

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: By whom?

MR. CHAIRMAN: And I engaged with the Government. ...*(Interruptions)*... The Leader of the House met me... ...*(Interruptions)*... It is to the Leader of the House that I must give... ...*(Interruptions)*... If you are asking... ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, we brought it to their notice. They did not do this. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE UNION BUDGET, 2025-26-Contd.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, we have Shri H.D.Devgowda, in terms of age and experience, the senior-most Member of the Parliament and former Prime Minister. At this age, his presence not only in the House but in Committees also is very encouraging, inspirational and motivational to us. I have permitted Shri H.D. Devegowda taking into consideration all aspects. He will briefly reflect on the Union Budget 2025-2026 and the rest will be laid on the Table of the House.

SHRI H.D. DEVEGOWDA (Karnataka): Sir, I am grateful to you. I sent the message that I am not keeping well; I will not attend today's sitting. Having the sympathy, you have permitted me to lay the papers on the Table of the House.

Sir, the Finance Minister has gone into every issue. She has done her best to give the support to all sections of society, not only one section. She has done her best to protect the interest of the people. I congratulate her and the hon. Prime Minister also. One brochure has been prepared by the Prime Minister. I have gone through it. All details have been given. I don't want to go against your direction. There are four issues. One, youths are coming to cities. Your goodself will understand. The population of Bengaluru is one crore forty lakhs. Why? I have a note. As directed by the Chair, I place it on the Table of the House. And the other issue is about the micro, small scale and medium industries. I have a note. I place it on the Table of the House. Another issue is regarding jackfruit. I am trying my best. There should be a board for tamarind, jackfruit and jamun. I am not talking whether it should in the south or the north. In Bihar, Makahana Board has been formed. In Southern States, the jackfruit and tamarind is everywhere; even on the road side, it is there. If a Board is formed, the youth will start making value addition products and they will not move to the cities. That is one point. The next point is about the small-scale industries. I have given a

note. Your goodself has directed me to do so because I am running fever. My conscience did not permit me to remain absent. So, I have come.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sir, place it on the Table. Don't strain yourself.

SHRI H.D. DEVEGOWDA: I will just make one more point about the Godavari-Cauvery linking project. Our leader is sitting here. Drinking water is a problem. You know that. In Bengaluru City, nearly 1,500 water supply lorries are extracting money, squeezing the poor people. I will leave it at that stage. There is only one point which I will read. The hon. Finance Minister, after making the provision of Rs.1,400 crores in the Union Budget of 2022-23 for the project, stated in her Budget Speech that all the concerned States would be consulted in the matter of giving approval to the DPR and implementing the scheme. This is what hon. Finance Minister stated. All our friends demanded Godavari to Cauvery, if it is below Mettur, the link is going to be prepared, what will we do? Give us, at least, the Godavari water. Karnataka is suffering. With folded hands, I beg. The hon. Chairman has directed me not to speak much. I lay it on the Table. I have prepared a note on the small-scale industries. Then, rural young people are coming to the towns. We have to see how we can prevent this. I have prepared a small note. Four different sheets are there. Jackfruit and tamarind Board should be formed, like Makhana Board. I have given a note. I will lay it with your kind permission. You have understood my difficulty and asked me to lay it on the Table. I am grateful to you, Sir.

♦ “(i) Ever since the policy makers thought of the city as an engine of economic growth, people in rural areas have been forced to live in urban slums. (ii) There has been an uncontrolled migration to the cities in search of livelihood. (iii) There is very little effort being made to ensure that people live a life of dignity in the villages. There is no economic plan being made keeping villages at the centre. The villages have become service hubs for cities. This has happened the world over and I do not wish to say that India should reverse the whole thing all together. All that I am trying to argue is that there is a need to balance this growth. This balanced growth will not only help villages but will help the health of our cities too. They will make them more liveable. (iv) The migration into rural cities and expansion of cities has also put a lot of pressure on infrastructure and resources within cities. For instance, drinking water for cities is already an issue and will only become bigger in the years to come. Housing is another area that will create big problems. (v) There has to be an innovative

♦ Laid on the Table.

development model that restores the urban-rural balance. We have to correct the model to ensure our budgetary investments yield much more in the future. (vi) There is yet another consequence of the distorted development model. Governments unable to cater to the aspirations of rural and semi-rural populations have had to alter their welfare models. Here again, they are not focused on building permanent assets for the community or the state, but are mostly keen to cater to individual aspirations. For instance, elected State Governments are less inclined on capital expenditure and long-term asset creation but are focused on individuals receiving cash incentives, direct cash transfers etc. (vii) I do not object to individuals getting guarantees in any form, but the question is, what happens to permanent asset creation for the society. We have to think of the future generations. (viii) In the recent decades, all that we do when we talk of the agricultural sector is to discuss MSPs. We do not think in terms of irrigation projects. With the pressure of a distorted welfare idea and unmanageable guarantees, State Governments are left with no money to make big and long-term plans. (ix) Even when I was prime minister the State Governments did not have money to complete irrigation projects. Therefore, I had created the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme in 1996-97 with the objective to help States to complete their irrigation projects. (x) Governments have to think of restoring this economic balance to spend on assets that will bring long-term wealth and prosperity to the society. This will also restore the dignity of the people. (xi) The Government should seriously think of a legislation that will ensure that State Governments do not spend all their money on guarantees but on building permanent infrastructural assets for the society.

Sir, my next point is about establishment of Jackfruit, Tamarind and Jamoon Board at the national level.

In the history of Parliament for the first time, I spoke on the importance of Jackfruit & Tamarind during the recently held Monsoon Ssession, 2024 of the Parliament. Both Jackfruit & Tamarind are perennial Horticulture crops grown under low rainfall tracts across the Country. Even if all other crops fail, either due to continuous drought or unexpected heavy rains and floods, still these crops flourish, come to the rescue of farmers. Similarly, Jamoon has equal advantages compared to Jack fruit and Tamarind. These crops cultivated with very minimal expenditure in marginal lands. All the three fruit crops are considered multipurpose uses, where in every part of the tree besides both main product and byproducts have multivarious health benefits including huge demand in the pharmaceutical companies in addition to evergreen trees contributing for ecofriendly environment. Despite these multiple

benefits many farmers are not harvesting because of lack of market particularly Tamarind in the last two years.

In view of these multipurpose benefits, many farmers started growing pure crops across the country. There is a huge export demand for these crop produces because they are grown organically. Considering this various usefulness to farmers, rural entrepreneurs to take up Value Addition and Processing creating employment opportunities and benefits to economy of the nation at large, there is absolute need for establishing National level " Jackfruit, Tamarind and Jamoon Development Board " to address end to end issues enabling sustainable development of these growers and profitable marketing of both main products and by-products.

Sir, about MSME (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises), SME require separate tailored policies to sustain growth and competitiveness. I urge upon the Government to implement the following suggestions: MSME new policy is the turnover of up to 10 crores for micro, up to 100 crores small and up to 500 cores for medium industries. It is appreciable. MSME have to strengthen because, in India, as per the registered MSME, it is up to 5.93 cores, providing the job of 18 crores. Now, my humble request to the Government, micro and small enterprises require separate policy because, 10 crores turnover industries cannot compete with 500 crores turnover industries. 500 crores turnover industries negotiate the bank rate of interest as per their required rate of interest. But micro industry people cannot negotiate with the bankers. At the same time, it is the same labour laws applies for the micro, small, medium and large-scale manufacturing industries. Micro and small-scale industries are different. Bridging the gap between the micro (Rs.10 crores) and medium (Rs.500 crores) enterprises is significantly large, leading to most Government benefits being availed by medium enterprises, while Micro and Small enterprises struggle to compete. Hence, we all demand Micro and Small should have separate reservation policies. The gap between micro 10-crore and medium 500-crore enterprises is significantly large leading to most Government benefits being availed by medium enterprises while micro and small enterprises are struggling to compete. Hence, I demand micro and small scale should have separate reservation policy.

Exclusive benefits for micro and small enterprises: Currently, 20% of Government incentives (subsidies procurement quota and financial aid) are reserved for MSME. However, recent revisions favour medium enterprise, leaving micro and small business at a disadvantage. I demand that the creation of distinct benefit clauses to safeguard incentives for micro and small enterprises. The penalties discourage financial discipline and early loan repayment. Eliminating them will allow SMEs to manage finances more effectively. In this competitive environment, the RBI

Governor has made a statement, and the circular is awaited. On 10th October 2024, the Governor of RBI has assured that MSMEs will be allowed to prepay loans without paying foreclosure penalty. But this has not been addressed till date.

Regarding Special Credit Linked Capital Subsidy (CLCSS) for Technology, enablement for micro and small industries was Rs.1 crores for SC & ST. I request that the present amount has to be enhanced to Rs.5 crores to all micro and small industries. It is proposed that for MSME borrowers, the CIBIL score should not be considered in cases where the bank has extended one-time facilities, loan waivers, or loan closures, regardless of the nature of the assistance provided.

Here I urge upon the Government to exclude the CIBIL (Credit Information Bureau India Limited) at the time of loan sanctioning. At the same time, reduce the loan interest rates to 7 to 8% to enhance competitiveness and Exports can be boosted in the global market.

I further request for a specialized banking framework designed to meet the unique financial needs of Small and Micro Enterprises (SMEs), ensuring they are not assessed on the same criteria as medium and small-scale industries. Jai Hind!"

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Leader of the House, there is a request. The remaining speakers are from your Party only. We will have Finance Minister's reply at 4.00 p.m. Kindly manage. Now, Shri Pradip Kumar Varma.

श्री प्रदीप कुमार वर्मा (झारखंड): आदरणीय सभापति महोदय, आपने मुझे केंद्रीय बजट 2025-26 पर चर्चा में भाग लेने का अवसर प्रदान किया है, इसके लिए मैं आपका धन्यवाद करता हूँ। मैं आदरणीय प्रधान मंत्री जी एवं माननीय केंद्रीय वित्त मंत्री, श्रीमती निर्मला सीतारमणजी का हृदय से आभार व्यक्त करता हूँ, जिन्होंने वित्त वर्ष 2025-26 के केंद्रीय बजट को 'विकसित भारत' 2047 के लिए एक रोड मैप के रूप में प्रस्तुत किया है।

[उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री घनश्याम तिवाड़ी) पीठासीन हुए।]

आदरणीय प्रधान मंत्री, श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी जी के सभी वर्गों के समावेशी विकास के लक्ष्य एवं 'सबका साथ, सबका विकास' के दर्शन के प्रति प्रतिबद्धता को दर्शाता यह बजट माननीय वित्त मंत्री जी ने प्रस्तुत किया है। बजट में ग्रामीण समृद्धि के लिए कृषि, उद्यमिता और रोजगार सृजन के लिए एमएसएमई, बुनियादी ढांचे और नवाचार के लिए निवेश, आर्थिक वृद्धि के लिए निर्यात, इन चार क्षेत्रों के विकास पर विशेष ध्यान दिया गया है।

इस बजट का लक्ष्य प्रधान मंत्री जी के नेतृत्व में देश के विकास को गति देना, समावेशी विकास को सुरक्षित करना, मध्यम वर्ग की क्रय शक्ति बढ़ाना, निजी क्षेत्रों के निवेश को प्रेरित

करना, सुगम बनाना एवं स्वदेशी उत्पादों को वैश्विक बाजारों में प्रतिस्पर्धी तरीके से लेकर जाना प्रमुख रूप से है।

शून्य कर श्रेणी को 12 लाख रुपये की आय तक बढ़ाकर एवं वरिष्ठ नागरिकों के लिए अर्जित ब्याज पर टीडीएस कटौती की सीमा 50,000 रुपये से बढ़ाकर एक लाख रुपये करके मध्यम वर्ग की क्रय शक्ति बढ़ाने का कार्य इस बजट में किया गया है।

आदरणीय उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदया, हम झारखंड के लोग बड़े सौभाग्यशाली हैं कि आदरणीय प्रधान मंत्री जी का हमेशा से हमारे झारखंड पर विशेष ध्यान रहता है। उनके विगत 10-11 वर्षों के कार्यकाल में हर बार के बजट में झारखंड का विशेष ध्यान रखा गया है। वर्ष 2004 से 2014 तक कांग्रेस की सरकार थी, तो जहां कुल टैक्स कलेक्शन में से झारखंड को 56 हजार, 90 करोड़ रुपए हस्तांतरित किए गए थे, वहीं वर्ष 2014 से लेकर 2024 तक 302 प्रतिशत की वृद्धि करते हुए टैक्स कलेक्शन में से झारखंड को 2 लाख, 26 हजार, 444 करोड़ रुपए हस्तांतरित किए गए हैं। भारत सरकार की ग्रान्ट में भी 266 प्रतिशत की वृद्धि हुई है। वर्ष 2004 से 2014 तक जहां 28,509 करोड़ की ग्रान्ट झारखंड को मिली थी, वहीं यह ग्रान्ट बढ़कर अब 1 लाख, 4 हजार, 373 करोड़ रुपये तक पहुंच गई है। यह दर्शाता है कि आदरणीय प्रधान मंत्री जी का और बजट में माननीय वित्त मंत्री महोदया का झारखंड पर विशेष रूप से ध्यान रहता है।

रेलवे के लिए बजटीय एलोकेशन की बात करें, तो इसमें भी 16 गुना वृद्धि देखी गई है। वर्ष 2009 से 2014 में जहां झारखंड को 457 करोड़ रुपये का बजटीय एलोकेशन रेलवे के विकास के लिए हुआ था, वहीं वर्ष 2014 से 2025 में यह 7,302 करोड़ रुपये तक पहुंच गया है। झारखंड में नई रेल लाइन बिछाने के 32 नए प्रोजेक्ट्स चल रहे हैं। 52,885 करोड़ की लागत से कुल 3,070 किलोमीटर नई रेल लाइन बिछाई जा रही है। झारखंड के 57 स्टेशंस अमृत स्टेशन के रूप में विकसित किए जा रहे हैं। वर्ष 2014 के बाद जब से आदरणीय प्रधान मंत्री जी के नेतृत्व में एनडीए की सरकार आई है, तब से झारखंड में कुल 436 रेल फ्लाईओवर एवं अंडरपास निर्मित हुए हैं।

‘धरती आबा जनजातीय ग्राम उत्कर्ष अभियान’ के तहत प्रधान मंत्री जी द्वारा देश भर में 63,000 आदिवासी गांवों की 5,000 करोड़ से अधिक आदिवासी जनता को लाभ पहुंचाने की जो योजना प्रारम्भ की गई है, उसका बहुत बड़ा लाभ झारखंड के हिस्से आने वाला है। सर, 2800 करोड़ रुपये में झारखंड में 40 एकलव्य मॉडल आवासीय विद्यालय बनाए जा रहे हैं।...(समय की घंटी)...

