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**1.00 P.M.**

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MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, the hon. Minister would now move the National Food Security Bill, 2013 for consideration.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS,  
FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): Sir, I beg to  
move...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI BALBIR PUNJ (Odisha): Sir, he is not speaking into the mike. It is not audible. ...*(Interruptions)*... The hon. Minister lacks conviction in the Bill. That is why he is not...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please, come to the mike. ~~... (Interruptions) ...~~ Speak louder. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU (Karnataka): Sir, there is no voice security!  
*...(Interruptions)...*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, please. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please speak into the mike, Mr. Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*... Speak louder. ...*(Interruptions)*... After the Minister moves the Bill, we would have a break.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY (West Bengal): Sir, I think the Minister's food security is important and so, you should break for lunch. ...(*Interruptions*)... Let us break for lunch. Let him eat and come back, so that we could all hear him. ...(*Interruptions*)...



PROF. K.V. THOMAS: Sir, I move:

“That the Bill to provide for food and nutritional security in human life cycle approach, by ensuring access to adequate quantity of quality food at affordable prices to people to live a life with dignity and for matter connected therewith or incidental thereto, as passed by Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration.”

The questions were proposed.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, would you like to say something?

PROF. K.V. THOMAS: Sir, I would do that later.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: All right; he will speak after discussion. Now, hon. Members, the Statutory Resolution has been moved; the Bill for consideration has also been moved. As per practice, we will take up the discussion together. Now, it is almost 1.10 p.m. Shall we decide that there will be no lunch-break?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: All right. Let us have lunch-break up to 2.00 p.m.

The House is adjourned up to 2.00 P.M.

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

The House re-assembled after lunch at two of the clock,

[MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.]

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, the BJP is for the food security of all the people of the country, and for that matter every political party. In the morning, my colleague and the Leader of the Opposition, Shri Arun Jaitley, was questioning the Food Security Ordinance. Why Ordinance route when the Parliament was about to meet? I don't want to go into details because he has very neatly and rightly explained it. The reply is, “This may be a life-saver, a life-changer for many people. So, delay even by a single minute or a day, God knows how many lives it could cost.” That is the answer. My colleague has doubted this Ordinance route. The response from the ruling party is, “This may be a life-saver, life-changer for many people. So, delay even by a single minute, or a day, God knows how many lives it could cost.” Sir, this Food Security was part of the



Congress Party's manifesto in 2009. It was part of the Presidential Address in the Parliament also. From 2009 to 2013, how many days, how many years, how many hours, how many minutes and how many lives have been lost? The Government should explain it. After all, you said that 'delay of even a single minute will cost lives of people.' That being the case, why did you delay it for four years? You have to answer the nation. Just on the eve of your going out of power, you bring this, and that too in the form of an Ordinance when the Parliament was about to meet. That means the Government is not sincere; the Government is trying to be populist on the eve of elections. That is the charge for which the Government has no clear-cut answer. They have no credibility. I wonder sometimes that after 67 years of Independence, 67% of the people need to be given food security. What has happened to this country? Sixty-seven years passed, 67% of the people need to be given food security. What happened to all Five-Year Plans? What happened to the Government? And that too, Sir, out of 67 years, for 57 years you have been in power. You forgot the food security. You never bothered about the common people. Now, after four-and-a-half years of your second tenure, you remember about the food security of people. Please give a reasonable explanation. That means, for 67 years you have totally neglected the common people and poor people. You never felt that there is any need to provide them food security. Suddenly, on the eve of elections, you realized that there is a need for food security and you are covering 67 per cent people. On the one hand, the Planning Commission says that the poverty is reduced considerably. On the other hand, you feel that there is a need to cover two-thirds of the population for food security. Sir, the Planning Commission is Government's creation. It is also an important body. It is speaking one language and you are speaking altogether a different language. How do you explain this contradiction? If the poverty has come down to 22 per cent as is claimed by the Planning Commission, which is thumped down by the ruling party all over the country as its great achievement, then how do you justify giving food security to two-thirds population of the country? This is the second question for which you have not been able to give a satisfactory answer so far. If you want to take the credit for bringing this Bill, please take the blame also for not covering 67 per cent people in 57 years of your rule. That is another question.

Sir, forty years ago, Madam Indira Gandhi gave a slogan ᐃᑦᑲᓄᓂ ᐱᓕᓐᔭ... Then, what happened? Now, according to you, ᐅᓇᓂᓐ ᐃᑦᑲᓄᓂ ᐱᓕᓐᔭ ᐊᓚᓐ, ᐃᑦᑲᓄᓂ ᐳᓚᓂᓐ. ᐸᐱᓚᓐ ᐳᓚᓂᓐ ᐊᓚᓐ ᓄᓚ ᐱᓐ ᐱᓚᓐ ᐊᓚᓐ, ᐊᓚᓐ ᐊᓚ ᐱᓚᓚᓐ ᐱᓚᓐ ᐳᓚᓂᓐ ᐊᓚᓐ.



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 downtrodden and the poor people. Forty years after giving the slogan, 'Y0, P0B  
 A000t0e, you could not do it. When we were in power, Sir, we provided 35 kilos of  
 foodgrains without any propaganda. We gave 35 kilos of foodgrains and now, you  
 are reducing it to 25 kilos, and you are asking as to what is it that we have done.  
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ÜÜÜÜÜÜ "ÜÜ ÜÜ ÜÜ when the situation is delicate, the economy is dwindling and the  
rupee is going down, the Minister makes such irresponsible statements and tries to  
justify them also. The ruling party also stands behind the Minister. Sir, what is it  
that the Congress Party has done to reduce poverty during all these years? One of  
these must be correct. Either 67 per cent must be a \* figure that they are giving,  
or, their claim of reduction in poverty must be \*. One of these two things has to  
be \*. You cannot contradict yourself in such a big way. People of India are  
intelligent.

Sir, the Government is trying to get vote security in the name of food security. I can assure my friends that food security is not going to get them vote security because they have lost the confidence of the people and they have \* every section of society.

Sir, there is just about three or four months before the election. It will take four to six months to put everything in order and then start its implementation. You may make a formal inauguration. You may make a foundation. But nothing is

\*Expunged as ordered by the Chair.



going to happen because everything has to be organised in such a way. And now, you are saying that it will be a ‘game-changer’. Your spokesman said, “It is a game-changer.” Do you consider this as a game, playing with the lives of common people of the country, playing with the lives of the poor people? **A0'0'00 0e t000de AEBB "0Aik... t000de AEBB "0Aik Xu tY0t0 A0»0 Uu zW-u tA00de Y0e0 "0e0,u OuAWE Ae.** I am not able to understand the audacity of the Congress about such an important and sensitive issue. Sir, this is nothing but an electoral gimmick. I can assure you that your Food Bill is not going to get you ‘goodwill’; it is going to get you a big bill. The Government has to understand this and it has to respond to the criticism in such a manner as will satisfy the people. Sir, the Congress and the UPA have no credibility. It has got credit. I do agree to that. Credit is going up day by day and we have Rs.3,62,000 crore interest payment per year and almost 63 per cent of GDP is going for debt repayment. That is the fact of the situation. Only 37 per cent remains. Out of that, how are you going to adjust? Nobody is explaining that. Sir, the Government has \* the people on every count – be it controlling prices, be it bringing back the black money from abroad, be it taking action against the corrupt, be it taking tough stand on terror, be it providing reservation for women in legislative bodies, be it creating two crore employment opportunities per year, or, be it creating ‘*Nirbhaya Fund*’ for women. All these are the promises that the Government has made in the Presidential Address, in the Budget Speeches and in the statements made by the Congress Party from time to time. On all these, you have \* the people. Now, how can you believe this promise of providing food security to all the people? You have not only promised but you have failed and you have \* the people.

Sir, even about Mahatma Gandhi NREGA, you have been tom-tomming across the country saying that you have created 100 days of employment. The figure shows that 14.48 per cent of the total registered households got jobs in 2008-09. The figure dipped to 10.9 per cent in 2012-13. That is the reality. You tom-tommed it across the country saying, “NREGA, NREGA, १०० दिनों का काम मिलेगा... १०० के ऊपर आने? १०० के आसपास ‘मैं’ यहाँ से खाऊँगी। उदात्त आठ-दशों में ही है।

»(000, +00 0e 000 000? 00000 '0'u Y00. ‡0000 0000 0000-000 000 00. Sir, I would like to make a mention here. When late N.T. Rama Rao, the icon of the Telugu people formed a party, he made a promise that if he was voted to power, he would

\*Expunged as ordered by the Chair.



provide rice at Rs. 2/- per kilo. The then Chief Minister, late Shri Vijay Bhaskar Reddy, said, you would be able to provide rice at Rs. 2/- per kilo only if you come to power. I am in power, I will give rice at Rs. 1.90 per kilo. He made an announcement and started the same but the people did not believe him. The reason is lack of credibility and the Congress Party lost miserably in that election in 1983. I would like to remind that your empty promises, your hollow promises are not going to get you votes for ruling the country once again.

Sir, with regard to this Bill, my point is that food security can be provided if there is satisfaction among the farmers of the country. If the farmers are happy, then, only we can have food security. You cannot have an imported food security. You need to have home-grown food security. That is what Mr. Swaminathan and everybody is saying but you are not taking any steps. What is missing in this Bill, and, even in the objectives, is how you are going to encourage the farmers to produce more. Unless you produce more, you cannot meet the requirement. That has to be understood. You cannot import and then distribute foodgrains like that. Already, your import bill is going up. You don't have enough funds to provide for import of foodgrains. That being the case, what are the steps you are taking? Sir, leaving apart politics, my concern is: how do you sustain agriculture. That is the basic issue, which is agitating my mind. Sir, the average per capita grain consumption in 1965 was 418 grams, and, that of pulses was 62 grams. It is according to the Economic Survey, this is not my figure. After five decades, the per capita foodgrain consumption of an India in 2010 was a meagre 407 grams and the per capita pulses consumption was 32 grams. From 418 grams, it has come down to 407 grams. The per capita foodgrain availability in India in 1971 was 394 grams. After thirty years, in 2001, it has come to 396 grams, which means, a mere simple rise of 2 grams. That being the case, how do you assure food security to the people? The population is growing, the aspirations are growing, the consumption levels are increasing but the production levels are not commensurate with the consumption levels. That has to be understood. The agriculture is in dire crisis. What happened to the recommendations of the Swaminathan Commission? Seven years have passed but you did not bother or take care to consider the important recommendation made by the Swaminathan Commission of providing the support price to be calculated as cost of production plus fifty percent to the farming community. That is one of the important recommendations made by the Commission but you totally ignored it, and, you are not talking about that.



That being the case, how do you sustain food security? That is another issue. Sir, the share of agriculture and the allied sectors in India's GDP has declined to 13.7 per cent in 2012-13 as per the Central Statistical Organization. During 1950-51, it used to be 51.9 per cent, which has come down to 13.7 per cent in 2012-13 at 2004-05 prices. From 51.9 per cent, it has come down to 13.7 per cent !

[illegible]

Sir, that is why, people are waiting for the Government to take action on the Swaminathan Commission recommendations with regard to fixing the minimum support price. Sir, the present President of India said, "People's right to food can become a reality only through sustainable increase in agriculture production and protecting farmers". These are the words of hon. President of India. It will become a reality only through sustainable increase in agriculture production and protecting farmers, but what have you done to protect the farmers. Now, please understand that this Food Security Bill can be implemented if you produce 350 million tonnes extra. Then only, you will have the comfort of distributing and then providing food security. So, the moral of the story is, one cannot distribute what one does not have.

Mr. Ramesh, you will be able to understand it better than anybody else. Sir, from my childhood, I have been seeing in this House, that some political parties — I do not want to name them, they will feel a little embarrassed — always used to say, *panchali, panchali, panchali*, which, in Telugu means distribute, distribute, distribute. But, Sir, in my childhood, what I learnt from Acharya Ranga and Rajagopalachari, the great C.R., in those days, was, ‘before *panchali, penchali*, which means, you have to produce more, then only, you can distribute.

Without producing, without creating wealth, without getting the growth, you cannot have development. This is a simple common sense for any student of economics or, for that matter, for any common man of the country also. But, unfortunately, Government is not taking enough required steps. It has not outlined any of those steps in this Bill with regard to providing safety, security and



\*Hon. Member Spoke in Telugu.



