप्यूटर, कपड़े धोने का साबुन, तेल, फ्रिज, साइकिल, मोटर साइकिल - सबको उस basket में रख दिया, तो naturally वह price index तो अलग ही दिखाएगा, मगर जो consumer को affect करता है, जो Consumer Price Index है, उसके बारे में मैं मंत्री जी से कहती हूँ कि अगर फाइनेंस मिनिस्टर यहां होते, तो मैं उनसे सवाल करती। आपसे सवाल करने से कोई फायदा नहीं, क्योंकि आप कहेंगे कि यह मेरे मंत्रालय का सवाल नहीं है। सर, सवाल यह है कि यहां हम क्या बोलें? किससे बोलें? Agriculture Minister cannot answer these questions because he will say the same thing which he has been saying for the last three times or what he said in the Lok Sabha. That is why, I have decided that I am only going to put three points. I request the hon. Minister to answer these questions. What is in the Wholesale Price Index basket? What are the commodities put there? Why should we not think about the Consumer Price Index which affects the consumer? Why only the Agriculture Minister is answering and why not the Finance Minister? Why the Minister for Programme Implementation who is responsible for implementing the Government's programme not over here?

These are my three questions. For the rest of the time, my colleagues will speak. Thank you, Sir.

श्री शान्ताराम लक्ष्मण नायक (गोवा) : धन्यवाद महोदय, पहली बात तो मुझे यह कहनी है कि कांग्रेस पार्टी एक ही देश की ऐसी पार्टी है जिसका जन्म ..(व्यवधान) ..

डा० (श्रीमती) नजमा ए.हेपतुल्ला : जिसने price को बढ़ा दिया। ..(व्यवधान) ..

श्री शान्ताराम लक्ष्मण नायक : जिसका जन्म अपनी राजनैतिक रोटियां सेंकने के लिए नहीं हुआ। 100 साल पहले, जब देश में बीमारी थी, प्लेग था, famine था, यह जो economic reasons उस वक्त थे, उनसे लड़ने के लिए कांग्रेस पार्टी पैदा हुई थी। ..(व्यवधान) ..

डा० (श्रीमती) नजमा ए.हेपतुल्ला : Price rise की बात करो। ..(व्यवधान) ..उस बात को छोड़ो। ..(व्यवधान) ..

श्री शान्ताराम लक्ष्मण नायक : छोड़ने की बात नहीं है। गरीबों के बारे में, price rise के बारे में कांग्रेस को जितनी चिंता होती है, आप लोगों को उतनी हो ही नहीं सकती। इसलिए नहीं हो सकती ..(व्यवधान) ..

डा0 (श्रीमती) नजमा ए.हेपतुल्ला : तभी price इतना बढ़ रहा है। ..(व्यवधान)।.

श्री शान्ताराम लक्ष्मण नायक : आप सुनिए। ..(व्यवधान)।. इसलिए नहीं हो सकती क्योंकि आपके बहुत सारे व्यापारी समर्थक - हमारे समर्थक तो छोटे-छोटे व्यापारी हैं - आपके जो समर्थक बड़े-बड़े हैं, उनको फायदा हो जाए और उनके coffer से आपको मुनाफा हो, इसमें आपका ..(व्यवधान)।.

डा0 (श्रीमती) नजमा ए.हेपतुल्ला : आप उन्हें पकड़कर जेल में भेजिए, हम लोग तैयार हैं। पकड़ो होर्डर्स को, पकड़ो black market करने वालों को।

श्री शान्ताराम लक्ष्मण नायक : ठीक है। ..(व्यवधान)।.

THE VICE CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): You address the Chair.

श्री शान्ताराम लक्ष्मण नायक : हमारे गोवा में सब्जी और दूध बेलगांव से आता है। वह बहुत महंगा हो गया है, सौ प्रतिशत बढ़ गया है। इसके लिए हम कभी येदुरप्पा को ब्लेम नहीं करते हैं, कर्नाटक की बीजेपी सरकार को ब्लेम नहीं करते। उनको तो इस price rise पर कभी रोना नहीं आया। लोग दुखी हैं लेकिन उनको रोना नहीं आता है। उनके मंत्रिमंडल से एक कोहटाया गया, उसके ऊपर उन्हें बहुत रोना आ गया। यह कर्नाटक की बीजेपी की सरकार है। महोदय, सरकारों को ब्लेम करने की एक लिमिट होती है। हम सब जानते हैं कि price rise के सिलसिले में सरकार को ब्लेम करने की कोई मर्यादा होती है। ऐसा नहीं है कि हम लोगों की भावना को नहीं समझते हैं। मैं एक गीत के lyrics के जरिए, जो आम आदमी की भावना है, मैं कोई संकोच न करते हुए, उस गीत की कुछ पंक्तियां यहां पर पढ़ना चाहता हूं। उसमें सारी आम आदमी की भावनाएं हैं और वही मेरी भी भावनाएं हैं।

पहले मुट्ठी में पैसे लेकर थैला भर शक्कर लाते थे,
अब थैले में पैसे लाते हैं, मुट्ठी में शक्कर आती है।
हाय महंगाई, हाय महंगाई,
तू कहां से आयी, तुझे मौत क्यों नहीं आयी?
शक्कर में आटे की मिलायी मार गयी,
पाउडर वाले दूध की मलाई मार गयी,
राशन वाली लाइन की लम्बाई मार गयी,
जनता जो चीखी, चिल्लाई मार गयी,
बाकी कुछ बचा तो महंगाई मार गयी।
गरीब को बच्चों की पढ़ाई मार गयी,
बेटी की शादी और सगाई मार गयी,
किसी को दो रोटी की कमाई मार गयी,
कपड़े की किसी को सिलाई मार गयी,
किसी को मकान की बनवाई मार गयी,
जो सच-सच बोला तो सच्चाई मार गयी,
बाकी कुछ बचा तो महंगाई मार गयी।

5.00 P.M.

ये हमारी भावनाएं हैं, हम व्यक्त करते हैं। हम संकोच नहीं करते हैं।..(व्यवधान).. हमें कोई संकोच नहीं है। यह सच्चाई है। लेकिन इसका किस तरह मुकाबला करना है..(व्यवधान).. आप तो सिर्फ सरकार को उंगलियां दिखाएंगे, आप कुछ सुझाएंगे नहीं। आप कुछ alternative नहीं बताएंगे।

डा० (श्रीमती) नजमा ए.हेपतुल्ला : आप देखिए। आप सरकार में हैं।

श्री शान्ताराम लक्ष्मण नायक : हम सरकार में हैं लेकिन आपका भी कुछ दायित्व बनता है। आप सरकार को बताइए कि क्या करना चाहिए। क्या आपने कभी बताया?

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: What is he talking about?

श्री शान्ताराम लक्ष्मण नायक : दूसरी बात है, Sir, there is a percentage, of course, of price rise, where hoarding is involved. देश में सूखा पड़ा, सौ करोड़ लोगों को अनाज देना है, यह कोई आसान बात नहीं है। आधा देश सूखाग्रस्त है, इसकी जानकारी सबको है, लेकिन इसका उल्लेख कोई नहीं करता है। सूखा होने के कारण महंगाई बढ़ी लेकिन उसका कोई जिक्र नहीं करता है। इसलिए मैं आपसे आग्रह करता हूँ कि एसेशियल कर्मांडिटीज ऐक्ट का उपयोग राज्य सरकारों को करना चाहिए। आजकल सभी राज्य सरकारें विदाउट पार्टी थिंकिंग, इस कानून का उपयोग करने में कतराती हैं। इसलिए आपका यह दायित्व होता है कि सभी राज्य सरकारों को बताएं कि इसका उपयोग होना चाहिए, ताकि जो माल आर्टिफिसअली होर्डिंग किया हुआ है, वह तो कम से कम बाहर आ जाए, उतनी सीमा तक थोड़ी सी प्राइस कम हो जाएगी। सर, दूसरी बात है कि हम टेक्नालोजी में बहुत आगे बढ़े हैं, हम चन्द्रमा पर जाने की सोच रहे हैं, हम बड़ी-बड़ी गाड़ियां बनाते हैं, ऐरोप्लेन बनाते हैं, कम्प्यूटर सॉफ्टवेयर में हम दुनिया में नम्बर वन और नम्बर टू हैं। लेकिन सीड्स बनाने में, उत्पादन बढ़ाने में हमारी टेक्नालोजी कहाँ जाती है? प्रोडक्शन सालों से स्टैटिक रहा है। तो बाकी चीजों पर ध्यान न देते हुए अगर हम अच्छा बीज प्रोड्यूस करने में अपनी टेक्नालोजी बढ़ाएं, जो स्टैटिक प्रोडक्शन है वह आगे बढ़ाएं और जो पल्सेज हैं, जिनके इंपोर्ट करने में बहुत तकलीफ होती है, इसके लिए पैसा देना पड़ता है, तो इन चीजों पर ध्यान करके अगर हमने अपना प्रोडक्शन बढ़ाया तो जब कभी ड्राउट आते हैं तो हमें ऐसी मुश्किल का सामना नहीं करना पड़ेगा।

दूसरी चीज, हम सभी जानते हैं कि किसान और कंज्यूमर, इन दोनों का इंटरैस्ट कांट्रेरी होता है। किसान को मदद करने जाएं तो मार्केट में एसेशियल कर्मांडिटीज के भाव बढ़ते हैं। अगर सपोर्ट प्राइस दिया तो सपोर्ट प्राइस का consequence भी होता है। बीच में फॉरवर्ड ट्रेडिंग का जो एक्सपेरिमेंट हुआ, ताकि मिडिलमैन हट जाए और किसानों को सीधा लाभ हो जाए, चीजें सस्ती हो जाएं, मार्केट में भी चीजें सस्ती आ जाएं, यह जो प्रयोग है, यह सफल नहीं हुआ। इस प्रयोग को सफल करने में क्या करना चाहिए, इस पर ध्यान आपको देना है। सर, हम कहते हैं कि जब फाइनेंस मिनिस्टर को छींक आती है, तो स्टॉक मार्केट के भाव छलांग लेते हैं। यह तो हम सब जानते हैं। परन्तु ऐसा लगता है कि हमारे एग्रीकल्चर मिनिस्टर को जो खांसी आती है, तब भी भाव बढ़ते हैं। हमारे एग्रीकल्चर मिनिस्टर फ्रेंक हैं, फ्रेंकली बोलते हैं कि रबी फसल का सीजन आने तक चीजों के भाव वैसे ही हो जाएंगे। जब वे ऐसा बोलते हैं तो 25 परसेंट और बढ़ता है। क्योंकि वे तो फ्रेंकली बोलते हैं तथा जो परिस्थिति है वह बतलाते हैं। वह कम से कम हफ्ते में एक बार तो बतलाते ही हैं। हफ्ते में एक बार बताने से रिपीट हो जाता है। सर, जितनी बार रिपीट होता है उतनी ही बार भाव बढ़ते हैं। सर, जो आपके बतलाने का फ्रेंकनेस है, उसको थोड़ा कम कर दीजिए, कभी-कभी ही बतलाइए, बार-बार मत बतलाइए। सर, इन्ही शब्दों के साथ मैं कहता हूँ कि आपको हम सबका समर्थन है, देश का समर्थन है। आप भाव अगले कुछ महीनों में स्थिर करेंगे, ऐसी आशा हम करते हैं। धन्यवाद।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Thank you, Shri Shantaram Laxman Naik. Shri Prasanta Chatterjee. Now only three minutes are left for your party.

