

4.00 P.M.

**GOVERNMENT BILLS -Contd.**

**The Finance Bill, 2021**

SHRI KANKAMEDALA RAVINDRA KUMAR (Andhra Pradesh): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on the Finance Bill. Sir, I come from Andhra Pradesh. Since 2018, I myself, and prior to that the hon. Members from Andhra Pradesh, since the formation of Andhra Pradesh, have been demanding the implementation of the provisions of the AP Reorganisation Act, 2014. But the demands have still remained in the same position. The main demand from the State of AP is to grant Special Category Status to the State of AP. The present Government came to power on the promise made to the people that they would get Special Status if they got 25 seats from the people of AP. Accordingly, out of 25 seats, they got 22 seats. Nothing has happened so far for the reasons best known to them. The hon. Chief Minister now has forgotten this demand. However, I request the Central Government to grant Special Category Status to the State of AP as promised in this House by the then hon. Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh. After bifurcation, the AP Government decided to construct a capital at Amaravati with the consent of all people from all walks of life, including the present hon. Chief Minister. The hon. Prime Minister laid the foundation and released Rs.1,500 crores for the construction of capital at Amaravati. As per Section 94 of the AP Reorganisation Act, the Central Government is supposed to provide funds to all infrastructure projects, including the construction of capital. But, subsequently, no funds have been allocated for the construction of capital at Amaravati. But, in the meanwhile, unfortunately, the hon. Chief Minister brought three capitals concept due to which the State has become 'capital-less' at present and the State Government abandoned Amaravati though the then Government invested huge public funds amounting to about Rs.10,000 crores. The farmers of Amaravati area, from 29 villages, who are about 24,000 in number, voluntarily gave their land under land pooling system for the purpose of constructing a capital. Due to the decision taken by the present Government, they have been conducting agitations for the last 440 days. Neither the State Government nor the Central Government has paid any attention to resolve their demand and to attend to the problems of the farmers. Most of the farmers are ladies. I request the hon. Minister to look into this matter and do justice to the people of AP in general and people of Amaravati in particular. This is the first step, by land pooling, for constructing the capital. ..(*Interruptions*)... This is a part of Budget, hon. Member,

you know that. *..(Interruptions)...* The funds have not been allocated. *..(Interruptions)...* You must be aware of it. *..(Interruptions)...* It is because you have forgotten everything but that does not mean... *..(Interruptions)...* Don't interrupt me. *..(Interruptions)...* You have done your job and you have spoiled the entire State of Andhra Pradesh. Now, you are coming up with a version. *..(Interruptions)...* You are supporting it. *..(Interruptions)...* In addition to the above problems, the Central Government has created another major problem by declaring the privatisation of Vizag Steel Plant. After a prolonged agitation of eight years, the 'Visakha hakku-Andhra hakku', which means that Visakha Steel Plant is the right of Andhra Pradesh, in that 32 people sacrificed their lives and around 22,000 farmers had given their land for the establishment of this plant. If the Government allocates captive mines and covert the loan into equity, then automatically the Vizag Steel Plant will come into profit. Now, I request the hon. Minister to look into this issue.

It appears that POSCO has evinced interest to set up a steel plant at the Visakhapatnam lands. They have also visited Visakhapatnam and made consultations with the State Government as well, as per the information given by the Central Government. But, the State Government did not disclose the information. I don't know why the people of Andhra Pradesh were kept in dark. It appears that the Government initiated the process much earlier. Now, the State Government is shedding crocodile tears about the proposal as if they don't know anything. But it is reported that the State Government has got no knowledge about it.

As far as the Polavaram project is concerned, it is a national project. The completed construction is of 77 per cent. But the present Government abruptly stopped it on the ground of reverse tendering. Due to that, there is a huge price escalation. Apart from that, the Central Government has taken a decision to reduce the project cost. The estimation for the Polavaram project is Rs. 55,630 crores and it is already approved by the Technical Committee. Due to non-persuasion of the State Government, it is kept aside and there is no progress.

There are several other problems with regard to the educational institutions, etc. No allocations were made in the Budget. Sir, our State Government is not in a position to demand from the Central Government funds on anything though they have got a one-sided mandate from the people. Our misfortune is that the Government of Andhra Pradesh abandoned all the issues since they are busy with other things...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SURENDRA SINGH NAGAR): Please conclude.

SHRI KANAKAMEDALA RAVINDRA KUMAR: Sir, the financial status of Andhra Pradesh is in a mess. The Government of Andhra Pradesh has already taken loans to the tune of Rs.1,46,000 crore. The State Finance Minister made a statement saying that they are going to take loans to the tune of Rs.2 lakh crore. If you look at the gross debt of Andhra Pradesh, as per CAG, it is a staggering Rs.3.17 lakh crore. This clearly indicates where the State Government is going and the way the present Government is taking steps in its finance. This is precisely the reason why the Central Government should come to the rescue of Andhra Pradesh. Otherwise, the people of Andhra Pradesh will be thrown onto streets as destitute. Ultimately, the State will be ruined!

Finally, on the petrol prices, in our State, as compared to other States, Rs.2.3 extra is collected. Either the State or the Centre should reduce the tax, or the petrol prices should be brought within the purview of GST. I request the hon. Finance Minister to consider the above demands and allocate the funds to Andhra Pradesh. Thank you.

SHRIMATI PRIYANKA CHATURVEDI (Maharashtra): Sir, thank you so much. आपने मुझे इस महत्वपूर्ण मुद्दे पर बात करने का मौका दिया है, इसके लिए मैं आपकी आभारी हूँ। मैं आज इस मुद्दे पर बात नहीं करने वाली थी, पर बहुत सारे वक्ता, जो मैंने उस तरफ से सुने हैं, उन्होंने इस तरीके की दलीलें दी हैं कि जैसे हमारे देश में किसी तरीके की कमी नहीं रह गई है, we are a land of milk and honey. अगर कोई किसी तरीके की कमी दिखाता भी है, तो वह ऐसे बताते हैं कि जैसे anti national बात हो। इसलिए आज जो मुझे माननीय वित्त मंत्री महोदय के सामने बोलने का मौका मिल रहा है - एक तो मैं उनकी आभारी हूँ कि वे यहाँ बैठी हुई हैं और सवेरे से सबकी बात सुन रही हैं and she is doing a job which, at this point in time, no one envies. We all know that it has been a tough year and she has tried to do a good balancing act. However, some problems exist. मैं बस उन आंकड़ों को आपके सामने लाना चाहती हूँ। महोदय, आज सवेरे ही अखबार में Urban Female Labour Participation की एक रिपोर्ट आई है, जो 2016 से consistently गिर रही है, यह पहले 15.3 प्रतिशत पर होती थी, लेकिन नवंबर, 2020 के आंकड़े जो बताते हैं, उनके अनुसार आज यह 6.9 प्रतिशत पर है।