They have no other alternative. They cannot do any business because they have no seed money. They are not getting any support. They have no other alternatives of getting revenue. That is why they are continuing in agriculture. Otherwise, many of the people would have said goodbye to agriculture long back. But, unfortunately, the Government of India is not able to understand the seriousness of the situation at the grass-root level. Thousands of farmers are committing suicide. It is a shame for all of us, not only for the ruling party. That being the case, I thought the Minister for Food and the Government will come out with some concrete suggestions. While giving incentives for the food security, they should have given some incentives for producing the food also. They should have taken some welfare measures for the farmers also, which they have not taken. Sir, with regard to the prices of wheat, the production cost is Rs. 1,530 and the Minimum Support Price is Rs. 1,280. That means, the farmer is losing Rs. 250 per quintal. That is the reality. Many people are there from wheat-growing areas in the north. *ମୁହେଁ ଖୁବ୍ ଖୁଆଁଉଁ ଓଷ୍ଟ ଶାସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଶାସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଶାସ୍ତ୍ରୀ* *ଆଁ*. That is why, Sir, my point is, first of all assure the House, assure the country about providing sustainability for the agriculture. And now you are saying small and marginal farmers, who are the producers, they are also consumers. Okay, if that is the case, are you going to put them in that one-third category where they are forced to purchase from the open market? The open market prices go up like anything. 50 per cent of the urban population and 25 per cent of the rural population who hold the land will be deprived of the public distribution system.

Then they will be forced to purchase from market. Wherefrom do they get the money? The poor farmers after harvesting will sell their produce then and there itself because they have to repay their debts. They don't have enough money to invest in agriculture again. Again, they will go to a moneylender for borrowing money. They don't even have the storage capacity.

Sir, the prices of all other agricultural inputs have gone up. The fear, Mr. Minister, among the farming community is that tomorrow the State Governments, guided by the Central Government, may go for a rice levy. And if there is a levy then it will be a compulsory levy and the farmers will be forced to sell it to the Government agency first. That being the case, they will not get remunerative prices from market. The farmers will be the losers. That is why many of the farmers' organisations are agitating and some of them are openly opposing this measure also. Try to understand this problem and then come out with some response.



Sir, procurement is a major challenge. Where is the infrastructure? Where are the godowns? The other day, the Planning Commission estimated cold storage requirement of 61.13 million tonnes. Present capacity is only 29 million tonnes. It is not even the fifty per cent of the requirement. Vegetables, other foodgrains and also fruits are perishing. Last week, the Minister gave a reply, which I have with me. He said, “Annually, Rs.13,393 crore is being lost on vegetables alone because there is no storage capacity in India.” We have failed in providing storage capacity. Food does not mean rice and wheat only. Food means pulses, cereals, oil, sugar and other requirements. All these things are required. But you are not bothered about any of those things. You are just talking about wheat and rice.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Venkaiahji, your Party has five more speakers.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, leave it to me. You don't worry about that. I will take care of my Party. I am thankful to you for your concern about my Party and its time.

Sir, in a reply given by the Minister, in 2013-14, against the target of 613 lakh ton under PEG Scheme, storage capacity added upto July is only 3.36 lakh ton. The target is 613 lakh ton. And achieved is 3.3 lakh ton. Mr. Minister, this is your reply to this House. At this rate, how many years will you take to provide the needed storage capacity, both public and private, closed, covered and uncovered? That being the case, Sir, my worry is, again coming back to that point, about the sustainability. My worry about the sustainability is on two issues. One is about the neglect of agriculture, not providing needed incentives. Second is about the finances. I am not an expert on finance or economy. The CSO data released on Friday shows that the annual growth has come down to 4.4 per cent. This is the real worry. Where is the money that you are talking about? How are you going to finance the scheme? Please explain and take this House into confidence. Last year, the Finance Minister, Mr. P. Chidambaram, brought an expenditure cut of nearly one lakh and twenty five thousand crore. I stand corrected, it is Rs.95,000 crore under Plan Expenditure. Every segment, including education and housing, has been affected. Are you again going to put another cut like that in this year also? You are not able to sustain it because you don't have money.



Sir, rupee is sinking fast. Fiscal deficit is on the rise. Trade deficit is widening. Current Account Deficit is increasing. Growth rate is going down. Your subsidy bill is increasing. Investments are flowing out. No fresh capital is coming in. Investors, both domestic and global, have lost confidence. The other day the icon of Indian industry, Shri Ratan Tata, opined, "India has lost the confidence of the world." This is not a statement. This is not a happy statement either. At the same time, it is a fact that nobody is coming here to invest in the country. Even Indian investors are running away from India. Many people are praying that this Government should go at the earliest so that there is some certainty.

Sir, with regard to fresh capital, it is not coming in. Country's sovereign rating is suffering. Inflation is breaking the backbone of the common man. Growth has come to a grinding halt. Large-scale unemployment is looming large. That being the case, Sir, the experts are warning that this Bill may play havoc with Government finances.

Sir, the other day the RBI rang a warning bell to the Government and said, "It will be difficult to contain food subsidies within the amount even in 2013-14 when this Act will begin to get implemented." This is not a doubt expressed by Venkaiah Naidu. This is a doubt which is expressed by the Reserve Bank of India.

"In the next few years, growing subsidies could restrict employment opportunities including agricultural sector", this is the opinion of the RBI. The outgoing Governor of RBI said that the only solution to our rupee problem is to reduce Current Account Deficit. That is the advice he has given and we have seen CAD to be well above the sustainable level for three years in a row. Continuously, for the last three years, CAD has increased. A former Governor of RBI, Dr. Bimal Jalan, raised a red flag at the programme and said, "if the Finance Minister is trying to contain the fiscal deficit and control expenditure, it is important to look at the cost of financing such a programme, especially when the economy is not in a good shape". Sir, let me quote our Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, please conclude.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Sir, the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, while presenting the Budget as the then F.M. in 1995-96, said, "If we try to fund every project and programme irrespective of the revenue available, we will only generate high inflation, high interest rates, which



will choke off investment. This approach will only jeopardise our basic objective of development with social justice since it is the poor who will suffer the most from the resultant inflation and slow growth of employment.” I underline the words ‘high inflation’, ‘high interest rates’, ‘choke off investment’ and ‘it is the poor who will suffer the most’. Sir, food is not the only thing for the survival of human being. You need water; you need sanitation; you need education for children; you need housing; you need clothing; and, you need other minimum requirements. That being the case, if the inflation goes up and the Government is not able to contain the prices and control inflation, then what will happen to the common people? Merely by eating rice and wheat, one cannot survive. It is everybody’s knowledge. So, that being the case, I would request the Government to understand this. Economist Prachi Misraji said that the cost of the programme may be Rs.50,000 crore. Just now, our Leader of the Opposition said that as per the Minister, the cost of the project is going to be Rs.9,000 crore only. On the one side, you are tom-tomming and saying that this much money is going to be spent; on the other, you are saying that the cost is going to be only Rs.9,000 crore. One of this must be untrue. The other must be a fact. So, please explain to the House what the fact is.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, what is your problem? I am not able to understand.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: My problem is that your Party has only 22 minutes left and it has five speakers. How will I accommodate them?

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: I have been told by my Party that there are only two speakers.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is given here. There are seven speakers.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Don’t worry, Sir. Leave it to us.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: But, I have to regulate.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, the problem with the Deputy Chairman always is, you try to apply brake. Once we break, then it takes some time to again catch up.



MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay. No break. You continue.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, the Food Security Bill is going to negatively affect the States. Chhattisgarh is giving universal coverage, 90 per cent of the people. You are restricting it to 67 per cent. Tamil Nadu Government is going to forego Rs.1,000 crore per year, ten to twelve lakh tonnes of foodgrains per year, as per your allocation. The other day I heard the Minister with attention. In Lok Sabha, he said that it would be offset by providing additional foodgrains. At what cost? That question was not answered. I would like to ask the Minister: At what cost? Please explain to the House today. Would it be at an increased cost or at the same cost at which you are providing to other people? Second is about Gujarat. Gujarat is going to lose around 1.47 crore people who are in the BPL. From 5.11 crore, it will come down to 3.66 crore. That is the apprehension. Please try to understand the apprehension and then address that issue also. Sir, the Supreme Court said that the Chhattisgarh model is a good model and why you do not follow it. I am asking the Minister: What prevents you from following the Chhattisgarh model?

Sir, now, I come to reduction of entitlement. As per ICMR, it requires nearly 14 kilograms. Now, you are making a provision of five kilograms. You are going to cover only 20 crore families as per the reply given to us in Parliament. It means, 20 crore into 4 or 4.5 per family, around 80 crore people. That being the case, what will happen to the remaining people? At what cost do they have to purchase the foodgrains? Secondly, I want to open up and tell the House about the debate that is going on. Are you really targeting the food security? Are you really targeting the needy? Then, why don't you also target the subsidies to those needy people? That means, the poor people, the BPL families, the *Antyodaya* families, the helpless families, etc., have to be taken care of not only rice and wheat, but also of other important components of food so that they also get a nutritious meal for their children. Malnutrition is a major problem in this country. It is a known fact. I don't want to quote the figures of the World Health Organisation and then bother you all.

But the fact is that there is malnutrition, stunted growth and under-nourishment in the country. That being the case, without covering those aspects of the nutrition, how are you going to take care of those children? How are you going to take care of the malnutrition? You have not been able to understand. *ĀŒ,Œ*



So, first you decide what your target is. If you are going to give to 67 per cent of the population, then, you may say, Venkaiah Naidu, you said 90 per cent in Chhattisgarh, then, I ask you to cover it by 100 per cent. What is the problem? If, 67 per cent of the population can be covered, why not 100 per cent population? Some States are already giving. My point to you is, please don't attack the federal system of the country. Please allow the States to have their own schemes. If you want to supplement them, supplement those States' programmes fully. Then, do not make them villains. The Leader of the Opposition has made a pertinent point, you decide the number; and they have to decide the beneficiaries. Is it in the real federal spirit of the country? The number and the criteria should have been done in consultation with the States. You can't put the States in such an embarrassing situation; and create difficulties for them with finances. The Centre has got enormous resources. You have the taxation power. States have limited finances. That being the case, don't put the States to such a situation where they have to bear the brunt and you will try to tom, tom from Delhi to the States. Is it in the real federal spirit of the country? The number and the criteria should have been done in consultation with the States. You can't put the States in such an embarrassing situation; and create difficulties for them with finances. The Centre has got enormous resources. You have the taxation power. States have limited finances. That being the case, don't put the States to such a situation where they have to bear the brunt and you will try to tom, tom from Delhi to the States.

Sir, with regard to the quantum of food, we have already talked about. With regard to taking care of inflation, we have already talked about. With regard to the Food Bill, I will conclude by saying a few words. I can tell you that the Food Bill is not going to get your good will. It is going to be a very heavy Bill. How do you make it? Please explain to us. “†00,†r Åē †0000 •0000,ü 2000ē 3000 00ē Åü. †00 0ē †00 “×0,000”ü Åē •0<0ē. Y000,0 you are talking of so many things on the eve of the elections. You are saying that this direct cash transfer will result in vote transfer. Finally it will end in regime transfer. Please try to understand it because the message is very clear. People are angry. They are impatient. They want this Government to go at the earliest opportunity. The sooner it is the better it would be. That being the case, giving lollipops, making empty promises without proper allocation at the last moment is not going to serve the purpose. The concept of food security is nobody objecting. My States are implementing it in a better manner. Please join my States of Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and other States and then make it successful. Thank you very much, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Next, Shri Narendra Budania.



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MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, please conclude.

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MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Now, please conclude. ....(Interruptions)...Your Party has seven speakers. What can I do? Please conclude. Don't give so many names.

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MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You are the Party Deputy Chief Whip and you have given seven names. You yourself have said that you will take only 20 minutes. There are so many Members who wish to speak. I am requesting Members from every Party. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please.

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MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

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MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Now, Shri Derek O'Brien.

SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN (West Bengal): Sir, what is an idea and what is a gimmick? Very simply put, an idea endures over time and changes people's experiences. A gimmick certainly attracts a lot of attention but does not meet two issues. One, its commitment, and, two, most people who come up with gimmicks do so because they are under pressure. Sir, I can well understand that the UPA is the '*Under Pressure Alliance*', and, therefore, we can understand why they are so much in search of gimmicks and not ideas. Sir, having said that, in principle, we agree with the concept of 'Food for All' and we also agree that when 12 per cent of a Budget is allotted for Defence, about 5 per cent is allotted for HRD and Mid-day Meal Scheme together, and, 2 per cent is allotted for Health, then, whatever the figure, 6 to 8 per cent is the figure they have now, will be part of this food security. In principle, we are in agreement with this figure.

Over the next few minutes, I want to stress on the two broad points which I want to make today. First is the mockery of federalism, and, the second is the execution of the plan. So, let me make three quick points on the mockery of federalism.

Clause 38 of this Bill basically says that for all issues of finance, the Centre will give the States the directions and the States will have to comply with whatever directions the Centre gives. This makes the mockery of federalism and let me give you three examples. The Congress-led UPA Government is making a lot of noise about VAT, VAT, VAT; how a VAT is implemented or one per cent of GDP will be improved. The story is that there is a CST, that is, the Central Sales Tax, which the States would collect and which is 4 per cent. In their enthusiasm to introduce VAT, the States were told to bring it down from 4 per cent to 2 per cent. The Centre dictated the same. Then, they said that they would reimburse the States but, Sir, in reality, this did not happen. I am using this example to show you how my State West Bengal has not got Rs. 650 crore. A promise was made for CST and it was not done. The point here, Sir, is that this is the danger of clause 38, and, that is why, we have moved an amendment to clause 38, and, I would appeal to all the Parties, who have more than 90 per cent of their seats from one States, to look at this clause very, very carefully. Let me give you second example. When a Central Scheme starts, for example, *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, NRHM, they start with a particular percentage. Let me give you two examples; I can give you eight-



ten examples but I am giving only two because of paucity of time. Sir, ten years ago, the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* started with a sharing arrangement of 85:15, that is, 85 per cent share of the Centre and 15 per cent share of the State. Now, in the same programme, the share of the Centre has come down to 65 per cent from 85 per cent, and, the State's share has gone up from 15 per cent to 35 per cent.