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE (West Bengal): Sir, I will take five or six minutes.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Okay, you take five minutes.

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: It is a very important issue.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): I agree. You take five minutes. I know you will keep your words. I know that.

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Sir, the Government has talked about the global phenomena not only in this House but also in the Independence Day Address of the Prime Minister last year. The Prime Minister had stated, "The inflation that we have seen this year is basically due to external factors". Now, I would like to quote from the IMF indices:

"After peaking in mid 2008, the international fuel and food prices have fallen sharply throughout 2009; from June to July, 2008 the fuel prices have fallen by nearly 50 per cent, while the food prices have fallen by over 25 per cent."

The global inflation, which peaked at 6.27 per cent in July, 2008, had come down to around 1.3 per cent by August, 2009, with the inflation rate of emerging economies falling from 9 per cent to 4.3 per cent in this period. The IMF says, and I quote: "In emerging economies, inflation is forecast to hover around five per cent, in 2009-10, down from more than nine per cent in 2008." This is the picture, Sir. Now, I quote from some of the selected countries from different regions across the world. In October, 2009, it clearly shows that India has among the highest inflation rates. More importantly, while the inflation rates have come down everywhere since 2008, it is only in India that the consumer inflation rate has increased. I quote from the source, "Output, Price and Jobs, The Economist of 3rd December, 2009. I give examples, of only a few of the countries, showing the Consumer Price Inflation as on October, 2009, in comparison to October, 2008, (Year on Year Increase %). I quote: "Pakistan, in 2008, it was 25, while in 2009, it is 8.9. In Vietnam, it was 23.1; now, it is 7.1. In China, from 4 per cent, it has come down to -0.5. In Malaysia, from 7.6, it has come down to -1.6. And, in India, it was 10.4 in 2008, and in October, 2009, it was 11.5." So, the argument of global phenomenon is a bogus argument put forth by the Government and that side. Now, the principle factors are domestic, and, we, the Left, are continuously saying as to what the reasons behind inflation in India are. The neo-liberal policies are causing agrarian crisis and eroding self-sufficiency. The main reasons behind high inflation, especially, rising food prices are manifold. There is the weakening of the Public Distribution System and increase in fuel prices. We had seen it in the last Session

that you did not care about Parliament, that just eleven hours before the Parliament Session was to start, you increased the fuel and diesel prices. There is also the failure to check hoarding and speculation, and weakening the role of the States. With the dominant role of the private speculators, public procurement continues to remain limited to a few major crops. Procurement operation was carried out only in limited parts of the country. Big corporates have been allowed to enter into the food market. There has been an increasing reliance on imports, often at exorbitant prices, erosion of self-reliance in food production and failure to control rise in prices. Sir, agricultural growth fell shortly in the absence of any substantive expansion of irrigation. Sixty per cent of our Indian agriculture continues to remain dependent on the monsoon. What is the estimate of the World Food Hungry Report? The Global Hunger Index of 2009 says that countries, which have scored between 20 and 30 points, are in an alarming condition.” And the rate of India has been estimated at 23.9. Who will answer this? Who will take the responsibility for this? What we see is the faulty estimation of the BPL. We are also demanding a universal PDS at affordable prices. But the Government, as a policy, does not want that. And, they are passing the buck. Here, they are advocating their principles. Besides that, we see that Kerala has set a unique example. We also have the examples of West Bengal and Tamil Nadu where the PDS is a success. Kerala is a unique example. Since the time the Left and the Democratic Front Government assumed office in May, 2006, the Central allotment for rice for APL under PDS was 1,13,420 MT per month. It was reduced to 21,334 MT. It was further reduced to 17056 metric tonnes from April, 2006. They are the advocates of open market!

Sir, while concluding, together with the observations made by the other speaker of my party and other Left speakers, we, once again, demand that the Universal PDS should be strengthened, (*Time-bell*) The Government should act against hoarders, ban futures trading, reduce the price of diesel and petrol, end the discrimination in allotment and follow the self-reliant policy in agriculture. So, this is my demand. Thank you, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Now, Shri Naresh Gujral. Please take only five minutes. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI NARESH GUJRAL (Punjab): You give me five minutes and I will live with it.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Because I will tell you the problem. In the “Others Category” there are nine speakers and only 29 minutes. That means, almost three minutes. But, I am allowing extra two minutes. ...(*Interruptions*)... Yes, generous.

SHRI NARESH GUJRAL: Sir, the last few months have witnessed an unprecedented rise in the prices of essential commodities. While the Government may be sitting smug with the overall

official low inflation figures, the fact of the matter is that the Aam Aadmi, who this Government claims to represent, is finding it difficult to keep his body and soul together. The Government by patting itself on the back with a 7 per cent growth rate is very, very happy. Congratulations. But, what about the man on the street who is literally starving due to the high prices of food?

Sir, more than 50 per cent of our population survive on just four or five food items, *atta* or rice, *dal*, onion, edible oil and a little bit of salt and sugar. The prices of all these commodities have gone up from 20 per cent to 120 per cent in the past one year. Congratulations to the Government for the management of the economy!

Sir, according to the Planning Commission, an average person in the village requires a minimum intake of 2400 Calories of food per day, and those living in urban areas require 2100 Calories per day. I ask you, Sir, given the current prices of food stuff, how does he get it? It is a matter of national shame that more than half of the population remains malnourished. Sir, according to the Global Hunger Index that ranks countries on a scale of 100 with 0 being the best score, India has a GHI of 23.9 which is an alarming value. We stand next only to Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Pakistan. These are last year's figures. With the current prices, we are, perhaps, below them even.

Sir, in reply to a debate on the sugar prices, the hon. Finance Minister said that the prices are going up because there is a mismatch between demand and supply. We all know that. We also know that we have had a drought year, but does that mean that we let our poor starve?

Sir, to my mind, the only solution to meet this challenge is to increase our food production, and this would be possible only if we make farming a lucrative profession or business. According to the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, a recent National Survey has shown that 49 per cent of the farmers would not like to be in farming given a choice. Sir, our farmers are perennially in debt, and many unfortunately resort to suicide to end their misery. This is so because of the myopic policies of successive Governments that have only given lip-service to the interests of the farmer.

Sir, to improve our farmer's plight, we need to incentivise him. We need to give him better MSP, and this MSP should be realistically decided keeping in view the input costs. Sir, in 2007-08, when the hon. Minister raised the MSP of wheat from Rs.750 to Rs.1000, we saw a quantum jump in production of food grains from 69 million tonnes to 76 million tonnes. Sir, we need to give our farmers high-yielding seeds, better quality fertilizers and pesticides at

reasonable prices. We need to provide them with a market at their doorsteps and we need to give them credit at low rates of interest so that he does not end up in the clutches of money-lending sharks.

Sir, I am pained to point out that when our State Government gives free electricity to the farmer in Punjab, we are told that we are populist. When the Shiromani Akali Dal Government gives subsidized *atta* and *dal* to 16 lakh poor families in Punjab, whose monthly income is less than Rs. 3,000, we are branded as irresponsible.

Sir, it is the responsibility of the Central Government to ensure that all BPL families —and their present definition is seriously flawed—are given essential commodities at affordable prices, as only then will India have inclusive growth.

Sir, I would also like to draw your attention to the fact that while prices are shooting up, we are doing precious little to prevent damage to the stocks of our foodgrains and crops. I come from an agricultural State which provides almost two-thirds of wheat and one-third of rice to the nation. Yet, I am sad to point out that after sixty-three years of Independence, we have not built adequate modern storage facilities to warehouse our precious food stocks. Almost 20-30 per cent of our fruits and vegetables, 8-10 per cent of the pulses and more than 8-10 per cent of foodgrains are wasted post-harvest, and these are official figures. I am certain that the actual losses are much higher since I have seen how the FCI stores foodgrains in the open for months and months together, allowing them to be attacked and wasted by rats, rodents and pests.

Sir, in the end, I would like to say that since the Government claims that it has adequate food reserves or buffer stocks, there is no need to import foodgrains in the near future, it is imperative for the Central Government to put in more food in the Public Distribution System immediately. Thank you.

उपसभाध्यक्ष (प्रो. पी.जे. कुरियन) : श्री प्रकाश जावडेकर। प्रकाश जी आपके पांच मिनट हैं।

डा.(श्रीमती) नजमा ए. हेपतुल्ला : पांच मिनट कैसे?

उपसभाध्यक्ष (प्रो. पी.जे. कुरियन) : मैंने बोला है कि पांच मिनट बाकी हैं। Please finish in five minutes.

श्री प्रकाश जावडेकर (महाराष्ट्र) : उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, मैं मंत्री महोदय जी को याद दिलाना चाहता हूँ, कुछ आंकड़े बताना चाहता हूँ, कुछ सवाल पूछना चाहता हूँ और कुछ मांगें भी रखना चाहता हूँ। पहला है वायदे की याद। चुनाव में जाते समय जब लोग महंगाई पर पूछ रहे थे, तो यूपीए घटकों ने प्रोमिस किया था और यहां राष्ट्रपति महोदय ने भी अपने भाषण में कहा था कि सौ दिन में महंगाई कम करेंगे। सौ दिन पूरे हो गए, लेकिन महंगाई बीस फीसदी और बढ़ी है। हमारे एक कांग्रेसी मित्र ने कहा कि इतना सब होकर भी हम जीत रहे हैं। मुझे उन्हें यह बताना पड़ा कि यह जनादेश और चुनावी जीत महंगाई के लिए जनादेश मिला है, ऐसा न समझें, इसलिए मैं आपको वायदे की याद दिलाना चाहता हूँ।

दूसरी बात, सरकार क्या कर रही है। क्या यह आसमानी संकट है या सुल्तानी संकट है? मैं इसे सुल्तानी संकट का नाम देना चाहता हूँ। इस सुल्तान का नाम है यूपीए सरकार। भले ही यूपीए सरकार में कुछ दल शरद पवार जी को टारगेट करते हैं और उनके कारण ही महंगाई हो रही है, ऐसा मानते हैं, लेकिन मैं उनके साथ सारे यूपीए को कटघरे में खड़ा करना चाहता हूँ। सर, गन्ना और चीनी के साथ क्या खिलवाड़ हुआ? शरद पवार जी, हम जो अभी चालीस रुपए में शुगर परचेज कर रहे हैं, वह पिछले साल की है। पिछले साल किसान को क्या दाम मिला था? उसे सोलह रुपए मिले थे। आपने हमें बहुत बार गणित समझाया है कि जिसे सोलह रुपए किलो मिला, उस सोलह रुपए का पच्चीस रुपए भाव बाजार में होना चाहिए। अगर किसान को सोलह रुपए मिलते हैं तो वह ग्राहक को पच्चीस रुपए में मिलना चाहिए, तब आज यह चालीस रुपए में क्यों मिल रहा है? ये बीच के पंद्रह रुपए कौन खा रहा है? इसके लिए आप क्या कर रहे हैं? शुगर के बारे में मंत्री महोदय ने नौ महीने पहले कहा था, बहुत दूर नहीं है, इसी सेशन में पहले कहा था कि भंडार लबालब भरा है और इतनी शक्कर है कि हम निर्यात की परमिशन दे रहे हैं। निर्यात किया गया 48 लाख टन। जनवरी 2009 में 48 लाख टन शुगर निर्यात हुआ 12 रुपए की दर से और अभी वही शुगर आ रहा है 27 रुपए की दर से। सर, यह कौन सा व्यापार है? यह कौन सी आयात-निर्यात नीति है? यह तो चीनी का महाघोटाला है। 48 लाख टन शुगर निर्यात किया जाएगा 12 रुपए की दर से और 9 महीने में तुरन्त 70 लाख टन आयात होगा 27 से 30 रुपए की दर से, इसे घोटाला नहीं तो और क्या कहेंगे? इसका हमें जवाब चाहिए।

