

is her maiden intervention in the House. She is making contribution on 'Concern over the people deprived of entitlements under the National Food Security Act, 2013'. Shrimati Sonia Gandhi.

**Concern over the people deprived of entitlements under the National Food Security Act, 2013**

SHRIMATI SONIA GANDHI (Rajasthan): Hon. Chairman, thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak. The National Food Security Act (NFSA) introduced by the UPA Government in September, 2013, was a landmark initiative aimed at ensuring food and nutritional security for the country's 140 crore population. This legislation played a crucial role in protecting millions of vulnerable households from starvation, particularly, during the Covid-19 crisis. It is this Act that provided the basis for the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana. Under the NFSA, 75 per cent of the rural population and 50 per cent of the urban population are entitled to receive subsidized foodgrains. However, the quota for the beneficiaries is still determined based on the 2011 Census, which is now well over a decade old. For the first time in independent history, the Decennial Census has been delayed by more than four years. Originally scheduled for 2021, there is still no clarity on when the Census will be conducted. The Budget allocations reveal that the updated Census is unlikely to be conducted this year as well. Around 14 crore eligible Indians are thus being deprived of their rightful benefits under the NFSA. It is imperative, Sir, that the Government prioritizes the completion of the Census as soon as possible, and ensure that all deserving individuals receive the benefits guaranteed to them under the NFSA. Food security is not a privilege; it is a fundamental right. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The following hon. Members associated themselves with the issue raised by the hon. Member, Shrimati Sonia Gandhi: Shri Mukul Wasnik (Rajasthan), Shri A.A. Rahim (Kerala), Shri Imran Pratapgarhi (Maharashtra), Dr. V. Sivadasan (Kerala), Shri Haris Beeran (Kerala), Shrimati Jebi Mather Hisham (Kerala), Shrimati Renuka Chowdhury (Telangana), Shri Ashok Singh (Madhya Pradesh), Shri G.C. Chandrashekar (Karnataka), Shri Anil Kumar Yadav Mandadi (Telangana), Shri M. Shanmugam (Tamil Nadu), Shrimati Rajani Ashokrao Patil (Maharashtra), Shri Manoj Kumar Jha (Bihar), Shri Sanjay Singh (National Capital Territory of Delhi), Shri Pramod Tiwari (Rajasthan), Shri Sandosh Kumar P (Kerala), Shri Saket Gokhale (West Bengal), Shrimati Sulata Deo (Odisha), Shri Jose K. Mani (Kerala), Shri K.T.S. Tulsi (Chhattisgarh), Shri Prem Chand

Gupta (Bihar), Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav (Uttar Pradesh), Shrimati Priyanka Chaturvedi (Maharashtra), Dr. John Brittas (Kerala), Shri Prakash Chik Baraik (West Bengal), Shri Ritabrata Banerjee (West Bengal), Shri R. Girirajan (Tamil Nadu) Shri Rajeev Shukla (Chhattisgarh) and Dr. Fauzia Khan (Maharashtra).

Now, Shri Mohammed Nadimul Haque on need to nurture All India Radio to make it world-class national broadcaster. I appreciate your ambition because the entire nation is in an aspirational mode. Please go ahead.

### **Need to nurture All India Radio (AIR) to make it world-class National Broadcaster**

SHRI MOHAMMED NADIMUL HAQUE (West Bengal): Sir, India has a great tradition of cricket commentary on the radio. This Government is killing that tradition. In the years gone by, radio cricket commentaries had some legends, Berry Sarbadhikary, Pearson Surita, Dicky Rutnagur, Anant Setalvad, Kishore Bhimani and others.

Why is Indian cricket commentary on radio now in such a poor shape? With the exception of a few commentators like Shri Sushil Doshi and Shri Vinit Garg in Hindi and Shri Sunil Gupta and Shri Prakash Vagankar in English, it is boring. There is a huge potential for Akashvani to create good content and reach larger audiences by producing world-class cricket commentary. The BBC and ABC only use the best commentators always. Akashvani is India's national broadcaster. It has 591 stations, reaching 98 per cent of the population. With its massive reach, it has huge potential to lead in this space. In the first three months of 2022, Akashvani averaged just two crore listeners per month. The number of podcast listeners in India is estimated to be 17 crores. Still, the BCCI and channels don't give radio rights to Akashvani. Yes, they deprive Akashvani. Terrible! And Akashvani does not even send commentators to the venues, citing lack of funds.

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

On top of that, one cannot hear cricket commentary on the medium wave, but only on FM radio or via an App called 'News on Air'. This is absurd, Sir. An excellent way to further grow Akashvani's listeners' base would be to create world-class cricket commentary.

For this to become a reality, my Party, All India Trinamool Congress, suggests that three things must be done urgently. One, have dedicated channels for each language. Having the Hindi and English commentators doing the commentary, as a pair, is the surest way to kill good radio commentary. Two, the selection procedure of