If you take the NRHM, again, it started off as 85-15 and now it is already down to 75-25. Sir, this kind of law will have an impact on how the States manage their funds, especially debt-stressed States like the State I come from and a few others like Kerala and Punjab where we will not be able to prioritise our own programmes. Sir, the second point on this mockery of federalism is, if you look at section 23 – and here we were very tempted to move an amendment also, but in the nature of consensus, we thought, ‘no we won’t’ – the suggestion made is that when the Centre cannot supply the grains to the State from the Central pool, the State has to buy the grains on their own. Now, here is the problem. And regarding reimbursement, let us say if the State buys at ‘x’ price, the reimbursement may be below ‘x’. So, the State, in fact, will be losing money. Why? Because the Central pool could not supply them the grains. Third, Sir, quickly on setting up of infrastructure, whether you take the redressal mechanism, whether you take the State Food Commission, whether you take storage, transport, distribution, on all these points, it is not very clear as to how much of the burden the State has to bear. So, over all, my friends in the UPA – actually I should say my old friends in the UPA – have either not read the Sarkaria Commission or Punchhi Commission Reports, or, they have read it and they have selected amnesia. Those are the few points, Sir, we made on federalism.

Sir, now quickly some points on the execution. Mayawatiiji actually shared the point which I again want to re-emphasise. You look at the PDS, you look at AAY, BPL and APL, then you study these numbers. It is an extremely relevant question because what is really happening is 60 per cent of those BPL houses covered under PDS will get less. So, if you look at AAY, BPL and APL, if you put them together on the existing PDS, 40 per cent, I agree, will be beneficiaries, 14 per cent will be equal and the rest of it, which is about another 40-45 per cent, will actually be getting less than what they are getting now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have taken half of your party's time. Do you wish to take all of it?







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SHRIMATI VANDANA CHAVAN (Maharashtra): Sir, I consider myself extremely fortunate to have got this opportunity to put forth my views and to support this historic landmark legislation on behalf of my party. Sir, looking back at the 66 years of our country's history on the one side, we take pride in the progress and development that we have made in the fields of Science and Technology, Information Technology, Infrastructure, Industry, Agriculture and Social Welfare. Thanks to the positive initiative in the last decade, that we came to be labelled as the fastest growing economy in the world. We see the emergence of a rapidly increasing middle class with higher standards of living and increasing purchasing power. We are proud of the fact that we are termed as a country on the march and are considered an important player on the global platform. However, on the other side, Sir, there are glaring and startling realities which need to be addressed. Ours is a country of disparities and it is this gap that we need to bridge. It is unfortunate that a major chunk of our population still has to struggle for basic survival needs. Sir, India is home to a third of the world's poor. India is home to nearly a fourth of the hungry in the world making it the world's hunger capital. One out of four children is malnourished. The figures and captions can go on. More eloquent for me, Sir, are the words I read in an article of a grandmother, Jharna, carrying her sick, undernourished, limp, emaciated one-year grandchild to a clinic, who anxiously expressed to the author of this article and I quote, "You see her arms? They are almost the width of my thumb. She is too weak. She can't



even sit by herself.” I was shocked to hear this and when I saw my own thumb and compared it to probably the arm of a one-year old, I could not imagine that this could be true, and, therefore, I googled, I searched for images and I was shocked to see that it was not only just Jharna’s grandchild but many more children cuddled in their mother’s arms, who perfectly fit that description. Therefore, Sir, in passing of this Bill there is a special feeling, a deep sentiment of contentment and fulfilment, I think, which our Mahatma told us that we have to think of the last person and this is the dream that he envisaged and that is exactly what we are trying to do today. Sir, as we aim for a high economic growth which is absolutely essential, what is utmost important is, the growth, has to be inclusive. It is our duty to ensure that the benefits reach the poor and weaker sections of our society and I feel in passing of this Bill we are precisely doing that.

Once this Bill becomes law, food security is not a welfare measure but a right of almost 2/3rd citizens of India. Sir, to be able to provide entitlements, as mentioned in the Bill, it is absolutely essential that there has to be stability and self-sufficiency of food production. Worldwide, especially in the Asian region, challenges such as increasing population, climate change impacts, over exploitation of natural resources bring pressure on food production and sufficiency.

Lester Brown, a renowned environmentalist, in his Book “Full Planet, Empty Plates”, has observed, “Globally the world grain reserves have fallen by 1/3rd and the world is in a transition from an era of abundance to that of scarcity.” In this background, I think, we are fortunate and blessed that what was unthinkable a few years back in India, today, boasts to be self-sufficient in foodgrain production.

Sir, we are the largest exporter of rice and the second largest exporter of wheat. There has been a record production of pulses. India is the second largest producer of vegetables. India is the second largest producer of fruits. India is the largest producer of milk. India has the largest livestock. Agriculture credit which was Rs. 86,000-odd crores in 2003-04 has now reached Rs. 600,000 crores. From a net importer to a huge exporter of agricultural produce, India has, in 2012-13, exported agricultural produce worth Rs. 2.32 lakh crores. And, to our credit, this tripled in just four years. India’s godowns are overflowing with wheat and rice waiting to be reached to the poor. In spite of many natural calamities, we have achieved a record foodgrain production of 259.29 million tonnes in 2011-12.



Initiatives such as Green Revolution in the Eastern India, 60,000 pulses and oilseed villages, successful Minimum Support Price policies and many others have played a major role in achieving this success.

Sir, we have to realize that the introduction, deliberation and passing of this Bill would not have been possible had there not been toil and hard work, grit and determination of the sons of our soil — our Kisan. We would not have been talking on this Bill had the great impetus not been given by the Government in recent years to the agricultural sector. We would not have been talking on this Bill had it not been for the leadership and direction of an astute and truly visionary leader who understands the nerve of agriculture and farmer, hon. Minister of Agriculture, Sharad Pawarji, and the support of the hon. Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singhji, whose valuable contributions have made India not only self-sufficient in foodgrains, but has set all-time production record on the global scenario. The challenge now, Sir, is to maintain the pace and ensure sustainability. For this, we need to ensure that every farmer is remunerated well, kept motivated and we have to keep in mind, that he — the farmer — is the pivot, he is the champion, in the real sense, he is the *Anna Data* for this programme's success. And, topmost priority should be given to his concerns.

Sir, it is heartening to see the provisions in this direction in the Bill too. Schedule III of the Food Security Bill is extremely welcome and crucial as it makes sure all levels of Government — Central, State, Local ...(*Time-bell rings*)... Sir, I am going to be the only speaker from my party.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA): You have got only two more minutes now.

SHRIMATI VANDANA CHAVAN: ...Governments would strive to revitalize agriculture to make interventions for procurement, storage and movement of grains and to provide access to safe and adequate drinking water and sanitation.

Sir, we all know that health burden of poor quality of water is enormous. It is estimated that every year around 37.7 million Indians are affected by waterborne diseases and 1.5 million children are estimated to die because of diarrhea. Sanitation forms an important component of health. More than half of all people who defecate in the open live in India. Studies in India have shown that there is a link between open defecation and stunted growth. Therefore, ill-health will not allow proper absorption of food and nutrients. Therefore, these issues also need to be addressed.



Sir, it is extremely important to realise – and this is the last but one point – that, through this legislation, no doubt, we are taking care of only a part of the food basket, quantity-wise and nutrients-wise, which itself undoubtedly is a major step.

The ICMR norms recommend that an adult requires 14 kilos and a child 7 kilos and, therefore, this is only the beginning of a stupendous task that we have in future.

To combat malnutrition, one needs basic food necessities, which means a combination of cereals, pulses and edible oils. Let us hope that the Government is taking care of the responsibility of a part of the food basket and the rest is earned by the person who feeds for himself. And, therefore, we need to make sure that the poor get work and income. The MNREGA is a step in that direction. However, we will have to strive for more aggressive implementation of skill development and other such programmes.

A massive education programme needs to take place as people need to know what nutrition really means. It should not be that, just because they have been given the grain, they feel that everything has been sorted out. They have to understand that it has to be supplemented by pulses and edible oils. (*Time-bell rings*)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA): Please conclude.

SHRIMATI VANDANA CHAVAN: Yes, Sir.

Some of the other challenges that we face today are climate change impacts, water shortages and, of course, not a very efficient PDS system.

Through this Bill, Sir, ours will be the biggest programme in the world to eradicate hunger. I am sure, if all of us, the law and policy makers, the elected representatives and administrators at all levels of the Government, resolve that we want to see a better world, a hunger-free world, a safe, secure and healthy world for our children, our future generations, then, I can only say, this is our best chance.

SHRI H.K. DUA (Nominated): Thank you, Mr. Vice-Chairman, for giving me the opportunity to speak on this very, very important Bill.



Sir, there is an unwritten consensus among all the political parties, despite the current mood of cynicism that has spread across the country, that we can be a major economic, political and nuclear power of the 21st century. We have the world's largest skilled manpower, a major source of our strength. We have one of the world's largest Armies, Air Forces and Navies. We are one of the world's larger missile powers. In a few years' time, an Indian will be landing on the Moon. Possibly, we will be able to send a Mission to the Mars, "Ön the near future.

But, Sir, the reality on the ground is not as happy and hopeful as it seems. A chunk of our population doesn't get nutritious food every day. A chunk of the population does not get one nutritious meal per day. If a majority of the children who are malnourished in the world are Indians, then, there is something wrong with our priorities.

Sixty-five years after freedom, now we are in a position to fill that gap between promise and achievement. It was not possible soon after Independence when we were going round the world with a begging bowl asking for PL-480 foodgrains, and we had to pay heavy price for it in our policies and programmes. There is no free lunch anywhere, as you know.

Now, we produce enough foodgrains of our own. We are exporting it also. But it is not reaching all the people. Why? That is because the people do not have the purchasing power to buy all what we grow, or they need. That is why there is malnutrition. There are not many famines in the country, but there have been, still, people in Vidarbha who died of hunger, who committed suicides. It happened in Andhra Pradesh also. It happened in a prosperous State like the Punjab where, some years ago, there were hunger suicides, not in large scale but there were six people who had died.

Now, what is worrying is, even if famine has been eradicated from India, and we have enough bufferstock to take care of a drought or two, malnutrition is very, very widespread. It is so widespread that it cannot be the base for building a major power of the 21st century. You can be a power; but on hungry stomach, you cannot be a major power of the 21st century. This Bill tries to fill that gap between promise and performance. We have the grains. There are 70 million tonnes of grains in our warehouses, or, lying in the open on the plinth. A chunk of it is eaten by rats. Rats don't commit suicides in Vidarbha; they are fairly well-fed, or,



elsewhere where the pockets of food shortages are there. It is men who do. No where rats are suffering from malnutrition. It is people who do; it is the children who suffer from malnutrition. Now, a chunk of these 70 million foodgrains is eaten away by rats or the vagaries of weather. Can't we distribute it to the people who need it? Those people who cannot afford to buy these. This Bill provides them cheap grain at a vast scale. That is why it is of historic importance. I am sure the House will support it unanimously. There have been reservations from different parties about some problems with the Bill. I am sure, these can be addressed. If not, as we go along, if some glitches appear, these can be rectified later. This programme is of a massive scale. I think we should all support it. Criticism is coming from the middle class outside. Criticism is coming from the 'Shining India', which has been a gainer of growth. The 'Shining India' wants subsidies for petrol, it wants cheap fares for air travel, it would like to go to posh restaurants and order lobsters and discuss obesity. The people who belong to the 'Shining India' don't want to share a handful of grain with the poor and who are under-nourished children. They just don't want to share it. I read in the newspapers, and most of you people would have read that kitty parties are being held by chartering an aircraft for rich ladies to go to Hong Kong or Bangkok or Paris. The kitty parties are being held there at tremendous costs, and when they come back, they discuss why this Bill is being brought, why cheap grain is being distributed to the other India; and when the country doesn't have enough resources. But, 'Shining India', frankly speaking, is a bit selfish India. When the voting time comes, the Shining India people don't turn up for voting. The voting percentages are the least in prosperous areas, as it has been experienced in posh areas of Mumbai or Delhi. They have the least percentages. Who have really the stake in democracy? Ultimately, the poor of the country have the stake in democracy. And, if the State does not take care of the poorest, "the loneliest and the last," then, I am afraid, it will be an undemocratic State.