खाद्य तेल के बारे में भी क्या खेल किया गया। मैं मंत्री महोदय को एक बात याद दिलाना चाहता हूँ कि दो साल पहले महाराष्ट्र में गन्ना किसानों का आन्दोलन हुआ था। वह इसलिए हुआ था कि वे लोग 1,200 रुपए भाव मांग रहे थे, लेकिन उनको 1,200 रुपए नहीं दिए गए, इसलिए वे लोग आन्दोलन कर रहे थे। आप वहाँ अपनी दो सीटें भी हार गए, क्योंकि वहाँ किसानों का जन-आन्दोलन हुआ। वह आन्दोलन इसलिए हुआ कि उन्हें 1,200 रुपए भाव दिया जाए, लेकिन 1,200 रुपए भाव नहीं दिए गए। अब इस साल 2,000 रुपए देने पड़ रहे हैं। यह क्या नीति है? क्या इस देश में सरकार नाम की कोई चीज़ है, जो एक किसान को दीर्घकालीन कीमत नहीं देती है, जो long-term price guarantee नहीं देती है? यह कैसी सरकार है, क्या नीति है? न आयात की नीति है, न निर्यात की नीति है, न price stability की नीति है, न महंगाई को रोकने की कोई कला है, न शास्त्र है। खाद्य तेल में क्या हुआ? वह आज 80 रुपए तक गया। ऐसा क्यों हुआ? मैं सवाल पूछ रहा हूँ कि क्या 2003 में इस देश में एक टन खाद्य तेल का भी आयात हो रहा था? सात साल में ऐसा क्या हो गया, सिर्फ इसके सिवाए कि यूपीए सरकार छः साल सत्ता में रही है, क्या हो गया कि अब अपनी 60 फीसदी जरूरत आयात से पूरी होती है? देश के तिलहन की खेती क्यों समाप्त हो गई? देश का तेल का उद्योग क्यों समाप्त हो गया? श्रीलंका के साथ हमारा free trade agreement है और यहाँ के मिल मालिकों ने वहाँ जाकर मिलें लगाईं और श्रीलंका और मलेशिया का कारोबार है, तो मलेशिया से यहाँ without tax आ रहा है। क्या यह किसी को दिखता नहीं है कि किस तरह से इस देश के तेल के उद्योग को समाप्त किया गया, किस तरह से तिलहन की खेती को समाप्त किया गया? जो आज से छः साल पहले self-sufficient था, छः साल बाद आज वह 60 per cent import dependent हो गया। दालों की हालत आज क्या हो गई! 100 रुपए किलो दाल कभी सोचा था! Pulse के मिशन के बारे में आप बार-बार कहते हैं, वह क्यों fail हो गया? क्यों productivity नहीं बढ़ी, क्यों नए seeds नहीं आए, क्यों assured water supply नहीं मिली? इससे भी ज्यादा दाल के किसान को आपने क्या गारंटी दी कि आप दाल लगाओ, तो आपको हर साल बेहतर कीमत मिलेगी? क्या यह

सरकार ने कभी बताया? कोई नीति नहीं है। नीति के अभाव में सरकार के कारण देश में supply-demand की problem तैयार हुई और इसके कारण आज महंगाई बढ़ी है।

सर, मैं आज एक और बात पूछना चाहता हूँ कि हमने paddy के किसान के लिए 1,000 रुपए मांगे थे, प्रधान मंत्री जी ने कहा कि 1,000 रुपए नहीं दे सकते। क्या प्रधान मंत्री जी ने ऐसा नहीं कहा था? उन्होंने कहा था कि हम 1,000 रुपए नहीं देंगे, क्योंकि महंगाई बढ़ेगी। मैं पूछना चाहता हूँ कि आज क्या हुआ? आज बाजार में 40 रुपए किलो चावल मिल रहा है। जो एकदम साधारण चावल है, वह भी 20-25-30 रुपए के नीचे नहीं है। आप किसान को 1,000 रुपए देने के लिए मना कर रहे थे और ऐसा हुआ। **(समय की घंटी)** यह जो हुआ है, उसका मूलभूत कारण है कि यह आसमानी नहीं, सुल्तानी संकट है और सुल्तान का नाम यूपीए सरकार है।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (प्रो. पी.जे. कुरियन) : जावडेकर जी, आप समाप्त कीजिए।

श्री प्रकाश जावडेकर : सर, अंत में, मेरी दो-तीन मांगें हैं। क्या यह सरकार किसान को long-term price guarantee देगी, क्योंकि यही एक रास्ता है? मैंने देखा है कि पिछले साल उत्तर प्रदेश में आलू के किसानों ने कोल्ड स्टोरेज में आलू छोड़ दिया। वे उसका किराया भी नहीं दे सकते थे, इतनी भी price नहीं मिली। इस साल ग्राहक को आलू 30 रुपए किलो लेना पड़ रहा है। Price में ये जो distortions आते हैं, वे इसलिए आते हैं, क्योंकि सरकार के पास कोई नीति नहीं है। Assured water supply is the key to the productivity of agriculture. क्या assured water supply सुनिश्चित करने के लिए सरकार public investment करेगी? अगर हाँ, तो कितना करेगी? महोदय, अंत में एक मांग है कि आज जनता को राहत देने के लिए सरकार क्या करेगी? मैं मांग करता हूँ कि हर परिवार को 5 किलो चीनी, 5 किलो तेल, 5 किलो दाल, 10 किलो चावल और 10 किलो गेहूँ मिलना चाहिए। यह हर परिवार को, APL परिवार को भी, सुनिश्चित दामों पर PDS के माध्यम से निश्चित रूप से मिलना चाहिए, तभी राहत मिलेगी, नहीं तो सरकार ने क्या किया? **...(समय की घंटी)...** इसने केवल बयान दिया और महंगाई पर लगाम नहीं लगाया, यही लोग कहेंगे। **...(व्यवधान)...**

उपसभाध्यक्ष (प्रो. पी.जे. कुरियन) : हो गया।

श्री प्रकाश जावडेकर : इसलिए मैं अंत में केवल एक वाक्य कहूँगा। **...(व्यवधान)...** मैं केवल एक वाक्य कहूँगा कि यह जो महंगाई का राक्षस है, यह अचानक नहीं आया है। यह कोई संकट नहीं है **...(व्यवधान)...** यह सरकार द्वारा निर्मित है **...(व्यवधान)...** और इसलिए यह सरकार को करना चाहिए।

SHRI SHARAD ANANTRAO JOSHI (Maharashtra): Thank you Vice-Chairman, Sir. If I remember correctly, it is the third time during the period of the UPA-II that we are discussing the price situation, particularly about the essential commodities. It is remarkable that not even on one occasion that we have talked about the rural consumer. When we talk of consumer prices, we, essentially, talk of urban consumer. It must be remembered that there is a basic difference in the interest of the rural consumer on the one hand and the urban consumer on the other. The urban consumer wants low prices; the rural consumer wants higher incomes. The basic defect in the policies of the Government is their failure to balance between the interests of rural consumer and urban consumer. On all the three occasions I had pointed out that the increase in inflation

and the hike in prices all a direct consequence of the policy of so called inclusive growth or the *Aam Aadmi* economics. Sir, this has distorted the supply-demand situation in the country as a whole. The flagship schemes of the UPA have resulted in a lot of money being pumped into the consumer who is going in for additional consumables which is a happy thing. But, that has to be matched with additional incentives to the producer community which is not coming as has been pointed by so many previous speakers. Unless we provide sufficient incentive to the producer, it is very difficult. If we do not do that and go on pumping money into the hands of the consumer, the consequence would be what we are seeing today. The fact that *Aam Aadmi* economics has got them vote possibly give them to think that they are on the wrong track. They might have won elections. It might, actually, come out to be disastrous for the country as a whole. I would like to make only one point, Sir.

The knee-jerk reactions that the Government is giving, for example, importing the essential commodities, banning the export of essential commodities, imposing restrictions on the futures market, etc., are all anti-farmer measures which will discourage the farmer from producing more next year. This year you suffered from drought and next year it might come as inundation and flood and you are not really equipped to meet that situation. This year you might escape because you have sufficient stocks. But, next year, you might be really in trouble and don't think that the electorate is as favourable to you that time as they are this time. Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Thank you. You stick to time. You have taken less time.

SHRI SHARAD ANANTRAO JOSHI: Sir, I always do that.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): You are very crisp and to the point. And, you have made very good points.

SHRI SHARAD ANANTRAO JOSHI: Thank you, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Smt. Stanley.

SHRIMATI VASANTHI STANLEY (Tamil Nadu): Thank you Vice-Chairman, Sir, for giving me the opportunity. I record my concern here over the increasing trend in prices of essential commodities like edible oil, pulses, etc. The result is showing on other commodities also like vegetables and fruits. This has a direct affect on *Aam Aadmi* for whom we say that the entire Government is working. So, this is of much concern and the need of the hour is to address this sincerely.

The main reason for increase in the prices is the mismatch between supply and demand. That is, when the demand is very high and the supply is less, certainly, it paves way for

increasing the price. The supply is less due to floods and drought conditions. In such a condition, the supply of essential commodities can be increased only through import. If at all there is hoarding, we can impose stockholding limits. Tightening of de-hoarding operations will have only a temporary relief. This cannot have a desired effect on price rise if the supply condition is acute. A Tamil Poet says, which means, 'The Government should be able to create the resources, guard it very well and then equally distribute it.' This is what the Government of India is doing now.

India is now facing such a short supply, particularly, in respect of pulses and oils. The Government of India is implementing a scheme for importing and supplying edible oils and pulses to the State for its distribution through PDS. But, Sir, the quantum of supply is very, very inadequate for Tamil Nadu. For instance, in Tamil Nadu, the State has supplied 71,000 tonnes of *Tur dal*, whereas, the Central Government agencies have supplied only 250 tonnes. Then, 29,000 and odd tonnes of *Urad dal* has been supplied through PDS in Tamil Nadu, whereas, the Central Government agencies have supplied only 4750 tonnes to Tamil Nadu. Similarly, 69,000 and odd kilolitres of palm oil has been supplied by the Tamil Nadu Government through PDS but the Central Government agencies have supplied only 20,000 kilolitres of palm oil to Tamil Nadu. Likewise, 17000 and odd tonnes of *Atta*, 4000 and odd tonnes of *Sooji*, 15,000 and odd tonnes of *Maida* and 43 tonnes of *Masala* packets have also been distributed through PDS from April, 2009 in Tamil Nadu. So, apart from introducing the scheme of providing rice at Rs. 1 per kg, the distribution of *Masala* packets is another unique system of curbing the price rise in Tamil Nadu. All the important *Masala* items like coriander powder, chilli powder or even mustard seed, etc., are packeted, which is worth than Rs. 100 but it is distributed through the PDS at just Rs. 50.