महोदय, कोविड लॉकडाउन की वजह से जो job losses हुए हैं, 49 परसेंट की जो ग्राज गिरी है, वह महिलाओं पर गिरी है क्योंकि उनकी नौकरियाँ चली गई हैं। Urban unemployment के जो आंकड़े सामने आ रहे हैं, उनके अनुसार अप्रैल से जून, 2020 के बीच महिलाओं का 21.2 प्रतिशत का आंकड़ा है और पुरुषों का अप्रैल से जून, 2020 के बीच 20.8 प्रतिशत का आंकड़ा है, जो 2019 में 8.3 प्रतिशत का आंकड़ा था। एक और रिसर्च सामने आ रही है, मैं जानती हूँ कि सरकार की आदत बन गई है कि कोई भी रिसर्च के आंकड़े देते हैं तो सरकार उन्हें खारिज कर देती है। मैं उम्मीद करती हूँ कि कोई रिसर्च हो, perception हो, जब international business की बात करते हैं, एफडीआई की बात करते हैं, investment की बात करते हैं, तो दुनिया में हमारा

perception क्या जा रहा है, वह भी देखना बहुत ज़रूरी है। यह एक Pew की रिसर्च है, जो कहती है कि कोविड के lockdown के अंतर्गत देश की साढ़े 7 करोड़ आबादी गरीबी रेखा से नीचे गिरी है। दुनिया के पॉवर्टी लाइन के लोग जो हैं, उसमें हमारे देश का 60 प्रतिशत योगदान है।

सर, एक समय में हम गर्व करते थे कि हमने करीब 12 करोड़ लोगों को गरीबी रेखा से ऊपर उठाया है और मिडिल क्लास को बढ़ाया है। आज हालत यह है कि 3.2 करोड़ मिडिल क्लास में decrease हुआ है। मैं मानती हूँ कि वह कहीं न कहीं हमारी अर्थव्यवस्था और पॉलिसीज़ का ही नतीजा है। अगर हम India's economic growth की बात करें, तो 2005-06 में 9.3 प्रतिशत, 2006-07 के 9.2 प्रतिशत, 2007-08 के 10.2 प्रतिशत के आंकड़े हैं। अब हम 2018-19 की बात करें, क्योंकि सब कुछ अच्छा तो 2014 के बाद ही हुआ, पहले कुछ अच्छा ही नहीं हुआ था। वर्ष 2018-19 में 6.1 प्रतिशत, 2019-20 में 4.2 प्रतिशत, 2020-21 में -8% के आंकड़े हैं।

अगला मुद्दा मैं सदन में लाना चाहती हूँ और जिनका ज़िक्र करना चाहूंगी, तो मैं उन्हें स्वर्गीय नहीं कहूंगी, क्योंकि वे अजर-अमर हैं -श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज जी की याद दिलाता है। जब वे लीडर आफ ऑपोज़िशन थीं, तो उन्होंने पेट्रोल प्राइसेज़ के बारे में एक बात कही थी कि जो इसके victims होंगे- The victims are housewives, farmers and the poorest of the poor. किसानों पर क्या गाज गिरी है, यह दिल्ली बॉर्डर पर हम रोज़ ही देखते हैं, जिसकी चर्चा हम यहां करने से कतराते हैं और हमें बोलने का मौका नहीं दिया जाता है।

उधर से बार-बार वसूली की बात हो रही थी। मैं ध्यान दिलाना चाहती हूँ कि आम इंसान, जो हर रोज़ एक लीटर पेट्रोल भराता है, वह देश की सरकार को वसूली चार्ज के रूप में पैसा देता है। पिछले सात सालों में 460 प्रतिशत पेट्रोल के दाम बढ़े हैं। वर्ष 2014 में यह कहा जाता था कि महंगाई डायन है, वह अब भारत सरकार की मेहमान बनी बैठी है। यह कहा जाता था - 'महंगाई की मार।' अब हर दस मिनट में 100-100 बार इसी महंगाई की उस तरफ से जय-जयकार होती है। आप जय-जयकार कीजिए, पर उन मुद्दों पर करें जहां आपने किसी तरीके की विजय पाई हो। भारत को सोन चिड़िया बता देना, अपनी जवाबदेही से बच जाना, यह कोई अपनी पीठ थपथपाने का मुद्दा नहीं है।

माननीय वित्त मंत्री जी ने अपने बजट में 2,200 करोड़ रुपए air pollution को टैकल करने के लिए रखे हैं। मैं उन्हें याद दिलाना चाहूंगी कि यह तीसरा साल है, देश की राजधानी दिल्ली, जहां पर हम बैठे हुए हैं has been nominated as the most polluted capital of the world. हमारे देश में 20 में से 13 ऐसे शहर हैं, खासकर दिल्ली बॉर्डर से लगते हुए और उत्तर प्रदेश के, जो most polluted in the world हैं, इसलिए मेरा मानना है कि इस काम के लिए 2,200 करोड़ रुपए का आवंटन बहुत ही कम है।

पिछले सात सालों में एलपीजी के दाम दोगुने कर दिए गए। उस समय महंगाई की मार की बात की जाती थी और अब ऐसी महंगाई की मार है कि जो लोग subsidised सिलेंडर लेते थे, वे फिर से हिम्मत ही नहीं जुटा पा रहे हैं कि उसे वापस refill करा सकें। उनका आज यह हाल हो गया है। मैं उम्मीद करती हूँ कि माननीय वित्त मंत्री जी इस पर ध्यान देंगी और इस पर किसी तरीके की कार्रवाई करेंगी। मुझे वह दिन भी याद आता है, हम लोग Twitter पर हैं, इसलिए हम काफी एक्टिव हैं। वहां पर मोदी जी ने कहा था - petrol price hike will put a burden on



hundreds and crores of people in Gujarat. शायद गुजरात में किसी तरीके की कमी नहीं है और उन्हें किसी तरह की दिक्कतें पेट्रोल प्राइसेज से नहीं आ रही होंगी।

I am concluding, Sir. आखिर में मैं बस एक anecdote सुनाना चाहूँगी, जो पार्लियामेंट के बारे में ही है। एक बार पंडित जवाहरलाल नेहरू जी और राजा जी की बहुत तीखी बहस हो रही थी। वहाँ पर नेहरू जी ने राजा जी से कहा कि, 'ऐसा है, You can say whatever you want. But, I have the numbers and I have the majority.' तो राजा जी ने उनको जवाब दिया, 'You may have the majority, but I have the logic.' इस पर खुद प्रधान मंत्री, पंडित नेहरू हँसे और उनको जो भी advice दी गई थी, logical advice दी गई थी, उसको उन्होंने accept किया था। अगर हम उसी गरिमा को बनाए रखेंगे, निभाते रहेंगे, तो मैं मानती हूँ कि देश प्रगति और उन्नति की ओर बढ़ेगा। जय हिन्द।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SURENDRA SINGH NAGAR): Shri Derek O'Brien. You have four minutes.

SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN (West Bengal): Sir, the hon. Finance Minister has been here since 11 o'clock and making her notes. I have major differences on policy and ideology with her. That is different. But, there is decency and courtesy which we always try and extend — does not matter man, woman or anybody. Sir, I am a little disturbed, — especially because I have been sitting next to the hon. Finance Minister for the last five hours — because about two hours ago, a most distasteful statement was made about a woman saying that she should not wear a sari anymore, but she should wear Bermuda shorts! This is not acceptable in politics. This was said by a Member of Parliament and State President of the BJP. We condemn this kind of a statement on anyone. Sir, we have political differences. So what if we have political differences? I respect Madam and every other Member. They are political rivals. We are not political enemies; of course, not.

Sir, I have six very quick points which, I hope, are pointed and the hon. Finance Minister would, certainly, address these in her reply.

The first one is about the Centrally Sponsored Schemes this year. Centrally Sponsored Schemes पहले 66 थीं, अब cut हो कर 28 हो गई हैं। This is a big reduction. Central share of money for States' schemes is: पहले Central share 75 प्रतिशत था, अब इसको कम करके 60 per cent दिया जा रहा है। And, States, instead of paying 25 per cent for these schemes now have to pay 40 per cent. So, my suggestion and question to the hon. Minister is: Should States also not get the benefit of devolution? The States are not. This is my first point.

The second point is on LPG. You cannot make a speech here, today, in Parliament, without discussing LPG. We all know the price of LPG, diesel and petrol.

Sir, there is another pointed question to the hon. Finance Minister. Sir, there is 62 per cent Cess on petrol and 69 per cent on diesel! Sir, my limited point is that this is not tax; there is a basic difference between Cess and tax. The entire Cess goes to the Central Government! This is one statistics. Sir, fifteen years ago, Cess collection to gross revenue was 2 per cent. Under this Government, Cess is now 15-16 per cent. So, let us know where money is going. I will give one example from a State. Sir, GST collection from my State was Rs. 12,000 crores in 2017-18. Now, GST collections doubled to Rs. 28,000 crores from Bengal. But, tax devolution coming to Bengal has come down by Rs. 1,000 crores — from Rs. 49,000 crores to Rs. 48,000 crores! So, this is a hocus-focus which is anti-federalism.

My suggestion to the hon. Finance Minister is that you cannot have schemes like Beti-Bachao-Beti-Padhao. It is bad, poor and pathetic governance when you have 56 per cent of your scheme's money spent on advertisement! यह बंद कीजिए। Take the best practices from around the world. What does it mean? Instead of giving money to girls, you are giving it to the 'face'?

Sir, I have last two points. I am trying to make it as positive as I can, because there is so much of negativity around and there is so much of negativity being spread. This is a startling statistics and since the Finance Minister is here, I must not miss this opportunity. In the last five years the CAG Reports are down by 75 per cent. This is a very, very bad precedence; unacceptable precedent. How is this Government working? No speech on finance or the economy can be made without recalling what happened at 8 p.m., one particular evening. Something happened at 8 p.m., and at 10 p.m. -- since we started with a lady we will also end with a lady -- two hours after the announcement, she said, "Withdraw this draconian decision". It was November 8, 2016, when the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi stood up and delivered his demonetization speech. उसके बाद में बोले - हमको 50 दिन दो। 50 दिन क्या, पांच साल भी पूरे हो गए, लेकिन बंगाल में बस 50 दिन बाकी हैं, तब 'खेला होबे'। Thank you, Sir.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH (Karnataka): Mr. Vice-Chairman Sir, I too will join Mr. Derek O'Brien in thanking the hon. Minister for sitting through a long day, and I will be very brief.

The Finance Bill, 2021, not only deals with tax rates, as it should, but also brings about very substantial and very significant amendments in a very large number of laws, passed by Parliament after debate and discussion. The Central Goods and Services Tax Act is being amended; the Integrated Goods and Services Tax is being amended; the LIC Act is being amended, and I will come to it a little later; the Securities Contract Regulation Act is being amended; the Central Sales Tax is being

amended; the Benami Property Acquisition Act is being amended; the Securities Exchange Board of India Act is being amended; the Debt Recovery Tribunal Act is being amended; the SARFAESI Act is being amended; and, the IDBI Act is being amended. Sir, when Governments do not have majority in the Upper House or in the Council of States, this route of getting Acts passed through Finance Bill has been resorted too. And, I am reminded of the Finance Act, 2017, when Shri Arun Jaitley was the Finance Minister, and in the Finance Act, he amended nineteen Acts, passed by the Parliament. And, he got them amended through the Finance Act. I challenged this in the Supreme Court. Thanks to my colleague, Dr. Abhishek Manu Singhvi, who is sitting here; in November of 2019, a three-judge bench of the Supreme Court, headed by no less a person than the Chief Justice of India, who is today a nominated Member of the Rajya Sabha, upheld my petition and rejected the amendments made in the Finance Act of 2017. So, my earnest plea to the hon. Finance Minister is that you have a majority in the Lok Sabha, you have a majority in the Rajya Sabha, why is this convoluted way of bringing amendments into Acts which deserve debate and discussion?

Sir, I will confine myself only to one Act, that is, the LIC Act. The LIC Act was passed by both the Houses of Parliament in September, 1956, when Mr. T.T. Krishnamachari was the Finance Minister. There were 49 sections in this Act. This Finance Act, sixty-five years later, is amending 27 sections, out of 49 sections. Sixty per cent of the LIC Act of 1956 is being amended, is being changed in some form or the other. No debate! No discussion! No scrutiny by a Standing Committee! No scrutiny by a Select Committee! I fail to understand why this route was taken on such a very important Act. Those of you who have been to Nariman Point in Mumbai, you might have seen the headquarters of the LIC. It is a big building there. It is called 'योगक्षेम'।

And, if you look at the LIC logo, you will find that below the logo, it is written, योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम्। योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् is from Chapter-IX of Bhagwad Gita, and it means, I am the provider of your security and I fulfill all your needs. So, that is the spirit in which the LIC was set up. The LIC was set up in 1956. There were a large number of malpractices in which the private insurance companies had indulged. It was not nationalised in a fit of great socialism. The man who nationalised the Life Insurance in 1956 was the then Finance Minister, -- before Shri T.T. Krishnamachari -- Shri C.D. Deshmukh, who was as market friendly and economist as you can think. There was a certain social logic to the nationalisation of the Life Insurance Corporation. And, today, through these 27 Amendments to a 49-Section Act, without debate, without discussion, without examination, without scrutiny, you are endangering योगक्षेमं