Sir, there are other plus points in this Bill, which are very, very important. Women, particularly the women who are on the family way, and the children are the first charge in its scheme of things. An important aspect of the Bill — there is one Clause which has not been explained — is that the head of the family in every beneficiary family will be a woman, not man. Now, that is indeed of societal importance in this Bill that the head of the family will be the eldest woman of the family. Now, that kind of proposition is unimaginable in Indian social set up, where



a woman is not regarded although your passport and my passport will mention the mother's name also as head of the family in an entitlement card. Now entitlement is to be determined by the head of the family – a woman.

If the democratic promise has to be fulfilled — although 65 years have been lost. Let's not lose more. You have to feed the under-nourished families. If they cannot afford, then the State has got to help. There used to be times when you ask your help or someone, 'well, your son has got the job, congratulations, ...' These days *dal* is getting outside the menu of the poor. For most people in India, the only source of protein is *dal* which the poor cannot afford at eighty rupees or ninety rupees a kilo. What a housewife does? She puts more water in *dal* to save on *dal*, reduces the quantity of *dal* which is being cooked for the entire family. In the process, protein is being denied to the children who are already malnourished. So, they suffer more from malnutrition. How do you build a democratic, strong India of the 21st century on the basis of hungry or malnourished stomachs? This Bill goes some way, possibly, I think we may have to come and increase the grain later on at some stage till the purchasing power of the common man improves. Let us not go by the glitter of the malls or the lifestyles of those of the shining India. Our big aim should be that entire India shines. This Sir, is only a beginning. Thank you very much, Sir.

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THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA): Please conclude.

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THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA): Next is. Mr. Sanjiv Kumar; not present. Then, Shri Birendra Prasad Baishya.



SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA (Assam): Thank you, Sir, for having given me this opportunity.

Before beginning my speech on this Bill, I would like to quote Mahatma Gandhiji what he had written in the *Harijan* before Independence. Before Independence of our country, Mahatma Gandhi wrote this in the *Harijan* in which he said, “In a democracy, a Government which cannot provide basic amenities to the poor people of the country is not a Government but a conjunction of the anarchist.”

With this quotation of Mahatma Gandhi, I would like to start my speech on this Bill. India is a welfare State and it is the duty of any welfare country to fulfil basic needs of the people of the country. In our country, what are the basic needs of the people? They are: Food, clothing and house. But successive Governments have totally failed to provide '*Roti, Kapada and Makaan.*' It is nothing but a slogan in our country. All the Governments have failed to implement this.

Coming to the Bill, in this Bill, the Government has said that it will provide five kilogram of rice or five kilogram of wheat per person in a month— rice at Rs. 3 and wheat at Rs. 2. But, Sir, no individual can survive with only five kilogram of rice. So, I want a modification in this paragraph of the Bill. I request that it should be increased up to 15 kilogram a month for an individual. Only then, he can survive. By five kilogram rice, nobody can survive.

Secondly, Sir, you are giving rice here, you are giving wheat, but you are not giving *sarson*, you are not giving refined oil or mustard oil and you are also not giving *daal*, which is very important.

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Then, Sir, take salt. The price of salt is very low in this part of the country, but if somebody has visited our border area, Indo-China border area in Arunachal Pradesh, he would be knowing its price there. Can you imagine that it is sold at Rs. 100 to Rs. 120 per kg there? So, I request the Government that it should also include *daal*, oil and salt along with rice in this Scheme. Only then, people can survive. But, for successful implementation of this Bill, strengthening of the Public



Distribution System is also very important. However, in our country, the Public Distribution System has totally collapsed. Without improving the Public Distribution System, you cannot implement this Scheme. ...(Time bell rings).. If you will not properly implement this Scheme through the strong Public Distribution System, this Scheme will be like the slogan 'Roti, Kapada and Makaan'. In the fair price shops under the Public Distribution shops, sugar is already missing. People are not getting sugar from the fair price shops for the last several months. So, try to improve the Public Distribution System first.

Then, storage is also a very important part of this. I come from the North-Eastern Region of our country. During flood times, North-Eastern Region always gets cut-off from the rest of the country. But there is no sufficient storage capacity. Without sufficient storage capacity, you cannot implement this Scheme. You should also look into this. This also needs to be given importance in this Scheme. ...(Time bell rings).. Then, there is one very interesting thing.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA): Mr. Baishya, please conclude.

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Sir, give me just two minutes. ...(Interruptions)...

Sir, I would like to make another point here. The role of the Food Corporation of India is very important, but there is a nexus between the Food Corporation of India and some illegal businessmen due to which the Food Corporation of India has totally collapsed in our country. I would call it, not the Food Corporation of India, but 'the Food Corruption of India'. I would urge the Minister, before implementing this Bill, try and look into these issues. Otherwise, this Bill would remain only in name and people would not get any benefit out of it.

Sir, there is another important point to which I wish to draw the attention of the Government. There are certain basic problems being faced by the people of the North-Eastern Region. Most of the fair price shops are smuggling goods into Bangladesh. It is not reaching the poor people. Although the Government has introduced the scheme, people are not getting any benefit out of it. Most of the low-priced goods are being smuggled into Bangladesh and illegal and dishonest businessmen are earning money. The Government must look into this and make some clarification.











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THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA): Now, Dr. Karan Singh – not there. Dr. Bhalchandra Mungekar.

DR. BHALCHANDRA MUNGEKAR (Nominated): Sir, I thank you for allowing me to participate in this important debate. At the outset, and with utmost gratitude, I congratulate the Congress President, Shrimati Sonia Gandhi, who is the architect of this historic legislation. Some experts criticised her personally for originating it, but she remained steadfast in her commitment to the poor people because she represents the voice of the poor in the country. I also congratulate Hon. Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, and the UPA partners for bringing in this historic legislation.

Sir, the Bill has two dimensions. One is philosophical and the second is that of logistics.

Sir, millions of people in this country joined the freedom movement under the leadership of the Indian National Congress, but it was not only for political freedom, i.e., right to vote in every five years. It was also for the enhancement of the material welfare, that is, sustained improvement in their living conditions. They fought for freedom from colonial exploitation to end poverty, unemployment and destitution. The Constitution of India, therefore, committed to create a 'welfare State'. Within the vision of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the country accepted economic



planning as the strategy for economic growth with equal distribution of the benefits of economic development.

Sir, even the worst critic of India's development strategy will have to admit that whatever economic growth has taken place in the country has benefited all sections of the society. But, regrettably, due to the unequal social structure – caste, gender, etc. – and all kinds of rigidities, all sections of the society could not equitably share the benefits of economic growth. It is in this background that the country witnessed the disaster that the slogan of 'Shining India' could lead to.

Therefore, the Congress-led UPA Government adopted 'Rights-based' approach to the economic development in the Eleventh Five Year Plan, implying that the improvement in the living conditions of the people is not at the mercy of the Government of the day, but it is the right of the people. It is in this context that the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, the Tribal Forest Land Rights Act, the Right to Free and Compulsory Education and the Right to Information are the shining examples of the Rights-based approach to development. I am aware of some of the shortcomings of these schemes very closely, but nobody can deny the fact that these schemes have improved the lives of millions of people, needy and poor people, in the country, particularly in the rural areas.

Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, Right to Food Security is the most important addition to this agenda of Rights-based approach to development. I call it 'most important' because all other Constitutional rights could be enjoyed by a person only if he or she exists. Right to Food Security gives a person the right to existence. Since the details of the Bill are well known, I would straightway deal with some of the apprehensions and criticisms of the Bill.

I will begin with the Statutory Motion moved by the hon. Leader of the Opposition. Sir, he was talking about the political exigency while moving this Bill and bringing the Ordinance at the cost of the Constitutional propriety. Sir, it is accused that the Bill is politically motivated. The point is that after coming to power in May, 2009, in the election manifesto, this promise was given that the Bill relating to food security will be introduced.

Exactly after two-and-a-half years, in December, 2011, this Bill was introduced. Since then, the Parliament was not allowed to function. Only on 5th July, the



Ordinance was issued because there was no other option. The hon. Leader of the Opposition just now mentioned that this was the political exigency. Sir, I spent my career as a teacher, and, that is why, I am not fully trained in settling political scores. But even assuming that it as a political exigency, I think, that political exigency is still better than the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992 for coming to political power in this country. ...(Interruptions)... Madam, please.

Sir, on the one hand, there is implicit consensus on the Bill, all political parties, with some differences, have approved the Bill in Lok Sabha, then, why should there be criticism? I understand that there are some valid points of criticism, but the major reason for the criticism is the political fear in the minds of the Opposition parties that this Bill will give political mileage to the Congress. This is the main fear, which they are not able to overcome. If at all, suppose the Congress takes the benefit of this, the Congress is not a party of *sadhus and sanyasis*, preaching *Vasudeva Kutumbakam*, and, actually going for violence.

Sir, in a country like India, the food security is of fundamental importance. I am reminded of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's words, when he said in 1928, and, I quote, "India was a classic land of famines, where famines are not caused for want of food, but for want, amongst the masses of money to buy food". Panditji said this 52 years before Professor Amartya Sen developed his celebrated theory of economic entitlements only in 1980. It is due to this that the Bill guarantees prescribed quota of foodgrains at affordable prices. These prices will remain in vogue only for three years, and, then, they will be revised but, in any case, they will not be above the Minimum Support Prices.

Thirdly, the Bill is heavily criticized because it covers 810 million, or, 81 crore people when the poverty is declining. I think, Sir, people are missing the point that this is statutory and justiciable Fundamental Right. It is not dealing with poverty. The poverty has nothing to do with it. Secondly, the most important point is that if we take into account the World Bank's norm of \$2 a day poverty, which is called the median poverty, and, which is not taken into account in this debate at all, then, automatically, 81 crore people are covered under median poverty. Sir, I do not understand as to how people forget that only a few days ago, we were discussing Rs. 27 a day for rural areas, and, Rs. 30 a day for urban areas as the lowest cut-off points.



**5.00 P.M.**

(MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.)

Now, when we are taking \$2 a day poverty benchmark, which, at the current exchange rate comes to Rs. 124, what is the objection? It is just contradiction. Another point is that my Leftist friends, whom I value very much, have been demanding universalisation of the food security. I absolutely share their concern. But I will only say that at present, the Bill covers 61 per cent of the population and is near universal. I wish, in course of time, the Government will actually make this scheme universal.

My fourth point is about the cost of implementation of this Bill. Some critics are frightening by arguing that the additional cost of the Bill will be Rs.1.25 lakh crore . A prominent economist, who is writing in a daily, has estimated the cost of Rs.3.14 lakh crore, just another discovery after Einstein, and, that is 3.0 per cent of the GDP. Surprisingly, one prominent former Union Finance Minister quoted this figure of Rs.3.14 lakh crore, unmindfully, without questioning the statistical or methodological blunder that the prominent economist made while estimating the cost of its implementation.

Sir, if the Bill is fully implemented, the maximum cost, according to my own estimate, may go up to Rs. 1.35 lakh crore rather than Rs. 1.25 lakh crore, which will be approximately 1.2 per cent of the GDP, and, if this PDS is properly restructured and improved, then, I think, the cost can be brought down to one per cent of the GDP.

And, even I go further. Suppose the cost is 1.3 per cent. So what? Congress President is on the record – and I fully support her – that if there are no resources, resources are to be made available for the poor people because ultimately for whom is this growth?

Sir, as Mr. Dua has just now mentioned, it is most distressing. Who are the critics? I can understand the political parties in the game of parliamentary politics will be criticizing on political fronts. But who are the serious critics? The serious critics are the people who have reaped the benefits of post-1991 economic reforms and who used practically every imported consumer item, including perhaps the toilet paper, and contributed towards the deterioration of the current account deficit.



They are the ones who are opposing the Food Security Bill. They are condemning it as 'wastage' of the resources. The same clan has been vociferously condemning the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme as 'fund-muzzling'. Many people here referred to Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme – forgetting the fact that nearly five to six crore poor unskilled rural households are annually getting around 250 to 300 person - days of employment. I, therefore, strongly denounce such people's anti-poor stance and treat it unethical.

Sir, some argue that the Bill is anti-farmers. We have heard it here. It is a travesty of truth. Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, today, Minimum Support Prices, just now my colleague, Mr. Javadekar, was speaking, are protecting the interests of the farmers more than the consumers. (*Time-bell rings*) If the Government withdraws from the market, we must have... (*Time-bell rings*). Sir, I am having time. Basically, the point is... (*Time-bell rings*)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

DR. BHALCHANDRA MUNGEKAR: Sir, I think I am given fifteen minutes.

Sir, the basic question is the Minimum Support Prices are protecting the farmers, because if the Minimum Support Price mechanism is withdrawn, the farmers will be the losers because of the imperfections of the market and the role of the middlemen.

Sir, the Food Security Bill will not distort the market prices, because it is only additional five-six million tons of foodgrains required to be procured for the PDS. That will not distort the market, because it will also withdraw that much demand from the market.

Sir, I compliment the Government for three or four other reasons. I am completing within two-three minutes, Sir. First, the Government did not introduce...(*Time-bell rings*)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, please conclude.