So, here it is very clear that the supply given by the Central Government is very inadequate, but still the State Government of Tamil Nadu is able to manage the situation. How is it possible? It is done only by the additional budgetary provisions. An amount of nearly Rs.400-500 crores is being spent to buy the essential commodities from the open market and to supply this at the subsidised rate to protect the poor people of Tamil Nadu irrespective of the quantum supplied by the Government of India. The same is the case with sugar also.

I would like the Government of India to take some long-term measures by increasing the production and also the productivity so that there is an increase in the supply. This can be achieved only by incentivising the cultivation of such crops and also by adopting better seeds and promoting high yielding variety seeds and also by following good agronomic policies. Sir, there is another interesting Tamil cinema song which is worth quoting here. Which means

everything is possible if you are concentrating properly on the farmers and on the field.
...(*Time-bell rings*)...

Sir, pulses and oil seeds can be grown in large quantities in our climatic conditions. For this, I request that the Government can give the hybrid seeds to the farmers free of cost. If it cannot provide it free, it should be provided, at least, at 50 per cent rates.

Finally, I will make just two more suggestions. The MSP is always fixed at a very low level, as a result of which the Government agencies are not able to procure the desired quantity. I request that the remunerative rate may be fixed for the essential commodities like we have fixed for sugarcane. Otherwise, the MSP should be fixed on par with the moving average, that is., taking into consideration the market price.

With this observation, Sir, I request that the Government of India should support the State Governments like Tamil Nadu which is taking several proactive measures to implement PDS as an effective anti-inflationary scheme and also to consider the short-term and long-term measures to curb the price rise at large. Thank you, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Dr. Subbarami Reddy. ...(*Interruptions*)...

DR. K. MALAISAMY: Sir, I would like to thank(*Interruptions*)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Dr. Subbarami Reddy. ...(*Interruptions*).
Yes; yes.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, this past year has been very unfortunate for the households in our country because the prices of fruits, vegetables, even eggs, chicken, sugar and palm oil have gone up abnormally. This is mainly because this year, we had unprecedented drought on one side and heavy floods on the other, and most disproportionate patterns of rainfall throughout the country. This is one of the major reasons. The price of potato rose by 82 to 100 per cent, onions by 49.9 per cent, pulses by 23 per cent. The price of rice was up by 12.19 per cent and wheat, by 7.47 per cent. Now, there is no doubt that we have a very knowledgeable and committed Minister for Agriculture. As the Minister for Agriculture, Shri Sharad Pawar is doing his best to control the prices but certain things are beyond his control. At the same time, there are some remedies which I would like to suggest on this occasion. For instance, take sugar. Today, sugar has become so expensive. It is priced at Rs. 40 to 50 and in some places, even Rs. 70 per kg. Why? How to control it? Today, prices are high all over the country and cane production has gone down by almost 50 per cent. This is because in the last several years, the sugar industry has been made to suffer extensively. At one

time, there were heavy imports. Later, imports were stopped. Subsequently, cane was not grown fully and cane growers had problems. Sugar factories closed down as a result. Thus, there have been many problems continuously. Today Government wants to import sugar, but the international prices of sugar are very high. Even by importing sugar they would not be able to control prices. So, what is the option? The option is, at least, for the future, what they must do is, sugarcane farmers must be encouraged to grow more sugar. Now, cane production has gone down by 50 per cent. At least, in future they must be encouraged. Similarly, in sugar factories which are sick in States like Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and various other States, the Government must take initiatives to give them more incentives and even ask banks to give them loans at less rates of interest and restructure the sick factories. The cooperative sugar factories should also be restructured. This should be done on a war-footing and, at least, in the next one or two years, the price of sugar must be completely brought under control. There must be a boom and production should go up.

Sir, similar problems are being faced in the case of palm oil. You cannot import palm oil. Not many countries produce it; there are a very limited number of countries that does that. So, we must produce more in our country itself. We must also concentrate on potatoes and onions. The Agriculture Ministry must concentrate on some special crops where there is a shortage always. Every season we talk about potatoes and onions; this is a burning issue in every season. How to solve it? The only solution is warehouses. Whenever there are good monsoons and a bumper crop, you must put warehouses to use. There is the Warehouses Corporation and there are cold storage facilities, but they are not sufficient. The Ministry must take more aggressive steps and encourage the private enterprises to come forward. If you have cold storages and warehouses, whenever there is more production of fruits and vegetables in a particular area, you may store them and use them again. Also, wherever in some area there is a surplus of foodgrains and vegetables, Government must take the initiative to transport them to places where they can be stored. The system is not well-coordinated. Now, the Government must take active part in, (1) coordination of transportation of vegetables, fruits and foodgrains from surplus areas to the deficit areas within the State and between States in a very scientific manner; and (2) wherever more crops are produced, particularly in areas where the monsoons have been good, they should provide for cold storage by giving them more loans and encouraging public-private partnership, and see that the vegetables and food items are stored and then given out when there is a shortage of food. Then, there are monsoons and floods; this is a continuous process in the country. Even though this cannot be solved immediately, there should be some solution, that is, they must concentrate on improving the irrigation system at the national level.

Now, just as we are giving top priority to power, construction of roads, the next priority should be irrigation. If we give priority to irrigation, whenever there are floods, water will not flow out to the sea; it would be actually stored to be used again for cultivation. Similarly, when there is a drought, this water could be utilised.

The next priority should be irrigation. Whenever there is a flood, water should not go to sea. It should be stored for cultivation so that this water could be utilised when there is drought. When the flood will come again, it will not damage the crops; water will be stored in reservoirs. In conclusion, I would like to say that even though we have succeeded to bring down the inflation from 12 per cent to zero per cent in one year, again, it has now become 1.3 per cent. Foodgrains and vegetables prices have gone up to 13 per cent, 14 per cent or 21 per cent. It is quite possible for the Government to control the prices with all remedial measures and future planning, and also help the people who are suffering. You must have the planning, at least, for future one or two years in a very scientific way.

श्री राजनीति प्रसाद : उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, आपने मुझे इस विषय पर बोलने का अवसर दिया, इसके लिए धन्यवाद। मैं यहां इसलिए खड़ा हुआ हूँ ताकि मैं अपनी पार्टी की तरफ से महंगाई के खिलाफ पुरजोर विरोध प्रकट कर सकूँ।

उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, हम समाजवादी आंदोलन से आते हैं और हम लोगों ने नारा दिया है — “रोको महंगाई, बांधो दाम, नहीं तो होगा चक्का जाम”, यह हम समाजवादी लोगों की मांग है। हमारी दूसरी मांग है — “महंगाई जो रोक न सके, वह सरकार निकम्मी है, जो सरकार निकम्मी है, वह सरकार बदलनी है।” अभी हमारे एक मित्र बता रहे थे कि आप सरकार नहीं बदल सकते, क्योंकि अभी साढ़े चार साल बाकी हैं। मैं उनको बताना चाहता हूँ कि साढ़े चार साल नहीं, केवल चार साल और दो महीने बाकी हैं। यह जो सरकार आती है और जो सरकार जाती है, अगर आप महंगाई को नहीं रोकेंगे, तो सरकार को जाने में ज्यादा समय नहीं लगेगा। मुझे याद है कि जब जनता पार्टी की सरकार थी, तो प्याज का दाम बढ़ गया था और प्याज का दाम बढ़ने की वजह से हमारी सरकार चली गई। यहां तो हर चीज का दाम बढ़ गया है, केवल आदमी का दाम घट गया है। आदमी का दाम कम हो गया है, बाकी सभी चीजों के दाम बढ़ गए हैं। अभी हमने हाल ही में सुना कि पानी का भी दाम बढ़ गया है। हमने यहां एक प्रश्न पूछा था कि क्या पानी के लिए मुंबई में लड़ाई हो रही है, तो उन लोगों ने कहा कि यह स्टेट का सब्जेक्ट है। हमको लगता है कि आने वाले दिनों में हवा के लिए भी परमीशन लेनी होगी और उसका भी दाम लगेगा।

उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, इस देश में जहां 77 फीसदी आदमियों को रोज 20 रुपए मिलते हैं, वहां पर अगर आप गुड़ की कीमत को बढ़ा देंगे, तो कैसे काम चलेगा? हम लोग देहात में जाते हैं, तो एक लोटा पानी मिलता है और उसके साथ थोड़ा सा गुड़ मिलता है, ताकि आप गुड़ के साथ पानी पीजिए, लेकिन यह “कबीरदास की उल्टी बानी, बरसे कम्बल, भीगे पानी” वाली बात हो रही है कि चीनी का दाम कम है और गुड़ का दाम ज्यादा है। यह कमाल का देश है। फिर हमारे यहां के जो कृषि मंत्री हैं, वे गुड़ के दाम को आगे बढ़ा रहे हैं और चीनी के दाम को कम कर रहे हैं। चीनी का दाम, गुड़ के दाम से कम हो रहा है, यानी गुड़ का दाम 50 रुपए किलो और चीनी का दाम 40 रुपए किलो हो रहा है।

उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, इस देश में महंगाई है और कलराज मिश्र जी को यह विषय यहां उठाने के लिए मैं धन्यवाद देना चाहता हूँ, लेकिन उन्होंने आंकड़ा बहुत ज्यादा बताया। हिंदुस्तान के जो 77 फीसदी लोग हैं, उनको आंकड़े से कोई मतलब नहीं है, GDP कितनी बढ़ी, GDP कितनी कम हुई, इससे उन लोगों को कोई मतलब नहीं है। आपको अगर यह फख है कि हम जीत गए हैं और बहुत अच्छी तरह से जीते हैं, तो यकीनन आप हार जाएंगे, बहुत अच्छी तरह से हार जाएंगे, महंगाई आपको छोड़ने वाली नहीं है। वैसे महंगाई किसी को छोड़ने वाली नहीं है, महंगाई ने हमको भी नहीं छोड़ा। जब जयप्रकाश जी की जनता पार्टी की सरकार आई, तो महंगाई उसको भी ले डूबी। इसलिए इस देश में महंगाई एक बहुत बड़ी चीज है। आज हर चीज का दाम बढ़ गया है - आलू का दाम बढ़ गया है, प्याज का दाम बढ़ गया है, आटे का दाम बढ़ गया है, सूजी का दाम बढ़ गया है, हर चीज का दाम बढ़ गया है, लेकिन हमारी जो आमदनी है, हम यह नहीं कहते कि हमारी फीस बढ़ा दी जाए। हम तो वकील थे, हमें पता ही नहीं लगता था कि किसने कितना पैसा दिया, किसी ने पांच सौ रुपए दिए, किसी ने चार सौ रुपए दिए, पता ही नहीं लगता था। यहां भी पता नहीं लगता है कि महंगाई क्या है, लेकिन गांव में लोगों को सब्जी नहीं मिलती है। आपका जो मिड-डे मील प्रोग्राम है, उसमें गांव में जाकर देख लीजिए, वहां खिचड़ी में रंग दिया जाता है, उसमें दाल नहीं होता है। महंगाई का यह असर है कि खिचड़ी में पीला रंग दिया जाता है। उसमें दाल नहीं होता है। यह एक गंभीर मामला है, इसलिए मैं इस गंभीर मामले के बारे में आपसे निवेदन करूंगा कि महंगाई पर जरूर रोक लगनी चाहिए। सर, महंगाई एक जबर्दस्त चीज है, “न संभलोगे तो मिट जाओगे ये हिन्दुस्तान वाले कि तुम्हारी दास्तां भी न होगी दास्तानों में”, अगर गरीबों का असर आपको लगेगा, तो सरकार आपकी नहीं चलेगी। यह सरकार पांच वर्ष तक नहीं चलने वाली है, यहां आंदोलन होने वाला है। सब लोग मिल जाएंगे और महंगाई के खिलाफ आंदोलन होगा और फिर आपका साढ़े चाल साल और पांच साल सब दिवास्वप्न हो जाएगा।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (प्रो. पी.जे. कुरियन) : कृपया आप समाप्त कीजिए।