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री घनश्याम तिवाड़ी): माननीय प्रदीप जी, आप समाप्त करें।

श्री प्रदीप कुमार वर्मा : इसका भी लाभ झारखंड के आदिवासी समाज को मिलने वाला है। सर, मैं कन्क्लूड करता हूं। जब से आदरणीय प्रधान मंत्री जी के नेतृत्व में एनडीए की सरकार आई है, तब से हमेशा बजट में झारखंड का ध्यान रखा गया है। मैं आदरणीय प्रधान मंत्री जी और माननीय वित्त मंत्री महोदया का विशेष रूप से धन्यवाद करते हुए अपनी बात समाप्त करता हूं।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री घनश्याम तिवाड़ी) : डा. भीम सिंह।

डा. भीम सिंह (बिहार): उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, सक्षम सरकार की योग्य वित्त मंत्री आदरणीय श्रीमती निर्मला सीतारमण जी के द्वारा प्रस्तुत वित्तीय वर्ष 2025-26 के बजट के समर्थन में बोलने के लिए मैं खड़ा हुआ हूँ। इस बजट में वित्त मंत्री जी का ध्यान चारों तरफ गया है, चाहे पूर्व हो, पश्चिम हो, उत्तर हो, दक्षिण हो, धरती हो, आसमान हो या समुद्र हो, सर्वत्र उनकी निगाहें गई हैं। उन्होंने एक खाका प्रस्तुत किया है, जिससे 2047 में निश्चित तौर पर अपना भारत विकसित देश बनेगा। बजट सर्वश्रेष्ठ है, सर्वसमावेशी है और सर्वगुण संपन्न है। इस बजट से विकास में तेजी आएगी, वह विकास एकांगी नहीं, बल्कि समावेशी होगा, विकसित भारत की आधारशिला होगा। आप जब देखेंगे, तो हमारी सरकार, जो सक्षम सरकार है और हमारे नेता, जो विश्व नेता हैं, उनके नेतृत्व में हमारी सरकार लगातार बजट का आकार ही बढ़ा रही है। आदरणीय डा. मनमोहन सिंह जी, जिनका मैं आदर से स्मरण करता हूँ, उनकी सरकार ने 2013-14 का जब अपना अंतिम बजट पेश किया था, तो बजट का आकार 16.5 लाख करोड़ रुपये था। उसके बाद हमारी सरकार आई और बजट में लगातार वृद्धि हो रही है और आज बजट का आकार 50.65 लाख करोड़ रुपये हो गया। यह तिगुनी से भी ज्यादा वृद्धि हमारी सरकार ने की है। यह कैसे हुआ? यह कोई जादू से नहीं हुआ है, बल्कि यह मोदी जी की दूरदृष्टि से, उनकी देशभक्ति से और कुशल वित्तीय प्रबंधन से हुआ है। इन कारणों से आज हमारा देश दुनिया में एक शक्ति के रूप में उभर रहा है। आज दुनिया में जो राष्ट्रों का मान है, सम्मान है, वह केवल arms की पावर पर नहीं है, केवल शस्त्र की पावर पर ही नहीं है, शक्ति पर नहीं है। यह राजनयिक चल रहा है, जो पोलिटिकल डिप्लोमेसी का स्थान आज इकोनोमिक डिप्लोमेसी ने ले लिया है। हमारी सरकार भारत को एक आर्थिक रूप से संपन्न राष्ट्र बना रही है, इसलिए आज दुनिया में भारत की आवाज़ सुनी जा रही है। यह कैसे हुआ? हमारी सरकार ने भ्रष्टाचार मुक्त शासन दिया है। जहां पहले घोटाले पर घोटाले होते रहते थे, आज हमारी सरकार के लगभग साढ़े दस वर्ष बीत गए। विपक्ष का भी कोई व्यक्ति हमारी सरकार के किसी मंत्री की ओर एक उंगली भी नहीं उठा सकता है। इस बजट का परिणाम क्या होगा? इस बजट का परिणाम गरीबी से मुक्ति होगा, शत-प्रतिशत स्कूल शिक्षा और सस्ती और सुलभ स्वास्थ्य सुविधाएं होंगी। यही तो चाहिए। शिक्षा हो, स्वास्थ्य हो और इन सारी चीजों का परिणाम होगा कि एक हंसता हुआ भारत होगा, भारत के लोगों के चेहरों पर मुस्कुराहट होगी। इसके लिए हमारी वित्त मंत्री जी ने इंजनों की कल्पना की है। इनमें एग्रिकल्चर है, एमएसएमई है, इन्वेस्टमेंट है और एक्सपोर्ट है। इन चारों के लिए हमारे वित्त मंत्री ने सेक्टरवाइज प्रबंधन किया है। इसका रिफॉर्म फ्यूल होगा, ईंधन होगा।

महोदय हमारी सरकार ने कृषि के लिए, एमएसएमई के लिए और इन्वेस्टमेंट विस्तार से काम किया है, मैं उस पर ज्यादा नहीं कहूंगा, क्योंकि मुझे पाँच मिनट का ही समय मिला है। महोदय, मैं बिहार के बारे में कहना चाहूंगा।...(समय की घंटी)...

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री घनश्याम तिवाड़ी) : माननीय सदस्य, कृपया अपना भाषण समाप्त कीजिए।

डा. भीम सिंह : महोदय, मैं बिहार के बारे में कहना चाहूंगा।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री घनश्याम तिवाड़ी) : माननीय सदस्य, कृपया समाप्त कीजिए।

डा. भीम सिंह : एक मिनट दे दीजिए।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री घनश्याम तिवाड़ी) : आप बोलना बंद कीजिए। श्री आदित्य प्रसाद, आप अपना भाषण आरंभ कीजिए।

श्री आदित्य प्रसाद (झारखंड) : माननीय उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, मुझे इस बजट पर बोलने का अवसर देने हेतु आपका बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री घनश्याम तिवाड़ी) : आदित्य जी, आपके पास पाँच मिनट हैं।

श्री आदित्य प्रसाद (झारखंड) : महोदय, सर्वप्रथम मैं इस दूरदर्शी और जन कल्याणकारी बजट के लिए एक गरीब बाप के बेटे, गरीब मां के बेटे, भारत मां के लाल, देश के यशस्वी प्रधानमंत्री और माननीय वित्त मंत्री जी का हार्दिक धन्यवाद करता हूँ।

उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, हमारी सरकार ने महिलाओं, किसानों, युवाओं, पिछड़ों, दलित, आदिवासी, सभी समाजों, सभी वर्गों के लिए तकनीकी शिक्षा और अन्य नागरिक सुविधाओं के संबंध में अभूतपूर्व विकास किया है। मेरे गृह राज्य झारखंड, जो एक आदिवासी जनजाति बहुल राज्य है, मुझे उसके बारे में बताते हुए अपार हर्ष है कि धरती आबा जनजाति ग्राम उत्कर्ष के अंतर्गत इस बजट में 80 हजार करोड़ रुपये का प्रावधान किया गया है। महोदय, 470 से ज्यादा एकलव्य मॉडल आवासीय विद्यालयों, जिनमें सवा लाख आदिवासी बच्चों को स्कूली शिक्षा दी जा रही है।

महोदय, किसान सम्मान निधि के रूप में एक धनराशि, जो एक निश्चित समय अंतराल पर किसानों को सहयोग राशि के तौर पर दी जाती है, उसे बढ़ाकर 41 हजार करोड़ रुपये किया जाना, एक बहुत महत्वपूर्ण कदम है। महोदय, चूँकि मैं गांव से आता हूँ, भारत गांवों का देश है, गांव में किसान रहते हैं, 'किसान सम्मान निधि योजना' के माध्यम से प्रत्येक चार महीने में जो राशि प्रधानमंत्री जी ने किसानों को देने का काम शुरू किया है, उसके लिए मैं बताना चाहता हूँ कि मैं अकसर देखता था कि जब किसान का खेती करने का समय आता था, तो मां बेटे से पूछती थी कि बेटा, बीज कब आएगा, खाद कब आएगी? पिताजी भी बेटे से पूछते थे, लेकिन बेटे के पास पैसा नहीं रहता था। वह मजबूरी में अपने खेत में फसल नहीं लगा पाता था। किसान मां और पिताजी, दोनों रोते थे। महोदय, वैसे किसानों की आंखों के आंसुओं को पोंछने का काम प्रधानमंत्री जी ने किया है। आज किसान सम्मानपूर्वक, सीना तानकर खेतों में फसल लगाने का काम कर रहा है। मुझे गर्व है कि देश आजाद होने के बाद हम लोग जिस प्रकार से गांव में कच्ची सड़कों पर चलते थे, कभी सड़क पर चल नहीं पाते थे, बरसात के मौसम में जब स्कूल जाते थे, तो कभी सड़क पर नहीं चल पाते थे, पगडंडियों पर चलते हुए, आरों में चलते हुए, जंगलों में चलते हुए 7 किलोमीटर की दूरी तय करके जब हाई स्कूल जाते थे, तो ऐसा लगता था कि हम सपने में भी पक्की सड़क देखने का काम नहीं करेंगे। लेकिन 'प्रधानमंत्री ग्राम सड़क योजना' के माध्यम से स्वर्गीय अटल जी ने इस कार्यक्रम को शुरू किया। उन्होंने सड़क बनाने की प्रथा शुरू की और झारखंड राज्य सौभाग्यशाली है कि अलग राज्य होने के बाद 2002 में, स्वर्गीय अटल बिहारी

वाजपेयी जी ने झारखंड राज्य के रांची जिले के दुबलिया गांव में इस योजना की शुरुआत की। हम लोग इस बात के गवाह हैं।

महोदय 25,000 बस्तियाँ, जो स्लम एरियाज हैं, जिनमें गरीब लोग रहते हैं, किसान रहते हैं, गांव का किसान सड़क के अभाव में सब्जी उपजाता था, खेती करता था, लेकिन बाजार नहीं पहुंच पाता था। वह साइकिल को धक्का देते-देते भरुआ में, बोझा में जाता था। दीदी लोग, मां लोग खांची में सब्जी लेकर बाजार जाती थीं, लेकिन वे या तो देर से बाजार पहुंचती थीं या पहुंच नहीं पाती थीं। यदि बाजार पहुंचती भी थीं, तो सब्जी बिकती नहीं थी। जब सब्जी नहीं बिकती थी, तो किसान वहाँ पर सब्जियाँ फेंककर चला आता था या बिचौलिया को औने-पोने दामों में बेचने का काम करता था। आज प्रधानमंत्री जी की देन है कि गांव का किसान सीना तानकर, सीना चौड़ा करके बाजार में जाता है और सम्मानपूर्वक सब्जी और जो भी खेती करता है, उसका उचित मूल्य लेने का काम करता है।

महोदय, मैं रेल पर बात करना चाहता हूँ। हम लोग सिनेमा में देखते थे, टीवी में देखते थे कि जिस प्रकार से वंदे भारत, अमृत भारत, नमो भारत ट्रेन्स चल रही हैं, हम लोगों ने उनको कभी सामने से देखा नहीं था, लेकिन वर्तमान में नरेन्द्र मोदी जी के नेतृत्व में और माननीय मंत्री जी, अश्विनी कुमार जी के सफल संचालन में इस प्रकार की ट्रेन्स चल रही हैं। महोदय 2004 से 14 के बीच, जब कांग्रेस की सरकार थी, उससे पहले अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी जी ने झारखंड राज्य में कोडरमा से हजारीबाग होते हुए, राँची तक एक रेल लाइन का शिलान्यास किया था। जब दस वर्षों तक कांग्रेस की सरकार चली, तब वे उस लाइन पर एक पत्थर का ढेला भी नहीं रख पाए। जब 2014 में भारत माँ के लाल देश के यशस्वी प्रधानमंत्री बने, तो सरपट रेल लाइन चली। आज वहाँ पर तेजी के साथ ट्रेनें चल रही हैं और देहात में, गांव में रहने वाली माताएं-बहनें, जंगलों में रहने वाली माताएं-बहनें दातुन, पत्ते तोड़कर शहर जाती हैं, सब्जी उगाकर शहर जाती हैं और सामान बेचकर हंसते हुए घर लौटने का काम करती हैं। ऐसे ही गरीब माता-पिता, किसानों का आशीर्वाद देश के यशस्वी प्रधान मंत्री और इस सरकार को प्राप्त है। महोदय, इस बजट के माध्यम से, मैं कहना चाहूँगा कि चूंकि मैं गांव से आता हूँ, मध्यम वर्ग के लोगों, किसान लोगों को जो टैक्स देना पड़ता था ...(समय की घंटी)...