DR. BHALCHANDRA MUNGEKAR: No, no, I will conclude after two or three minutes, please.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There is no time.



DR. BHALCHANDRA MUNGEKAR: Sir, the Government did not introduce the voucher system for the food security as some of the so-called experts were consistently demanding.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Everybody has to adhere to the time-limit.

DR. BHALCHANDRA MUNGEKAR: It was first recommended by Milton Friedman...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You have taken ten minutes. Ten minutes would do.

DR. BHALCHANDRA MUNGEKAR: Sir, let me complete silently. It was first recommended by Milton Friedman for American society. India is not America. Sir, today only a leading national daily, those who talk of voucher system, has quoted that India's largest private insurance company, ICICI Lombard, has cheated the Government for crores of rupees through false insurance premium claims by creating ghost beneficiaries. The company was given contract for implementing welfare schemes. (*Time-bell rings*) Sir, the next point is, I understand the Government has agreed to ensure the number of present beneficiaries in different States and it will take further measures to protect the interests of the States. Sir, the Bill prescribes, as Mr. Dua said, the eldest woman as the household head and it will reduce the anti-gender and anti-children bias in the families.

Lastly, food security will now be a justiciable right. The Bill provides for grievance redressal cell mechanism at the district and State level and the States will have flexibility.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, this is the last point. Now, having totally supported the Bill, I am constrained to draw ...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, please conclude.

DR. BHALCHANDRA MUNGEKAR: Only last sentence, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no, your party has so many speakers. Your whip has said to reduce everybody's time.

DR. BHALCHANDRA MUNGEKAR: One minute, Sir. By this time, I will complete.



I am constrained to draw the attention of the Government to the challenge of the implementation of this historical legislation, particularly because of the very serious shortcomings of the PDS. I would summarise all the shortcomings as the dominance of “vested interests”. The Government will have to totally restructure the working of the PDS to reach the food security to the needy. Sir, I have mentioned that the Lok Sabha has passed this Bill. I congratulate the hon. Members of the Lok Sabha. ....(*Interruptions*).... Let this House also pass the Bill unanimously. (*Time-bell rings*) Sir, one last sentence. The Fifteenth Parliament will go in the history of India’s Parliamentary democracy as the one that has given the country’s citizens the right to food, right to existence. Thank you very much.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, hon. Members, unless ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI NARESH GUJRAL (Punjab): Sir, I want to raise one point. You gave so much time ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Is it a point or point of order?

SHRI NARESH GUJRAL: One minute, Sir. Then, there are six speakers from the principal Opposition Party. Small parties are then given three minutes each. This is not fair. You have been promising us all along that consideration would be given to us also. But if this goes on, we will all be in the Well and this debate will not go on.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You have made your point. Gujralji raised an important point. I agree with him. But from ‘Others’ category, there are 14 speakers, and the total time for them is 47 minutes. How much time will one hon. Member get? I think it will be less than four minutes. That is my problem. Take five minutes and cooperate. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI NARESH GUJRAL: What is this? This has been going on for so long. I have been protesting it for six years.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You should know that we are governed by Rules.

SHRI NARESH GUJRAL: This is not fair. You have to change the Rules. Just because we are a small Party...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Gujralji, please sit down.



SHRI NARESH GUJRAL: I come from a food State.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Gujralji, we are governed by Rules. I am telling you that I am ready to curtail the time of major Parties. Even that is not possible because not much time is left allocated to the BJP. It is only the Congress Party ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI NARESH GUJRAL: So, Sir, let the BJP and the Congress Party run the House and we all will go out. Then what are we doing here?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am ready to reduce it. It is for those Parties to do that.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, we can extend the time. Voting can take place tomorrow morning. What is the great difficulty in this? I am not able to understand it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is for the House to decide.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: All other Parties should get a fair opportunity.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Then I will be very happy. Venkaiahji, I will be most happy if you agree to extend the time allocated for discussion and give time to everybody. I really want to give time to everybody.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: We agree to it. We have no problem.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I really want to give time to everybody. Nareshji, my sympathies are with you.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: We can sit up to 6.30 p.m. ...*(Interruptions)*... We can have voting tomorrow. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You have made your point. Dr. V. Maitreya. My humble request to everybody is, please keep to the time. Your Party's time is ten minutes.

DR. V. MAITREYA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, on behalf of All India Anna DMK, I rise to oppose the National Food Security Bill, 2013. My Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Dr. Puratchi Thalaivi has taken a consistent and principled stand against the Food Security Bill since it is against the interest of Tamil Nadu. When the draft Bill



was approved by the UPA Government in 2011, my Chief Minister wrote to the Prime Minister as early as on 20th December 2011 opposing the Bill vehemently. She reiterated her opposition in the meetings of the National Development Council (NDC) held on 27th December 2012 and 10th June 2013. When the UPA Government issued the Food Security Ordinance in July 2013 prior to the Monsoon Session of Parliament, our Chief Minister again wrote to the Prime Minister on 2nd August 2013 wherein she had suggested several amendments to the Bill. Again, prior to the Lok Sabha taking up the Bill on 26th August, my Chief Minister wrote to the Prime Minister on 24th August 2013. Hence, our stand is consistent and principled. To protect the interest of Tamil Nadu, we oppose the National Food Security Bill, 2013. We will definitely vote against the Bill. I have moved nine amendments. We will insist on them and demand division on each of them at the time of voting.

Now, I shall come to why we oppose the National Food Security Bill. One, while you have agreed to protect the existing level of allocation under the PDS, Mr. Thomas, you have left the fixation of issue price to the discretion of the Central Government. When this matter was raised by the AIADMK in the Lok Sabha, we demanded that difference in the quantity between what has been assured through clause 3(1) and what is eligible under clause 3(1) read with clause 3(2) should be supplied to the State at the price of Rs. 3 per kg or at least at the current price applicable for the APL families, that is Rs.8.30 per kg. Mr. Thomas, in your reply in the Lok Sabha, you had assured that it indeed would be the APL price of Rs.8.30 per kg. But you did not bring any amendment to this effect. That is why we oppose this Bill.

Two, Clause 3(2) of the Bill says that 75 per cent of the rural population and 50 per cent of the urban population will be covered. This is totally arbitrary without any rational basis. It should not be forgotten that PDS was originally put in place to ensure affordable supply of foodgrains primarily in urban areas. Hence, my Chief Minister had demanded to increase the urban coverage to 100 per cent or at least 75 per cent on a par with rural areas. This has not been accepted. And that is why we oppose this Bill.

Three, Schedule 1 of the Bill assures even limited allocation of foodgrains only for a period of three years. My Chief Minister had demanded an amendment to Schedule-I and guarantee subsidy for a period of at least ten years. You have



ignored her request and that is why, we oppose this Bill. Fourthly, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu had suggested that clause 23 should be amended to make it compulsory for the Central Government to implement all necessary measures including import of foodgrains, when warranted, to ensure continued supply and not leave the States to fend for themselves. You have not acted upon that and that is why, we oppose this Bill. Fifthly, according to clause 10(1), identification of eligible households should be completed in 365 days. Since this is contingent on the completion of the National Population Register and the Socio Economic and Caste Census, SECC, whether one year is enough, is not sure. You have not made any amendment to this and that is why, we oppose this Bill. Sixthly, as per clause 12(2)(h), there is a provision for the Central Government to introduce cash transfer programmes and food coupon schemes under this Bill. The AIADMK is firmly opposed to the direct cash transfer programme and hence, we oppose this Bill. Seventhly, clause 37 gives the Central Government unfettered freedom to amend Schedule-I, Schedule-II, Schedule-III and Schedule-IV as and when it wishes. Clause 38 gives power to the Central Government to give directions to the State Governments for implementation of the provisions of the Bill and that the State Governments shall comply with such directions. Both clauses 37 and 38 strike at the very root of federalism. In a federal structure like ours, the Union Government should not encroach into the domain of the State Governments. Hence, we oppose this Bill. But, there are parties which opposed the Bill in the States, which opposed the Bill while speaking in Lok Sabha, but voted for the Bill and the UPA during voting. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no. ...(*Interruptions*)... It is not about you. ...(*Interruptions*)... Vasanthiji, it is not about you. Why do you worry? ...(*Interruptions*)...

DR. V. MAITREYAN: In fact, a voice from Chennai screamed on 11th August that their party will support the Bill only when various important amendments are accepted by the Government. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He has not mentioned the name of the party. ...(*Interruptions*)... He has not mentioned the name of the party. Then, why do you worry? ...(*Interruptions*)... He didn't mention your party's name. ...(*Interruptions*)...



DR. V. MAITREYAN: Except for a single addition in clause 3 of the Bill, protecting the existing level of allocation and offtake of foodgrains under the PDS, none of the amendments moved by various political parties has been accepted by the UPA Government. Yet, my opponents from Tamil Nadu voted for the National Food Security Bill in the Lok Sabha and I am sure, they will repeat the same today also. *...(Interruptions)...*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: 'Opponents' is all right. *...(Interruptions)...*

DR. V. MAITREYAN: If I have to borrow the words of Mr. Venkaiah Naidu, operation in Chennai and cooperation in Delhi is rank opportunism and great \* on the people of Tamil Nadu. *...(Interruptions)...*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: 'Opponents' is only practical. Why do you worry? You can reply. When your chance comes, you can reply.

DR. V. MAITREYAN: Now, I will focus on the Congress Ministers from Tamil Nadu. I don't see Mr. Chidambaram here. Najmaji, will you help me see whether Jayanthiji is here? I wanted to ask Mr. Rajeev Shukla whether Mr. G.K. Wasan is here. But, Mr. Rajeev Shukla himself is not here.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Why do you worry about them?

DR. V. MAITREYAN: Because these three Congress Cabinet Ministers from Tamil Nadu were present when the Union Cabinet approved the Food Security Bill. By approving the Food Security Bill in the Cabinet, these three Congress Cabinet Ministers from Tamil Nadu have \* the people of Tamil Nadu. We have two more Ministers from Tamil Nadu and adjoining Puducherry –Narayanasamyji and Dr. Sudarsana Natchiappan. All of them have \* the interest of Tamil Nadu. *...(Interruptions)...*

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Sir, he has called my name. *...(Interruptions)...* I have to reply. *...(Interruptions)...*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If you take names, they have a right to reply. *...(Interruptions)...*

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\*Expunged as ordered by the Chair.



DR. V. MAITREYAN: They can reply, Sir. I have no problem. ...*(Interruptions)*... I am concluding in two minutes. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: So, don't take names. ...*(Interruptions)*... Then, he has a right to intervene. ...*(Interruptions)*... Don't take names.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Since he has taken my name, I will respond. ...*(Interruptions)*... Since he called my name, I have to respond to him. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr. Maitreyan, \* is an allegation. So, I expunge it. It is an allegation. So, I will expunge the names. ....*(Interruptions)*....

DR. V. MAITREYAN: Sir, very soon all will be expelled from Tamil Nadu. Sir, the people of Tamil Nadu will reject the DMK Party and the Congress Party ....*(Interruptions)*.... I challenge you to make the Food Security Bill as a referendum among the Tamil Nadu people; and go to the next Lok Sabha elections. Tamil Nadu people will throw you lock, stock and barrel into the Bay of Bengal. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will go through the record. ....*(Interruptions)*....\* is unparliamentary. It is expunged.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Before you give your ruling, if any Member, while making a speech or a submission in the House and takes the name of the other Member, the Member can be given an opportunity to explain. But the Chair expunging the name, it never happened.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am saying the word \* has been expunged. ...*(Interruptions)*... I agree. Now, you please take your seat. If any Member takes the name of the other Member, who is a Member here and who can come here, he can defend himself. So, names are not expunged. What I expunged is \* . ...*(Interruptions)*.... Mr. Narayanasamy has a right to explain.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, since the hon. Member has taken my name, I have a right to explain. Whether you count it or not, let me make my point clear.

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\*Expunged as ordered by the Chair.



Sir, under the Food Security Bill, the Government of India is giving a subsidy to the tune of Rs. 24 per kg of rice. As far as rice is concerned, the State Government's contribution is only Rs. 3.

DR. V. MAITREYAN: The Government of India doesn't get money from the heaven. ....(Interruptions)....

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr. Maitreyan, you can't intervene. ....(Interruptions).... Dr. Maitreyan can't intervene.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: It is my money also. Let me make it very clear. ....(Interruptions)....

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He is replying because you took his name. ....(Interruptions).... It is the Minister's right to explain because you took his name. ....(Interruptions)... Dr. Maitreyan should not intervene. You please take your seat.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: It is my money. It is your money. Let me make it very clear. In the case of Tamil Nadu, free rice is given to the people. The publicity is being given that the State Government is giving free rice to the people. But the Central Government is giving a subsidy of Rs. 24 per kg on rice. Most of the people know about this. ....(Interruptions)....