श्री राजनीति प्रसाद : मैं आपसे निवेदन करता हूँ कि महंगाई पर रोक लगाइए। मैंने आपके बारे में सुना है कि आप बहुत एक्सपर्ट आदमी हैं और अच्छे आदमी हैं, इसलिए मेरा आपसे निवेदन है कि महंगाई पर रोक लगाइए और गरीबों को राहत दीजिए। गरीबों को माओवादी और नक्सलाइट बनने से रोकिए। इन्हीं शब्दों के साथ मैं अपनी बात समाप्त करता हूँ। धन्यवाद।

श्री मंगल किसन (उड़ीसा) : महोदय, आज़ादी के 62 साल बाद आज महंगाई पर चर्चा हो रही है। आज़ादी के बाद एक राष्ट्र को संपूर्ण रूप से निर्माण करने के लिए 62 साल का समय दिया, मगर हम लोगों ने आज तक आम जनता के लिए चावल, गेहूँ, आटा, साग-सब्जी, दाल और खाने का तेल पहुंचा नहीं पा रहे हैं। इसके लिए सरकार को सोचना चाहिए। महोदय, industrial product के लिए हर साल ज्यादा मात्रा में पूंजी निवेश किया जा रहा है। मगर पं. जवाहर लाल नेहरू के बाद जो mega irrigation project, medium irrigation project और minor irrigation project को समय-समय पर भारत सरकार सेंट्रल प्रोजेक्ट के रूप में लेती थी और मेगा प्रोजेक्ट के जरिए किसानों को इरिगेशन के जरिए पानी देती थी, जिसके चलते आज कम से कम पचास प्रतिशत जनसंख्या कुछ खाद्यान्न खाने के लिए अच्छे से पा रहे हैं और पचास प्रतिशत जनसंख्या अभी starvation-like condition में जी रही है। Irrigation subject एक State subject है। मगर जैसे without water, there is no question of fish farming. Like that, without irrigation, there is no question of farming. महंगाई तो बढ़ेगी और population भी बढ़ेगी, मगर इनके खाने-पीने का जुगाड़ करने के लिए जो जमीन है, उस जमीन का जो एरिया है, it cannot be increased. यह हिन्दुस्तान का जितना जमीन है, उतना ही रहेगा। इसीलिए जो 70 परसेंट average जमीन rainfed है, उसको सरकार irrigation की facility दे।

Without taking any tax, water tax, farmers should be given the irrigation facilities. जब तक आप यह नहीं करेंगे, तब तक हर साल पार्लियामेंट में महंगाई पर चर्चा होगी। फिर आप बोलेंगे कि इस साल मौसम अच्छा नहीं हुआ, एग्रीकल्चरल प्रोडक्ट्स कम हुए, इसलिए महंगाई हो रही है। कभी आप बोलेंगे कि महंगाई को कंट्रोल करने के लिए राज्य सरकारें भारत सरकार के साथ सहयोग नहीं करती हैं, इसलिए महंगाई बढ़ रही है। कभी बोलेंगे कि वायदा बाज़ार के चलते hoarding हो रही है, इसलिए महंगाई बढ़ रही है। कभी बोलेंगे कि हम लोगों की जो गवर्नमेंट मशीनरी है, that Government machinery is not able to control the blackmarketers. ये कारण आप गिनाएंगे, मगर ये कारण तो 50 परसेंट ही जिम्मेदार हैं। जब तक आप 100 परसेंट secure irrigation facility हर स्टेट को, हिंदुस्तान की हर इंच ज़मीन को नहीं देते हैं, तब तक महंगाई बढ़ती रहेगी और फूड शॉर्टेज होती रहेगी।

[MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair]

इसलिए मैं भारत सरकार से निवेदन करता हूँ कि for the incomplete mega irrigation projects and the medium irrigation projects, which are pending at the State level, the Central Government should come forward and ensure hundred per cent funding to complete all these incomplete projects, and, it should also provide hundred per cent irrigation facilities throughout the country. Then only, this problem may be solved. Otherwise, we will continue to discuss it again and again, and, perhaps, will not find any solution. (*Time-bell rings*) और हम लोग विशेषकर जो बोलते हैं “आम आदमी के साथ”, तो क्या हम “आम आदमी के साथ” हैं? Fifty per cent of the *aam aadmi* is now in half-starved condition. Sir, if the Government does not make any provision and does not give them hundred per cent support, there may be anarchy in the country.

श्री उपसभापति : किसन जी, समाप्त कीजिए।

श्री मंगल किसन : जैसा अभी राजनीति प्रसाद जी बोल रहे थे कि आम आदमी फूड के लिए लड़ाई लड़ने के लिए घर से निकलेंगे और देश unruly हो सकता है, इसलिए the Government should provide hundred per cent irrigation facilities to the farmers of the country. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Barun Mukherji. (*Interruptions*)

डा. (श्रीमती) नजमा ए. हेपतुल्ला : सर, फाइनेंस मिनिस्टर आ रहे हैं या नहीं आ रहे हैं?

श्री उपसभापति : फाइनेंस मिनिस्टर क्यों आएंगे?

डा. (श्रीमती) नजमा ए. हेपतुल्ला : क्यों नहीं आएंगे? उनको भी महंगाई की इस बहस का जवाब देना चाहिए।

DR. BARUN MUKHERJI (West Bengal): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, it is a matter of great concern not only due to the fact that the prices are steadily rising but also due to the fact that the Government is quite indifferent about it. We are at a loss to think as to what is going on. Some of the earlier speakers have already said that it is for the third time that we are discussing the same issue, namely, price rise, during the second term of the UPA Government. Periodically,

this is coming up, we are discussing it and the same stereotyped answer is coming but the problem remains the same. Not only it remains the same but it is also becoming acute day-by-day. It is really a matter of great concern for the whole nation. If the Government is concerned for the people, we expect them to tackle this crisis on war footing. We may prosper in many ways. We may feel proud saying that the GDP is improving and all these things. But when it comes to the essential commodities, prices are rising steadily. Starting from salt to sugar, from rice to pulses, prices of every thing are rising. We are gradually having the impression that the Government is not very serious about it, and that really is a matter of concern. It has been repeatedly demanded, particularly from the Opposition parties, that the forward trading should be banned. But, it has not been banned, and no categorical answer is coming as to why it has not been banned.

We have analysed that these profiteers, hoarders, the people engaged in forward trading, they are causing the serious price rise. But the Government is reluctant to ban it. We are seriously raising this issue again and we want a very categorical answer as to why it has not been done. If the Government has some other answer to overcome it, we would not have raised this point. But we find that the basic reason is not being taken care of. Moreover, no action has been taken against the profiteers. When the recent potato crisis was there, we found that tons of potatoes were stored safely under the care of some hoarders. Then, the Government came with the plea that they did not have adequate law in their hands to take out all those potatoes from the godowns and all these things. There are so many excuses. There may be some genuine reasons also. But apparently it seems that we are bowing down to the nature. We are taking the name of the droughts or the floods or inadequate monsoon. But the point comes is, if these adverse circumstances continue, what would be the fate of the people? We are bowing down to the nature. We don't have the power to overcome nature's adversities. Sir, the other day, we noted that the hon. Finance Minister also stated that to overcome the problem, the PDS has to be strengthened. May I ask the hon. Minister what steps have been taken? Our hon. Agriculture, Food and Supply Minister is here. Everything is in his hands. So, what steps have been taken to strengthen the PDS? The artificial barrier between BPL and APL should also go. The Government must come forward to give more subsidies, particularly for these food items and other essential items. If necessary, even half of the total Budget should be spent for protection of the millions of hungry people. (*Time-bell rings*) So, all we say is, not only the price rise is a matter of concern, but we also find that the Government is indifferent about it. So, they must show that they want to address the problem. They have got the mandate of the people. They have come to power for the second time. But they must justify it. The people's demand

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is that they must have their salt; they must have their water; they must have their rice; they must have their food. But nothing is being supplied. Is it not betrayal to the people? Once more, we have participated in the debate. I find that it is an ongoing process. But please don't make it an ongoing process. Please come out with positive assurances, and not only assurance, but positive actions also so that the prices can immediately be controlled. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Bharatkumar Raut, you have got 4-5 minutes.

श्री भारतकुमार राऊत (महाराष्ट्र) : उपसभापति महोदय, वैसे तो मैं अंग्रेजी में अपने विचार व्यक्त करता हूँ लेकिन आज मैं हिन्दी की सहायता ले रहा हूँ। क्योंकि आज का विषय है — महंगाई, यह महंगाई विषय ऐसे आम आदमी का है जिसका दिल सेंसेक्स बढ़ने से उछलता नहीं और जी०डी०पी० ग्रोथ के बड़े-बड़े आंकड़े उसके लिए कोई मायना नहीं रखते। ऐसे विषय पर मुझे बोलना है। मुझे लगता है कि मैं आखिरी वक्ता हूँ, बहुत सारे मुद्दे तो आ चुके हैं, मुझे सिर्फ दो-तीन सवाल आपूर्ति मंत्री से पूछने हैं। क्या आपने यह देखा है कि जिन चीजों के दाम मार्केट में बढ़े हैं, मैसूरा रेड्डी जी ने आपको पूरा हिसाब दिया कि उनका जो उत्पादक है उसे कितना भाव मिलता है। आज भी आलू का उत्पादन करने वाले जो लोग हैं, उन्होंने जितना इनपुट दिया उतना भी उनको रिटर्न नहीं मिल रहा है और आज आलू के दाम ऐसे हो गए कि बिना आलू के सब्जी बनने लगी है। उपसभापति महोदय, एक दूसरी बात यह है कि एक तरफ हम बोल रहे हैं कि एसेशियल कमांडिटीज महंगी होती जा रही हैं। मंत्री जी ने पहले कहा था कि यह दाम तो अगले तीन-चार महीनों में बढ़ने वाले हैं। एक तरफ एसेशियल कमांडिटीज के दाम बढ़ते हैं, दूसरी जगह बड़ी-बड़ी कार, बड़े-बड़े टी०वी० सैट्स, कॉस्मेटिक पाउडर, टूथ पेस्ट जैसी चीजें जो ऊंचे लोगों की वस्तुएं हैं, उनके दाम कम होते जा रहे हैं, क्योंकि वे बड़े-बड़े एडवर्टाइजमेंट टी०वी० पर देते हैं तथा उनके कम दामों की एडवर्टाइजमेंट टी०वी० पर दीखती है। हम टूथ पेस्ट खाकर जिनदा नहीं रह सकते, हम कॉस्मेटिक पाउडर खा नहीं सकते, लेकिन उनके दाम आप घटाते जा रहे हैं। यह आपकी क्या पॉलिसी है? मुझे लगता है कि यह जो एसेशियल कमांडिटीज की मूल्य वृद्धि हो रही है, यह मैन मेड है, यह नैसर्गिक कृपा से नहीं हुई है। कृषि मंत्री महाराष्ट्र से आते हैं, महाराष्ट्र में 1995 से 1999 तक शिव सेना और भाजपा का शासन था। उस समय मंत्रालय के सामने एक बड़ा बोर्ड लगाया गया था और उस पर पांच एसेशियल कमांडिटीज के दाम लिखे गए थे और साढ़े चार साल वही के वही दाम रहे, उसमें एक पैसे की वृद्धि नहीं हुई। इसका मतलब यह है कि अगर आपकी प्रशासन पर कमांड है, अगर आपकी नीति साफ है और अगर वहां पर ट्रांसपिरेंसी है तो भाव बढ़ नहीं सकते। मुझे लगता है कि यही प्रयोग अब आप और राज्य सरकारों में क्यों नहीं करते, क्यों नहीं ऐसे बोर्ड लगाते कि यह-यह दाम हैं और ये इतने साल तक कायम रहेंगे। उसके लिए एक नीति की आवश्यकता है।

