

MESSAGES FROM LOK SABHA**The scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes orders (Amendment) Bill, 2002**

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Sir, I have to report to the House the following message received from the Lok Sabha, signed by the Secretary-General of the Lok Sabha:

"In accordance with the provisions of rule 96 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, I am directed to enclose the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Bill, 2002, as passed by Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 18th December, 2002."

Sir, I lay a copy of the Bill on the Table.

श्री सभापति: वैसे सदन की कार्यवाही 6 बजे तक चलाने की सदन की अनुमति थी लेकिन मैं ऐसा समझता हूँ कि जनरल डिबेट आज समाप्त हो जाए और मंत्री जी का जवाब कल हो जाए तो ज्यादा अच्छा रहेगा। इसलिए आज डिबेट खत्म करने के लिए मैं माननीय सदस्यों से निवेदन करना चाहूँगा कि कम से कम समय में गंभीर से गंभीर बात कह दें तो ज्यादा अच्छा रहेगा।

SHORT DURATION DISCUSSION**MID-YEAR REVIEW OF COUNTRY'S ECONOMY AND ITS IMPLICATION-CONTD.**

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, I am happy that the Government has initiated a new step, has taken the initiative in bringing out the Mid-Year Review for the first time, and it is heartening to note that the economy will grow by five or five-and-a-half per cent. The exports have registered a growth of 7.5 per cent and the imports have registered a negative growth of 10.5 per cent. These are all the figures given in the Document. Even the revenues have increased at a rate higher than the corresponding figure of the previous year. But, overall, the picture given in the Document shows that the economy has not taken a beating. The figures give an indication about that, but I have got my own doubts about the veracity and the accuracy of the figures because this is only a Mid-Year Review. We have been making all these estimates-quick estimates, revised estimates-subject to certain changes. However, the stupendous task, the Herculean task Government is to achieve a growth rate of 8 per cent, as announced by the hon. Prime Minister. Two years have already passed. Last Year, we could achieve a growth rate of 3-5.4

per cent, and, this year, as the Document shows, we are going to achieve a growth rate of 5-5.5 per cent. In the next three years, we have to achieved a minimum growth rate of 10 per cent so that a growth rate of 8 per cent can be achieved in the Tenth Five Year Plan. But what are the structural changes required for that purpose? What is the infrastructure strength now added to achieve this 8 per cent growth rate?

The Document says: "The Capital Expenditure has grown by only 3.6 per cent and the Revenue Expenditure is up by 13.5 per cent." Sir, in a sound economy, 90% per cent of the Government borrowings have to be spent on the creation of assets. Otherwise, it will be very difficult to achieve the growth rates. As per the Document, the credit has not been expanded even after making a substantial reduction in the interest rates.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

Sir, the earlier speakers have also mentioned about the low rate of inflation. Can it be considered as a real achievement? In the post-liberalisation period, the real incomes of the people-I am emphasising the words "the real incomes of the people"-have considerably gone down, and there is no money at the disposal of the common man to buy more goods. Sir, they are not bothered about the bulk demand for goods in the country. The low rate of inflation has got no relevance. With regard to foreign exchange, the Government has always been claiming that we have got a large foreign exchange reserve. Now, it is about 60 billion US dollars. Is it out of our trade surplus? For the past one decade, the trade deficit was around 30 billion US dollars. The accounting figure or the statistical figure may be 60 billion US dollars. But, how did you get this 60 billion US dollars? If you make an analysis, it is not an encouraging one. How can we achieve this 8 per cent growth rate? It has to be achieved. Otherwise, we will lose the rating or classification as a developing economy in the world. We have to achieve 8 per cent growth rate so that we can improve the economic standards of the people. We have opened the economy to the market forces. Import duties have been drastically reduced; quantitative restrictions of many items have been removed; and free flow of capital and technology has been permitted. We have the second largest scientific pool in the world, a vast reservoir of English-speaking people and very high technologies. We have got 40 odd world famous laboratories in this country. We have got a free Press, an independent judiciary and a very vibrant democracy. In spite of all these things, why are we not able to achieve the growth rate? Why are we not able to attract Foreign Direct Investment in the manufacturing sector? We are not able to mop up resources domestically. So, the next alternative is to depend on Foreign