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, you sit down. Shrimati Kanimozhi .†00 20Si •0†<... †00 20Si •0†<... ... (30000) ... Why are you intervening? ....(Interruptions).... Mr. Rajeeve, please. ....(Interruptions).... Mr. Narayanasamy, that is over. ....(Interruptions).... Please, †00 20Si •0†<... Shrimati Kanimozhi, next speaker. 0000 •0, †00 20Si •0†<.... (30000) ...

DR. V. MAITREYAN: \*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is not going on record. Dr. Maitreyan's speech is over. What Dr. Maitreyan says will not go on record. ....(Interruptions).... Mr. Narayanasamy, please. It is only a friendly exchange between Mr. Narayanasamy and Dr. Maitreyan. They are good friends. That's all. Shrimati Kanimozhi. Let us listen to the lady Member, please. Hon. lady Member is going to speak, let us listen to her.

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\*Not recorded.



SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI (Tamil Nadu): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I do not need concession as a lady Member when somebody is saying ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I said, hon'ble lady Member. Not a special consideration. Hon. lady Member. You are always hon. lady Member.

DR. V. MAITREYAN: If she is refusing, why should you object to it?

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Yes, I have an equal right. That's all. I don't need special consideration.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes. I didn't say special consideration. You have an equal right.

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Thank you, Sir. In 2012, the Minister of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions and Minister of Statistics and Programme Implementation released a report titled, "Children in India". This report estimates that close to 40 per cent of children, that is, 63 million children, are suffering from malnutrition.

It is also reported that 50.7 per cent rural children and 39 per cent urban children are stunted, that is, less height for the age. This indicates that the rural children are at a greater disadvantage. When we talk about the Global Hunger Index, we are nearly on a par with Ethiopia, Sudan and Angola. It is a collective responsibility. All of us are to be blamed for this. Keeping this in mind, when a Bill comes to protect these children, when a Bill comes to make sure that people don't go hungry, I support it because our leader, Dr. Kalaignar and our Party definitely believe in making sure that there is a more equal society, there is a chance and choice for everybody and people are protected and the right to food is a basic right of every Indian. Saying this, I support this Bill and welcome it.

Sir, I would like to proudly share this with the House. People have been talking about many States who have done very well in food security. I think one of the model States is Tamil Nadu. In Tamil Nadu, PDS was started in 1964 and now the Universal PDS has been started, that is, there is no discrimination between APL and BPL families. This Universal PDS was brought by the DMK Government. Sir, the Universal PDS in Tamil Nadu is actually run by the cooperative societies, Women SHGs and Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation. All these agencies come



together to make sure that the PDS is successful and it ensures transparency, safety and accessibility. Here people were talking in different voices; voices coming from here and contradicting themselves. I would just like to give an example about what a master contradiction this is. In 1996, the Central Government tried to bring Targeted PDS and it wanted even Tamil Nadu and many other States to have Targeted PDS. The then DMK Government in 1997 refused to give into it and we continued with the Universal PDS, but in 2003, the then AIADMK Government wanted to go back in time and they wanted to distort this Universal PDS. We all know that colourful cards were brought in; red cards, yellow cards, rainbow colour cards with 'H' stamp. In Tamil Nadu, it is called H Muthirai and I don't think the people of Tamil Nadu have forgotten it, and will ever forgive that Government...

DR. V. MAITREYAN: That is why they voted for us in 2011 with a thumping majority. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr. Maitreyan, please ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Sir, just winning an election is not everything.

DR. V. MAITREYAN: People had voted for us. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr. Maitreyan, no running commentary, please.

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: When political parties only know about winning and losing elections and they don't have any concern for the State and its people, this is what the response will be.

DR. V. MAITREYAN: Sir, that is why...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr. Maitreyan, please do not interrupt. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Sir, one Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu said ...*(Interruptions)*... people dying in a war ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please don't bring in Tamil Nadu politics here. ...*(Interruptions)*...



SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: It is a very, very normal thing and they are very proud of the Chief Minister who has been voted to power. ...(*Interruptions*)... This was actually talking in different tongues. They wanted to bring back Targeted PDS, but actually the Government had to go back on its decision because there was a stiff opposition from all parties and the people in the State. It is very funny that these people today are talking about protecting the people. On 9th August, our President, Dr. Kalam, in a statement had written to the Central Government to make sure that the concerns being raised by us have to be respected and the Bill has appropriate provisions to protect the off-take of food grains, only then will we support this Bill.

And, on 26th August, the DMK President again urged upon the Government to ensure the supply of APL foodgrains at Rs.8.30 per kg, as is the case now. The Minister, who spoke that evening in the Lok Sabha, after the discussion, stated, and I quote: Eighteen States, including Tamil Nadu and Kerala, are not getting what they are supposed to get under the TPDS. I discussed it with Shri Baalu, — the Leader of the DMK Parliamentary Party — and told him that whatever is the off-take in the last three years in respect of all the States will be completely protected. For example, in the case of Tamil Nadu, their average off-take is 37 lakh tonnes. There are OMS and special BPL schemes which will continue. Even now we are getting OMS's supply of foodgrains. But the TPDS' off-take in the case of Tamil Nadu is around 37 lakhs in relation to the Food Security Bill. It has come down to 27 lakhs. I assure him that the remaining 14 lakhs will be protected, and it will be at the price which they are getting now under the APL, that is, rice at the rate of Rs. 8.30 per kg. so that it is fully protected.” ....(*Interruptions*)....

DR. V. MAITREYAN: This is not seen in this Bill which has been circulated.

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: There were amendments made which have been brought into the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, please conclude.

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: A few minutes more, Sir. I further quote: “Out of 27 lakh tonnes, 7 lakh tonnes will be provided at Rs. 3 per kg and the rest 22 lakh tonnes are to be given at Rs. 5.65. Now the Central Government will be giving the entire rice for BPL families at Rs. 3 per kg. This means that the State's burden to



provide food will be greatly reduced.” Sir, I would like to mention here that the DMK will never accept anything which goes against the people of Tamil Nadu, and I don’t think that the Central Government will also want to bring in anything to offend or hurt anybody, especially, Tamil Nadu, in this case because we have, repeatedly, been asking for assurances from the Central Government to make sure that the interests of Tamil Nadu and other States, which are performing well, are protected.

Sir, there are a few concerns on the National Food Security Bill, which I would like to mention here. (i) Nutrition comes from a well-balanced and all-rounded meal. The Government is only providing rice, wheat and coarse grains. Can the Government consider including pulses either now or in the future? (ii) Fair Price Shops are essential for the distribution of rice and wheat and the implementation of the Food Security law. But the Bill is silent on improving infrastructure of existing Fair Price Shops. The Government may consider providing assistance for modernizing Fair Price Shops. (iii) In clause 3 (1), the Bill specifies that priority households shall get 5 kilos per person per month. In the case of poor widows and homeless people, I don’t think that this will be enough. Also, will the hon. Minister think of making sure that even homeless people are taken into consideration and are brought under this Bill? (iv) In clause 4 (b), the Bill provides maternity benefits, that is, one meal for pregnant and lactating mothers. Can the hon. Minister explain as to what mechanism will be put in place to provide cooked meal to such a large number of pregnant and lactating mothers? (v) In Clause 5 (1) (b), the Bill provides entitlements for school-going children up to class VIII, that is, fourteen years of age, by way of mid-day meals. Will the Government consider extending it up to class XII? Even in Tamil Nadu we have the Mid-Day Meal Scheme and it is given till Class XII because we cannot leave the rest of the children without considering nutrition requirements for them.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, please conclude. You have made all the points.

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: (vi) In Clause 23, the Bill provides the option that the Centre may provide funds when there is a short supply of foodgrains. Does this mean that the States would have to make their own arrangements? When the Centre is unable to arrange foodgrains, then, how will the States be able to do so? (vii) In Clause 38, it is stated that the Central Government can give directions



to the State Governments. Can the Central Government consider a better way of putting it? The food security is not enough. Even in the recent speech of the Prime Minister, he has pointed out that sanitation and drinking water are very important and are an important health ...(Time-bell rings)... factor. Concerns in this have to be taken into account.

SHRI SHASHI BHUSAN BEHERA (Odisha): Sir, on behalf of Biju Janata Dal, I rise to participate in the so-called historic Bill, The National Food Security Bill, 2013 drawn by UPA-II which will keep the nation free from hunger and people will live with dignity. Sir, it gives an assurance to nation that 67 per cent of the population will be covered by this, 80 crores of people will be benefited by this and the per capita allocation will be five kgs per person. Sir, it sounds very healthy but with this scheme the Government wants to cover up shame that we are victims of hunger even after 66 years of Independence. Anyway, the attitude of the ruling party is still unchanged and they have no concern for poverty, they have no concern for the hungry. Sir, it is, I would say, all for 2014 elections. Sir, I am saying this because I was watching television when the Bill was discussed on 26th of last month in Lok Sabha. I saw in the television that a crowd burst clapping was there was patting of tables when an amendment was negated by a division. Sir, what is that amendment? That amendment was moved by a Biju Janata Dal Member, i.e. to keep the subsidised price of grain at Re. 1 per kg in a uniform manner throughout the nation. Sir, it only speaks about the attitude of the ruling party, which is now being proved here. It creates anomalies and Ministers from the Centre are visiting the States and telling people, like what Mr. Narayanasamy spoke here, that the Centre is giving at Rs. 18 and the State is giving at Rs. 2. Everything will be mitigated when you will agree for Re. 1 as a uniform subsidised price throughout the nation. But they were intolerant. You are intolerant towards the national economic crisis. When the country is in economic crisis, everyday the rupee value is depreciating, gold is at a higher price and you, the Treasury Benches are enjoying. When the Prime Minister is making statements, you are also clapping and patting the tables. Your concern is exposed. So, this is nothing but a political gimmick. You have no political attitude for this Food Security Bill. You just make it a game-changer. What is the present PDS system? It was well discussed by Venkaiahji, Behenji, and other Members also have given details of how much of grains you are giving to the nation.



How much excess money are you spending by making Budgetary provision? This may be a game-changer for you. But, it is completely an election gimmick. Without proper infrastructure and without any preparation for improvement of infrastructure you are bringing this Bill in the election year i.e., just a few months before elections. Sir, it was there in your 2009 Election Manifesto; we are now in 2013. You are bringing this Bill just before elections. Who is responsible for this delay? You have come with this Bill, but there are so many flaws. It is just eyewash.

Sir, food security requires huge preparation. You have not prepared for this. You are not prepared for de-centralized procurement or de-centralized storage which is very much required. Unless you prepare for de-centralized storage system, we will see the same way in which lakhs of tons of wheat is rotten. It is all happening because of lack of storage facility.

You have taken up some projects under the ICDS and other programmes. We all know that there is a lot of corruption in the ICDS and other programmes. And, Sir, you are not able to give MSP to farmers. You are not looking at the welfare of the farmers. So, these are lacking in you.

Sir, you are going in for distribution system which is not scientific and is not computerized. And, you have reduced the Ration Cards to 16 crores from 22 crores. There are bogus Ration Cards even within the 16 crore.

I would like to know how you are planning for universalized distribution system. Sir, this is all impossible. For that, doubts come to my mind. You are planning to cover 50 per cent population in urban areas and 75 per cent in rural areas by giving them grains at Rs. 5 per kg.

Sir, currently, the BPL household is entitled to 35 kg per month as per the Central Government norms. It is not being followed by many States, because there are some States like Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh which are catching up...(Time-bell rings)...Sir, I will take only 2-3 minutes. You have never given more time to me. Every time I concluded my speech within the given time. I request you to give me one or two minutes.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: For me everybody is equal.



SHRI SHASHI BHUSAN BEHERA: Sir, some States are capping the household allocation to 20-25 kgs like Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. For a wider coverage, we have to make it more households. This type of flexibility must be given to States.

In my State, my Chief Minister has given such a wider coverage and if you go by this norm, it is beneficial. We are still following the 1997 BPL statistics. Sir, sixteen years have already been passed. What does the NSS 2009-10 speak? It says that a family either of 7 members or more than 7 members constitutes only 10 per cent of the population. And, less than 7 members constitute 90 per cent of the population. So, naturally, they will be the losers. And, only 10 per cent, having 7 members, with 5 kgs foodgrains, will get 35 kgs of foodgrains.

So, ninety per cent of the families or the households would be losers. Therefore, allocation should be made according to the population of the State. That would be better. This is my suggestion. You must make allocation according to the population of the State. As for the approach or the way it should be done, it must be decided by the State Governments. That would help maintain better Centre-State relations. So, a clear and uniform system must be adopted. Otherwise, this would create confusion; I am going only by this part. Let us take a look at the tribal areas in our State such as Malkangiri, Mayurbhanj, Bharipada and the interior areas; if you give 15 kg of food grains to families with two or three members and some other families get 18-20 kg of food grains, this would lead to discrimination and the PDS dealers would be benefited out of this. They will confuse the whole system. There is another thing. If a family has added to its numbers another member, because of marriage or birth, then, they will also have to face difficulties. It will be very difficult to address this. These are some of the things that I wanted to point out.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRI SHASHI BHUSAN BEHERA: Then, the State Governments must be given the choice in the matter of BPL households. Now, what is the criterion in respect of BPL households? It is the *pucca* houses. Now, *pucca* houses were provided by the Government under the Indira Awas Yojana. Will they be deprived of this benefit? You would be denying this benefit to those people. Then, decisions regarding identification, eligibility, etc., must be kept with the State



Governments. SC/ST people, hostels, women and children must be given due importance. As for free rice given under the Annapurna Yojana, there is no mention here. *(Time-bell rings)*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes, yes.