वहाम्यहम्। The LIC has been the bulwark for Government programmes, whether it is the State Government or the Central Government. Whenever a Government is formed, whenever a Ministry requires money, the first agency you run to is the LIC. Mr. Gadkari has gone to the LIC. Mr. Piyush Goyal, the Railway Minister, has gone to the LIC. The successive Governments have made use of the LIC to fund infrastructure projects, and that is the way it should be. I request you, the hon. Finance Minister, that with these Amendments, please ensure that the basic social obligation nature of the LIC does not change in any way, that the capability of the Government to use the LIC for infrastructure and social welfare is not weakened or jeopardised in any way. The LIC is going to be a listed company. The corporate governance norms will change. Foreign funds will own part of the LIC. What will Governments do? This IPO of LIC is *fait accompli*. We can't stop it. These amendments are part of the Finance Bill. We can't stop it. But, as a Member of the Council of States, as a Member of the Rajya Sabha, I think it is my duty to bring to the attention of this House that far-reaching amendments are being done in Acts without discussion and without debate, of which the LIC Act is the prime example. I hope in the next Session, at least, we will have an opportunity of discussing what safeguards need to be introduced over and above what you have proposed in the Finance Bill, so that the ability of the LIC to meet the infrastructure needs of the State Governments and of the Central Government, the ability of the LIC to meet the social welfare needs of the State Governments and the Central Government, and the ability of the LIC to fulfil the aspirations and obligations of individual citizens, is not weakened. This Bill will pass, your IPO will be there, and you have said in the law that for five years, the Government ownership will be, at least, 75 per cent and the Government ownership will never fall below 51 per cent. That is there in your amendment. But I am curious, in one place, you are saying, 'Government shall', but at another place, you are saying, 'Government may'. As you know, in legal language, and Dr. Singhvi will educate all of us, 'shall' means होना ही है, and 'may' means हो सकता है। So, there are some places in the Act where there is 'Government may' and that is what gives some apprehensions. For example, you say, 'Government may', 'the Corporation may' reserve 10 per cent of the IPO for policyholders.

(MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN *in the Chair.*)

It is not mandatory. It is an enabling provision. Why don't you make it mandatory? Why don't you ensure that 10 per cent of the IPO is reserved for LIC policy holders? Make it mandatory.

So, I think, these are the issues which we can discuss in the next Session. Today, we don't have time. It will pass. But, Madam, Finance Minister, you have majority in both Houses; please amend the Acts by bringing Bills to amend the Acts on the floor of the House, and let not this Finance Bill become like the Finance Act of 2017 which had to be challenged in the Supreme Court and a challenge which the Government actually lost; and now you are coming forward with a Bill to fulfil the verdict of the Supreme Court -- what is it called -- 'The Tribunal Reforms Bill'. It was not needed if you had listened to us in 2017. So, please, I urge you. Of all the amendments that you have proposed in the Acts in this Bill, the most far-reaching is the amendment to the LIC Act. Let us move forward but let us move forward cautiously. Let us not move forward in haste and let us debate what safeguards are required; and we will do it, in my view, in a spirit of cooperation, in a spirit of understanding that there is an IPO. The IPO makes certain demands. However, at the same time, the LIC is a unique institution; and I quite agree with Sushil Modiji, India requires not one LIC; India requires many LICs.

**श्री उपसभापति:** धन्यवाद, माननीय जयराम रमेश जी। Please conclude.

**SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH:** So, I am not holding a brief for one organization. Let us have four LICs; let us have five LICs. But I think the public sector nature should not be disturbed in any fashion whatsoever. Thank you, Sir.

**THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN):** Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, and I am indeed grateful to all the Members, twenty-three of them, who have been giving us in detail their views on the Finance Bill.

So, whilst I will, very briefly, to start with, give the broad features of the Finance Bill, I think, it will be worth my while to respond to the observations made by various Members, and, through that, I think, the response and my reply will be far more pointed towards the concerns, towards the issues raised by the hon. Members.

What exactly is in the Finance Bill has been viewed by all the Members, has been analyzed, spoken, and, therefore, I will not get into the details other than broadly indicating that this Finance Bill does not envisage any increase in taxation, particularly, in the direct tax, particularly, in the income-tax. It, of course, has some amendments towards achieving reduction in compliance aimed at 'ease of doing business.' The approach is similar when I am dealing with customs and indirect taxes. I had announced in my Budget Speech that I shall take a fairly long-bound



exercise in rationalizing customs duties and any other duty which has been brought in against dumping or any such activity over the decades only because -- I don't know if I should say it -- I was fairly astonished to see a large number of notifications on anti-dumping which have been announced during the decades, not by one Government but several Governments, all of which did not have an 'end date', 'sunset date'.

As a result, they just continued to be there, whether anybody was benefiting from it, whether actual injury was being caused, and so on. So, we have announced in the Budget that from the 1<sup>st</sup> of April there would be a stakeholders' consultation, the whole thing would be available in the public domain and, if any such decades-old anti-dumping duty or any other notification as regards increasing or reducing duties is felt necessary, we shall take it up. But now, all of us have brought in a system whereby any such notification that is brought out after consultation should come with a deadline, so that, say, two years after the notification, in March of that year, there should be a review. And, if it is felt necessary, it can continue. If it is not felt necessary, it should end, rather than leaving it at a loose end. So, we have built in that system and that is also going to be subject to all people talking about it from the 1<sup>st</sup> of April. That exercise, hopefully, will come to an end on 31<sup>st</sup> August, post which after a month of looking at reconciling the dates, from 1<sup>st</sup> October, we expect to roll out this new system, which is a streamlined system. It is not a system to undermine any one item of import or one item of anything that is causing injury. So, largely, the emphasis on the Direct Taxes has been to reduce the compliance burden, not to increase the rates and also to make sure that 'ease of doing business' is kept in mind. There was a suggestion from one of the Members, asking why we couldn't get into the second stream of taxation which we have brought in in the Income Tax, without any exemptions, and so on. I have got a detailed response to give, but the fact remains that that system is provided as an option rather than that being the only one and removing the previous long-existing system, because we need to also grandfather exemptions that have been provided as many people do benefit from it. So, the approach taken in this Finance Bill is, essentially, rationalize, bring in systems, simplify the process, make compliances easier, and so on and, ultimately, bring the rates down. So, I would not say anything more here except that the agricultural infrastructure development cess has become a matter of concern. I said this in the Lok Sabha and I wouldn't mind repeating it here -- before bringing in the cess, I had sat down personally to look at the items on which the customs duty can be brought down. If the customs duty was to be brought down by ten on any one particular item, the cess for the agricultural infrastructure that is being brought in now would not be to the full extent of ten, but only to a partial extent. So, net-net, the

incidence of the cess will be far lesser than what the importer was paying through the basic customs duty that existed. If not remaining at the same level, it would be lesser. It will not be, in any one case, more than what they were paying earlier. So, that is the clear justification as to why we brought it. Yes, I agree and I concede that cesses and surcharges don't get devolved, but the cess in this particular case is completely tailor made for immediate emphasis to be given for improving infrastructure in the farm gate or with the farm yards, and so on. The farm yards and all the APMCs are with the States and, therefore, the cess money will have to go to them to improve the infrastructure there. So, that is something I wish to draw the hon. Members' attention to. There are also extensions of dates, whether it is for the start-ups, affordable rental housing projects or affordable houses. All those projects which existed prior to Covid are now being extended. During the Covid it got extended; now they are getting extended by one more year, up to March, 2022.