Direct Investment. But we are not able to get it. The Government has to make an analysis of it. According to my analysis, it is because of two or three things. One is that the image of India at the global level has to be improved. The need of the hour is to improve the image of India at the global level. We can't create demand for our own goods locally. An hon. Member was saying that more than 50 million tonnes of foodgrains were rotting in the godowns and the people did not have the capacity to buy them. Why is this dichotomy? We have failed considerably in the past three or four decades in improving the economic standards of the people and enabling them to buy two square meals a day. What are the efforts that the Government is making to achieve this object? Compared to the international standards, our productivity levels are very low. We are unable to compete with global competitors in terms of cost and quality. The need of the hour is to improve the productivity in the industrial and agricultural sectors. Compared to China, we are nearly 70 per cent behind in industrial growth rate.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, you have to wind up.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Madam, the first four speakers were given the maximum time.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will tell you why it was like that. The first one was the person who initiated the debate; the second one was the person who was to initiate the debate; the third one was the person who was making his maiden speech. We can't squeeze them.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Madam, what I am trying to emphasise is that indigenous demand has to be created. We can create demand only when we improve the economic standards of the people. But, ultimately, the real income of the people, as I said, in the post-liberalisation period, has considerably gone down and they do not constitute the aggregate demand for goods in the country. The second alternative is outsourcing. Though we have been trying to create an outsource base in this country, we are unable to face the competition at the global level, because of low quality and high cost of inputs. So, these are the points which the Government needs to address. One of my suggestions is that thrust has to be given to improving the productivity and increasing the expenditure on infrastructure, both agriculture and industry, like transportation, roads. Of course, the Government is doing extremely well, as far as the roads are concerned. I have been telling that there is a strong complementarity between private investment and public investment. Unless you increase the public investment, it is

very difficult to get private investment in this country, and for which you have to mobilise the resources, the savings of the public and for which you have to provide incentives for savings also, not only to improve the economic condition of the people so that they can create more demand, but also to enable them to save money and pump it into the industrial sector. So, what I am trying to say is, even at the expense of increasing the fiscal deficit, as long as the revenue deficit is not increasing and you take care of the revenue deficit, you have to invest in sectors like irrigation, power, roads etc. so that more demand can be created, more facilities can be created, in the economy.

Madam, the next aspect which I want to emphasise is that the capital expenditure has to be increased. It is a very difficult task for the Government. Over a period of time, they have been claiming and promising the nation, but they have failed to achieve it—reduce the revenue expenditure and increase the capital expenditure. Then only, more amount can go into the creation of capital assets.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: How many more papers are there?

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: I may be giving the impression that I am reading from the papers. Because I have been continuously disturbed, I lost track.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is the job of the Chair to disturb you if you go beyond the time. I am paid for it.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Madam, I should congratulate the Minister for presenting this document, which is the first of its kind in this country. Earlier, we never had such a mid-year review. But there is no room for complacency.

Whatever the positive figures you have given or the earlier speakers were telling, we should not feel elated over that because the low rate of inflation is not real, and the foreign exchange reserves are also not out of the trade surplus. Banks have gone abroad and have opened their branches, inviting deposits from the foreigners and remitting it into the country. That constitutes your 60 million dollar forex reserves. So, once you make the analysis, the picture is not that bright. We have to make serious efforts and try to analyse the things in a proper way and initiate measures to achieve the 8 per cent growth which has to be done otherwise there will be a lot of disturbance in the country.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI (Tamil Nadu): Madam, Deputy Chairman, I thank you very much for having given me this opportunity to