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री घनश्याम तिवाड़ी): आदित्य प्रसाद जी, समाप्त करें।

श्री आदित्य प्रसाद: उन्हें 12 लाख की जो सब्सिडी दी गई है, लोग उसकी सराहना करने का काम कर रहे हैं।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री घनश्याम तिवाड़ी): आपका भाषण समाप्त हुआ।

श्री आदित्य प्रसाद: महोदय, एक मिनट और दीजिए।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री घनश्याम तिवाड़ी): नहीं, आपका भाषण समाप्त हुआ।

श्री आदित्य प्रसाद: गाँव का गरीब व्यक्ति पैसे के अभाव में ...(व्यवधान)...

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री घनश्याम तिवाड़ी): श्री रामभाई हरजीभाई मोकरिया। आपका भाषण समाप्त हुआ। ...(समय की घंटी)...

श्री आदित्य प्रसाद: बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद।

श्री रामभाई हरजीभाई मोकरिया (गुजरात): माननीय उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, मैं इस सदन में बजट के समर्थन में बोलने के लिए खड़ा हुआ हूँ। सबसे पहले, मैं दिल्ली की भव्य जीत के लिए माननीय नरेन्द्र मोदी साहब को धन्यवाद देना चाहता हूँ। साथ-ही-साथ, हमारे नड्डा जी को भी धन्यवाद देता हूँ कि काफी समय के बाद दिल्ली में बीजेपी का शासन आया है और बीजेपी के समर्पित कार्यकर्ता को भी धन्यवाद देता हूँ कि उन्होंने पार्टी के लिए अच्छा काम किया है। साथ-ही-साथ, मैं दिल्ली के मतदाताओं को भी धन्यवाद देना चाहता हूँ कि हमारी सौ साल पुरानी पार्टी की हैट्रिक लगवा दी और एक बार नहीं, बल्कि तीन-तीन बार जीरो देकर घर बिठा दिया। इससे बड़ा सौभाग्य क्या हो सकता है! ...(व्यवधान)... आप मेरी बात सुनिए। मैं आपकी बात सुनता हूँ। यह सर्वांगीण विकास का बजट है। यह बजट गरीब, महिला, किसान और युवा को लक्ष्य में रखकर बनाया गया है। इस बजट में लेदर इंडस्ट्री, खिलौना उद्योग पर विशेष भार देकर, मेक इन इंडिया पर भार दिया गया है। इस बजट में डिजिटल इंडिया पर विशेष भार दिया गया है। देश भर में 5G और एआई उद्योग को बढ़ावा दिया जाएगा। इसके लिए बजट में प्रावधान किया गया है।

महोदय, इस बजट में शिक्षा, कौशल और आरोग्य के लिए भी विशेष प्रावधान हैं। आयुष्मान भारत योजना का आरोग्य बीमा कवच पाँच लाख से बढ़ाकर दस लाख करने को लेकर कहा है, जिससे प्रत्येक समाज को लाभ मिलेगा। इसके साथ ही, प्रत्येक जिला स्तर पर उपचार केंद्र स्थापित करने की घोषणा की गई है। कैंसर और असाध्य रोगों के उपचार के लिए प्रत्येक जिला स्तर के अस्पताल में डे केयर कैंसर सेंटर प्रतिस्थापित किए जाएंगे।

इस बजट में शिक्षा पर भार देते हुए नई शिक्षा नीति को बढ़ावा दिया गया है। ग्रामीण स्तर पर सौ नए स्मार्ट रूम बनाने जा रहे हैं। सरकारी शाला में पढ़ने वाले बच्चों में वैज्ञानिक सोच को बढ़ावा देने के लिए 50,000 स्कूलों में अटल टिकरिंग प्रयोगशाला स्थापित होंगी। प्रत्येक जिले में एक मेडिकल कॉलेज स्थापित होगा, जिसके कारण 75,000 मेडिकल सीटों को बढ़ावा मिलेगा। युवाओं को मेडिकल अभ्यास के लिए विदेश या अन्य स्टेट में नहीं जाना पड़ेगा। देश भर में 500 नए आईटीआईज़ प्रतिस्थापित होंगे, जिसके कारण युवाओं में कौशल शक्ति बढ़ेगी। युवाओं को डिजिटल नौकरियाँ उपलब्ध होंगी।

सर, मोदी जी के शासन में कई साल से 80 करोड़ लोगों को मुफ्त अनाज मिल रहा है। यह तो मोदी सरकार दे रही है। हमारे opposition वाले खुद तो गरीब लोगों कुछ नहीं दे पाए और अब इसमें भी विरोध कर रहे हैं। यह गलत बात है। नागरिकों को मुफ्त अनाज मिल रहा है, वह भी मोदी साहब के हिसाब से मिल रहा है। चार करोड़ गरीबों को प्रधान मंत्री आवास योजना का लाभ मिल गया है। 12 करोड़ परिवारों को टॉयलेट मिला है। 55 करोड़ लोगों के जन धन खाते खोले गए हैं। 50 करोड़ लोगों को बीमा कवच से जोड़ा गया है। अभी नई बात यह आई है कि चाहे कोई अमीर

हो, गरीब हो, पिछड़ा हो, अगड़ा हो, 70 साल की उम्र से ऊपर वाले सभी लोगों को मुफ्त इलाज मिलने वाला है।

4.00 P.M.

यह भारत देश में सबसे बड़ी उपलब्धि है। फॉरेन में कहीं भी ऐसा सिस्टम नहीं है, लेकिन यह सिस्टम मोदी साहब द्वारा अमल में लाया गया है। इसके लिए मैं मोदी साहब को धन्यवाद देता हूँ।

महोदय, यह बजट समावेशी है, परंतु समय के साथ चलते हुए बजट का समर्थन करते हुए, विकसित भारत के लिए घोषित किए गए इस बजट के लिए मैं अपने हृदय से माननीय मोदी जी और वित्त मंत्री निर्मला सीतारमण दीदी को धन्यवाद देते हुए अपनी वाणी को विराम देता हूँ।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI GHANSHYAM TIWARI): Hon. Minister of Finance to reply to the discussion. Now, hon. Finance Minister.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE; AND THE MINISTER OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I guess, more than 90 speakers have participated and I thank them. The last count when I entered this House was 88. Now, I think, subsequently, four or five more have been added. More than 90 speakers have participated in this debate. And, I am grateful that they have spoken so much in detail about the various provisions made in the Budget. I will try to answer most of their concerns, questions, seeking clarification by grouping the questions and concerns raised to broadly about 16 different categories. They have been grouped and I will try to speak about them.

At the very beginning, I would want to underline the fact that this Budget has been made during a very difficult time. The challenges, particularly the external challenges, are very, very severe, most of which are beyond even any projections or predictions. There are no models that you can build and understand how the trends will be because they are very dynamic and they are changing by the day. So, it is very difficult to reasonably plan up for a Budget. But despite that, we have tried keeping the assessments as close as possible to what can develop keeping India's interest top-most. This immense uncertainty is still playing out and many Indian imports which are very critical for our economy to grow are also going to be left with uncertainty. We are trying to make sure that the Budget somewhat, at least, foresees all these and is ready for such eventualities. But, even as we say about these things, the Budget has very clearly identified the difficulties that are before us. Of course, all these years, possibly even decades, we have been talking about globalization; now, we are facing a situation of fragmentation of the world. The post-Covid times has made States to

borrow, not just Indian States but countries to borrow to meet with specific difficulties that they have to face and also hand-hold people, and at the same time, give growth impetus. It has led to a situation where countries are borrowing, and rising debt is a problem whereas fiscal prudence has always been the matter which gets advocated. People tell that economies will have to be managed more fiscally, prudent-wise. Globalization *versus* fragmentation, which is a reality; fiscal prudence *versus* growing global debt, which is a reality, and, everybody wants to have free market situation but you have aggressive tariff barriers and non-tariff barriers. You are facing a world where a lot of talk goes on about to keep the markets free, but no one country wants to have free market when it comes to their interest. With all this, the usual practice would be that you will approach multinational institutions to seek redressal or to seek handholding. Multilateral forums have also become today very diluted. They seem to be there but not really exerting themselves even with the given framework of things. Bilateral partnerships and regional forums are the ones which are really governing the situation. So, much contrary to all those principles with which the world has moved in terms of an economic order is all going through a major change.

So, the uncertainties can be defined in some terms, but you really cannot predict what moves. In this situation, the first advanced estimates from the NSO has said that India's economy will grow by 6.4 per cent in real terms and about 9.7 per cent in nominal terms. In the Budget this year, we have kept our goals in such a way that we are able to accelerate growth, secure inclusive development, invigorate private sector investments, uplift household sentiments and also directly or indirectly, to enhance spending power of the Indian rising middle class. In all this, we have seen that there are four groups of people that if you touch and serve, the impact will be across the country--*gareeb*, youth, *annadata* and *naari*. Therefore, every scheme that we have before us, has something to bring in terms of benefits for these four large groups.

Sir, I want to take a minute to put it before this august House. When we are talking about capital expenditure--because I have heard quite a few Members speaking about how capital expenditure is probably coming down, the shift is now from moving away from capital expenditure to boosting consumption--I just want to highlight the thought about or the idea of effective capital expenditure. What it does include is core capital outlays in the Union Budget and also the grants-in-aid for creation of capital assets to the States. Though the grants-in-aid for creation of capital assets is accounted as revenue expenditure in the books of the Union Government, yet they go to the States to create capital assets and, therefore, they are also effectively, eventually, only capital expenditure. In the Budget, 2025-26,

which is before us, the effective capital expenditure is projected at Rs. 15.48 lakh crore as against Rs. 13.18 lakh crore in the RE of 2024-25. So there is just no reduction in capital expenditure. But even more, if we take this together with what is done by the public enterprises, they are independent of the Budget, they do their own. But they also account for the capital expenditure. If we were to take that also on board, we take that public enterprises raise from their own resources when they invest money for capital expenditure, they do it substantially. So, if I were to include that for the year 2025-26, the capital outlay which I would define as effective capital expenditure, is likely to be in the range of Rs.19.80 lakh crores. On the concern expressed by some Members, which I take up in detail a bit later, but right upfront saying, "Have sectors been denied money? Have some sectors received lesser than what they received last year?", I just want to assure the House in terms of the numbers that have been presented in the Budget and restate them. Sectoral outlays for 2025-26 - agriculture and allied activities, Rs.1.71 lakh crores; Rural development, Rs.2.67 lakh crores. These are already given in the Budget. It is before us. Urban development and transport, Rs.6.45 lakh crores; health and education, Rs.2.27 lakh crores and defence spending excluding defence pension is Rs.4.92 lakh crores. So we have not cut down on any sectoral allocations. The total resources being transferred to the States in 2025-26 is Rs.25.01 lakh crores. Resources being transferred to the States show an increase of Rs.4.92 lakh crores over the actuals of 2023-24. So, the portion which has to go to the States is also not cut down. On the contrary, substantial increase has been made in them. I have spoken specifically about capital expenditure and also sectoral allocations. Because this is the Upper House, where very experienced Members coming from various walks of life are here and Members, who have been in Governments, are here, I want to highlight a feature of Budget-making in the last four-five years, which speak for themselves.

Just two examples for each of the years, which is very important considering that Members would be eager to know as to how public finance is being managed. Sir, I begin with a contrast, not so much for talking about whose period it was, whether it is my period or your period. But when crisis hit countries, when crisis will have to be managed and when managing crisis, you will have to adopt some methods and post that the revival, in that sense, I would like to just compare between the global financial crisis as opposed to the crisis of Covid-19, when Indian Government's attempt resulted that India became Fragile Five whereas after Covid, the attempt that has been made with targeted support to people who needed help, has lifted India from the position where it was in Fragile Five post Covid from where it was to where we are today, on the top five economies. So, the measures that have been taken are

not attributable to one Budget itself. It has been sustained over several budgets since 2020. I want to highlight some features about that from each of them. For instance, in 2020-21, Budget reveals recurrent themes. From then, it reveals recurring themes of transparency to foster credibility of Budget making, reforms to capitalize growth, targeted social security and use of technology for obtaining value for public money. I think it is a very appreciable point. Today, all over the country, concern about how effectively the taxpayers' rupee is being spent, is widely heard. You hear from different sections of the society talking about taxpayers' money, which is a right concern citizens should have. I just want to highlight that in 2020-2021 Budget, we brought in the element of transparency and strengthening cooperative federalism. How did we do it! We took a big step of bringing on board FCI, the Food Corporation of India's off-budget borrowing of about Rs.1.2 lakh crores onto the Budget. We said, 'Yes, it might hit us from the point of view of fiscal deficit, but we will have to do it, bring in credibility to the budget making and transparency.' We also strengthened the partnership with the States. It is that year that not because Finance Commission has recommended it, not at all, but we brought in a 50-year interest-free capital assistance to the States, which was not on the basis of a recommendation which the Finance Commission gave. But we started the process then, and when we started it, we just extended Rs.12,000 crores to the States saying, 'For 50 years, you take it. No interest to pay. You can go ahead with what you want to do in terms of capital expenses.' All States! All states, no State left out in that. And, that Rs.12,000 crores of 2020-21, today for this year, has reached Rs.1,50,000 crores. Fifty year interest free! Budget for this year gives Rs.1,50,000 crores for States. They can choose the projects they want to do and complete it as set building. So, that has been started from 2020-21 and every year some amount has been growing and it has reached this level today. In 2021-22, again, fiscal transparency and technology adoption was taken up for the Budget making. We regularized long pending, outstanding dues. And, this is very interesting, Sir. And I am sure the House will appreciate this point that we regularized long pending outstanding dues amounting to over Rs.81,000 crores payable to the States under devolution of Central taxes for the period. So, I was astonished when I started working on it. But I am glad to say that we resolved it. Rs.81,000 crores, for the period, beginning 1996-97 and till 2017-18, we had to do the calculations to make sure every State, of this due of Rs.81,000 crores, which has been pending over decades, is given that money back. We did that in 2021.