So, largely, these are the kinds of things. 'Faceless', of course, has to be given a lot more emphasis because what was earlier faceless assessment now has gone over to become faceless appeals too. I know, some Members did say, "Can it not be, at least, one-to-one interaction?" Nothing stops the interaction. The Supreme Court, for instance, with due respect, can hold its hearings via video conference. It only reduces the burden on assesseees, if we can sort out the matter even via video conference. So, it is not as if e-mails are sent or e-mails are received; it is totally a faceless affair. It is not. They can even have a video conference with whoever is allotted to deal with their case. So, it is better and efficient use of time, efficient use of technology, cost reduction and so on. More than 90,000 assessments have been concluded; orders have been issued. So, there is an acceptance even among those assesseees who wanted this system and now they find that it is actually bringing a certain level of comfort.

I will now quickly get into responding to some of the issues by Members. I am not going to respond in any particular order. But still, the first speaker, Shri Deepender Hooda, did speak about capital expenditure and said that we have not done much about the demand side and so on. I have said this before, once or twice. But the fact remains that when the money is spent on infrastructure, it has immediate impact on job creation. When job creation happens, the money goes into the hands of people in the form of wages and that actually is going to improve on the demand side. It also improves demand for core goods, whether it is steel, whether it is coal, whether it is cement and so on. There, the demand goes through the core industries by their raw material. Even that goes to increase the demand. The sum and substance is that when you learn theory or when you are taught Economics, demand

side is separate and supply side is separate. When you are studying and assessing, yes, demand side can be separated from supply side. But it is not so watertight a compartment; resources do flow in and flow out. So, when higher capital expenditure is undertaken, particularly by the Government, it will have such multiplier effect that every aspect of the economy will have a positive bearing and, therefore, we have chosen to go in this route. It is not just an incremental addition. What was Rs.4.12 lakh crore in the current year, the year which is ending now, has been increased to Rs.5.54 lakh crore. So, it is a huge increase in building social infrastructure and in building infrastructure such as road, waterways and so on. I think, these will have a bearing on demand also. Many Members also voiced this point that at the end of the day we have not taken care of वंचित, शोषित और पीड़ित। I am not sure if they want to say it after having seen what had happened immediately after the lockdown when the Prime Minister announced Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana where 80 crore people for full eight months were given free foodgrains. One of our Members also did speak that 40 crore people had been given money directly into their accounts. I was monitoring it and I will not lose an occasion to thank every one of the bank employee who undertook this exercise of making sure that the money announced went into the accounts of beneficiaries and many of them, in spite of Jan Dhan Yojana, had to be accessed through Bank *Mitras*. Bank *Mitras* went even during that peak lockdown time and put the money into the accounts of these people.

So, when we talk about '*garib, vanchit, peedit, shoshit*', even during peak Corona time, and, in fact, even today, I have a very heavy heart when I talk about this, when we talk about migrant labourers. All of us knew that there was immense suffering and there is no denying it. Trains were arranged. I know the extent to which Piyush Goyalji was completely at it and there were times when we had to request him saying, "Please don't stress yourself. All of us have to work together with the States." He spent hours and nights to coordinate with the States to get the trains running for the migrant labourers so that they could go back to their respective villages. And, even as they were going back, assessment was made as to how many districts were going to receive how many migrants and what kind of immediate employment opportunities could be given. That is why, the allocation for the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGA) was raised from Rs.64,000 crores, which was my BE announcement, to more than Rs.1 lakh crores. That is not a joke. Okay, we announced it. What happened after that? Are we monitoring it and is that amount being utilised fully? In fact, two months ago, when I looked at it, about Rs.90,000 crores of that Rs.1 lakh crore enhanced amount, which was given for MNREGA, was utilised. And, gradually, of course, the amount

tapered down because people started getting back to different cities and the jobs they were in earlier. So, regarding '*vanchit, shoshit*', enough thought has been given. More can be given. That is a different argument, but to say that nothing was given is not right.

Again, Sir, under the SVANidhi Scheme for street vendors, there was direct transfer of cash for women Jan Dhan Account holders. Money was also being given for divyang. Money was being given for Kisan Samman Nidhi, which goes directly into the accounts. It is nearly 10 crore now. Nine crore odd farmers have received money directly through Direct Benefit Transfer. Are these not taking care of the poor and also the dispossessed? So, I just want to draw the attention of hon. Members that we will have to look back at what has happened.

Now, Sir, if you permit me for a minute, I really don't want to and normally do not try to get into severe political replies, but I find it a bit heavy to listen, bit too rich to listen, to opponents telling us, "You know, you are not managing the economy all right. You don't have an expertise. You know, you are handling the economy so badly. Look at the golden bird we left with you." Sir, let me just do a bit of a comparison. When my late predecessor, Shri Arun Jaitley, was the Finance Minister, he had referred quite often as to what he had inherited as an economy. India was one of the fragile five economies and that was what he had inherited. But, what did he make of it? India became one of the fastest growing economies, and that is entirely to the credit of Arun Jaitleyji and hon. Pradhan Mantriji. He did not leave it as one of the fragile five. Today, we are hearing, "Oh my God! Look at how you are handling the economy, particularly during a crisis." You created a crisis. Jaitleyji and Pradhan Mantri Modiji handled it to have the credit of becoming one of the fastest growing economies. Now, again, 2008 financial crisis is nothing in comparison to what we have today, the Corona crisis, nothing at all to compare. It was a global crisis, but it impacted India too. At the time of 2008 crisis, measures were taken. Nobody is denying it. What was the result of those measures? Many people are reminding me today, "Hey, be careful now. You remember 2008 crisis. There was something called taper tantrum. You, probably, will have to face that. Be careful." We are learning lessons, but it is a recognition that 2008 financial crisis, being handled then by the U.P.A. Government, resulted in taper tantrum.

You could not handle the taper tantrum. We are learning lessons out of it. You could not handle it and also you could not handle the double-digit inflation, which was the character of the economy at that time. Now, and, not just now, also between 2014 till today, economy's inflation has never crossed that emotional barrier of six per cent or beyond. We have never crossed it. Even today, the inflation rate is well below

and the recent statement of the Reserve Bank of India also says that. So, bit rich, when I am being told about the handling of the economy. I am learning lessons from what you left, fragile five, double-digit inflation, taper tantrum.

Sir, there was another thing, which was widely circulated, 'policy paralysis'. There is no policy paralysis. Now, even during the Corona crisis, hon. Prime Minister was engaged in more than 100 video-conferences with countries abroad to learn from them and also to tell them as to what we are doing in this country. Corona vaccine has been handled. We are giving it not only for Indian citizens but also for others. Sir, we came up with five mini Budgets, and, I am quite grateful to hon. Scindia ji, who spoke about it in great detail, and, after that this Budget too. So, we are handling the economy. I am glad that while we are handling the economy, we are also having consultation with people and industry, be it small or big. Some hon. Members said that you are consulting very big people and not others. Yes, Gupta ji said this. It is not so, Sir. Small industry, small trade, everybody, whoever wanted to have a consultation with us, was welcome. I held video conferences with them. Even hon. Prime Minister spoke with them. We received memorandum from them and all that has been made a part of the announcement, '*Atmanirbhar Bharat*'. It is not that we serve only one section and not serve the others.