उपसभापति महोदय, ज्यादा नहीं बोलूंगा लेकिन मैं अरबन पुअर के बारे में थोड़ी सी बात करना चाहता हूँ, मैं मुम्बई से आता हूँ, हमारे आसपास की तीन फेमिलीज का सर्वे किया गया। एक फेमिली है, जिसमें पति बी०एम०सी० — मुम्बई म्यूनिस्पल कॉर्पोरेशन में लोअर डिविजनल क्लर्क है, उसकी वाइफ हाउस वाइफ है, उनके दो स्कूल गोइंग बच्चे हैं। उनकी मासिक आमदनी 18 हजार रुपए है। इस 18 हजार रुपए में उनकी जो ग्रासरी का खर्चा है वह 15 हजार रुपया है। दूसरी फ्लम्बर की फेमिली है, उसकी वाइफ मेड सर्वेंट है, उसकी मासिक आमदनी 8 हजार रुपए है। उसकी ग्रासरी का बिल 6 हजार रुपए है। जो तीसरी फेमिली है वह हमारी

बिल्लिंग का सिक्योरिटी गार्ड है, उसकी वाइफ सफाई वर्कर है। उनकी आमदनी 6 हजार रुपया है। उनकी ग्रीसरी का खर्चा 5 हजार रुपया है। अगर इतना खर्चा हो रहा है तो उसके आगे उसकी हाऊसिंग है, उसका इलेक्ट्रिसिटी बिल है, उनके बच्चों की पढ़ाई है, उनका क्लोथिंग है, उनका कम्यूटिंग का खर्चा है, तो इस तरह से यह एक गरीब आदमी कहां से जिंदा रहेगा? क्या सरकार ने सोचा है कि यह गरीब आदमी, आम आदमी जिसकी आप बातें करते रहो, यह कैसे जिन्दा रहने वाला है? आप बोल रहे हैं यकायक बारिश हुई, इसलिए आपके पास अनाज नहीं है इसलिए अनाज के दाम बढ़ रहे हैं, जो सही नहीं है। आप महाराष्ट्र से आते हो। मैं महाराष्ट्र की एक बात आपको बतलाना चाहता हूं कि महाराष्ट्र में जो कोऑपरेटिव शुगर फैक्ट्रीज हैं, जो आजकल साइड बिजनेस करके शराब बनाते थे, इसमें से कई शुगर इण्डस्ट्रीज को आपने चावल, गेहूं, बाजरा और ज्वार से लिक्वोर प्रोडक्शन के लाइसेंस दे रखे हैं। लोगों को खाने के लिए अनाज नहीं, लेकिन लिक्वर बनाने के लिए, शराब बनाने के लिए इस सरकार के पास उनको लाइसेंस देने की नीति है।

सिर्फ लाइसेंस देकर ही चुप नहीं बैठे, उन्होंने सरकार की पूंजी से, राज्य सरकार की तिजोरी से, उनको सबसिडी दी है। कृषि मंत्री जी जिस पक्ष से आते हैं, उस पक्ष के जो लोग हैं, उनकी जो सहयोगी पार्टी है, वे सहयोगी पार्टी के लोग क्या कर रहे हैं? आप हमें सिखा रहे हैं, आप लोगों को बोल रहे हैं आपकी पार्टी के जो लोग हैं, जो धान है, उस धान से शराब पीने का आप लाइसेंस दे रहे हैं, ऐसा कितने दिन चलेगा? **..(समय की घंटी)..** यह नहीं चलेगा। महंगाई मार देगी। महंगाई पहले हमें मार रही है, उसके बाद में सरकार को मारेगी, यह मैं जरूर कहना चाहता हूं। यह सिर्फ एक सिग्नल है। यह सिर्फ एक वार्निंग है। अगर यह सरकार ऐसे ही चलती रहेगी, तो जैसा मेरे सहयोगी ने कहा, वैसे ही जनता सड़कों पर आएगी और जब जनता रास्ते पर आएगी, तब जनता कहेगी कि सिंहासन खाली करो। वह ऐसा नारा देगी। यह दिन नहीं आना चाहिए। इसलिए आज ही माननीय मंत्री जी को कुछ कदम उठाने की जरूरत है। मैं इतनी ही विनती करता हूं और मैं अपनी बात समाप्त करता हूं। धन्यवाद।

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I have been carefully listening the discussion in the House regarding rise in the price of essential commodities. I would like to share the concerns of all the hon. Members because this particular subject is a subject which is affecting practically each and every household of this country and, particularly, the vulnerable sections of the country. Middle classes of this country have to face a very serious situation. It is true that we have discussed this subject in the month of August and it is also true that there is no remarkable change in the situation. I recollect, in the discussion in August, in my reply, I had explained what was the ground level situation, what steps had been taken and for how long this situation will continue. Of course, when I tried to take the House into confidence and, through the House, the people of India, I tried to put a proper picture before them. I have seen that there are some allegations against me that because of my statements, certain things are happening and I don't want to hide. I have definitely tried to tell the truth to the countrymen because I was quite convinced that this type of situation will continue for such and such period. The issue is not restricted to prices of essential commodities. I recollect, in my

young days, I was in the Congress Party. And, the Working Committee of the Congress Party in 1960s took a decision that nationalisation of foodgrains failed. That was a major decision. Practically, within three months' time, the Party took another decision and withdrew from that decision because the Government and the Party realised that it was not a subject which the Government or the Government machinery or officers would control and implement very effectively to protect the interests of public. Here, if we have to resolve this issue, we have to take a long-term approach. We have to take an approach which can take corrective measures immediately.

For long term, in a country like India, it is the responsibility of all of us to see how we will be able to improve our production of agricultural goods and the productivity from each and every inch of land. We have to give it a topmost priority. Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru had said once: "Everything can wait but not agriculture." It is a huge country. We have six per cent land of the world; we have three per cent water of the world, but we have to feed 17 per cent population of the world! So, feeding 17 per cent population of the world, with such limited resources, is not easy unless and until we are ready to make, we are prepared to make substantial investment in the agriculture sector, whether it is irrigation, whether it is other facilities or whether it is cold chains, and save the post-harvest losses to reserve providing sufficient market facilities.

Some of the decisions were definitely taken in the last few years. When the UPA first took the responsibility to protect the interest of this country, in our programme, it was announced that such and such steps we are going to take in the area of agriculture and we would like to change the overall approach in agriculture; balance of trade also we would like to change. The overall investment pattern which was not giving justice to this sector has also been changed and tried to improve. Credit system has been improved. I recollect that in the year 2005-06, the total agricultural credit which was provided in this country was Rs.86,000 crores, crop loan, has been enhanced to Rs.3,01,000 crores this year. Interest - it has always been a normal discussion in the villages that if anybody wants to buy a small car, the credit is available or the money is available in some financial institution @ 8-9 per cent whereas the crop loan in this country is available @ 12 per cent. In Indian region, certain decision has been taken to reduce that from 12 per cent to certain percentage. Similar programme has been taken in hand and the House is fully aware that in the last Budget, the hon. Finance Minister has announced reducing the rate of interest, for crop loans, from eight to seven per cent, and those who were ready to pay regularly, they will charge six per cent. So, practically, we have come down from 12 per cent to 6 per cent. Of course, this is the precondition that regular payment should be there.

One of the points raised here by one of the hon. Members was that we should try to provide substantial money for irrigation purposes. It is true that 60 per cent of our agriculture is rain fed. It depends on uncertainty of monsoon, and unless and until we try to bring more irrigation percentage in the country, to resolve the question of food security is not that simple. So, a special programme has been taken up in this country, that is, the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP). Thousands of projects were taken up by the State Governments. But for years together, they are incomplete. So, the Government of India took a decision to provide a special assistance to the States where they are in a position to complete these projects within two to three years. And, practically, every year, we are enhancing the budgetary provision for that purpose. The intention behind it is to improve the agriculture production and productivity, and make available sufficient foodgrains in this country. There are other schemes for which also a lot of monetary provision has been made. I recollect that on 17th May, 2006-07, I called the Chief Ministers' meeting and this particular subject was discussed practically for the whole day. For the first time, in the last forty or fifty years, an exclusive meeting of the Chief Ministers was called to discuss the problem of agriculture. It was decided in that meeting to provide Rs.25,000 crores and to introduce a new scheme, namely, the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, where flexibility has been provided to the State Governments, and the State Governments, as per their requirements, can take up schemes in their respective States which will be useful to enhance agricultural production, particularly, foodgrains and other items, and productivity. We are implementing that Scheme for the last two or three years.

Another major decision was taken to improve the National Food Security Mission. An amount of Rs.5,000 crores has been provided. It was planned to enhance the wheat and pulses production by 20 million tonnes by 2011. The implementation of the Scheme is also doing quite well and I must say that most of the States are cooperating extremely well, and that is the reason why both the decisions are definitely going to show some results from some time now. So, one way our approach is to improve production and productivity, and make foodgrains available.

Another area where we have to take a lot of interest is the Public Distribution System or to make foodgrains available in the market. In the Public Distribution System, which we have accepted in this country for years together, there was a change in the approach when the NDA Government took the responsibility to run the Government. The change was a slightly different. The change was to give more weightage to the targeted sections of the society which are really the poorest of the poor. A decision was taken that 35 kilograms of wheat and rice should be provided to all the BPL families throughout India. Another new scheme has been introduced, namely, Antyodaya Anna Yojana. Those who come under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana are also

eligible to get 35 kilograms of wheat and rice per family per month, and the price, which was fixed in 2002, is Rs.2 per kilogram of wheat and Rs.3 per kilogram of rice. Till today, the same price pattern has been there. We have not changed that, though the minimum support price for wheat and rice has been substantially hiked. But this section of the society are, for years together and even today, getting 35 kilograms of rice and wheat at this particular price. So, we have the PDS and the AAY. There are about six crore families, that is, 30 crores of people, of this country, who have taken full advantage of these schemes. Another decision was taken by this Government to introduce a new category, called, the APL, that is, Above Poverty Line. Now, the people of this category are also entitled to get the foodgrains under the PDS. But it depends on availability. In the last few years, 10-12 kgs. of wheat and rice have been provided to the APL category. There is an exception to the States of the North-East, Jammu and Kashmir, hilly States, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep, where we are even supplying 35 kgs. for the APL category. But the other States are getting around 10-11 kgs per family per month. And, if the availability improves, then, the Government will, happily, take a decision to enhance this quantity as well. Along with these, our effort is also to see to it that there is availability in the local market.