Hon. Prime Minister has been Chief Minister of a State. He knew the difficulties of States and he said, 'Please, sit and clear this up. I don't want this waiting. It has been waiting since 1997. Clear it.' Sir, we had cleared Rs. 81,000 crores in the year

2021-22. I am very happy that we had sorted that out after consultations with States. I told you, previous year, we took on-board the Food Corporation of India's amounts which were off-budget borrowings. This year, after having given States their dues pending from 1996-97, we took on-board the off-budget borrowings of urban housing of the Ministry of Urban Development. Sir, Rs. 33,000 crores, which were off-budget borrowings, was brought back onto the Budget. It means, we have taken the responsibility to address this. And, we also prepaid it. I would like to highlight the fact that clearing debt prior to its due time has also been methodically taken up in each one of our Budget exercises. That was done in 2021-22. And, the third step is use of technology. We used technology so that States and Centre will be clear as to where money lies, they can see flow of money and see where the treasury is receiving money for which project and, therefore, go ahead with State's contribution and build that. So, there is a single nodal agency for timely release of money, with technology driven, so that everybody knows where the money lies. It was brought in 2021-22. It has actually reformed. There are later instances which I will explain about how that has helped us to see where money is lying idle and, therefore, to that extent, borrow less and pay less interest. So, it has helped in fiscal management.

In 2022-23, debt consolidation was given a big priority. Strengthening States' liquidity position has been a big priority. I will just give an example. Hon. Railway Minister is just sitting next to me. We have commenced complete financing of the capital outlays of Railways and Highways from the Union Budget. So, this has lowered the cost of borrowings for Railways for their projects and, as a result, today, we are able to speedily fund their capital investments. We also advanced -- this will be very much in favour of the States -- the devolution date. Every month tax is devolved to the States. For years, it had been done on 20th of the month. We said, 'Why should it go in the middle of the month? Why can't it be paid earlier?' So, we moved the date from 20th of the month to 10th of the month itself so that States can get it earlier. That was done so that the cash position in the States can be improved.

Sir, we also did one more thing for the Budget. Every year you have your Budget Estimates given during the Budget presentation and in the middle of the year suddenly one programme loses enough money and they say, 'We need more. So, will you raise it in the Supplementary Demands for Grants?' Well; there was a practise all the while to have three times Supplementary Demands. So it had two implications -- one, your estimates were going for a toss or your estimate itself was not based on the data which you get from the ground. And, therefore, we wanted to streamline that and from that year, 2022-23, we brought in a fairly clear system of having Supplementary Demands, but only twice in a year, so that you are able to bring in a

BE which is far more realistic rather than go along the year and keep adding Supplementary Demands. So, we have brought in that kind of a discipline for ourselves much more than for anybody and that is paying adequate rewards.

Last year, 2023-24, we made sure the taxpayers get a relief. So, the new tax regime was brought in and we made it as the default regime, so that unless a person wants exemption, he will be part of the New Tax Regime. But, if he states that he wants to be in the old, he can still be in the old, if he thinks he is better off in that. So, we have brought that in and we also raised the tax limit; meaning, up to Rs. 7 lakhs income, you don't pay tax at all in that year. It means, marginal relief being given to the taxpayer. That an individual doesn't need to pay tax up to Rs. 7.27 lakhs was brought in 2023-24. Of course, this year, we have gone up to the level of Rs. 12 lakhs.

So, 2023-24 also saw a special scheme for women, Mahila Samman Bachat Patra. We brought it in 2023-24 with very high interest for them, so that they benefit out of that money. We also doubled deposit limits in senior citizens savings schemes and monthly income schemes. So, that way, we were continuously bringing changes. And if I come to the current Budget, Sir, you will see the trend is continuing; that is, the new instrument of service limits in 2024-25 Budget, the July Budget, means, Ministries will be given higher limits up to which they can spend. This has been recommended by the PAC. We also consulted the CAG and we brought it so that Departments will have greater flexibility in spending more rather than for small amounts coming and seeking appropriation from the Supplementary Demands. So, that has given more facility, more freedom for the Departments to spend when they have an issue of a priority spending area. This is the fourth time since independence that such a review has been undertaken and we have brought it in this year in 2024-25.

Similarly, one other major reform that we have brought in was that short-term T-Bill borrowings have been drastically reduced. This has contributed for greater liquidity in the markets and financial system so that private borrowers do not suffer. The Government does not get into the market and crowd them out. That situation shall not occur because we have now chosen to have short-term T-Bill borrowings drastically cut down. We also did a buyback of G-Sec for about Rs. 88,000 crores. This one single step has resulted in interest saving of about Rs. 5,000 crores, apart from infusing liquidity in the system. So, other than what we do through the schemes, other than what we give through devolution, for managing the taxpayers' rupee far more efficiently, these are the steps that we have taken and repeatedly proving to the taxpayer that paying the tax truly is going for nation building. So, we have also, in the

July Budget, shown very clearly that we will have a debt consolidation pathway, and that pathway will enable our Government debt to be brought down closer to 50 per cent of our GDP from nearly 58 per cent, where it is now 50 per cent plus minus 1 per cent, by 31st March, 2031. That has been explained in the Budget document of last July Budget.

Sir, again, if that is the trend through the Budget-making and the effective use of taxpayers' money, questions were raised if the fiscal consolidation has been at the cost of spending. I think, in the brief opening remarks itself, I explained how there has not been any reduction in the money being given to the social sector. It actually balances available money wherever it is available effectively, and that is not cut down. But if questions are being put about that we are giving lesser now, whereas the project demands more, I broadly highlight the fact that the cost technology is now available for both the Centre and the States. You can see where the money is lying unutilised. And, if that money is utilised, bills are raised, we shall immediately fund the money to the States. Now, whether it is lying in the treasury, whether it is lying in the SNA account, which is for a particular scheme, money is lying and big amounts are lying in various big schemes across States. I am not pointing out for one State or another State or a third State, but money is lying there. It is the money given, and many times borrowed money. If it is lying there, am I expected to borrow more money and put it in there and keep in the interest or is it better that you use the money and, post that, I can borrow timely and give it to you? Or, if I have the comfort of my revenue, I can even give it. But that which is lying 'unutilized' today is available for the Governments wherever they are, State or the Centre, to see and to use it much before demands are made for additional resources. I wouldn't get into reading how much is lying where. It is part of the Budget set of documents. You can see it in the Budget document which is available and it is in the 'Annexure Statement 4AA.' So any hon. Member can see where in which Scheme, the money is lying within their State and use it far more effectively; and that would only make efficiency far more for the taxpayers' money.

Sir, I have already said about the money which is going to the Schemes. So I wouldn't take more of the House's time. About growth challenges, I understand two hon. Members have spoken about it. I think Sulata Deoji from BJD and also hon. Member, Kapil Sibalji, spoke about it. It is a matter of fact, as I said earlier, that there are challenges. There is no doubt about the challenges that not just India but every country is facing. For India, in particular, to explain why the Quarter Four growth was low and why we think it is manageable in the forthcoming quarters is because of the adverse weather conditions which prevailed during the year. Excess rainfall in some

States, drought in some others, and also due to model Code of Conduct because of the Lok Sabha elections, most Departments could not spend their money in time. As a result, the multiplier was not as much as you would calculate when you spend on your capital expenditure.

Sir, the former Finance Minister, Shri P. Chidambaram, has raised quite a few issues and I have answers for all of them, answers based on data. I understand he has also communicated with me through a letter that he is unfortunately not going to be in the House today for unavoidable reasons and I appreciate him communicating, saying that 'he is not going to be in the House.' But, nevertheless, because they are very important points, I will try to give answers for them. Talking of unemployment ...

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री घनश्याम तिवाड़ी): वैसे यह आपकी उदारता है। संसदीय परम्पराओं में यह है कि जो बोल कर चले जाएं और उपस्थित न हों, तो उनका जवाब देना आवश्यक नहीं होता है। अगर आप उदारतापूर्वक जवाब दे रही हैं, तो धन्यवाद।

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Because उन्होंने मुझे information भी दी थी।

श्री जयराम रमेश: सर, मंत्री जी को जानकारी दी थी।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री घनश्याम तिवाड़ी): जी, धन्यवाद। ठीक है।

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: I have conceded that. Sir, he had asked a question saying, the PLFS data has been released. The PLFS has said that unemployment rate is 3.2 per cent. The same PLFS says, youth unemployment is 10.2 per cent, and the same PLFS says, unemployment among graduates is 13 per cent. So his question was: Then how does PLFS conclude that unemployment rate is 3.2 per cent? I have a bit of a discomfort, Sir, in that. It will be untypical of me to answer the way I am answering it but I will do it with due deference. The blunt point is, there are subsets and the lot are different lots. They don't sum up to become the average which will have to be something else. You are comparing apples with oranges and then clubbing all the three and say, 'How come it is 3.2 per cent!' The former Finance Minister, I am sure, -- and I want to say this on record -- is aware of it, but he still threw that question at me. With due respects, I want to tell him that 3.2 is the overall unemployment rate for the entire population, whereas when you are talking of youth, it is a subset within which they are calculating the total. We need to improve in each one of them; there is no doubt about that. But to think that these did not add up to give a mean average is wrong. They are different sets. So, I leave it

there. I would think, 'Oh! I am surprised to hear that from the former Finance Minister.' I am not saying that, but yes, it surprises me.

Sir, he also raised a question. What is the difference between the new employment generation scheme and the PM Employment Generation scheme, that is, PMEGP? Again, they are definitely different. Why are they different? The new Employment Generation Scheme, which was announced in the July Budget, had three different schemes within it. There is one which will take care of first-time job seekers. There is a particular scheme, a particular provision, which has been given for them. It says that the first-time job seeker would be given a certain amount the moment he is taken in, and so on. There is scheme 'B' within that set of three, which is job creation in manufacturing, where we incentivize for the employer additional employment that he will bring either of a first-timer, or of somebody who is moving from one job to another. So this is linked to employment, and first-time employees are given that kind of attention much more. An incentive will be provided at specified scale directly to both the employee and the employer through the EPFO route. So, it is registered, it is transparent, everyone can see how much is going to which employer and for which employee that he brought in additionally. And, that scheme will last for four years. So, for four years, if the same employee continues with the new employing company and the employer, the incentive keeps flowing. So, that is the second one. And the third one is to support employers where all additional employment within a salary limit of one lakh rupees per month will be counted and the Government will reimburse employers up to 3,000 rupees per month for two years towards their EPFO contribution for each additional employee. So, the new Employment Generation Scheme had these three distinct employment generating schemes, whereas the PM Employment Generation Program, PMEGP, is one of the flagship programs of the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises, MSME. It assists prospective entrepreneurs in setting up new micro enterprises, particularly in the non-farm sector, for generating employment by providing margin money and subsidy to the bank loan. So, the character, the nature, the purpose and the method of PMEGP is this and, in the PM's new scheme of employment, there are three distinct components. So, as a basket, the three distinct components versus the PM Employment Guarantee Programme are totally two different things. So, the difference between the two is what came as a question. This is what I would like to give us as the answer.

Sir, there was also this question about high inflation, food inflation, which was asked by several Members, former Finance Minister and others who joined in. Now, as per the data released yesterday, the CPI inflation for January '25 fell to 4.31 per cent from 5.22 per cent. This is now closer to the lower end of RBI's inflation target,

which is in the range of 4 per cent; so, the steep correction, particularly in tomato, onion, and potato prices, the three key components in the CPI food basket. And additionally, there is a decline in pulses inflation supported by tariff-free imports. For the pulses that we don't produce adequately for our consumption, we import, but we made a conscious policy of removing the tariff when the import comes in so that we don't add to the price of the landed pulses. So, as per the RBI's report on 7th February, CPI inflation for 2025-26 is projected to be lower, at 4.2 per cent only.

So, food inflation gets triggered when you have an adverse weather condition. Supply chain disruptions are being managed by a Group of Ministers, who is ensuring that timely import happens if there is a shortfall in the supply. So, as a result, I think, with advanced estimates on agricultural production 2024-25 being what it is, foodgrain production is expected to be at 5.7 per cent. So, the production of rice and toor dal is expected to increase by 5.9 per cent and 2.5 per cent respectively compared to 2023-24. So, the prices of food will be well under the inflation radar as per the advanced estimates which we are getting. But despite that, the Group of Ministers will be monitoring it. So, what did this Budget do, the current Budget, which is waiting for clearance? In 100 districts, where agricultural productivity is really low, we have come up with a scheme called PM Dhan Dhanya Krishi Yojana so that agri-activities are given impetus, productivity is increased and more produce come into the market. Many other things are also added in it. There will be *Atma Nirbharta* for pulses as we grow as much and all variety of pulses that we consume in this country. Then there is a comprehensive programme for vegetables and fruits so that supply remains abundant. A National Mission for High-Yielding Seeds is also brought in so that production of high-yielding seeds will result in greater agricultural produce in the market. I have expanded and explained about how Government attempts to get subsidised dal, subsidised rice, subsidised atta into the market in the name of Bharat Chana Dal, Bharat Atta, etc. I just want to say how much is already sold in the market and how that selling is going to help because if you look between the Phase-1 and Phase-2, 13.8 lakh tonnes of Bharat Chana Dal, 16.0 lakh tonnes of Bharat Atta, 15.3 lakh tonnes of rice are already sold; so does chana whole, moong dal and so on. So, it is clear that Government's attempt to remove the stress of price rise is actually being received in the ground. The efforts will continue. We shall make sure that price would not be a burden on the ordinary citizens. We shall support this subsidised atta, wheat and rice and channa dal and so on. As far as inflation management is concerned, I think, we have made sure that we are addressing the problem. I am not getting into a comparison game because by now it is very clear who manages inflation a lot more in time and who does not. The depreciation of the rupee was also something which very many Members spoke about. I want to spend a minute on it.