say something on the Mid-Year Economic Review. Madam, it is the first time, since independence, that a Mid-Year Review is being submitted to the Parliament for consideration. At the outset, I thank the hon. Finance Minister because he is the Minister of Investment. There is the Minister for Disinvestment. But, he is the Minister of Investment. That is why it is very important. Madam, our economy is actually a mixed bag. I will come to the subject directly because very little time is there. Last year, the current account surplus was 0.3 per cent. That is how the economy functions. Last year, the exports were 13.5 per cent. It is very important. Several people have talked about China. they wanted to compare our economy with China's. Here the NPA is 8 per cent of the GDP; whereas in China 50 per cent of the GDP is NPA in PSE. We have to keep this in mind. In six months revenue income has increased by 16 per cent. The net tax revenue has increased by 27 per cent. It clearly shows that from April to October it has increased by 5.6 per cent. Because of that the housing loan has gone up by 25 per cent per annum. The Government has to see that the food processing industry is developed further. Out of the total production of vegetables and fruits, only one per cent is being utilised for food processing. The Government has to keep this in mind. The export growth has further increased by 23 per cent from April to August, according to the Director General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics. It is a welcome thing. So far as inflation is concerned, it is less than 4 per cent.

6.00 P.M.

I want to say one thing about the food security and the purchasing power of the people. Because of food security, the inflation may come down. But as you know, because of less demand also the inflation may come down. Therefore, the Government has to be very careful. The purchasing power of the people has gone down. I would request the hon. Minister to see that the purchasing power of the people is enhanced, particularly in rural areas. The Government has already taken steps in this direction. They have come out with two projects i.e. the National Highways Development Project and the Village Road Project. If the rural industry is developed, the purchasing power of the people would increase automatically.

My next point is about the packages. We have done it in the case of banks. We have done it in the case of the UTI. The Government has taken Rs. 1,115 crores from the National Industrial Credit long term Operations and gave that money to IDBI. We are going in the right direction. At the

same time, there are some problems. The Securitisation Bill has already been passed. I would like to point out that the Securitisation Act should extend up to 2002. We are hearing that it is only for the years 1998, 1999 and 2000. I would like to request the hon. Minister to see to it that the NPAs are recovered and the guilty people are put behind bars, as per the law of the land. I would like to point out that 69 projects with World Bank's assistance of 12.9 billion dollars are in progress throughout the country. In the year 2002-03, the World Bank has given an assistance of 1.6 billion dollars and in the year 2003-04, they would give 1.9 billion dollars more. It is a good sign. Some people are saying that the picture is gloomy. But is not so. The average number of years taken to settle the tax assessment order has gone down. It is a good thing. The foreign exchange reserves have reached 67 billion dollars. When the rupee becomes dearer, the inflow from the export earnings increases. It is a welcome step. Therefore, the picture is not gloomy, as somebody was just now saying.

If we have to increase the revenue, the domestic savings should be increased. If people deposit some money, that money should remain safe. There should be such a feeling. If people are asked to deposit their money with the private people, they would hesitate to do so. So there is a need to start some kind of a deposit insurance scheme. Public expenditure should be increased further. The SEBI should be further strengthened. I would suggest the hon. Minister to increase our revenue further by Rs. 4,000 crores. It is left out of the Budget. For the last decade, I can say, for cigarette, they are having excise duty only on the length of the cigarette, not based on the quality of tobacco. If you add in the excise duty, tobacco quality also, Government coffer will get further Rs. 1500 crores. That is one point.

Then the second point is Railway Diversification. They are selling a lot of material worth crores of rupees in the name of scrap. If they are scrapping them for diversification, then I have a suggestion to make. Rolling mills, re-rolling mills, four re-rolling mills can be established. Either you can yourselves establish them or you can have some joint venture contract with some people, with private people also. Instead of selling such scrap, if it is converted into value added products, you will get further 2000 to 3000 crores of rupees every year. Just out of these two things, I have suggested, Government can get more than Rs. 4000 crores by way of revenue in this Budget.