SHRI SHASHI BHUSAN BEHERA: Without giving due importance to ...*(Time-bell rings)*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: All right. I gave you more time than what you had demanded.

SHRI SHASHI BHUSAN BEHERA: If you do not give due importance to the people belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, it would not serve the nation. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now Shri D. Raja. Rajaji, I have to say something. What Shri Naresh Gujral said was correct. There are 14 names in the 'Others' category, and the total time allotted is 47 minutes. If you divide it, you get only three-and-a-half minutes. Don't take more than five minutes. This is my humble request.

SHRI D. RAJA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, we too have a humble request to make to you. You must also be considerate.

Sir, it is time we took brave steps forward to eradicate hunger and malnutrition. Article 21 of our Constitution guarantees the fundamental right to life and personal liberty. It includes the right to food also. Then, article 47 also speaks about the fundamental right to nutrition and public health.

Having said this, my Party has been fighting for a strong legislation on food security and the right to food. My Party, along with the other Left Parties, has conducted a countrywide campaign for a strong and effective legislation for food security and the right to food.

Sir, the Government's Bill falls short of many of our expectations and the Government's Bill falls short in its vision also. As many Members have pointed out, it appears as though it is just an extension of all the existing programmes, whereas we need the Government to re-imagine the entire food economy. That is what we expect.



Sir, here, I must list out certain concerns which my Party has got. I have proposed a number of amendments. When we take up the amendments, we would be able to look into those amendments. But, due to the paucity of time, I would only make certain points for the consideration of the House and for the consideration of the Government.

Sir, in this Bill, agriculture and farmers have been neglected. Our hon. Member, Shri Venkaiah Naidu, spoke, in detail, on this issue. Sir, 60 per cent of country's population depends on agriculture. Sir, 52 per cent of food is produced by small and marginal farmers. They are the ones who will be the backbone of this Food Bill. They have to be supported by adequate minimum support prices. Sir, the Bill must put in place a mechanism for procurement from all States in the country and directly from small and marginal farmers, ensuring they get remunerative prices.

Sir, then, I move to the other point. The Public Distribution System coverage, as it is, in the Bill, is not enough. We have been demanding universal coverage. The existing Public Distribution System must be strengthened, streamlined and it should be made universal. Here, I quote the Saxena Committee Report of the Ministry of Rural Development. The Report states, "We respect the view that all basic entitlements should be universal. We believe that the Directive Principles of the State Policy in the Constitution should never be compromised or undermined. Instead, they need to be realized, strengthened and further taken forward. Food for all; Health for all; Education for all; Work for all; these should be taken as the bottom line. The BPL identification exercise should, under no circumstances, be used to dilute these principles. In no way should it be used to exclude people from their basic rights and needs." It is your own Committee, namely, the Saxena Committee of the Rural Development Ministry. This is what that Committee states. That is why we keep demanding that PDS must be made universal.

Sir, here, I would like to emphasize one point. There are States which have relatively better Public Distribution Systems. These existing systems should be protected. In fact, States like Kerala, West Bengal, Tripura, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh have better system. As of now, Tamil Nadu is providing 20 kilograms of foodgrains free of cost to all households under the Universal Public Distribution System. Other States, such as, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Madhya Pradesh have, in fact, reduced the price to one rupee per kilogram. These are all existing schemes. *...(Time-bell rings)...* Whatever the Bill tries to do, it should not affect the existing schemes.



MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, please conclude.

SHRI D. RAJA: Sir, there are many points, but I will just mention the points. The Public Distribution System which we talk about should be expanded to cover pulses and oil in order to strengthen the nutrition component of the Food Security.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, please conclude.

SHRI D. RAJA: Then, the children should be given a central place in the Bill on nutrition. You must take steps to contain the private contractors who are entering into the Mid-Day Meal Scheme or ICD Scheme. Sir, the women empowerment is an issue where you will have to address the concerns of the people from the SCs and STs...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, please conclude.

SHRI D. RAJA: I am coming to the end.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: But that 'coming' is a 'long coming'. That is the problem.

SHRI D. RAJA: No, Sir, I am going to conclude. Sir, our great poet Thiruvalluvar once said, "If you have no food for your ears, you must throw some food for your stomach". I am giving food for your ears; food for the Government to think and do something better for this country.

Sir, finally, I make one point that this Bill should not adversely impact the federal governance of our country. In many parts of the Bill, the Central Government has retained all powers of decision-making. This goes against the federal nature of our polity. The State Governments must be consulted at every stage. ...(*Time-bell rings*)... At the same time, given the present state of States' finances, this Bill should not place additional burden on the budgets of the State Governments. The Central Government should take the responsibility of contributing to all or the majority share of all cost related to the entitlement under the scheme including PDS, ...(*Time-bell rings*)... maternity entitlement, ICDS, ...(*Time-bell rings*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Do not take so much of advantage. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI D. RAJA: Sir, this is a serious issue. ...(*Time-bell rings*)..



MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If everybody takes this much time, what will I do? ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI D. RAJA: Let me quote our great poet, Subramaniya Bharathi...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You can quote it later sometime. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI D. RAJA: If there is no food for one individual, we should destroy the world. That is what Subramaniya Bharathi, our great poet said: \*

Let us understand the anguish and anger of the people. After 63 years of Independence, our people are undergoing starvation, semi-starvation. It is time we addressed this issue with all seriousness to ensure right to food and food security to all citizens of our country. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If everybody takes this much of freedom, then we cannot pass it till 10.00 p.m.

SHRI D. RAJA: We will sit up to 10 o' clock. ...*(Interruptions)*... Lok Sabha sat till 11.30 p.m., Rajya Sabha can also sit. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am very happy. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI D. RAJA: We can sit tomorrow.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We have to pass it today. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI D. RAJA: We cannot pass such a legislation in a hurry, in a haste. There should be some comprehensive debate on the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: When time was allotted, you were also there. You could have given this opinion at the time of allotment of time.

SHRI D. RAJA: We said it. I share with Mr. Naresh Gujral. We raised this issue. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now Shri Rangasayee Ramakrishna. Please take only six minutes.

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\*Hon. Member spoke in Tamil.



SHRI RANGASAYEE RAMAKRISHNA (KARNATAKA): You have already given me a good comment for brevity the other day. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I know that. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI RANGASAYEE RAMAKRISHNA: Sir, due to time constraint, I will certainly flag only a few issues and leave them to be pondered over by the hon. Members. The first thing I would like to say is that this morning Mr. Budania from Congress mentioned that the number of beneficiaries, as he calculated, will be 78 crores. Let me put it even at 80 crores. The market price of rice and wheat for the type of quality which we get in PDS will not be more than Rs.30 per kilogram. So, for five kilos per head for one year, you need Rs.1800 per head. If you calculate that way, you will be spending only Rs.1.44 lakh crores. Is it not a much better system of putting this Rs.1800 in the accounts of the 80 crores people and ask them to fend for themselves? Instead of that we continue with the existing system with all its infirmities like centralized procurement, the PDS, unavailability of wagons, lack of storage space and we continue to have twin spectacle of grains rotting in one place and people starving on the other side. This is number one. Number two, this morning we also pointed out how despite the Bill citing as many as 20 or 25 items in which they need State Government's implementation this is a classic case where you have not consulted the Chief Ministers even once. Now, I would like to recall that when we started our post-Independence era, there was a very good tradition of consulting the Chief Ministers even on issues which were, essentially, the Central subjects. I will reminisce on my own experience. I was a Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of Finance in 1966. At that time, we had administered devaluation. In 1966, we devalued one dollar from 4.7 rupees to 7.5 rupees. That day, we, all the officers, were called and asked to wait in the office. Then, there was a letter, from the Prime Minister to each Chief Minister, given to us. We were sent as messengers to go to individual Chief Ministers, discuss with them and get their concurrence. This was on devaluation, which has nothing to do with the States. Today, on an issue, where for everything you have to depend on the State Governments, you did not feel it necessary to consult the State Governments at all. This is number two.

Number three, I want to flag a very broad issue. We have two different models of attacking poverty. One is the growth model with a trickle-down effect



6.00 P.M.

and the other one is a direct attack on poverty. The first one is a little difficult to achieve because, administratively, it takes a longer time, but it is well-sustainable. What we are tempted to always is to prefer a direct attack on poverty like the one here. In this particular case, I am really aghast that we have included even able-bodied, employed and employable people for public doles. This will completely demoralise the society. You take the case of Western countries like the United States or the UK where unbridled social security has completely changed the social fabric of their countries. Today, a country like the USA is surviving only on immigrants. Now, do we want to drive our country to that type of situation? Soon after Independence, we rightly dismantled feudal structures, *jaagirdari*, *jamindari* and the privy purses. But feudalism has been rearing its head from time to time and masses have been longing for a bygone *mai-baap* culture. In the classic debates on the relative merits of growth and the trickle-down effects and direct attack on poverty, one traces a natural preference for the easier option of the latter. The Food Security Bill is a classic case of this mindset. In fact, not only the Central Government, but the State Governments also have been vying with each other to provide a cradle to grave provisioning of freebies. Now, this is a very wrong system of converting a robust nation into an army of parasites. So, my suggestion would be that we should confine food security only to destitutes, senior citizens, infants and expecting mothers. Now, how do we do it? The first suggestion which I have made is that you make a direct subvention of Rs.30/- per kilo for five kilos in bank accounts, which will be a much easier method and much neater method. You can dismantle the entire leviathan of the Food Corporation of India, the defective system of warehousing, the insufficient wagon space and all. But if you do not want to do it, then, the better way will be to empower panchayats.

We have been dealing with *Panchayat Raj* only in the Constitution document. But we have really not empowered them.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes. Now conclude, please.

SHRI RANGASAYEE RAMAKRISHNA: Sir, I am concluding. So, make food security the responsibility of the local *Panchayat* and the *Panchayat* can also coordinate with religious institutions like *gurdwaras*, temples, mosques and churches. They can provide for feeding destitutes, senior citizens, infants and expectant mothers.



Even for the buffer-stocking of grains, instead of having a centralized system, we can leave that to the *Panchayat* because, I think, ever since the PL-480 days, we really have not had a situation where we need a huge buffer-stocking.

Now, this morning also, there were many interventions on the impact of this Bill on agriculture. Today, the reality of the situation is that agricultural production is largely in the hands of small holdings where people are growing crops only for their own consumption. Now, if these people are also promised doles from the Government, where is the need for them to grow crops for themselves? ...(*Time-bell rings*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Ramakrishnaji, please conclude.

SHRI RANGASAYEE RAMAKRISHNA: Sir, I will conclude.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am forced to request you. I know you are making very good points. I know that.

SHRI RANGASAYEE RAMAKRISHNA: Just two minutes, Sir.

The last thing I wanted to mention was about the absolutely wrong-timing of this Bill. Next day or two, we are also going to consider the Land Acquisition Bill. Now, we all know that the country is passing through a very grave economic crisis. And, what are we doing? We are adding to fiscal deficit by this Bill and the small holding people will now find getting doles more attractive than their growing crops. They will sell away their lands under the promised higher earnings in the Land Acquisition Act. What is going to happen? What will be the future of this country? So, I think, it is a very, very highly ill-timed introduction of populist legislation which we should have avoided.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now Prof. Alka Balram Kshatriya. Please take only ten minutes.

ಶ್ರೀ ಪ್ರೊ. ಅಲ್ಕಾ ಬಲರಾಂ ಕ್ಷತ್ರಿಯಾ : ನಾವು ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಇಂದು 2009 ರಲ್ಲಿ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದ ನಾಗರಿಕತೆ ಮತ್ತು ಸಮಾಜ ಸುರಕ್ಷತೆ ಕಾಯಿದೆಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಚರ್ಚೆ ನಡೆಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದೇವೆ. ಈ ಕಾಯಿದೆಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ನಾವು ಇಂದು ಚರ್ಚೆ ನಡೆಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದೇವೆ. ಈ ಕಾಯಿದೆಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ನಾವು ಇಂದು ಚರ್ಚೆ ನಡೆಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದೇವೆ. ಈ ಕಾಯಿದೆಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ನಾವು ಇಂದು ಚರ್ಚೆ ನಡೆಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದೇವೆ.

ನಾವು ಇಂದು ಚರ್ಚೆ ನಡೆಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದೇವೆ. ಈ ಕಾಯಿದೆಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ನಾವು ಇಂದು ಚರ್ಚೆ ನಡೆಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದೇವೆ. ಈ ಕಾಯಿದೆಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ನಾವು ಇಂದು ಚರ್ಚೆ ನಡೆಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದೇವೆ. ಈ ಕಾಯಿದೆಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ನಾವು ಇಂದು ಚರ್ಚೆ ನಡೆಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದೇವೆ.