Above all, between 2014 and today, there is one sharp distinction, which we have to recognize and keep actually on top of the table. All this is possible and all this and more is possible only because the Prime Minister has led a corruption-free Government. This is one big signature, which we have to recognize and, therefore, when I hear from opposition parties on how to handle the economy, how to handle a crisis, I am just astonished.

Sir, here, I would also like to quote two former Governors of the Reserve Bank of India. Let me quote Shri Raghuram Rajan. I guess, one of the Members from this side did speak about it and quoted this also. I quote, "A larger number of the bad loans originated in the period of 2006 to 2008." It is a remark made by Shri Raghuram Rajan. Further he said, "Too many loans were made to well-connected people, well-connected promoters, who have a history of defaulting on their loans. Public-sector bankers continued financing promoters even while private sector banks were getting out". This is the description of the state of affairs in public sector banks by a well-recognized international economist and scholar. These are his words. Therefore, this Government under Prime Minister Modi had to take up very many ways of sorting this problem out. Asset quality review was held, and, then, after very many steps taken as per Government's comprehensive strategy of Recognition, Resolution,



Recapitalization and Reforms - 4 Rs, the NPAs have since declined to 8,99,617 crores of rupees as of March, 2020.

Sir, another Governor, Urjit Patel, whose book is normally very often quoted saying, 'Urjit Patel has said this!' In his book he says about the public sector banks, and I quote, "Instead they seem to have continued with extending further credit to poorly performing loan cases during the UPA period. This was done without commensurate enhancement of collateral. Borrowers seemed to have proffered their name or personal network in the form of personal guarantees as substitute." Banking practice has been completely, like you say in Hindi, बैंकिंग का तोड़फोड़ हुआ है। At the end of the day, even a Governor has commented like that. So, I just want to underline the fact that things were in a mess; the economy was mismanaged. With that record, today, if I hear them speak and warn us, I will still listen, I will still learn lessons. But, no, they don't have the credit of having managed the economy well. Just to give the data for comparison for a five-year period, from 2009-14, the GDP growth was 6.7 per cent and from 2014-19, it was 7.5 per cent. GVA of manufacturing, again for a five-year period, from 2009-14, it was 6.4 per cent and from 2014-19, it was 8.6 per cent. CPI inflation, from 2009-14, was 10.3 per cent and from 2014-19, it was 4.8 per cent. Fiscal deficit to GDP, from 2009-14, was 5.35 per cent and from 2014-19, it was 3.65 per cent. Current account deficit from 2009-14 was -3.34 per cent and from 2014-19, it was -1.43 per cent. Forex reserves -- it is point to point; it can't be for full five years -- from 2009-14 were 264.1 to 303.6 billion dollars, whereas from 2014-19, it was 303.6 to 411.9 billion dollars. And the final figure, Sir, is about FDI. More often I have been warned saying FDI will get affected, this is the kind of policy! FDI in billion US dollars was 179.7 from 2009-14, whereas from 2014-19, this rose to 268.5 billion US dollars. So, on the economy, I would want people to kindly look at actual data before commenting.

Sir, there was this point raised by hon. Member, Hooda, about downgrading by credit rating agencies. I just want to give you some actual observations. SEBI had stipulated that the CRAs, the credit rating agencies, may not consider delay in payment of interest or principal solely due to lockdown, lockdown conditions as default events. So, they have given very clearly saying you can't consider this to be default. Also, during the moratorium period, they were advised not to consider any default. So, the threat of being downgraded was taken care of. That should not worry anybody. Further, earlier there was a stipulation that once downgraded, 365 days have to elapse before restoring the rating. Now, CRAs will have to restore it in 90 days itself instead of 365 days in case of default which is made good. So, actually, through the SEBI, there is a very humane approach for businesses to survive and not

to be downgraded for one year or one-and-a-half years. The coming back is also quick because it should happen within 90 days.

About India's rating, India enjoys an investment grade rating, and we are not forcing any change or chance of any downgrade due to us incurring higher deficits because I have announced quite a big borrowing and also spending.

### 5.00 P.M.

Actually Fitch has just recently upgraded our growth projections. Many economists, international bodies and also rating agencies across the globe are of the firm opinion that governments need to spend to put the economies back. Globally that is the advisory that everybody is receiving, and we are also following it. So it shouldn't hurt our ratings. I think I have broadly spoken about the cess. But specifically, hon. Member Rajeev Satav spoke about cesses and their utilization pointed out in the CAG's report. Expenditure, which is allocated to sectors, is generally higher than the cess collections. For example, in the B.E. of 2021-22, an amount of Rs. 42,934 crore is estimated to be collected whereas an amount of Rs.1.67 lakh crore has been allocated in the B.E. of 2021-22 for the Ministries of Health and Education. Cess is one amount, but a far higher amount is being allocated to those very two categories under which cess is being collected. So, there is no mismatch there.

Again, there was this concern by hon. Member Rajeev Satav that the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act and SEBI have been made part of the Finance Bill. Why have we made it part of the Finance Bill? This is part of also what Jairam Ramesh *ji* has said. Why will the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act be a part of this Finance Bill? Pooled Investment Vehicle such as the REITs and InvITs, which are business trusts, are instruments which channelize fund flow, including those from the capital markets, into infrastructure and also into real estate. These instruments, REITs and InvITs, have been given tax exemptions. They will also be used for monetizing public assets and for generating revenues for the Government. Of course, in some cases, the Government also is a major player in the alternative investment funds. Having set up many such funds, and one example is the National Infrastructure Investment Fund (NIIF), which provides for equity and debt support, it is therefore necessary to have it in the Finance Bill.

Sir, I did mention about the video conferencing facility. It is very much in line with what the Supreme Court is doing. Vijayasai Reddy *garu* mentioned about it. I think that answers his concern. But more importantly he was very passionate while

speaking on the GST on the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam. I want to make it clear that that is not something which has happened after the GST regime came in. Services provided for considerations are liable to GST what prevails today. Any service which is provided by way of accommodation where rent for a day is more than Rs.1,000 attracts GST. This is not unique to only one particular institution, be it a temple. The GST applies to every institution where accommodation is provided and where the rental value is more than Rs.1,000 a night. Cheap accommodation is exempt. I would also like to mention that this is pre-GST tax, which was service tax. It was then applicable on hotel rooms and accommodation which got carried into the GST. The GST Council has discussed it several times and felt that this levy on room renting should continue, particularly for those above Rs.1,000. So that is not unique to GST. Also, at some point his party's hon. Member in the Lok Sabha raised it. This is also a point which many Members of Parliament coming from southern States most often raised.

Are Southern States being punished by the Finance Commissions for their efficiencies? Normally, they take the example of the way in which population control has been managed. I want to assure Vijayasai Reddy *garu* -- I did the same thing with his Party's Member in Lok Sabha -- to incentivize States which have enforced population control measures. The Fifteenth Finance Commission has provided a weightage of 12.5 per cent for demographic performance. As per this criterion, States with lower fertility rate will get greater *inter se* share. Andhra Pradesh has an *inter se* share of 6.635 per cent in the demographic performance criteria compared to overall *inter se* share of 4.047 per cent. It may be mentioned that in the Fourteenth Finance Commission period, overall share was 4.305 per cent. Therefore, the Finance Commission has already provided for a weightage of 12.5 per cent for demographic performance and under this criterion, Andhra Pradesh actually gets higher share because the sub-component for Andhra Pradesh is at 6.635 per cent.