Many of the Members are still here who have been talking about it. The value of the Indian rupee is influenced by several factors and I am sure hon. Members know about it. Those factors are the movement of the dollars, the index of the dollar, trends in capital flows, level of interest rates, movement in crude prices, Current Account Deficit and so on. Quarter four of 2024 certainly witnessed extensive currency-related volatility across major countries, not just India. So, Indian rupee, like other Asian currencies, depreciated against the US dollar on account of uncertainty pervading the global macro economy. US dollar index rose to 6.5 per cent during October 21, 2024 to January 27, 2025.

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

Major Asian currencies such as the Korean won, Indonesian rupiah and Malaysian ringgit depreciated by 8.1 per cent, 6.4 per cent and 5.9 per cent respectively. G-10 currencies also depreciated during this period by more than 5.5 per cent. For instance, the Japanese yen, British pound and euro depreciated by 7.0 per cent, 6.6 per cent and 5.8 per cent respectively. So, we believe overvalued currencies erode national competitiveness as exports become expensive and domestic companies will have to be given support. So, I would like to allay the concerns or apprehensions of the hon. Members on account of INR fluctuation. The Government and the RBI will continue to exercise necessary vigil. The RBI's efforts in making sure that the Indian rupee is stabilised are several. I would not want to take the time of the House on it, but these are details which I lay on the Table. Any hon. Member, who wants to see it, can go into the details of how the RBI is constantly keeping a watch on the volatility of Indian Rupee.

There was an interesting question raised by the former Finance Minister regarding reduction of External Affairs budget. In fact, he started his debate participation by talking about that at the outset. It made me feel why he would want to start talking on the External Affairs rather than talking about many other Finance Ministry related specifics. But he wanted to ask about the reduction on External Affairs budget. "Are we reducing India's global presence?", was his question. I was a bit surprised by this. The total expenditure of the Ministry of External Affairs in 2023-2024 was about Rs.28,914 crores. It included Rs.8,193 crores for payment to the Exim Bank. And why would it include payment to the Exim Bank! It is because the Exim Bank was almost compelled towards invoking guarantees against doubtful debts. The Exim Bank supports a lot of activity overseas, and in the instance of the payments not coming in time, they will have to invoke guarantee. So, that guarantee being invoked by Exim Bank will have to be filled up by the Government and, therefore, Rs.8,193 crore was given in the year 2023-2024. That thankfully did not

have to be given again. So, to that extent, the amount has come down. That does not mean, the External Affairs budget has come down, but that unique situation, not very fortunate but a unique situation, which arose where guarantees being invoked had to be supported because of bad debts outside, or, it could be a line of credit given to some country which is in distress, or some other issue, that does not get repeated. So, to that extent, this year's allocation to the Ministry of External Affairs does not include that amount. So, the 2024-2025 External Affairs Budget is about Rs.25,277 crores, which also includes Rs.4,383 crore for payment to the Exim Bank towards guarantees invoked against doubtful debts. In 2023-2024, we had it; in 2024-2025, we had it, but the year 2024-2025 had half of what was given earlier. In place of Rs.8,100 crore, it was Rs.4,300 crore. As a result, if the amount provided for payment to the Exim Bank towards guarantees invoked against doubtful debt is excluded, the core expenditure or budgetary provision of the MEA in 2023-2024 and R.E. 2024-2025 is Rs.20,721 crore and Rs.20,984 crore respectively. So, there is no reduction for the MEA. And, just as a matter of detail, the total amount received from the Government of India during 2022-2023 to 2023-2024 was aggregated, as I said, to Rs.8,191 crore. Of the above Rs.8,000 odd crores, an amount aggregating to Rs.7,160 crore, that is 87 per cent of it, pertains to the LOCs extended prior to May 2014. You had extended it at that time. Sir, you are a Hindi scholar. I do not want to risk my Hindi. We are *bhukt bhogi* of what happened prior to May, 2014.

Many hon. Members raised the question about food subsidy. The provision made under food subsidy 2025-26 is realistic and it factors into the reduced cost on account of the gains accruing from equity infusion made by the Government of India for Food Corporation of India. An amount of Rs. 11,000 crores was infused into the FCI in 2023-24. The provision reflects that and rationalizes to that extent. So, this has helped actually in reduced short-term borrowing. This has to be kept in mind. So, the infusion has helped.

With regard to fertilizers subsidy, in 2024-25, Rs. 1.64 lakh crores was given. It has been increased to Rs. 1.68 lakh crore for 2025-26. So, we have not reduced it. No! Let us also recall that in the *purvanchal* area, three urea factories, which were lying idle, have been revived under the *Purvodaya* scheme, a big scheme which the hon. Prime Minister believes in and wants to revive the eastern region. These three of them are in the eastern region. Now, to add further, this Budget has restored Namrup in Assam so that 12.7 lakh metric tons of urea can be produced. It can also add to the urea availability and reduction in the imports. So, these are steps taken one-by-one with a conscious attempt to make sure that the eastern region can grow and grow well.

Sir, I am not sure if these questions, which have been raised by many hon. Members have not been answered with facts earlier. Maybe they were answered earlier, but I would like to just highlight some of the issues. Many questions have been repeatedly asked, like, is it a Bihar Bonanza Budget, is it a Budget only for one State, and does it mean that no other State gets anything, and I have been answering these questions. So, I just want to highlight some points. There has also been the allegation that we have not consulted the States before making this Budget. It is not true at all, Sir. Every year, before the Budget is made, all Finance Ministers from the States spend a whole day talking about what are the State's priorities. We listen to them patiently and also include them in our Budget-making process. I have already expanded on the point that 1.5 lakh crore of rupees is the amount that we have now made provision for the capital assets for States.

With regard to regional imbalances and infrastructure gaps, PM Gati Shakti actually tells you about the gaps in the infrastructure programmes. As a result, we are able to fund them better, and, accordingly, the regional imbalances are being addressed. Sir, I have already said that Rs. 25.01 lakh crores is what is being projected to be given in the year 2025-26. So, allegations that the Budget is for Bihar or only the BJP-ruled States are just unfounded. I want to dispel this thought from the minds of hon. Members. I will give you the details.

Let us first take the example of Punjab. Shri Nitin Gadkari has informed the Rajya Sabha in December, 2024 that 38 National Highway projects were sanctioned in the last three years in Punjab for the development of 825 kilometers of roads, amounting to Rs. 22,160 crore. It is only for Punjab. As far as Telangana is concerned, Kakatiya Mega Textile Park in Warangal was announced as PM Mitra Mega Textile Park. In August 2024, the Union Cabinet approved industrial node in Zahirabad under the National Industrial Corridor Development Program. These are the two major big ticket items being done for Telangana. ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, in Jharkhand, Sir,...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please. Please. ...*(Interruptions)*... Renuka ji, please sit down. It is not going on record. ...*(Interruptions)*... Renuka ji, please. It is not permitted.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, let us hear the hon. Member. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Hon. Minister, please continue. ...*(Interruptions)*... प्लीज़, प्लीज़। ...*(व्यवधान)*... बीच में बिना चेयर की अनुमति के न बोलें, प्लीज़। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: What is that question, Sir? I am quite willing to answer. Let me hear it, Sir. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY (Telangana): Nothing has been given as yet.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is related to the Reorganisation Act compensation.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, on the AP Reorganization Act and what has been given to Telangana, as much as I am sure, the other side of the AP Reorganization Act will immediately get up and ask, "What have you given to us"? I am willing to answer every question on that. As to what has been given, in particular for Telangana, in the AP Reorganization Act, I am willing to spend a few minutes on it. I would probably now, or a bit later mention, and probably I will say this one line at the beginning, whether it is this party or that party, it doesn't matter. I am talking on behalf of the State Telangana, people of Telangana, as much as all of us want to talk. At the time of reorganization, post the Reorganization Act getting passed, Telangana was revenue surplus. Today, I am sorry to say —I am not picking on any one State; every State has its issues -- that Telangana is in debt, despite the measures taken by the Central Government. I will read this out, and I am not blaming this party or that party, I repeat. But AP Reorganization Act, and to that extent what Telangana should get, I will say point by point, some of which I will say with your permission, Sir. I mentioned about Kakatiya Mega Textile Park, Zaheerabad as a corridor nodal point. Then, Sammakka Sarakka Central Tribal University, is a part of the Reorganization Act. The foundation stone also has been laid for AIIMS in Bibinagar Nagar, close to Warangal. On roadways, 2,605 kilometers of national highway has been constructed in Telangana since 2014, after the AP Reorganization Act. Four greenfield corridors are being built under Bharatmala project in Telangana. About railways, record railway budget allocation of Rs. 5,337 crores has been made. Since June 2024, Union Cabinet approved new lines between Errupalem and Namburu, and between Malkangiri and Pandurangapuram. Around 753 km of new tracks have been constructed in Telangana since 2014. Five Vande Bharat trains have been introduced and started from Telangana. ...*(Interruptions)*...

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

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Forty railway stations are being redeveloped for Telangana. On Social infrastructure, over 2 lakh houses have been built and completed under PM Awas Yoajna - Urban. Around 31 lakh household toilets have

been constructed under Swachh Bharat Mission. Around 38 lakh tap water connections have been provided under Jal Jeevan Mission in Telangana. 82 lakh Ayushman cards have been provided. 199 Jan Aushadhi Kendras have been operationalized. Around 1.2 lakh Jan Dhan accounts have been opened. Over 75 lakh Mudra accounts have been sanctioned. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let the hon. Finance Minister conclude her speech. ..*(Interruptions)*.. No, please. It is not an open discussion. ...*(Interruptions)*... Reddy *saheb*, please take your seat. You are a very senior Member. ...*(Interruptions)*... She has replied in detail. ...*(Interruptions)*... बहुत विस्तार से माननीया फाइनेंस मिनिस्टर ने जवाब दिया है। ...*(व्यवधान)*... No further discussion. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let her speak. सिर्फ आपकी ही बात रिकॉर्ड पर जाएगी। आप बोलिए।

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, I have added one more. ...*(Interruptions)*... I would like to add one more. As per the AP Reorganisation Act, for nine backward districts of Telangana, we have provided Rs.50 crore for each district which is Rs.450 crore in six installments. We have provided Rs. 2,700 crore for the Backward District Development for nine districts. All are in Telangana. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let the hon. Finance Minister continue.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, Dr. Laxman from Telangana is right in saying that. I forgot it. Shrimati Indira Gandhi had contested from Medak constituency. She won from Medak. She represented that constituency. But who has given the first railway station for Medak? Prime Minister Modi. ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, Telangana throbs for Ramagundam. It is very important. Who has helped revive that Ramagundam for Telangana? Prime Minister Modi. ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, the capacity of Ramagundam after its revival is 12.7 lakh metric tonne. ...*(Interruptions)*... This is for record. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. ...*(Interruptions)*... No. ...*(Interruptions)*... She has replied in detail. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Sir, ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am not allowing you, Madam. You are a very senior Member. ...(*Interruptions*)... Please take your seat. ...(*Interruptions*)... No. ...(*Interruptions*)... आप सभी बैठिए। ...(**व्यवधान**)...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, no State has been ignored under Prime Minister Modi. ...(*Interruptions*)... No point getting angry, Sir. ...(*Interruptions*)... The point was raised. The point was answered. ...(*Interruptions*)... Do you want more? Sir, the point is...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please take your seats. ...(*Interruptions*)... Renuka ji, please take your seat. ...(*Interruptions*)... आपस में बात नहीं करें, प्लीज़। ...(**व्यवधान**)...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, actually, I kept reading only some of the main things. But more for the sentiment of Telangana...(*Interruptions*)... Like Ramagundam, like Sammakka Sarrakka. ...(*Interruptions*)... These are very big sentimental and right points for Telangana. One other right point for Telangana, I missed out. For that, Sir, I seek your indulgence. Turmeric which is produced in Telangana is one of the classiest turmeric. Very good quality turmeric is produced in Telangana. Who gave the Turmeric Board located in Nizamabad? Prime Minister Modi. ...(*Interruptions*)... With due respect to the hon. Member who is feeling so charged for Telangana, we are here equally charged for Telangana. ...(*Interruptions*)... But we show it through our actions and not by just raising questions. For every question that is asked -- because it is an emotional issue -- we are responding by action rather than keep raising the issue. We are showing it through our action.

Sir, for Jharkhand, in October 2023, the Union Cabinet sanctioned the North Koel Reservoir Project at a revised cost estimate of Rs. 2,430.76 crore. And that is for Jharkhand. This Budget is not for Bihar. This Budget is not only for BJP States. Every State is getting its right due. There is nothing that I am saying. we are giving. No! States deserve to get it. They will get it. And they are getting it. ...(*Interruptions*)...

5.00 P.M.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Rajeevji, please take your seat. ...(*Interruptions*)... माननीया रेणुका जी, कृपया आप अपनी सीट पर बैठें। आपस में बात नहीं करें। ...(**व्यवधान**)...