[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]



[illegible][illegible]

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

[illegible]

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI (Rajasthan): Sir, I was first in the list. I did not know that there was no Question Hour today. Otherwise, I was number one on the list. ...(*Interruptions*)... Kindly give me a few minutes and I won't take a minute longer than you give me.



MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: After Dr. T.N. Seema, I will call you. Dr. T.N. Seema, your party time is 7 minutes now.

DR. T.N. SEEMA (Kerala) :Sir, give me some more minutes. I am also an hon. lady Member of this House.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Every lady Member is honourable; every Member is honourable.

DR. T.N. SEEMA : Thank you, very much, Sir, for giving me this opportunity. Sir, my Party CPI(M) is a committed supporter of legally mandated right to food. Nobody in this House would oppose the concept of food security for all people in this country. However, a lot of reservation about this Bill remains. Why? Sir, look at the situation in the country. After almost seven decades of Independence, 42 per cent children are mal-nourished.

Vandanaji had described about the pathetic condition of a small malnourished child. Fifty-seven per cent do not have safe drinking water. Thirty-nine per cent persons do not have proper kitchens. Fifty-three per cent do not latrine facility. Above all, our country, India, contributes one-third of the hungry people to the global hungry population. But unfortunately, these facts have little impact on our policy-makers and the Government. If we look at this Bill, this Bill is not meant for food security for all. That is my Party's main objection. This Bill can't address the larger issue of malnutrition and hunger in our country. This Bill legalises the injustices of a Targeted Public Distribution System and the Government does introduce the Targeted PDS in a new form with a lesser scope and more limited coverage. Sir, irrational exclusion of population will lead to food insecurity and not food security, and it will worsen the condition of the malnourished in our country. Sir, we demand a universal Public Distribution System. It should be made universal excluding only the income-tax payers. But, this Bill envisages a targeted system by imposing a cap on the inclusion of the beneficiaries. The Government's propaganda is that the Bill will cover 75 per cent of the rural population in all the States and 50 per cent of the urban population, coming to an average of 67 per cent in all the States. But, it is not the case. Sir, it is 67 per cent average for the total national population divided differently in the States on the basis of the criteria decided by the Planning Commission. In fact, 13 States will end up serving less than 67 per cent of their population. Sir, there are



many States which are already running good PDS, for example, our State Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Tripura and Odisha. Sir, I want to draw the attention of this House to the situation in Kerala. I am very happy that Shri A.K. Antony and Shri Vayalar Ravi are here. Prof. K.V. Thomas, hon. Minister, is also from Kerala. Kerala had implemented a statutory rationing system to provide rice and other essential items to the people in 1964.

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): Hon. Deputy Chairman is also from Kerala.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Chair is neutral.

DR. T.N. SEEMA: This system has been running for the past 50 years and it is a very successful experience. Everybody knows that the State of Kerala has a comparatively better quality of life. Our statutory rationing system has played a historical role in achieving this. Sir, we have about 81 lakh households with ration cards. It is almost universal and an absolutely successful concept of ration cards itself, but in the Food Security Bill, only 46.36 per cent of our population will be included. Hon. Ministers are here. This is a very big challenge that we have to take as to how we will maintain Public Distribution System in Kerala. Sir, look at Tamil Nadu. They have a unique Public Distribution System, which is universal and they are providing 20 kg foodgrains free of cost. They have made a dramatic change in the social indicators and quality of life in Tamil Nadu. What will happen to that? I would like to request the hon. Minister to please ensure that Tamil Nadu people are not deprived of the existing benefit as a result of this legislation.

Sir, with this Bill, there will be a loss on three counts to States like Kerala - cut in allocation, high prices as well as exclusion of APL cardholders. The Government should not see PDS just as an outlet to distribute subsidised food to the poor. It is an alternative mode of intervention by the Government. Through the PDS, the Government can intervene in the market and control the market price. But unfortunately, this Government is not interested in intervening in the market. They are not ready to control the market price. Sir, the claim of the Central Government is that they are giving the right to the State Governments to identify the beneficiaries. But it is only a half truth because the Central Government will draw the *Lakshman Rekha* first and then the States will have to limit themselves within that cap imposed by the Centre.



But they are generously putting the extra financial burden on the State Governments if they want to continue the higher coverage. Look at clause 32(2). Sir, this is totally against the federal structure in the country. The Bill should necessarily allow the States to determine their food delivery system whether in terms of coverage, scope or efficiency.

Sir, in clause 39, as part of the power of the Central Government to make rules, the Bill empowers introduction of cash transfer as 39(d). It must be deleted. Sir, this clause gives the power to the Centre to impose their neo-liberal reforms on PDS including cash transfers even if the State Governments object.

Sir, my next submission is regarding the quantity of entitlements. Our amendment is for giving 7 kilograms of foodgrains per person or 35 kilograms per household, whichever is higher, and, for providing rice at Rs. 2/- per kg. Adequate quantity of other items like sugar, pulses and cooking oil should also be included in the foodgrains because everybody knows that for giving nutritional security, distributing only rice and wheat is not enough.

Sir, I was also a part of the Standing Committee which dealt with this Bill. *(Time-bell rings)* Personally speaking, it was a very good learning process for me. We got more than one lakh recommendations, suggestions, apprehensions in front of us. Many eminent persons, professors, research scholars, activists, political leaders appeared in front of the Standing Committee and shared their views. Not only in the Standing Committee but in the media and on other platforms also, they have pointed out that even seven kilogram allocation is very less than what is needed for a healthy life. How can the Government reduce the allocation from seven kilograms to five kilograms? What is the justification for that? Even as per the Indian Medical Council for Research estimates, a 5-member household would require about 49 kilograms of foodgrains per month while the Bill provides just 25 kilograms, and, the Government says that they do not have that much foodgrain for making it universal. That is not correct. As per the Food Security Bill, the Government plans to give only five kilograms per head per month, which comes to 60 kilograms per year.

Sir, last Friday, I asked a question regarding per capita allocation of foodgrains and per capita consumption of foodgrains. Let me tell you the answer. As per the figures provided by the Government in this House, per capita



availability of foodgrains in this country for 2012 is provisionally 450 grams per day, that is, total net availability per head will be 164.25 kg per annum. That means, only 36 per cent of the available foodgrain is being given through this Food Security Bill.

Sir, for the last several years, India has a bufferstock of foodgrains, which is more than double its requirement. The expenditure on maintaining this stock is very high.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

DR. T.N. SEEMA: I am concluding, Sir. This shows that there are enough foodgrains available in this country to feed the needy, but the Government needs the political will to do that.

Sir, through you, I urge upon the hon. Minister to delete the Schedule I. It is regarding fixing the price of foodgrains after three years. Actually, this Bill wrongly links the issue price with MSP. I do not know why the Government wants to create confrontation between farmers and consumers in the future. Sir, there is a huge campaign unleashed by the corporate class and the Right Wing Economists that subsidy to the poor is the main villain responsible for the economic crisis and this Food Security Bill deteriorates the financial condition further. *(Time-bell rings)* One minute, Sir. It is not correct that the entire cost of food security law implementation will be less than 01 per cent of our GDP, and, according to the estimate given by the Ministry of Food, the implementation of food security law will not require any substantial increase even the foodgrain requirement.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please.

DR. T.N. SEEMA: One second, Sir. Finally, I wonder what magic the UPA Government is going to play to solve the whole problem of hunger and malnutrition without substantially increasing the subsidy and without increasing the foodgrain. I wonder what magic we are going to watch. *(Time-bell rings)* My last point...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Finally, then, last point, then, very last...

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\*Expunged as ordered by the Chair.



drinking water, sanitation and primary health care for every child, woman and man. Sir, you are not providing the food as known to the United Nations, as known to Dr. Swaminathan, one of our greatest experts and as known to every man of common sense. Foodgrains means nutrients, foodgrains means oil, it means *ghee*, it means some condiments, it means some kind of macro nutrients and, Sir, all kinds of things which make food something which ultimately repairs the damage to the human body which our existence causes from moment to moment. Are you are providing security? Security means that which guarantees health; security means that which guarantees the repair of the body continuously against the damage which the working of system inevitably causes to it. Sir, this is not security really. You are providing not food but a means to postpone death and disease for a while. This Bill should not be called the Food Security Bill. I think, Sir, the best description of this Bill will be that it is a Bill for the temporary prevention of death and disease as a result of lack of nutrition.

That is the appropriate and honest description of this Bill. Please do not perpetrate this \* on the poor, trusting people of India, who think that today you are giving them some kind of remedy for their long-suffering misery.

Sir, let me tell you that I don't wish to vote for this Bill because I don't wish to be a party to this grave deception on the poor people of this country who expect much more from us. We are giving them nothing but a small lollipop as an exchange for their vote, which we are expecting from them. Thank you, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for adhering to time limit. D. Bandyopadhyayji, your Party's time is only four minutes. Do not take more than five minutes.

SHRI D. BANDYOPADHYAY (West Bengal): Sir, I always abide by your order.

Sir, long ago, Mahatmaji had said that 'God manifests himself in a morsel of food before a hungry man.' Food is life. Some years ago, in an FAO meeting in Rome, Dr. M.S. Swaminathan was speaking on eradication of hunger. Among the listeners was the former President of Brazil Lula da Silva. He was keenly taking notes. It's heartening to note from the print media that Brazil could successfully implement the programme of 'No Hunger in Brazil by 2015' even before the target date. My point in bringing the Brazilian example is that given sufficient political

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\*Expunged as ordered by the Chair.



will, it is possible to achieve the 'No Hunger Goal' within a reasonable timeframe in spite of all odds against it.

Sir, I read somewhere and I shall be grateful if someone corrects me that every night 11 per cent of the Indian population goes to bed with hunger. With 1.2 billion population, nearly 11 crore Indians go hungry every night. In spite of glittering average growth of over seven per cent for the last few years, the persistent hunger is not acceptable. It is an ugly blemish on any civilised society and so it is on us.

The usual criticism of PDS is that it does not function properly. No Bill could be perfect and so is this Bill. That does not mean in search of perfection we totally reject this Bill. Let's go by the principle that something is better than nothing.

The main criticism in the malfunctioning of the PDS is the present condition of the PDS in different States. States will have to bear additional load. It is heartening to note that a few recent studies conducted in Koraput, a very backward district in Odisha, found PDS to be functioning fairly well and so did the IIT Sample Survey of nine States which found that 84 per cent of the PDS entitlement was being received by the beneficiaries. Another defect is large exclusion errors. In the new framework, people's entitlement would be much clearer and therefore there would be pressure on the system to function and function properly. The danger is the haste in pushing through the measure without adequate preparation. Identification of eligible households is the basis for programme. There was a BPL Census in 2002. Then it was followed by a Socio-economic and Caste Census in 2011.

We would like the Government to follow the second census. Thirdly, a good measure should not be used by any party as a political football to be tossed around for a political game. Lastly, Sir, the ICMR's norm for cereal is 14 kilograms per person per month. By assuring five kilograms of cereals per person per month, the Bill assures semi-starvation diet. Semi-starvation diet prolongs the longevity of an individual for some time, but it also ensures a painful existence for the semi-starving persons. In the end, I strongly object to clause 38 of the Bill where the Centre will use the draconian power to do what it wants here and will send the Bill to the States. Hence, Sir, I would say that the Centre should take the entire



responsibility for this. I would only quote that in the year 2011-12, the tax foregone was Rs. 5.33 lakh crore. ...(*Interruptions*)... In 2012-13, the tax foregone is Rs.5.73 lakh crore. Why don't you recover this tax and pay for the Food Security Bill? Thank you, Sir.

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**MESSAGE FROM THE LOK SABHA - (Contd.)**

**The National Highways Authority of India (Amendment) Bill, 2012**

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Sir, in accordance with the provisions of rule 101 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, I am directed to inform you that the following amendments made by Rajya Sabha in the National Highways Authority of India (Amendment) Bill, 2012 at its sitting held on 13th August, 2013, were taken into consideration and agreed to by Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 2nd September, 2013 : –

**Enacting Formula**

1. That at page 1, line 1, *for* the word “Sixty-third”, the word “Sixty-fourth” be *substituted*.

**Clause 1**

2. That at page 1, line 3, for the figure “2012”, the figure “2013” be *substituted*.

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**STATUTORY RESOLUTION DISAPPROVING THE NATIONAL FOOD  
SECURITY ORDINANCE (NO. 7 OF 2013)**

**AND**

**THE NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY BILL, 2013 – (Contd)**

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, Shri Amar Singh. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: I want to make a submission and also an appeal to the ruling party. A good number of Members want to speak on this Bill. So, let the discussion be over today. Minister's reply and voting can take place tomorrow morning. ...(*Interruptions*)... That will be ideal. Otherwise you won't get Members. ...(*Interruptions*)...