Now, there are a number of families who do not want to go to ration shops. They are not generally dependent on the Public Distribution System of the Government. They prefer to buy in open market. For the sake of that section, it is also our responsibility to see how the foodgrains are made available in local markets. As I said, the availability can be met from production within our country. But, if there is shortfall, a pragmatic decision has been taken on a number of occasions to allow imports liberally. But when we allow imports liberally, we also try to take care that domestic farmers are not affected. In the last, practically, ten years, we have been importing pulses. When we look at the position of the total production of pulses and the total demand of pulses of this country, there is a gap by about 4 million tonnes. So, unless and until, we allow imports to meet the shortfall of 4 million tonnes of pulses, the availability will not be there, and the price of pulses will not be under control. So, we do import them. There was a criticism as to why this Government is allowing import of edible oil. This decision has not been taken today. This practice has been going on for a number of years. I have not got the details with me now. But I can collect the information and give it to the House. But, for years together, we have been importing palm oil from Indonesia and Malaysia, and ensuring availability of edible oil in this country. So, edible oil and pulses are two items which are generally imported because there is shortage. The reasons are manifold. I will also go into some specific details about other individual commodities. A number of issues have been raised here. I will, definitely, go into each and every item. Prior to that, I will try to bring out the broad thrust of the measures which

have been taken in the last few months to improve availability. We have been encouraging imports, as I said, and discouraging exports.

From the last one year, we have totally banned rice export, other than Basmati. We have banned wheat export. We have banned, except one or two small items which are required for Indian community, particularly in the Gulf, edible oils from our side. So, we have now totally banned a number of items. And, there are a number of items where we have practically removed 100 per cent duty. We have done it because we want availability should be there in the country. To ensure that the vulnerable sections of the country are protected, the Government of India has given considerable support to the Public Distribution System. An extremely important step in this direction has been to keep the Central issue price constant since the year 2002. We have two prices. One is acquisition price from farmer. The second is the issue price for the public distribution. These are two prices, and practically, the issue price is constant for years together. But, the acquisition prices have been increasing. That has been enhanced. The Minimum Support Price in the last five years has been enhanced by practically up to 70 to 80 per cent. At the same time, thanks to the record production of last year, the Government procured a record 58.53 million tonnes of food grains, *i.e.*, 33.30 million tonnes of rice and 25.23 million tonnes of wheat this year. As a result, the Central Pool Stock of wheat as on 1st November, 2009 was 266.88 lakh tonnes. In 2009-10, the quantity of 129 lakh tonnes of rice has been procured till first of December. I have briefed the House while this year we are expecting less rice production because of the drought situation in certain States, but still Punjab, Haryana, parts of the Western U.P., these Governments have taken tremendous efforts to save their paddy crop this year. The Government of India has also supported them. We have provided them diesel subsidy. We have provided them additional power and because of this, they could save their crop and that is why, at least, these two States or three States have definitely saved their paddy crop. That is why our paddy procurement, which has been started from practically two months, is quite good and, as compared to last year, till today, our procurement is a little higher. But, I don't expect similar situation all over India because there are a number of other States which have been affected. Modification has been made to the order issued under the Essential Commodities Act to provide powers to the States to fix and enforce the stock limit for several essential commodities. So, these are some of the quick decisions which have been taken.

Sir, the hon. Members would recall that in the last Session of the House, we had discussed the situation arising because of poor monsoon that we experienced last year. Since then, we have received full information about the monsoon of the current year. The monsoon has ended with overall shortage of 23 per cent. It is reported that it has been the worst monsoon since

1972. The State Governments have declared 316 districts in 13 States, namely, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Manipur, Nagaland, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh to be drought affected or scarcity or drought-like conditions. So, in 316 districts of the 13 States, the State Governments have declared the drought. Subsequently, States like Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh, lost a lot of their crops in the post-monsoon period. Commodities like sugarcane, rice, potato and onion were affected.

I am not aware of what exactly has happened when a point was raised here by the hon. Member, Smt. Jaya Bachchan, that when she was coming from Nasik to Mumbai, on the way she has seen two-truckloads of onion was thrown away. Definitely, I would inquire into it. But, I am fully aware that in that particular belt, because of the excessive rains, sizeable onion crop has been practically rotten; and, that is why, the farmer might have tried to remove that and dispose it of somewhere. That might be the reason, but, definitely I would go and try to collect the information from the State Government.

Sir, the adverse climatic conditions have been coupled with the high prices of certain commodities in the international market. These two factors taken together have considerably restricted the capacity of the Government to take remedial measures; and, at the same time, on account of the steps taken to promote growth and employment, the economy has continued to grow. The targeted scheme like NREGA has also helped to improve the income of the rural poor. And, all this has led to increase demand of the essential commodities. Hon. Member, Shri Sharad Joshi, has raised this particular subject. He said that because of a number of Government schemes, now the purchasing power of the rural areas has definitely been improved and that is why there is more demand. He also said that the country is facing a little different situation from region to region. In villages, the situation is different. Our people from villages want better price to their products and in urban areas the prices should be proper, at a particular level. So, there is a sort of contradictory situation in what he says and I entirely agree with him.

While I go into the details about the specific scenario regarding inflation of the essential commodities today, I would like a fact to be kept as a backdrop in mind. The annual rate of inflation in food articles is currently 17.5 per cent. This is a matter of great concern. Although, the annual rate of inflation based on monthly WPI stood at a low level of 1.34 per cent for the month of October, 2009, the high inflation in food articles is certainly disturbing. I do not deny that, we accept that. We are quite serious about that. Though there has been an increase in the total foodgrains production in 2008-09, the production of some of the items, say, some varieties of pulses is low. Sugar has been altogether different. The first advance estimated production of

major agricultural crops in 2009-10 for kharif would be 96.53 million tonnes, which is lower than the first advance estimate of last year, which was expected to be 115 million tonnes. So, practically, we are coming down from 115 to 96.

India is not self-sufficient in some of the agricultural commodities, as I said, particularly, edible oil and pulses. That is why, I said that we have no choice but to import. But, simultaneously, certain important decisions have been taken by the Government of India to provide a better price to the farmer. For instance, the Minimum Support Price for wheat has been increased from Rs.640 per quintal in 2004 to Rs.1,100 per quintal this year. If the minimum support price has gone up from Rs. 642 to Rs. 1,100 definitely, there will be some impact in the price front in the open market. It is not possible to get or make available that wheat at the same price which was there around one year or two years or three years back.

Similar is the case with paddy. Now, for the common variety of paddy, the minimum support price has been increased from Rs. 560, per quintal, to Rs. 1000 in the year 2009. That means, in percentage terms, the MSP of wheat has been increased by 72 per cent, and paddy, by 79 per cent. So, if the paddy price has been enhanced by 79 per cent for the last three to four years, definitely, there will be some impact on the prices of rice. When we give Rs. 1000 per quintal, for the paddy crop, that means, actually, we are getting 60 kgs of rice. That is why Rs. 1000 is the price of paddy, which means Rs. 1600 is the State price of rice, plus conversion charges, acquisition charges, *mandi* charges and State Government's taxes. So, altogether, practically it goes to, somewhat, near Rs. 2000. But whatever figures which have been published, we have a system, that Delhi Government will communicate the figures of the various essential commodities to the Government of India's Consumer Affairs Department daily. They collect the figures from a number of shops, and whatever latest information which I got from Delhi Government, six months back, the retail price of rice was at Rs. 20 per kg. Three months back, it had gone up to Rs. 21. One month back, it had gone up to Rs. 22. One week back, it was Rs. 23, and as on today, it is Rs. 23. Yes, it is true it is going on the higher side but we are not in a position to buy fast. One thing is, if the price which has been paid to the farmers at Rs. 1000, that means Rs. 1600 which is the cost of rice will ultimately reflect up to retail at this price. Similarly, of course, one point was raised in the House that the price has gone up to Rs. 30 or Rs. 40 for per kg of rice. That is not the information which I have got from a number of the other districts. There is every possibility that there are some types of rice like Basmati or some other good variety of rice. Prices are high but the prices which I am quoting is of the common variety, and the common variety prices are here only.

Similar is the case with wheat. Though the minimum support price of wheat has gone up to Rs. 1100 per quintal but practically, we have to pay 12 per cent market taxes, plus mandi charges, gunny bags, loading, unloading, transport, storage for acquisition cost in Punjab. Altogether, ultimately it goes up to Rs. 15 to Rs. 16. But the retail price in Delhi market is Rs. 15 per kg. That is the latest price which we have got about Delhi. Of course, there are some other places. In Mumbai, it is Rs. 19. In Trivandrum, it is something like Rs. 23 - Rs. 24 because we have to consider the total transport cost from Ludhiana or any destination from Punjab and Haryana to Trivandrum or Chennai. That has to be added. That is why, comparatively, the prices of Southern States are always high. So, as I said, our position is still better because we have a record production, and last year, procurement was very good. The stock of wheat and rice is, therefore, sufficient to meet the demand of the public distribution system and all other welfare fund. The price of rice and wheat in the open market has been rising on account of the minimum support price as I have already explained here. But, still, we are trying to maintain the price at a particular level. What have we done? We have earmarked 30 million tonnes of wheat and 10 million tonnes of rice to sell in the open market. How to sell? The Food Corporation of India can sell by inviting tenders.

But, we took a decision to handover these to States. We requested the State Governments to sell or take these at a particular price and make them available in the PDS even for APL category. Sir, 10 lakh tonnes of wheat and 10 lakh tonnes of rice has been allotted to States and UTs under the Open Market Sale Scheme for the retail consumer to be distribution between the October, 2009, and December, 2009 *i.e.*, two months. So, we have written to the States and UTs that such and such quantity of foodgrains was made available to them. These allocations have been made at a subsidized rate of MSP plus freight without adding tax, procurement charges, handling charges, interest, storage which are borne by the Government of India. So, the MSP which we have paid to the farmer has to be paid by the State Government plus freight from Ludhiana to that particular place. The other costs such as procurement charges, handling charges, interest, storage rate, etc., will be borne by the Government of India. The objective of the Scheme was to make wheat and rice available to retail consumer for his consumption and to control market prices. The State delivery system has to take the benefit of this Scheme. However, the lifting of wheat and rice, it is really surprising, under the Scheme by the States has been very, very poor. As per latest position *i.e.*, as of 6th December, 2009, from the FCI, 21,992 metric tonne of wheat has been lifted by the States. So, out of 10 lakh MT, the States have lifted only 21,992 metric tonnes! There are some States which are asking that we should provide them

wheat at the BPL price. It is not possible. We are asking them to pay only the price that we have paid to the farmers. We are not asking more than that. The acquisition and other charges are all borne by the GOI. The States have to pay only the transport and the price which was paid to the farmer.

SHRI P. RAJEEVE (Kerala): What about the additional allocation to the State of Kerala at the APL price.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: I will come back to you.

So, 1,49,176 metric tonnes of rice has been lifted by the States out of 5 lakh MT allotted to them. And, as I said, the same formula has been adopted for this as well. So, I think, it is the responsibility of the State Governments to take advantage of the Scheme and see that market will improve. I am going to take up this issue with all the State Governments. If the State Governments will not take this, then, the FCI will enter into open market and dispose these through open market tender process. But, our desire is that the State Governments can take these and use its machinery of the PDS.