Sir, Dr. Amar Patnaik had raised quite a few things like issues related to senior citizens above 75 years. I made it very plain. I was not talking about tax waiver. I was certainly talking about ease of doing business for elder citizens. That was not hidden. There were no small prints. It is a different thing that you may want me to consider even tax waiver for senior citizens above 75 years. But in the Budget, there was not any small printed line. It was very clear and I read it out very clearly.

Sir, then I come to the issue of Rs.2.5 lakh and Rs.5 lakh applicable to Government employees. I think that has been explained earlier. I will explain it even now. It constitutes only one per cent of population who pay more than Rs.2.5 lakh, get an assured return at eight per cent and above and also get tax concession. We

did not think it was right. This was clearly something which was for the employers and we need to attend to them.

Sir, then I come to GST compensation issue. I would not want to elaborate too much on it because it is all clear and out in the public but since many Members raised it, I want to respond to that. One thing is to talk about GST compensation pertaining to the year 2020-21 and another is, which I heard much to my consternation, compensation related issues prior to 2020. I have stood up and answered in the Council and the Council has definitely heard it. I have said it in this House also. I would not mind repeating. On this, I want to appeal to all Members; let there not be any apprehension. GST compensation had already been paid to States and UTs for the year 2017-18. There is nothing pending from that year. So is the case for the year 2018-19; nothing is pending for that year, everything has been cleared and so is for the year 2019-20, as per the GST Compensation Act, 2017. So, first let us get it clear that prior to Covid year, every compensation which was due for all the States has been cleared. If there has been something like at that time you did this or at that time you did that, every correction in course has been done, reported to the Council, States have received the moneys and nothing is pending there. Again, to re-emphasise that point, the unutilized compensation of the years 2017-18 and 2018-19 has been promptly carried forward and utilized in the years 2019-20 and 2020-21. So, there is nothing unutilized which is remaining, as though locked up in the Consolidated Fund of India. Nothing at all, clean account. And the GST compensation for the year, the Covid-affected year 2020 to January, 2021 -- I am not talking about February and March -- Rs.2,17,844 crore is the compensation due from April, 2020 to January, 2021. Back to back loans, which was agreed upon in the Council after very elongated discussions, released to States to meet the compensation shortfall totals to Rs.1,10,208 crore. Also, every Monday it was released in installments. So, compensation to be released from Compensation Fund -- that will happen in March, this month, in another few days -- is Rs.30,000 crore. It will go to the States. Therefore, compensation likely to be due to States and Union Territories in the year 2020-21 is Rs.77,636 crores. This is the overall for all States. And because, like in Lok Sabha, several Members felt Maharashtra has a lot of due, Sir, there is no discretion in GST. There is formula and as per formula it goes every month. So, the formula tells me how much is spending for each of the States and it is based on the formula, given to each of the States; yes, I have already told you Rs.77,636 crore is what is going to be due by the end of this month. So, there is nothing exceptionally being held back for Maharashtra. Provisional figure -- I am telling you about compensation due for the year 2020-21, April, 2020 to January, 2021

-- is Rs.32,295 crore, which many Members say: "You are sitting over 30,000 crore." No! Of that, Rs.11,977 crore has already been released for Maharashtra like many other States which received their share. So, nothing in particular is being held back for Maharashtra. I cannot do one thing for one State and something else for some other State. There is a prescribed format with which moneys are disbursed for States. So, on the GST, I want to give clarity so that Members may kindly realize that there is nothing which happens beyond what the Council has suggested to us.

Sir, hon. Member, Shri N.D. Gupta had asked about company tax rates being very different because they have been reduced as a result of September, 2019 decision whereas partnership tax rates have not been reduced. This is fairly an obvious argument which has been repeatedly posed and I want to explain it for a minute. When the income of a company is distributed to its shareholders, the shareholders have to pay the tax that arise out of dividend income in addition to the tax that the company paid on the income itself, on the company's own income. However, when the partner in a partnership firm receives his money, particularly, from his capital account in the partnership, it is not taxable. Hence, two rates, two tax rates, cannot be compared at all and, then, to compare and say: "If you can give that to companies; please, can you give it to me, does not work. It is a different story. You want something for the partnership, we can talk about it but saying because we have given it for company, give it to us, the treatment is very different for each.

Sir, I am coming to the last few. Shri Neeraj Dangi had raised an issue of customs duty on screws, nuts and bolts and everything else. I want to humbly submit that the customs duty increase on these items was done on two principles. One, anything that is being produced in India, particularly, by MSMEs, we have to encourage them and we are fully capable of producing and supplying to the Indian markets. We do not need to import them; therefore, we levied the tax on such items, nuts, bolts, screws, toys etc., all of which are being produced in India, in fact, meeting global standards.

Sir, second, over the decades, taxes have been levied on these goods for various reasons. They are not safeguarded properly. The safeguards are poor. Their quality is poor. They do not comply with many of the Indian standards. When on these course, we are asking them to be stopped. Today, we cannot say, 'No, no, it is all right, irrespective of your quality, you can still come.' That is the second. Third, using this occasion, I want to explain that everywhere where we have increased the duty, you would clearly see a pattern that I have not increased duties on raw materials or on intermediary goods. Taxes have been raised only on those items which are final



consumer products, which are available in India and we cannot import these and then, say, '*Atmanirbhar*' and, therefore, that step has been taken.

Sir, Shri Derek O'Brien has spoken about 'that the Central Schemes are now coming down and you are not really doing much on that.' On the cess, he said, 'Where is the money of the cess going?' I have explained the cess and the money going where, has been explained, for health and education. I have also said about the Agricultural Infrastructure Development Cess.