Then, Madam, the construction of government buildings is going on at many places. We the govt. of India wanted to disinvest some hotels and other things. Now, they are selling the buildings of the hotels to the

private people. What I say is that Government should have the buildings. They have their own plans, they have to construct further offices. So, what I say is that instead of selling the buildings at the market rate, we can utilise the same buildings and stop construction of buildings for the same purposes. Suppose Ashoka Hotel is there. You can house some other Government offices there. Instead of being sold, it will be used. Instead of constructing new buildings and, at the same time, selling existing buildings, we can think over it and in spite of disinvestment of buildings, buildings can be utilised for some other things. This recycling process, we never attempted it. That has to be done. Sometimes, there are temporary phenomena which affect our economy. I will give you an example. Bangladesh recently cut down import duty from 45 per cent for edible oils to 15 per cent for festive season. Ours is 65 per cent. That oil is already bleached, refined and deodorized. That oil is imported only at 15 per cent duty by them. They smuggle it into India. This is a temporary phenomenon. Madam, what we have obtained during these six months, I don't think it may be same for further six months because of two factors—one is Venezuela and the other is Iraq. I feel, it may affect our import of the oil and it may affect our economy.

Then, Madam, the tax revenue is Rs. 61762 crores, while your Budget estimate is Rs. 172965 crore. They are able to get only one-third of tax revenue estimated. Therefore, the plantation produce is completely affected. You have to look into it. I hail from South. I tell you, recently, Thiru Sharad Pawar announced some Rs. 780 package for the sugar mills. What they have done is instead of 'based on the production', they put 'based on the stock as on 31st October'. How will we accept it? People who are not able to sell in the market may be due to inefficient management, they will get the money from the Central package scheme, but people who are able to sell in the market, the people those who are able to export to the foreign countries, those sugar mills will be affected by this action. Therefore, I want to see that it should be based on production and not based on the stock as on 31st October. You have to revive it, otherwise sugar mills which are running in the South will be affected. I request the hon. Finance Minister to take care of it.

I welcome the proposal in respect of direct taxes and indirect taxes, that indirect taxes should be less than direct taxes. Hon. Finance Minister, in the priority sectors now the rate of interest is more. People who are getting loan from the priority sector are poor people. They are paying higher interest, but at the same time, in the corporate sector the people

are getting loan at a lower less percentage of interest. This anomaly has to be set right through your orders and action.

Madam, my last point is regarding the States. Value added tax, you are going to impose. But at the same time, what I want to know this from the hon. Finance Minister. You want the value added tax of the States. Almost all the States to get investment from the private people, have announced already sales tax concessions, for five years, seven years, ten years, etc. People, who have got the concession, are establishing industries, based on that assurance given by the State Government. What they are saying now is that the commitment made by the State Government should be honoured. Now, in the matter of value added tax, what about the commitment made by the State Governments regarding sales tax concessions? Kindly explain this.

Madam, one more point. The European Union had announced two days back that there would be 36 per cent cut in the agriculture import tariff, 45 per cent cut on export subsidy and 55 per cent cut on domestic farm support. This latest proposal of the European Union is good for us.

Then, Madam, the Naresh Chandra Committee on Corporate Governance had recommended that we should do away with the practice of rotating auditors. They also wanted to put a full-stop to the constitution of the Oversight Board. Now, if we go ahead with the proposal that has been put forth by the Naresh Chandra Committee, then, the extent of fraud would increase. To safeguard against this, the SEBI has to be strengthened. But if the second proposal *i.e.* abolition of "Oversight Board" is to be accepted, then, the fraud on the part of the rich people would go on.

Then, Madam, the Govindarajan Committee Report says: "Reform the investment approvals and implementation procedures in case they are worth Rs. 100 crores and more." I would also like to say that the setting up of the Foreign Investment Promotion Board would be under the institution as per this bill suggested by Govindarajan Committee is a welcome step. This will promote the industries. Therefore, it is a mixed bag as far as reforms is concerned. Now, the coming six months is a crucial period for us, and the steps taken by the Government are welcome. I do hope the suggestions made by hon. colleagues would also be taken into account and I am sure the Government would see to it that the economy is stepped up further. With these words, I conclude. Thank you, Madam.

उपसभापति: श्री प्रेम गुप्ता। मेरा फर्ज है कि आप को बता दूँ कि आप के पास 5 मिनट है।

श्री प्रेम गुप्ता (बिहार): मैडम, मैं पहले ही चिंतित था, अब आप के आने के बाद I have decided to cut short my speech. But the Chairman was kind enough to allow everyone...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Not everyone, but they were specialised people.

SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Madam Deputy Chairperson, first of all, I would like to congratulate the Finance Minister on placing the Mid-Year Review of the Indian economy before the house. As is well known, the world economy and particularly, the economies of the developing countries are passing through a very difficult time, particularly after the 11th September incidents in the U.S.A lot of developments have taken place--the consumer demand went down--and they had a cascading effect on all the countries, particularly, the developing countries, and I am afraid, India has not remained unaffected by the above happenings. The question today remains: What are we going to do to overcome such a grave situation? Madam, one of the main indicators of a healthy economy is the borrowing power of trade and industry. Two hundred thousand small, medium and large scale industries have closed down. There is no definite guideline in the Mid-year Review as to what the Government plans to do about the sickness in the industry. The document says that there has been a decline in disbursement by almost 46 per cent. This is not a healthy sign. This happens when there is no off-take of the economy. In the U.S., there was a decline in disbursement and there was a decline in borrowing. What the U.S. Government did was that they pushed down their rate of interest to a level of 1.41 per cent for three months. Mr. Finance Minister, I would like to know from you as to what definite plans you have got. How do you want to push up the economy through more and more flexible disbursements to the trade and industry? One of the major sectors, which contributes to total exports is the textile industry. A target of 15 billion dollars has been kept for this year. I am afraid, our neighbouring countries are taking over our export business. The Chinese have already taken over our export business of man-made fibre. Now, Sri Lanka and a small country like Bangladesh are capturing our markets. If something is not done, I am sure, this industry, which is an important segment of our exports, which also provides huge employment to the people, would be going down the drain. Madam Deputy Chairperson, one of the factors in the Mid-Year Review is that we have had a surplus

of \$325 million in the first quarter of this financial year. This was the third consecutive quarter where we had a surplus. Here, I would like to draw the kind attention of the hon. Finance Minister to the fact that the interest rates the world over are on the decline. The level is so low; that is why we are getting these remittances only because they want to earn a better interest rate. Once the interest rates start moving outside, globally, we may have this investment or these funds going back. So, we should be careful about it. The next point, which has been shown in this inflow of foreign exchange is the exports service. Madam, I would like to congratulate our Information Technology sector which has provided a lot of job opportunities and has contributed a lot to the inflow of foreign exchange in the country. Here, I would like to caution the Government that the Chinese are working very hard in this sector. So, we should be careful about this and we should make definite plans in this regard. Madam, one of the important points is that, retiring of expensive external debt is a part of prudent debt management policy. Today, with a soft interest regime in the international market and a comfortable foreign exchange reserves which we have today, the Government has not given any impetus to the pre-payment of foreign debts, to reduce our liability on foreign borrowings. This is a very serious matter. Madam, some of our foreign debts, by our commercial banks and large industrial houses, are as high as 10.5 to 11 per cent. They are very expensive. Madam, we have removed quantitative restrictions on import of 715 items with effect from 31st March, 2001. This is a step in the right direction. But, at the same time, we have to see how do we protect our domestic industry, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that our industry has a level-playing field, as far as our other competitors are concerned. Madam, today when we go to the market we see it full of Chinese products like bicycles, shoes, batteries, electronic items, garments, etc. whether in India or abroad. Madam, this is something very strange and interesting to note here. Wall Mart had sales worth Rs. 6,000 crores, \$1.2 billion, on a single day, on Thanks-giving Day, and they have 25 per cent of their imports from China. What are we doing here? Our industries are suffering; 200,000 small-scale units and medium units have closed down, and we have not given any impetus on this important aspect of our exports. One of the hurdles in the growth of our economy has been the '*Inspector Raj*'. The hon. Prime Minister had stated recently that we would put an end to the '*Inspector Raj*'. But how the Prime Minister is going to achieve this objective is yet to be seen. One of the issues with which the

Review deals is the issue of the Non-Performing Assets. The Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Ordinance, 2002... (*Time-bell rings*). Now, both the Houses have passed the Bill. The Government should take a serious view of how, in an organised manner, the UTI, the IFCI, the IDBI, have extended heavy loans to 'wilful' defaulters. Merely passing the Bill is not enough. We should go to the root of this problem. I will take just one minute more.