आप सबकी कोई बात रिकॉर्ड पर नहीं जा रही है। ...**(व्यवधान)**... Renukaji, please take your seat.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, I would like to respond to one of the points which the former Finance Minister raised. It was also raised by hon. Member, Shri Tiruchi Siva; also raised by hon. Member, Shri Saket Gokhale; and also raised by Shri Raghunadha Reddy from Andhra Pradesh, saying, 'You have given a certain projection for direct tax collection, but having foregone Rs. 1 lakh crore in the name of the tax relief that we have given to persons with income up to Rs. 12 lakh, how is that number right?' This is a question which has been asked and I think it is a very important question for which answer should be given. It is not a mistake or we have not deliberately just put a number. I will explain how mind has been applied and the Department of Revenue has really looked into the details and only then come up with a number. In the last five years, our Budget Estimates have been commented upon by many observers who say, "Yours is a very conservative estimate." Even for them, I had just said then and now that ours is not conservative, it is realistic. We do not overestimate; we are realistic. So, even this year, when we have given the number for revenue buoyancy, the number is realistic and I will tell you why. ...**(Interruptions)**... No, no; I will tell you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr. John Brittas, no comment please! ...**(Interruptions)**...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: We will answer it. ...**(Interruptions)**...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. ...**(Interruptions)**... Nothing is going on record. ...**(Interruptions)**...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, 'Taxes on Income' is a broad category. It includes individuals and taxpaying entities other than companies under the Income Tax Act of 1961. So, it also includes securities transaction tax. But, in the BE of 2025-26, in 'Taxes on Income', if you exclude security transaction tax, it is estimated to add Rs. 13.60 lakh crore. This represents a growth of 13.1 per cent over 2024-25 RE, which implies a buoyancy of 1.30. If you were to look at the buoyancy, this buoyancy is lower than the average buoyancy of 1.74 which is obtained in the last five years, which ends in 2023-24. If I were to take the last five years ending 2023-24, the buoyancy was 1.74. What we are now saying for this year is 1.30. If I were to look at not five years past, but only three years past, the buoyancy was 1.94. So, three

years' average is 1.94; five years' average is 1.74; but, what we are giving now is only 1.30. So, there is no way in which we have done any calculation error. Therefore, even as I explained, that misunderstanding which hon. Member, Dr. John Brittas, would have in his mind, for instance, the effective tax rate across different categories of taxpayers for the year 2022-23, is as follows. Effective tax rate for individuals was 12.2 per cent. Then comes 'Corporation Tax on Companies'. And when I say 2022-23, it was three years after the 2019 reduction of corporate tax.

Then, on Corporate tax on companies, the effective tax rate was still 23.2 per cent, which is higher than the individual tax rate. The effective tax rate on companies is 23.2 per cent. Together with this explanation on the tax, I also want to pick up on this one comment which the former Finance Minister made. He said, 'How can the net tax to Centre grow by 11.1 per cent when Government has given one lakh crore of tax concession.' The same point was mentioned in a different way. He also said, 'It is pure magic not mathematics.' I am sorry; it is pure mathematics. It is pure mathematics that we have done what we have done, and I will say why we have done that. The net tax revenue of the Centre is derived after deducting tax devolution to States from the gross tax revenue. The gross tax revenue for the year 2025-26, the Budget Estimate, is estimated to grow by 10.8 per cent. So, the tax devolution to States in the RE of 2024-25, the year in which we are still on, includes an additional tax devolution from the Union Government to the States, which is one time tax devolution of Rs. 12,764 crores on account of prior period adjustments which are required to be done. If this adjustment amount is excluded, then, the tax devolution to the States in the year 2025-26, the forthcoming year, is 11.5 per cent higher than the RE of 2024-25. What the net tax to Centre will be, meaning what that amount which Centre will be retaining for itself is only 10.4 per cent will be. The estimation, net tax to Centre, is both realistic and also it factors the interest of our States. I would want to inform the former Finance Minister that it is not magic, it is pure mathematics. I have explained about these buoyancies.

There was this question about tax cuts benefit, not only the middle class but also the rich. Again, former Finance Minister said, 'Oh! You have not just done for middle class, it is going to benefit even the rich.' And, that is a point on which hon. Member, Dr. John Brittas will also be keen to know, have I favoured the rich? ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. JOHN BRITTAS (Kerala): My point was... ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please, you have already raised your points. ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. JOHN BRITTAS: Sir, she is yielding. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes, put your question!

DR. JOHN BRITTAS: Sir, she projected an amount on corporate tax. She got Rs. 40,000 crores less, whereas she is projecting 14.8 per cent growth in personal income tax despite giving a give-away of Rs. 1 lakh crore. That was the question which was raised. Even then, now, for 2025-26, her growth rate in Corporate and GST is hardly 10 per cent. How is it? That was the question.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, I thought I have answered one part of his question, and I will further answer through this response on the point that the former Finance Minister raised. He said, 'Therefore, your claim that you are only benefiting the middle class is not really completely correct because the measures that you have taken are going to benefit the rich also.' I am sorry; he is wrong. Tax rates for different bands of income have also been reduced which is a truth. But what does it benefit? And, by how much does it benefit the middle class as supposed to by how much it does benefit the higher income groups; I will just give you a figure. We are all aware that in this Budget, we have said that up to Rs.12 lakh, 'nil' tax, which is 100 per cent relief for those earning Rs.12 lakh or less. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No intervention, please. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: This is for the middle class, up to Rs. 12 lakhs, which was already mentioned, but I will tell you later. In the proposed new regime, suppose the taxable income is Rs.24 lakhs, total income tax in the proposed new income tax for that group will be Rs.3 lakhs. The relief in comparison to the present regime is only Rs.1,10,000, which is 26.82 per cent, meaning assessee will be paying 26.82 per cent lesser than the tax that he had paid earlier. On that note, in that way, I will explain what happens for Rs.50 lakh. Sir, the assessee will be paying 9.24 per cent lesser. The new tax regime coming in will make somebody who is earning Rs.50 lakh to pay only 9.24 lesser than what he was paying earlier. What if he is earning Rs.1 crore? He will pay only 4.08 per cent lesser than what he has paid. If he is earning Rs.100 crore, 0.037 per cent only lesser than what he was paying earlier; if he is

earning Rs.250 crore, 0.015 per cent only lesser than what he was paying earlier; if it is Rs.500 crores, he pays 0.007 per cent only lesser than what he is paying now. So have we benefited the rich or is it for the middle class? Hundred per cent lesser you are paying, meaning you pay no tax, is better than 0.007 per cent lesser than what you were paying earlier. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Guptaji, please. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: That is a good question. ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, I am responding and I am not skirting any issue. The question which is coming in the mind of the hon. Minister is, the way in which questions are being asked on this, he is right, it makes us feel that they probably are against these tax benefits which are being given to the middle class. ...*(Interruptions)*... I think they should say it that they are opposed to this. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat, Guptaji. ...*(Interruptions)*... Mr. John Brittas, not allowed. ...*(Interruptions)*... Mr. John Brittas, please take your seat. ...*(Interruptions)*... Nothing is going on record. ...*(Interruptions)*... सिर्फ Finance Minister की बात ही रिकॉर्ड पर जा रही है। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: No cuts have been made. ...*(Interruptions)*... I yielded. I gave an answer, you will never be happy. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: She has already yielded. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please, no more questions ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, no cut has been made in capital allocation, which has been explained repeatedly. But I was again surprised to hear from the former Finance Minister saying "Fiscal deficit has been achieved by cutting capital expenditure. CapEx has been cut by Rs.1.8 lakh crore. Thus, she saved on the fiscal target by Rs.43,785 crore. Is it a good policy? I don't know. Is it a good economy? I say no." And left it there saying "You have managed to have fiscal deficit contained because you cut down on your capital expenditure." I have repeatedly said, capital expenditure has not been cut down. Actually, the total effective capital expenditure is proposed to be Rs.15.48 lakh crore, which is 4.3 per cent of our GDP. So Rs.11.11 lakh crore of the vote on account Budget and July Budget has now gone up to Rs.11.21 lakh crore, which is 3.1 per cent of our GDP for capital expenditure. So

where have I cut down? I have not. It is a good augury that the former Finance Minister has really appreciated and realized the importance of the capital expenditure. And so, at least, I am glad that he realizes that capital expenditure has greater multiplier and it is good for the economy, it is necessary to undertake it. And, his concern that are we cutting down, is well appreciated and I want to assure, 'No, we are not cutting down.' But, that concern may be well worth for him to counsel some of his own party-ruled States, whether it is Karnataka, whether it is Telangana, to spend on capital expenditure. Please tell them also. But their capital expenditure moneys are coming down. Congress-ruled States are no longer spending their own money on capital expenditure. We are giving. We will continue to give. So, former Finance Minister, may I request him, in his absence, that he should counsel Congress-ruled states to also spend on capital expenditure. I do not want to get into data to say during UPA this is what happened but one data is very important. Under the UPA, capital expenditure as percent of total expenditure excluding interest payments became half, meaning, it was halved from 31 per cent. In 2004, when Atal Bihari Vajpayeeji left, it was 31 per cent. It was brought down to 16 per cent when UPA left in 2014. Where is 31 per cent capital expenditure, Sir, and where is 16 per cent? Appreciating capital expenditure at least, देर आयद, दुरुस्त आयद। Sir, also the former Finance Minister said, "The Chief Economic Advisor says, 'get out of the way'." And in response, the Finance Minister in the Budget announces seven new schemes, eight new missions and four new funds. Meaning, the Chief Economic Advisor has told you to get out of the way, whereas you are coming up with more schemes! Sir, people of India have made them get out of the Government. People of India have made them to get out of governance itself. And, more importantly, if you take back to 1947, Mahatma Gandhi said to the Congress Party, 'Get out of politics. Disband it. Get out is for them, Sir. They should disband the party. Gandhi said, 'Please, you don't need to be in politics. Get out of politics.' But, no, they still lingering in India's political domain. So, from our side, I want to say, getting out is something which the hon. Prime Minister has been repeatedly saying, 'I don't want red tape. I want red carpet for industry. I will remove archaic laws.' 1550 obsolete laws have been removed. 40,000 unnecessary compliances have been removed. And, also decriminalisation has happened for 3,400 offences where people would have been put in jail. We have removed those clauses. We are, certainly, getting out and the CEA reminds and tells, 'show us many things that the Chief Economic Advisor is independent and does say things for all the country.' I want the State Governments also to follow this route of remove archaic laws. Get out, get out, get out! I wish the former Finance Minister tells the Congress Governments to please get

out of the way. You don't disturb people. They want to be entrepreneurs, they want to grow; So, Jan Vishwas Bill were brought by us. We removed the Angel Tax so that the start-ups can function. And, the notorious retrospective Act which was brought during UPA was removed by hon. Prime Minister, which was a regressive Act. Yes! Sir, the last point before that, I have two specific responses for two Members who spoke much later than when I left this place. Sir, the former Finance Minister. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI SANDOSH KUMAR P (Kerala): Madam, please speak about Kerala. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please. No comments. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: There is one point which we can repeatedly remind ourselves. I will say that. About Kerala! Sir, this is former finance minister who said, 'There is a Government, but there is little governance. There is no philosophy, so there is no policy.' I am urging the former Finance Minister to recapture the wisdom and fast-sightedness of Dr. Manmohan Singh. Former Finance Minister said this and I listened to him carefully. Sir, 'philosophy' and 'vision' was the way in which 1991 opening happened of the Indian economy. They gave up, within six months, all the conditions put on India for opening up of the Indian economy. And, they just forgot reforms after that! So, 'vision' was there, but it remained only on paper! And, Sir, not till Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee came has the momentum on getting reforms gained. You got your roads built for the country and rapidly changed the nature in which businesses are done. They all started happening. Sir, ten years after that, there was again lull for ten years! Once we entered into office in 2014, we started all over again and reforms are happening. So, 'vision' was there. And, whether under compulsion or otherwise, you opened the Indian economy. But, it did not persist. It was a brilliant Government and brilliant Budget. Right! It made history. No doubt. I don't know this connection; but I want to put it on record. It was from that Government the former Finance Minister resigned! I know whether he resigned on his own account or he was asked to go. If that was the Government about which he was telling, 'Oh! It was a brilliant Government. It had a vision', Sir, you resigned from it! I believe, you resigned, or, you were asked to go.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: But he came back again. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Alright. Never mind. You can defend. He did leave and then he went to three different parties. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No comments, Jairam Rameshji. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: He went to even a regional party — TMC. He went to a regional party — Tamil Manila Congress! So, such a great Government about which I am being told, 'Oh! You should remember. It had a vision.' You could not have left that visionary Government then. You left, Sir. You left. ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, there are two things...

SHRI SANDOSH KUMAR P: Madam, what about Kerala?

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: I will come to Kerala, certainly. Hon. Member, Jaya Bachchanji, spoke passionately about how the film industry is being neglected. She also said, 'Leave aside the GST. All single screen theatres are shutting down. People are not going to movie halls. There is no cut in the Entertainment Tax.' Sir, I just want to explain this a bit for the benefit of all hon. Members. There is no Entertainment Tax levied by the Union Government. First thing is clear. Second, Entertainment Tax levied, previously, by the State Governments was subsumed into GST. It is correct. Then, the Constitution still allows the State Governments to make laws with respect to taxes on entertainment and amusements to the extent levied and collected by the Panchayats and Municipalities. This is under Entry No. 62, List-II of the Seventh Schedule. Sir, Regional Councils or the District Councils can also levy. So, levy of taxes on entertainment and amusement is by the local bodies which is a State Subject. There is no Central jurisdiction on it. So, there is no question of increasing or reducing it; none of that is with me. Before the GST, the tax on entertainment services averaged around 30 per cent. Movie tickets attracted various entertainment tax, while a combined 20.5 per cent VAT and Service Tax applied on it. It also applied to food and beverages at theatres. Some States had Entertainment Tax as high as 100 per cent! Now, the service of food and beverages in movie theatre attracts a mere 5 per cent GST. Sir, only 5 per cent GST is levied on items in food stalls in theatres or now on notorious and infamous popcorn. Sir, only 5 per cent GST is levied.