Sir, one particular issue was raised here regarding the allocation and off take of APL rice to Kerala. Sir, it is true that the total allocation for Kerala has been reduced and there are reasons. In fact, I had given these reasons to the House. It is because whatever allocation was made was not lifted sufficiently by the State Government. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN (Kerala): When was this taken place?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You can ask it after the reply.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: From the years 2003-04, 2004-05, 2005-06 up to 2006-07, the off-take was not lifted. For instance, for the year 2006-07, 13,61,000 lakh tonnes was the allocation for Kerala, but the off-take was 1,81,000 only. In fact, that has been improved after that. So, during all these four years, i.e., 2003-04, 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07, Kerala Government has not lifted what was allocated to it. Then the Government took a decision not only for Kerala but also for all other States, and all those States which were not lifting their off-take, their allocation was reduced. Now, it is true that the State is asking, particularly, for the APL quota, but, as I said earlier, with regard to AAY and BPL we are fully honouring our commitments. We are honouring commitments; but there are some problems in the case of APL and I am not in a position to accept the Kerala Government's request in toto. But whenever they ask for something additional, that additional has definitely been provided to them. I recently saw

that statement of the hon. Chief Minister of Kerala that there was a commitment given by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru that 'this is a State which produces plantation crop and that is why the entire responsibility of providing it foodgrains will be taken by the Government of India.' I am searching; my office is also searching that communication, but I don't see, at least, any record... ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him complete. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Sir, one minute. ...*(Interruptions)*... He has yielded. Sir, our difficulty is, this is a State where we are producing only 15 per cent of the food articles, that means, staple rice. We are producing only 15 per cent and we are producing 85 per cent cash crops. No other Indian State has such a situation. So, naturally, the Central Government has to give a special assistance to the Kerala State, and, at that point of time, a statutory ration system was there under which the Central Government was providing sufficient rice to the State. Now that practice is stopped. So, naturally*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No; no; the Minister is saying that they are not lifting. The off-take is not lifted. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: No; no; Sir, that is not the situation. That is not the situation. There was statutory ration system in the State and more than one lakh tonne was allotted for the State per year. But now that has been restricted. With regard to APL, because of the given situation which is prevailing in the State and due to shortage of production, naturally, the State owes an assistance from the Centre and that was there. The State is producing cash crops which are exported and the country is gaining from that. So, naturally, a reciprocal gesture was there earlier and that should be retained. That is what we are saying. ...*(Interruptions)*...

PROF. P. J. KURIEN (Kerala): Sir, it was the Union Government which encouraged Kerala to go for cash crops. For example, we were importing rubber by giving foreign exchange. Kerala was asked to go in for rubber and such other cash crops by which we gained foreign exchange. Then Kerala was promised by the Union Government that through statutory ration enough rice will be supplied. That was a promise by the Union Government. It is known to everybody. It may not be known to his office. But it is known to... ...*(Interruptions)*... irrespective of the party... ...*(Interruptions)*... Let me finish. As far as Kerala is concerned, every party, every Government in Kerala is accepting and knowing that. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the Union Government to provide more rice to Kerala. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: How can you get answers like this? ...*(Interruptions)*... How can you get an answer like this? ...*(Interruption)*...

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Allow me to complete. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Sir, in West Bengal, when the West Bengal started the jute production*(Interruptions)*...

श्री उपसभापति : पहले इनका जवाब पूरा हो जाने दीजिए ..*(व्यवधान)*..

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: There was a Committee ...*(Interruptions)*... in the Central Government ...*(Interruptions)*... to provide rice allocation.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let the hon. Minister complete his reply and then this can be taken up. ...*(Interruptions)*... Let there be some order. ...*(Interruptions)*... Let there be some order. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN I would call your names one by one; you may then put your questions. Now, let him complete his reply. Please.

SHRI P. RAJEEVE: Regarding the point about statutory ration...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You may ask that after he completes.

SHRI P. RAJEEVE: Sir, the statutory ration system was introduced in 1967. At that time, Mr. Minister, no records were there. Regarding the other point about the off-take, at that time the price in the open market was lesser than the APL price. That off-take is less. Now, the price is very high. So, we are compelled to have it at the APL price.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: The point is that the concept of statutory ration is not there now; it was abandoned by the Government of India long back. The Government of India took a conscious decision to introduce 'targeted public distribution'. 'Targeted public distribution' means, we want to target that section which is really affected, poor and vulnerable. This decision was taken ten years back, and that is continuing even today. *(Interruptions)* Some decision might have been taken in 1948-49. But these days, we have factors like population, availability etc. and today's position is vastly different. That is why, a different decision has been taken and that decision has been implemented in this country.

SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: At least, increase the APL rice...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: The only question is that of availability. If there is availability, I would be definitely happy to enhance it, not only for Kerala but for other States also. I don't want to say anything more. About edible oil, certain decisions have been taken, and I have already explained that. Now, another important issue was discussed here, about sugar. Hon. Member,

Shri Javadekar, said that I had talked about availability of sugar last year, only a few months back. That is true. In the last two seasons production of sugar in this country was exceptional. We have practically reached 300 million tonnes. It is much, much more than our requirement. So, there was no choice but to encourage export. In fact, most of the mills were not in a position to pay farmers cane price. They should be in a position to pay the price to the farmers; so, Government of India has encouraged export. These decisions were taken. I recall that at that time, the price of sugar was about Rs. 16 per kg. In the same House, last year, I have made a statement that if we are not ready to accept an enhancement in the price of sugar in the open market, sugarcane farmers would definitely shift from sugarcane to some other crop, and the country will have to buy sugar at the rate of Rs. 30 to 35. This was my statement made in this House, on record, and exactly the same situation has occurred.

There was tremendous opposition for providing an additional price. And because of that, ultimately, when the farmers, particularly farmers from Uttar Pradesh and other Northern States, started getting greater price for wheat and rice, they shifted from sugarcane to wheat and rice. They preferred the wheat and rice crops. They get money practically within eight or ten days at the most; for sugarcane price they have to wait even up to one year. That is the reason why the area under sugarcane cultivation has been substantially dropped and that is the situation we are facing today. Our efforts are to provide a better price to the farmers. Unless and until we provide a better price to the farmers, they would not grow sugarcane. Today, you are complaining that sugar prices are going up. I remember, for practically two days, the House could not function because the price which the Government of India had announced for sugarcane in its Ordinance was not approved; there were agitations, and the functioning of both the Houses was practically stalled. And when a certain decision has been taken and the price of sugarcane has been enhanced, farmers would surely go back to this crop. Today, sugarcane prices have gone up from Rs. 129 per quintal. In Uttar Pradesh, it is Rs. 185; in the Gorakhpur area, some mills have given even Rs. 200, and some, Rs. 210. States like Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra and Tamil Nadu are providing between Rs.220 and Rs.240. So, that price will definitely change the entire situation. But sugarcane crop is not a crop which one can plan today and get the result practically within two months. This is a yearly crop. It will take some time, but I am sure that the situation will definitely change.. With sugar, there is a problem today, but the situation will definitely improve.

So far as pulses are concerned, it is true that *tur* prices are really creating serious problem for each and every family; it has gone up to Rs.90 to Rs.100. Pulses are essentially rain-fed crops. In a country like India where 60 per cent agriculture is rain-fed, if you do not get the

proper monsoon, it always get affected, and that situation has happened this year. Practically, every year, as I said, we import it, but this year the major supplying countries are also facing problems and that is why internationally prices have gone up and that is reflected in our own country too. But this year additional area has been brought under *tur*. I am sure that in another two months' time, when the harvesting of *tur* will start, there will be more availability of *tur* in the open market and the prices will definitely start coming down, and the situation will definitely improve about *tur*. ..(*Interruptions*)..

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: On PDS ..(*Interruptions*)..

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: As on today, it is not possible because today we are providing Rs.60,000 crore as a subsidy for Public Distribution System.

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: You have only given a concession of Rs.4.16 crore in one year's Budget to the corporate sectors. ..(*Interruptions*).. You have to provide an additional fund for the whole nation. ..(*Interruptions*)..

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Five years' back, when I took the responsibility of this Department, at that time, the subsidy bill was Rs.19,000 crore and today it is Rs.60,000 crore. Still we are concentrating on targeted section. If it is universal, then the Rs.60,000 crore can go up to, I don't know, any level. That type of money, as on today, is not available. If that type of money is available, definitely we will be very happy to take these types of decisions. But today we are not in a position to take this decision. Potato prices are definitely coming down; crop is good. Onion prices are definitely on the higher side, but have again started coming down. I have enquired today also with major producing States like Rajasthan, Gujarat, Karnataka, Nasik and other belts of Maharashtra. Although the crop was affected everywhere because of certain things, now the real season has been started and we will be able to see that the market changes and the change will be for better, and the prices will be coming down here. In all these areas though the situation is quite serious, the process of improvement has been started. But you cannot expect this type of result within a week's time or a month's time. To get crop and take it to farmers' home, it does take a lot of time and that process is definitely certain. One of the major issues which has been raised here is regarding the effective action against the black-marketers and others. As I said earlier also, all these powers have been delegated to the State Governments. It is the responsibility of the State Governments to take action. There are some State Governments which have taken action. There are some State Governments like Gujarat and others which have practically prosecuted a large number of culprits. They

7.00 P.M.

have booked culprits and prosecuted them and the cases are pending in the court. But there are some State Governments which have not shown any interest. We are continuously writing them. I am also getting in touch with the Civil Supply Ministers of States. And, because of that, I hope they will take this particular issue very seriously.

Another issue, which was raised here, was that we should ban the futures trading. In fact, some of the items have been withdrawn from futures trading. We have withdrawn sugar, *tur*, rice, potato. But, I do not see any impact over that. I have already briefed the House. One Committee was appointed under the Chairmanship of Prof. Abhijit Sen to go into the details of how far future trade or commodity exchanges are responsible for this rise in prices. Their report came negative. Still, we would like to continue ban on some of the items and we will see that if the market improves, prices come down, then, we may take a policy decision in this regard. But, unless and until there is clearcut proof, we will not be able to take a final decision about that. I do not want to take more time of the House. I know that issue is serious...*(Interruptions)*. In such a situation, the State Governments have to take the responsibility, and the Government of India will also have to take the responsibility. We have to improve our agricultural production; we have to improve our productivity; we have to improve our availability. Then only, this situation can be improved. But, this Government is quite serious about this problem on every front, and, I hope, there will be proper results...*(Interruptions)*.

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA (Jharkhand): Sir, I will not ask any question. Sir, my point is very simple...*(Interruptions)*.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will call Members one by one.

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Sir, the UPA Government came with the manifesto and they said that within hundred days, they would control price rise.

SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: We said that steps would be taken.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Then, what are the steps? Now, what is the reality? You give the price. You are telling only these things. Sir, we are not satisfied with the answer. We walk out.

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

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Sir, we will walk out. There are no assurances, no ban on futures trading...*(Interruptions)*.

SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Sir, we are dissatisfied with the reply, and we are forced to walk out.

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

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The House stands adjourned to meet at 11.00 A.M. tomorrow.

The House then adjourned at three minutes past seven of the clock to meet at eleven of the clock on Wednesday, the 9th December, 2009.