Madam, the Food Corporation of India is holding 51.4 million tonnes of foodstocks in its godowns. It would be interesting to know—and the hon. Finance Minister may kindly look into this matter—that no third-party inspection of the stock is being carried out. I am sure, a large part of our foodstock is not fit for human consumption. And if it is fit enough for human consumption, then, why do we have so many deaths due to starvation? This should be looked into.

Madam, in the Mid-Year Review, there is no mention of any definite plan for providing employment opportunities to our youth. We have 50 million youth seeking jobs every year. There is no definite plan. There is no definite policy that has been mentioned here. The hon. Prime Minister had stated that one crore job opportunities would be created every year. I have not seen any definite movement in this regard, so far. I have not seen any definite movement in this regard, so far. It would be interesting to know that the State of Alabama in the United States had paid US \$ 2,00,000 per job to Diamler Benz when it had set up its automobile unit in Alabama. When the two Germanys got unified, Dow Chemicals were paid almost \$ 3.4 million per job as compensation. So, we should do something for our youth. Shri Nilotpal Basu was mentioning that unless we provided job opportunities to our youth, they were not going to survive; they would have to sit idle at home. So, something should be done about it. (*Time-bell rings*) Madam,

उपसभापति: अब आप मैडम कहने के बजाय समाप्त कर दीजिए।

SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Madam, I have been very brief. I have just one last point. Nothing definite has been done on the infrastructure side. The health of the economy, of a country depends on its infrastructure. No definite plans have been indicated so far as our ports, civil aviation, telecommunications, roads and other sectors are concerned. Whatever infrastructure we have, it was good twenty years ago, but it is not good today. A 100 MT cargo ship is off-loaded in just eight hours in Singapore. As against that, it takes 7 days in India. For

seven days, the ship has to remain at sea, waiting to get off-loaded. So nothing much has been done, so far as infrastructure is concerned. I would like to know the views of the hon. Finance Minister on the points raised by me.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, those who are in the list of "Others", are going to be a bit surprised, but not angry with me, because we have only 17 minutes left, and there are six speakers more. So, you will have three minutes each. Shri R.S. Gavai.

SHRI R.S. GAVAI (Maharashtra): Madam Deputy Chairperson, at the outset, I thank the hon. Finance Minister for coming out with a Mid-Year Review. This is quite compact and touches all aspects of our economy. Madam, I will confine my speech to the agriculture sector alone. It is rather a matter of solace that production of foodgrains has increased and the production of non-foodgrains crops like oil-seeds, cotton has also increased. It is now a matter of solance, because the index of the agricultural production has sharply increased by 7.3 per cent in 2001-02, as against, the fall of 6.6 per cent in the previous year. I compliment the farmers for that. The credit goes to the cultivators alone and none else. I use the unpleasant terminology by saying that no sort of encouragement was given by the Government to the agriculturists. Although, by indicating figures, I said that it is a matter of solace, the average share of agriculture in the GDP has declined to 24.3 per cent in the year 2001-2002. Madam, two-thirds of our population is dependent upon agriculture. Agriculture provides employment to the tune of 60 per cent of the total productive work force in the country. The development of agriculture is regarded as an indicator of the equity of the life at the grass roots level. The basic objective of the economy's development, such as output and employment, price stability and poverty alleviation are based on the growth of agriculture sector. It is unfortunate to mention that the agriculture sector is being totally neglected by the Government. In many developed and developing countries, much thrust is being given on the agriculture sector, by giving a lot of concessions to the cultivators. As a result of that, the cost of production is very less. Our agriculturists are not in a position to compete with them. Therefore, our agriculturists are selling their products at very low price, which is less than that of their cost of production. A lot of apathy is being shown towards the agriculturists, like cotton growers, sugarcane growers, orange growers, paddy growers, tea-growers, etc. Issues relating to tragic conditions of our farmers are being raised on the floor of all almost all the Legislatures

of various States. I don't know whether it is correct or not, but many cases of suicides by farmers have been reported in the newspapers. By summing up, I request the hon. Finance Minister to give more protection to the agriculture sector, by having a durable Export-Import Policy, etc. The coming Budget should give more thrust on subsidies and other issues related to the agriculture sector.

