

*[Answers to Starred and Un-starred Questions (Both in English and Hindi) are available as Part -I to this Debate, published electronically on the Rajya Sabha website under the link <https://rajyasabha.nic.in/Debates/OfficialDebatesDateWise> ]*

### SPECIAL MENTIONS

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Ajay Pratap Singh... *(Interruptions)*.. Shri Deepender Singh Hooda...*(Interruptions)*.. Shri Lahar Singh Siroya.

#### **Need to check irrational freebies which can be disastrous to country's economy**

SHRI LAHAR SINGH SIROYA (Karnataka): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government on a very important subject that has dire implications on the country's macroeconomic stability. *..(Interruptions)*.. The culture of announcing freebies competitively to win elections poses a great risk to the fiscal health of States. *..(Interruptions)*.. In April 2023, the CAG of India said, "While we understand the importance of subsidies to help the under-privileged, it is essential to transparently account for such subsidies and we require to distinguish between justifiable subsidies from freebies which are not fiscally responsible." *..(Interruptions)*.. Citing the examples of what happened in countries like Brazil, Sri Lanka, institutions like the Supreme Court, the ECI, the Finance Commission, the RBI and the CAG have been cautioning about the consequences of fiscal profligacy in States. *..(Interruptions)*.. The Chairman of Fifteenth Finance Commission had cautioned, "It is a race to the bottom, not the road to efficiency or prosperity, but a quick passport to fiscal disaster." *..(Interruptions)*..

The Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act has failed to check the profligacy as most of the States borrow funds off-budget, beyond the pale of FRBM tracking. *..(Interruptions)*.. I urge the Government to look into this matter and check if any legislation is being planned to check profligacy in States. *..(Interruptions)*..

In my own State of Karnataka, the newly elected Government has reduced capital expenditure with allocations for education, health, rural development, agriculture and irrigation to fulfil the guarantees given during election. *..(Interruptions)*.. These cuts spell disaster to long-term development of the State.

This needs urgent attention. \*"Thank you, hon. Chairman, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to share my views." ... (*Interruptions*)..

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Naresh Bansal, ..(*Interruptions*)..

**श्री नरेश बंसल** (उत्तराखंड): सर, मुझे पेपर नहीं मिला है। ...(**व्यवधान**)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Niranjan Bishi, ..(*Interruptions*)..Shri Pabitra Margherita.  
..(*Interruptions*)..

### **Demand for recognizing Assamese Script in ISO-15924 and ISO/IEC-10646**

SHRI PABITRA MARGHERITA (Assam): Sir, my subject is, 'Appeal for Recognizing Assamese Script in ISO-15924 and ISO/IEC-10646.' ...(*Interruptions*)...

Sir, in this august Parliament, I have already appealed for recognizing Assamese as a classical language, and, subsequently, Assam Publication Board, Asom Sahitya Sabha and Government of Assam are already working on it. ...(*Interruptions*)... Now, I would like to appeal for taking necessary steps to recognize Assamese script in ISO 15924-2004 and ISO/IEC 10646. ...(*Interruptions*)... The origin of the Assamese script can be traced back to the early decades of the fourth century. ...(*Interruptions*)... But, unfortunately, in ISO and UNICODE documents and code chart, Assamese script has not been appropriately recognized. ...(*Interruptions*)... Earlier, Assamese script was recognized by DIT (MeitY) and C-DAC. ...(*Interruptions*)... In ISCII, the code for Assamese script was 57006. ISCII was the standard recognized by Government of India for the Indic scripts before Unicode standard was accepted. ...(*Interruptions*)... The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) is one of the recognizing authorities of script code for Indian languages. ...(*Interruptions*)... According to documentary evidence, BIS encoded Assamese script independently for Assamese language in 1991. ...(*Interruptions*)... But in ISO/IEC 10646, which provides a code for the representation of names of scripts, Assamese script is missing. Similarly, in ISO/IEC 10646, which is related to Unicode, Assamese script is not recognized properly. ...(*Interruptions*)... I earnestly appeal for recognition of Assamese script in ISO and Unicode. ...(*Interruptions*)... The BIS has the authority to forward the demand to ISO for recognizing and encoding the Assamese script in its standards. ...(*Interruptions*)...

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