The third point, of course, he spoke about *Beti Bachao Beti Padhao*, and don't advertise it, I am not going into that. That seems to be just an observation. But, on the Central Schemes, first of all, till the end of 13<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission, the States and the Centre had 32 and 68 as their shares in the tax devolution. Sir, 32 went to States and 68 was with the Centre. The 14<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission, after a lot of discussions, they came up with, that was early 2014, 2015, this report which said, 'States will now get 42, Centre will have only 58.' At that time, the Central Government and the Prime Minister Modi, because he being a Chief Minister in the State, knows what the need of the States are, readily agreed to this 10 per cent increase in the States' share, and 32 became 42. He readily agreed. He said, 'No, स्टेट को देना चाहिए, दे दो।' In that report, one of the observations was that this increase has been made, from now the Centrally-Sponsored Schemes and Central Schemes will have to be gradually rationalized. So, now, suddenly to tell us even as we have retained this 42:58 meaning 41 now because of J&K, that proportion remains. The logic, therefore, will also have to remain that the Centrally-Sponsored Schemes and the Central Schemes will have to gradually get rationalized. We can't have a higher devolution to the States and also run equally that many number of Central Schemes and Centrally-Sponsored Schemes. So, let us understand that it was a recommendation of the 14<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission which increased the devolution to the States to 42 from what it was earlier, 32. So, let us not be worried on that score. There is nothing that the Centre is doing on its own. It is a recommendation by the previous Finance Commission. But, at the same time, hon. Member O'Brien, also said West Bengal and the money which is getting devolved. It is estimated that for 2020-21, Bengal will get Rs. 41,363.45 crores. In the BE of 2021-22, which is now to commence from 1<sup>st</sup> April, it is estimated that West Bengal will receive Rs. 50,070.29 crores. Sir, Rs. 41,363.45 crores से, today, it has gone to Rs. 50,070.29 crores. There is an increase from 41 to 50. State devolution is based on the tax collections, and any change in the tax collection can lead to a change in tax devolution. That has to be kept in mind. Sir, I learned a lot from quite a lot of

Members. I have had also a lot of friendly banter with hon. Member, Ms. Dola Sen, and if the House will indulge in me, if I try speaking a bit of Bengali.

Hon. Deputy Chairman, Sir, please do not mind me. I will try and I am sure it is not going to be perfect. She spoke in Bengali, I am trying to give her reply in the same language. I try sometimes in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and I like to do it in Bengali too. Ms. Dola Sen has delivered her speech in Bengali. I want to reply to her in Bengali.

\*"The Central government wants to provide Rs.10000 crore to the poor farmers of Bengal but the State government is not allowing doing so. And she used the words "lajja-lajja, lazza-lazza", whatever is the pronunciation, saying 'shame, shame.' I just want to observe, is it right, lajja-lajja? Again, the Central government wants to implement Ayushman Bharat for the treatment of the poor people but the State government is not allowing doing so. Is it lajja-lajja for the poor people?"

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, whether it is health, whether it is the farmer, whether it is the *gareeb* person from Bengal, \*"whatever the Central government wants to give, you continue refusing them and then continue to complain that the Central government is not giving anything to Bengal. It is not right....."

Now, the third. ...*(Interruptions)*... No problem! Dola Sen can say what they have as better scheme. Yes, you may have. ...*(Interruptions)*... You may give one lakh per ...*(Interruptions)*... Please. ...*(Interruptions)*...

**श्री उपसभापति :** कृपया आपस में बात न करें।...*(व्यवधान)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: But, Sir, if they are giving, let us say, Rs.10 crores, what is the problem if Modi ji gives one more crore? You add it. "We have a better scheme, I do not want yours", यह क्या तरीका हुआ? ...*(व्यवधान)*... Now, the third point. ...*(Interruptions)*...

**श्री उपसभापति :** कृपया आपस में बैठ कर बात न करें। ...*(व्यवधान)*... कोई भी चीज रिकॉर्ड में नहीं जा रही है, सिर्फ माननीय मंत्री जी का बयान रिकॉर्ड में जाएगा।...*(व्यवधान)*...

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\* English translation of the original speech delivered in Bengali.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: It is okay. ...*(Interruptions)*... Now, the third. ...*(Interruptions)*... Listen to this. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Hon. Minister, please. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, whether it is health, whether it is the farmer, whether it is the *gareeb* person from Bengal, \*Sir, I am glad to hear ...*(Interruptions)*...

It is not right. बार-बार complaint करना that Central Government is not giving anything is wrong. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please take your seats. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please. ...*(Interruptions)*... Madam, please. ...*(Interruptions)*... आपस में बात न करें। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, I am glad to hear...*(Interruptions)*... \*  
Dolaji, sit down."

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, actually ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, if there is that anxiety, I would have given my answer to Shri V. Vijayasai Reddy in Telugu...*(Interruptions)*...<sup>#</sup> "Tax collection from Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam (TTD). Tax is not collected from TTD alone. Tax is being collected from TTD before GST also."

Now hear, you wanted me to say it in other language, I am saying, listen now. ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, there is no election...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Hon. Minister, please conclude, please conclude ...*(Interruptions)*...

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\* English translation of the original speech delivered in Bengali.

<sup>#</sup> English translation of the original speech delivered in Telugu.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, I just want to tell that I am glad to hear from Ms. Dola Sen that they never refused. I want to submit that when I had given my Budget Speech on 1<sup>st</sup> February, when Members asked me why I have brought down Rs. 10,000 crore of allocation for agriculture; I had to explain. If they did not refuse, it is good news for me because by the time Budget was to be presented, the farmers' list had not come to the Central Government. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now ...*(Interruptions)*... Hon. Minister, please conclude ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, therefore, if the list had come, if the list had come... ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, I am talking to you. ...*(Interruptions)*... If the list had come, Bengal's poor *kisan* would have received that money which is for PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi. ...*(Interruptions)*... It had not come, so, it was not given to the farmers. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, about the petrol and diesel taxation ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, I am sorry, I object. ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, I do not utter a word of untruth, ये 'असत्य' शब्द का उपयोग न करें। ...*(व्यवधान)*... I do not utter a word of untruth in this House, I am sorry. ...*(Interruptions)*... You have to apologize and withdraw that word. ...*(Interruptions)*... How dare, Sir, I do not utter a word of untruth in this House. ...*(Interruptions)*... I do not say 'असत्य'. You better apologize. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Hon. Minister, please conclude. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, hon. Member, Shrimati Chaturvedi from Maharashtra had spoken about petrol and diesel. ...*(Interruptions)*... I want you to please request the House to be in order. ...*(Interruptions)*... I wish the opposition Members have the patience to listen to the reply, and if they have a problem, after I finish, they may say what they want to say. Whereas when they kept preaching to us,

I had the patience to listen to what they said, even though, it was in Bengali, even though, it was in Bengali, I heard them out. They were putting all false allegations against us and that is absolutely unacceptable; no way. पश्चिमी बंगाल में किसान का हक मारा गया। ...**(व्यवधान)**... पश्चिमी बंगाल में किसान का हक मारा गया। ...**(व्यवधान)**... Sir, hon. Member, Shrimati Priyanka Chaturvedi spoke about petrol and diesel. ...*(Interruptions)*...

**श्री उपसभापति :** प्लीज़ बैठिए। ...**(व्यवधान)**... प्लीज़ बैठिए। ...**(व्यवधान)**... please conclude. ...*(Interruptions)*...

**SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN:** Shrimati Priyanka Chaturvedi spoke about petrol and diesel; I just want to highlight the fact.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** The question is:

"That the Bill to give effect to the financial proposals of the Central Government for the financial year 2021-22, as passed by Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

*The motion was adopted.*

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** We shall now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

*Clauses 2 to 173, the First Schedule, the Second Schedule, the Third Schedule, the Fourth Schedule, the Fifth Schedule, the Sixth Schedule and the Seventh Schedule were added to the Bill.*

*Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.*

**SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN:** Sir, I move:

That the Bill be returned.

*The question was put and the motion was adopted.*