Sir, multiple GST Council meetings have discussed -- I can give you the dates - 19th May, 2017, 11th June, 2017, 22 December, 2018 -- for reducing GST on movie tickets. In 2018, a decision was taken that on tickets costing Rupee 100 or above

Rupees 100, only 18 per cent GST will be charged. Earlier, it was 28 per cent. For movie tickets below 100 Rupees, only 12 per cent GST will be applied; whereas, earlier, it was 18 per cent. So, GST Council has reduced GST on movie tickets. Then, hon. Member Jaya Bachchanji said, "We do not believe in just photo ops with film stars. We work for the development of entire media and entertainment sector, which includes...". She said some things. Sir, I want to say, for all those, we give respect to everybody. One of the major steps taken by this Government is that the Cabinet has recently approved the Waves 2025. India will host, for the first time, World Audiovisual Entertainment Summit, called Waves, in Mumbai between 1st and 4th of May 2025. It will bring together media CEOs, entertainment icons, creative minds from all over the globe. The Summit aims to position India as a global hub for media and entertainment, offering unparalleled opportunities for collaboration and showcasing Indian talent. So, I want hon. Member Jaya Bachchan to know that we have not forgotten the film industry. On the contrary, we are lifting it to such a level where all States can display their talents, and the movie industry or, what you call, the audio visual capacities, which they have, can also be displayed. In September 2024, the Cabinet also approved establishment of the National Centre for Excellence for Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, Comics and Extended Reality. That has also been already cleared by the Cabinet. The Government has facilitated the signing of co-production treaties of India with 15 different countries, so that co-producing of films will be possible. And, for facilitating shooting in India of films, a single-window-clearance mechanism has also been created with the Film Facilitation Office. So, we have not forgotten the film industry. Also, hon. Prime Minister, in his *Man Ki Baat*, has also spoken about the 100th birth anniversary of several iconic figures. In the last *Man Ki Baat*, he spoke about four cinematic legends, Raj Kapoor, Mohammad Rafi, Akineni Nageshwar Rao and Tapan Sinha. They all have been remembered for their birth anniversaries and so on. So, I find it odd that hon. Member, Jaya Bachchanji, has expressed her angst about how film industry has not been supported, whereas she will well remember hon. Member of Parliament today in the Lok Sabha, Ms. Kangana Ranaut, under the MVA Government, which her alliance supports, was intimidated in September 2020 at Pali Hill, Mumbai. In a notice of 24 hours, which was given to her, demolition happened. And, till the Bombay High Court interfered, the demolition was happening. Hon. Member, Jaya Bachchanji, should be talking to her alliance parties about how film industry is being ignored, how they are being put to suffering. ...*(Interruptions)*... And, of course, I do not need to go back to talking about how Hridaynath Mangeshkar, the brother of Lata Mangeshkar, could not even work in All India Radio. He was fired because he was composing and singing not to

please the Congress party. And, also, Majrooh Sultanpuri was jailed in 1949. ...*(Interruptions)*... And, Dev Anand was threatened for not supporting the Emergency. And, Kishore Kumar was also pulled off the air. So, about film industry, about film... ...*(Interruptions)*... Yes, I will come to that.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. ...*(Interruptions)*... No; nothing is going on record. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: I will come to Kerala. ...*(Interruptions)*...

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

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: I will come to Kerala. Hold on. ...*(Interruptions)*... Jayaji also was very, very ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please. ...*(Interruptions)*... No, no, no. Let her speak.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Jayaji was also worried about film industry. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. ...*(Interruptions)*... No, no; no cross-talk. Please take your seat. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: You wanted on Kerala, I will come back to Kerala. ...*(Interruptions)*... Now you want something else. You can't just go on throwing the gauntlet like that to me. I will take each one of them and answer you. ...*(Interruptions)*... No good, no good. 'Everything is so expensive' was a worry, hon. Member, Jaya Bachchanji's worry. I want to say, Sir, 'No poor Jaya! All of you are poor; I am also poor. But the questions asked will have to be answered. Right? ...*(Interruptions)*... But so much was said. So much was said. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Tiruchiji, let her speak.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, when the Government is doing so much, I need to take time to answer. Do you want me to just normally mention one thing and go away? I will say everything that this Government is doing because we are doing

that much and more. ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, if 90 Members can speak and we have heard it all, I will not be allowed 90 minutes to answer! ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Unbelievable, Sir. You don't want ninety minutes of answer. I have heard 90 Members. ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, she had a concern that people have stopped watching films. People have not stopped watching movies. They probably are viewing OTTs. I just want to say how the OTT sector is booming in India -- Disney and Hotstar, 400 million active users; Netflix 3-plus million paid subscribers; and Amazon Prime Video, 4.4 million paid subscribers. According to a FICCI EY Report, OTT market will hit 12.5 billion US dollars by 2030, and, already, there are 448 million OTT viewers in India, which is second only to China. That is the growth that India in regional languages and in Hindi is having in the OTT sector. So, film industry will not have an issue, Sir, and the Government is quite seized of the kind of response. ...*(Interruptions)*...

Sir I just want to make one broad reference because the hon. Member, Shri Raghav Chadda, is seated here. I got to know that he is a Chartered Accountant. Sorry, I didn't know it earlier. I must confess. Probably, I have forgotten. Pardon for that. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please, Dr. John Brittas. Please.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Because, repeatedly, I don't see the strength of a Chartered Accountant coming in your interventions. So, it makes me question, 'Am I really right in thinking that you are a Chartered Accountant? ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, I want to say, 'marginal relief.' ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. ...*(Interruptions)*... No, not allowed. ...*(Interruptions)*... आपकी कोई बात रिकॉर्ड पर नहीं जा रही है। ...*(व्यवधान)*... Only Finance Minister's speech is going on recrd. ...*(Interruptions)*... No. Please. आप बोलिए। ...*(व्यवधान)*... Hon. Finance Minister, please speak. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: You should please listen and go to your Finance Minister in Kerala and ask this question about GST. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, if the hon. Member has a question to clarify on GST, equally and more competent will be the Finance Minister of Kerala to answer. He should seek clarification from him. ...*(Interruptions)*... No, no, you have had doubt and I am ready to answer; but if it is on GST, I would equally appeal to you to please contact your Finance Minister and ask him. Sir, about the 12 lakh rupees, I honestly want to request humbly the hon. Member, Raghav Chadha *ji*, to kindly not mislead the House; I don't mean he intended to do. I don't think he intended to mislead the House, but the way he popped up the whole detail about the personal income tax which has come in this Budget, 2025-26, we have issued FAQ. Just as soon as I finished my speech, the FAQ was put out. Lots of people who asked the questions have all been comprehensively given explanation. For an hon. Member to come to the House and say, 'No, you will pay entirely for every rupee post your Rs. 12 lakh salary' is not okay. No, the marginal relief takes it further down. You do not need to pay till about Rs. 12,75,000; you do not end up paying much. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Raghav Chadha, you have already spoken. ...*(Interruptions)*... She has already replied. ...*(Interruptions)*... No, it is not going on record. Please, take your seat. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, for his understanding ...*(Interruptions)*... Hon. Member, Shri Raghav Chadha, kindly indulge me. I will give you figures, number by number. Listen to me. Sir, suppose a person earns more than Rs. 12 lakhs — that was his core worry — say, Rs. 12,10,000, the tax without marginal relief would have been Rs. 61,500, whereas with tax, marginal relief which is given in the Budget, he pays only Rs. 10,000.

SHRI RAGHAV CHADHA (Punjab): But, what happens to ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Now, what if a person earns Rs. 12,50,000? The tax without marginal relief ...*(Interruptions)*... Listen, please. ...*(Interruptions)*... You misled the House. At least hear it now. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Raghav Chadha, please take your seat. ...*(Interruptions)*... I have not allowed you. Please take your seat.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, if a person earns Rs. 12,50,000, tax without marginal relief for him would have been Rs. 67,500. But, with marginal relief offered, he will pay only Rs. 50,000. Suppose he is earning Rs. 12,70,000, without marginal relief, he would pay Rs. 70,500 whereas with marginal relief, he pays Rs. 70,000. And it is only when he reaches Rs. 12,75,000, that his tax will be Rs. 71,250, with or without marginal relief.

SHRI RAGHAV CHADHA: That is exactly my point. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: All right. That is it. Do you expect me to go on till Rs. 20,000? ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री उपसभापति: सिर्फ माननीया वित्त मंत्री जी की बात रिकॉर्ड पर जा रही है। ...*(व्यवधान)*... आप बैठ जाँँ हर वक्त disturb न करें, आप बैठें। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Mr. Raghav Chadha being a Chartered Accountant, I repeat, is only misleading rather than informing people. ...*(Interruptions)*... And it is put out openly. There is no hide and seek in this. This is put out there. The calculation has been put out openly. And a Chartered Accountant keeps repeatedly saying... ...*(Interruptions)*... That is exactly what I am asking. I am saying that in writing and orally. What more does he want? I have not hidden anything. ...*(Interruptions)*... Also, Sir, I want to highlight Kerala before I go off to other issues. Hon. Member here said, I have not said much about Kerala. On August, 2024, the Union Cabinet approved an industrial node in Palakkad. The Kannur Airport was operationalized under RCS UDAN scheme. Site clearance was granted for construction of a Greenfield airport at Kottayam. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री उपसभापति : प्लीज़, आप बैठें। ...*(व्यवधान)*... Please listen. ...*(interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: One thousand and three hundred kilometres of National Highway have been constructed in Kerala since 2014. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री उपसभापति: प्लीज़, आप बैठें। You may listen to the response to your queries about Kerala. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI JEBI MATHER HISHAM (Kerala): Sir, what about Wayanad? ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: One thousand one hundred and twenty-six kilometres of National Highway corridors are being developed under *Bharatmala Pariyojana* in Kerala. Sir, I would continue but they would say, you have not said anything about Kerala. The moment I start reading the list, they would shout me down. Is this fair, Sir? ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री उपसभापति: सिर्फ माननीया वित्त मंत्री जी की बात रिकॉर्ड पर जा रही है। ...*(व्यवधान)*... आप बैठ जाँ। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Talking about metro, India's first water metro, the Kochi Water Metro, was inaugurated by Prime Minister, Shri Modi, in April, 2023. Thee Kochi Metro was inaugurated by Prime Minister, Shri Modi, in 2017. Twenty-five kilometres of metro rail have been operationalized since 2014.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr. John Brittas, please take your seat. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: There has been a record railway budget allocation of Rs. 3,042 crore for Kerala. 125 km of new tracks have been constructed in Kerala since 2014. ...*(Interruptions)*... Two *Vande Bharat* trains have been started. Thirty-five railway stations are being re-developed. Talking about social infrastructure, 1.6 lakh houses have been built under the *PM Awas Yojana*; in 2.5 lakh households, toilets have been constructed under the *Swachch Bharat Mission*. ...*(Interruptions)*... 21 lakh tap water connections have been provided under *Jal Jeevan Mission*. Sir, 82 lakh Ayushman cards were provided; 1,500 Jan Aushadhi Kendras were operationalised; 66 lakh Jan Dhan Accounts were opened; 1.6 crore Mudra Accounts were sanctioned. That is for Kerala. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: John Brittasji, please take your seat. Nothing is going on record. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Now, their talk about Bengal being denied its due share. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat, Dr. John Brittas. ...*(Interruptions)*... All the Members who are standing, I request you, please take your seat. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Bengal denied its due share being peddled about and the imagined discrimination against West Bengal. ...(*Interruptions*)... Like every other State, PM Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) is being implemented in West Bengal since 2016-17. The Government has released Rs.25,798 crore as Central share to the State since 2016-17. However, complaints of irregularities in the implementation of PM Awas Yojana, including selection of ineligible households for Awas Plus 2018 list, removal of eligible households and branding violations were received. Similar things have happened about MGNREGA also. The people of Bengal are survivors and I am sure they will get over the obstruction which has been imposed by the Party. But, on the specific issue which was raised by Shri Saket Gokhale, the Union Government allocated Rs.172 crore to Andhra Pradesh, Rs.147 crore to Bihar, Rs.151 crore to Gujarat, Rs.200 crore to Madhya Pradesh and Rs.154 crore to Uttar Pradesh for tourism projects according to an official statement in Lok Sabha. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN (West Bengal): Sir, I have a point of order. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will give you the point of order.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: This was raised and he also further said, 'Not a single rupee was given to West Bengal. Moreover, the Centre has not even included any tourism site from Bengal in the schemes'. It was said during the Question Hour and I quote Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat's response here and this is emblematic of the issue between the Member, who thinks Bengal is not receiving anything and the Government. Here, we go by the facts. And what was Gajendra Singh Shekhawat's facts? He said, 'We reached out to the Government of West Bengal four times in writing and even spoke personally to its representatives, requesting them to submit project proposals. Despite our repeated efforts, no proposal was ever sent by the State. So, the Centre is not showing any step-motherly treatment. It seems that West Bengal's own administration is failing to act'. So, I want Bengal also to know that there is no ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Hon. Finance Minister, he has a point of order. Derekji, what is your point of order? Under which rule are you raising it? ...(*Interruptions*)..

SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN (West Bengal): Sir, it is within the rules ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Under which rule are you raising it? ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN: It is within the rules. ...(*Interruptions*)... Let me finish. It is within the rules ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, with your permission, if there is no rule, I am going ahead. The point of objection is being raised. If there is no rule, with your permission, I want to go ahead. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN: Sir, it is Rule 239. ...(*Interruptions*)... Within the rules, I was asking for it for the last three minutes. Now, 239 is the Rule. I just bring it to your notice. It says, "When, for the purposes of explanation during discussion or for any other sufficient reason, any Member has occasion to ask a question of another Member on any matter then under the consideration of the Council, he shall ask the question through the Chairman." That is the rule. Besides this rule, I have Rule 322 on my computer, referring to a Chairman's ruling, 'debate State matters'. That is a ruling. Please pull out Rule 322 on your computer, and I am asking the question. I am reading. 'State matters - without prior notice, nothing should be said derogatory about a State Government'. That is the rule. ...(*Interruptions*)... That is a ruling. ...(*Interruptions*)... Now, I come to my question. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will give my ruling later on. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN: Sir, on 239, my question is there. I have a pointed question to the Finance Minister. ...(*Interruptions*)... You answer me 'yes' or 'no'. Rs.7,500 crores owed to MNREGA for Bengal; 99.2 per cent compliance has been made, but where is the money for MNREGA and Awas Yojana? ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. ...(*Interruptions*)... You have put your question. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN: Do not tell us about who gave the money ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Hon. Finance Minister ...(*Interruptions*)... Nothing else is going on record. Please take your seat. ...(*Interruptions*)... There is no point of order. ...(*Interruptions*)... The Leader of the House.

THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE (SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA): Sir, nothing derogatory against any State Government has been said. They are trying to politicise the issue. They raise issues and they try to give an impression that some injustice is being done to a State. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. आपकी कोई बात रिकॉर्ड पर नहीं जा रही है। ...(*व्यवधान*)...

SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA: Is it a fish market? Are they making it a fish market? ...(*Interruptions*)... They do not have even the decency to hear. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please sit down. ...(*Interruptions*)... माननीय सदस्य, मर्यादा के साथ एक-दूसरे से बात करें और सुनें। ...(*व्यवधान*)...

SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA: They have only one thing to put charges. ...(*Interruptions*)...

श्री उपसभापति: आपकी बात ही रिकॉर्ड पर जा रही है। ...(*व्यवधान*)...

SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA: Sir, nothing derogatory has been said against any State Government. That is number one. Number two, they have raised issues that they are not getting justice in the respective States. The Union Finance Minister is answering one by one the issue how the Government of India, the Modi Government, has given more than justice to their States and how the Government of West Bengal is not responding to the fiscal laws and rules. That is what she is trying to say. ...(*Interruptions*)... Now, Sir, I would like to request you that there should not be any point of order and let the Union Finance Minister give the answer in complete. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let her speak. Nothing else is going on record now. ...(*Interruptions*)... Yes, hon. Finance Minister.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, there were questions about how our Government is, probably, not doing adequate for the MSMEs. ...(*Interruptions*)... I want to make it very clear that in the last three Budgets, we have been repeatedly taking step after step, and in this Budget also, many steps have been taken to strengthen MSMEs for accelerated growth and enhanced remittance, enhanced

credit limits. ...(*Interruptions*)... So, micro and small enterprises have been given credit guarantee cover from Rs.5 crores to Rs.10 crores. ...(*Interruptions*)...

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

श्री उपसभापति: माननीय सदस्य, कृपया आप अपनी-अपनी सीट पर जाएँ।...(**व्यवधान**)...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: For start-ups, the coverage has been...

श्री उपसभापति: माननीय नेता सदन।...(**व्यवधान**)...

SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA: Sir, they do not have to answer the people of West Bengal; they have to answer their leader, Ms. Mamata Banerjee, and that is why they are doing all this. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Innovative financial tools have also been brought in for customised credit cards, and the credit card offering is about Rs.5 lakh. Support for the first-time entrepreneurs has been given. New firm loan scheme has been offered with up to Rs.2 crores for the first-time entrepreneurs for the next five years, particularly the SCs/STs and entrepreneurs who come from those communities. We have given leather and footwear industry enough support so that their businesses can grow and leather sector has also been given enhanced importance. Imports for wet blue leather are now fully exempt from basic Customs Duty so that crust leather export is freed from a 20 per cent duty to encourage domestic value addition and export.

The National Manufacturing Mission has also been given funds. The EV and mobile production is also being increased. The import of several of the critical minerals has also been enabled. So, very clearly, the steps taken in July, 2024 Budget are being continued even in this Budget. So, MSMEs have always received a very important place in our Budget-making.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA (Tamil Nadu): What about Tamil Nadu?

श्री जगत प्रकाश नड्डा: सर, बचपन में हम लोग देखा करते थे कि क्रिकेट के मैच में जब कोई टीम हारने लगती थी, तो वह विकेट उखाड़ करके चल देती थी।...(**व्यवधान**)... मुझे अपना बचपन याद आ गया, जब इतनी जिम्मेदार पार्टी ने ऐसा किया। हम 90 स्पीकर्स को सुनें, उनके एक-एक बिंदु को ध्यान में रखकर वित्त मंत्री महोदया तैयारी कर उसका जवाब दें और जब जवाब सुनने की

हिम्मत न हो, तो ये विकेट उखाड़ करके चल दें! ...**(व्यवधान)**... खुद का विकेट उखाड़ करके चल दें! सर, यह संसदीय परंपराओं के विरुद्ध है। मैं चाहूँगा कि इतनी पुरानी पार्टी - वैसे अपनी बुद्धिमत्ता के प्रदर्शन के कारण हर समय उनकी गिरावट बढ़ती जा रही है, लेकिन फिर भी हम चाहते हैं कि वे आगे बढ़ें। वे आगे बढ़ने के लिए कम से कम इतना तो ध्यान रखें और माद्दा रखें कि जब वित्त मंत्री point wise जवाब दे रही हों, तो वे उसको सुनें। यह जवाब केवल वित्त मंत्री नहीं देती हैं, this is the answer of the Government being given with full responsibility. जब उस responsibility के साथ वे जवाब देती हैं, then, the Opposition should also take it in that spirit.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, since very senior Member, Shri Tiruchi Siva is saying 'What about Tamil Nadu', I think, I should list out what is being done for the State of Tamil Nadu. With due respect... ...*(Interruptions)*... Do you want me to sit down? ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Tiruchi Siva ji, first, you have to take the permission of the Chair.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, I wish to say something important.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please be brief.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: The Tamil Nadu Government asked for two major important metro projects, Madurai and Coimbatore. Nothing has been said in this regard. Apart from this, pending dues of MNREGA and SSA have not been given and they are still pending with the Union Government. Also, with regard to the PMAY, the State Government has spent its entire share but the Union Government has not given what it has to. At least, say something about these two important metro projects.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Now, hon. Finance Minister.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: I wanted to start with something but I will reserve it for the end. Let us talk about Tamil Nadu. The Chennai Metro Rail Project, Phase-2, was announced as the 'Central Sector' project, costing Rs. 63,246 crores, of which, 65 per cent will be financed by the Central Government. The Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor was inaugurated in January, 2019. There have been different statements at different times. I would like to say, subject to correction, as I do not keep an account of these statements, investments worth more than Rs.

30,000 crore has already happened. This has been said by Ministers, both of the older dispensation and the current dispensation. I do not have the latest number. But when the Defence Industrial Corridors (DICs) were announced by Prime Minister Modi, the first corridor was announced for the State of Tamil Nadu. So, to think constantly that ‘Oh, Tamil Nadu has not got it’ is not right. The UP corridor was announced far later. Tamil Nadu was at the priority when it came to Defence Industrial Corridors. PM-MITRA Mega Textile Park was announced in the Aspirational District of Virudhunagar. Foundation stone for AIIMS, Madurai was laid in 2019. With regard to Railways... *...(Interruptions)*... No, no. It is all right. You can always keep on moving the milepost.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, please do not comment while sitting. Please do not speak without permission.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Now, I will have to say what I wanted to say in the beginning, which I reserved for the end. It cannot be a narrative where it is only the Centre’s fault. I want to quote two examples, and I want to quote these two examples with full responsibility. Sir, see the consciousness with which they point out every single detail, but where were they earlier! They were alliance partners with the Congress at that time. *...(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Hold on. You can’t stop me like this, I am sorry. *...(Interruptions)*...

SHRI M. MOHAMED ABDULLA (Tamil Nadu): We don’t agree.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: I will say this. I am answering you. *...(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. *...(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: &“I am answering you only. It is your duty to listen patiently. If you are so angry. I will give the reply in Tamil.” Sir, they were alliance partners. When Congress Implemented a ban on Jallikattu, where did you go? You were partners with that Government. Why didn’t you question the Congress

& English translation of the original speech delivered in Tamil.

Party about the banning of Jallikattu? Why didn't you question why they were doing it? It is wrong to criticise Mr. Modi that he is always working against the interests of Tamil Nadu. You are always criticising him. It is wrong. Do you have the courage to sit patiently and listen to the reply? Sir, there is some Member who thinks I am saying things which are not related. I will say it because it was Prime Minister Modi who did it, despite a silent partnership and a result which was against the people of Tamil Nadu. Jallikattu was banned in Tamil Nadu when they were partners with Congress. It was Prime Minister Modi who removed it from that list. Do you have the courage to sit patiently and listen to the reply?

That is one example, Sir. I will say the second example. Be patient and have strength in your mind. Have a strong mind to listen to the reply and convey it there. I will reply with a strong mind. Please listen. Sir, second example. You are speaking about the metro. I would like to explain about the metro, Sir, Chennai metro. ...*(Interruptions)*... You can't tell me that I can't say. You can speak anything you like. ...*(Interruptions)*... They are criticising me. Can't I reply? I will speak. I got his permission to speak. You can't tell me that I can't say. I don't know whether he understands Tamil or not. Mr. Siva, you have raised the issue twice since this morning. I am watching it. Mr. Siva, you are not speaking the truth. I am sorry to say this. ..Please speak to Mr. Siva.” I will say it in English, Tiruchi Siva is a very senior member. I respect him. We have had a lot of exchanges about differences in ideology. We have been talking. This is something which goes on. But since he raised the issue of metro, again I am saying, it was the decision of the State Government not to have the Centre do it and it was a decision that they will do it themselves. This Government or that Government, I am not getting into the picture. Now, if the State Government has chosen to do it, it is their decision. And in a press conference later, when it was all charged against us saying, your Urban Development Ministry is not sanctioning; you were supposed to get multilateral banks loans; you are not giving; Modi is not doing anything for Tamil Nadu, I wish to say, I was there and I explained that initially the Central Government said, we would get the multilateral assistance and support the Chennai Metro Project phase 2. The State Government, whichever the State Government was, chose not to have it from the Centre. They said, ‘No, we will do it ourselves’. All right!

SHRI P. WILSON (Tamil Nadu): No, no, that is not correct.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Excuse me, Sir. I am the Minister. I was in the discussion when your Ministers had come. I was a Minister at that time. I heard it.

...(Interruptions)... Hon. Member, Wilson, please go, check it up with your own Government. ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Wilson, please.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: No, no, I am sorry. I have said this even in a press conference in Tamil in Tamil Nadu. I am saying it in English in Rajya Sabha. We honoured that decision of the State Government and left it and said, whenever you want to think about it, come back. If you want, I will get the multilateral loan. Then, last year, Prime Minister Modi said, we will do that for them because hon. Chief Minister from Tamil Nadu had come, met up with the Prime Minister and said we would want you to take it and the Prime Minister conceded. This is on record. So, two instances, where the Central Government volunteered to say & "Dear Tamil friends, Jallikattu is yours. You can legislate a law in support of it. You can make necessary amendments. "

6.00 P.M.

It is in your powers to change it and say that *Jallikattu* will be allowed in Tamil Nadu.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Hon. Finance Minister, just one minute. Hon. Members, the reply to the discussion on the Union Budget, 2025-26 is under way. If the House agrees, we may sit beyond 6.00 p.m. to conclude today's Business. Do I have the leave of the House to extend the sitting beyond 6.00 p.m.?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Sir, in both the instances, the Centre kept on saying that we are willing to do it. But when it happened, even though they were alliance partner with the Congress, they did not stop it. We did not hold it against them. We came and explained that it is not us; it is not Prime Minister Modi who halted *Jallikattu*. On the contrary, we helped. Even in the Supreme Court, we said,

& English translation of the original speech delivered in Tamil.

“It should be part of Tamil Nadu's culture. So do it.” That was done by us. So was this one. Metro was also done by us. ...*(Interruptions)*... On Highways, Sir, 4,100 km of National Highways was constructed in Tamil Nadu since 2014. Five greenfield corridors being built under Bharat Mala project in Tamil Nadu. Salem Airport operationalised under UDAN. New integrated terminal building, phase one of Chennai International Airport, developed at a cost of Rs.1,260 crore. On social infrastructure, over 12 lakh houses built under PM Awas. Nearly 59 lakh households ...*(Interruptions)*... Toilets constructed under Swachh Bharat mission. Nearly 89 lakh tap water connections provided under Jal Jeevan mission. Seventy-eight lakh Ayushman cards provided. Sir, 1,350 Jan Aushadhi Kendras were operationalised. 1.6 crore Jan Dhan accounts opened and 5.7 crore Mudra accounts sanctioned. Tiruchi Airport. Hon. Minister Dr. Murugan is also saying about it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Hon. Finance Minister, please continue. ...*(Interruptions)*... Hon. Finance Minister, is your reply complete? ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN: Yes, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat now. ...*(Interruptions)*... Hon. Members, there are 23 permitted Special Mentions for today. Special Mentions of those hon. Members who are present now shall be deemed to have been laid on the Table of the house.

SPECIAL MENTIONS*

Demand for Railway Over Bridge at the Railway Crossing No.143 on Amirgarh-Dabela-Ambaji Road in Banaskantha District

श्री बाबूभाई जेसंगभाई देसाई (गुजरात): महोदय, मैं बनासकांठा जिले के अमीरगढ़-दबेला-अंबाजी मार्ग पर स्थित रेलवे क्रॉसिंग संख्या 143 पर रेलवे ओवरब्रिज के बारे में सरकार का ध्यान आकर्षित करना चाहता हूँ। इस मार्ग पर प्रतिदिन एक लाख से भी ज्यादा वाहनों का आवागमन होता है, जो रेलवे नीति के अनुसार रेलवे ओवर ब्रिज के निर्माण के लिए आवश्यक न्यूनतम वाहनों की संख्या से अधिक है। अमीरगढ़ तालुका मुख्यालय है और यहाँ सभी सरकारी कार्यालय, बैंक, कॉलेज आदि स्थित हैं। रेलवे विभाग द्वारा निर्मित अंडरब्रिज 90 डिग्री कोण पर

* Laid on the Table.