श्री बशिष्ठ नारायण सिंह (बिहार) : उपसभापति महोदया, मुझे खुशी है कि सदन में माननीय मनमोहन सिंह जी और देश के वित्त मंत्री श्री जसवंत सिंह जी दोनों उपस्थित हैं। एक ने जिस नीति की शुरुआत की, दूसरा व्यक्ति उसको आगे बढ़ाने का संकल्प लेकर वित्त नीति को चला रहा है और आज दोनों सदन में मौजूद हैं। लेकिन मैं एक ही बात विशेष रूप से आपके माध्यम से रखना चाहता हूँ कि इस आर्थिक नीति को लागू करने के 11-12 वर्षों के बावजूद भी दिल्ली शहर के चारों ओर अगर आप ध्यान दें तो बाहरी लोगों की आबादी बढ़ती जा रही है। दिल्ली में बाहर के लोगों की आबादी बढ़ती जाए और दिल्ली बेखबर रहे, दिल्ली उसकी कोई सुनवाई न करे, दिल्ली उसके ऊपर विचार न करे तो भविष्य में बड़ा संकट पैदा हो सकता है। इस पर विचार करने की जरूरत है कि शहरों की आबादी बढ़ती जाए और दिल्ली में यह बहस सरकार के द्वारा और सरकार के कुछ प्रतिनिधियों के बीच में तथा कुछ लोगों के बीच चलती रहे। प्रदूषण बहुत हो गया है। दिल्ली के शहरों के आस-पास गंदगी बढ़ती जा रही है। बाहर के लोग यहां आकर कई समस्याओं को जन्म दे रहे हैं, यह तस्वीर चिंताजनक है, ऐसी बात कही जा रही है, कि अगर इसी नीति को उसी रूप में लेकर चलने का यदि हम प्रयास करते हैं तो क्या इसी तरह का रिजल्ट भविष्य में पैदा होगा या नहीं? क्या अहमदाबाद का शहर, क्या हरियाणा के बड़े-बड़े शहर, क्या दूसरे राज्यों के शहर जहां अभी औद्योगिक घराने हैं, उनकी आबादी इससे प्रभावित नहीं होगी? महोदया, मैं यही कहना चाहता हूँ कि हमारी आर्थिक नीति के विषय में जो कुछ उपलब्धियां बताई गयी हैं, वह तारीफ के योग्य हैं, उनकी तारीफ की जा सकती है और यह भी कहा जा सकता है कि उत्पादन बढ़ेगा। मैं चाहता हूँ कि जब बाद में मंत्री जी जवाब दें तो इसको स्पष्ट करने की कोशिश करें। पैदावार बढ़ेगी तो लोगों को नौकरी मिलेगी, इनवैस्टमेंट होगा। लेकिन इतने दिनों के, इतने बरसों के अनुभव जो रहे हैं, उसके बाद क्या बेरोजगारी का कोई ठोस निदान निकल पाया है? इस बात पर सरकार को गंभीरता से विचार करना चाहिए। महोदया, एक चीज पर मैं ध्यान आकर्षित करना चाहता हूँ। अमेरिका की आबादी कितने प्रतिशत कृषि पर निर्भर है, केवल तीन प्रतिशत और भारत की 80 प्रतिशत। हमारा कॉन्सैट अगर अमेरिका के पैटर्न पर होगा तो इस देश को गर्त में जाने से कोई बचा नहीं सकता है। हम वैज्ञानिक उपलब्धियों को जरूर स्वीकार करेंगे लेकिन अगर हम अपनी वास्तविकताओं को नजर अंदाज करेंगे तो इससे बड़ा खतरा आ सकता है। इसी खतरे से आगाह करने के लिए मेरे मन में यह सवाल बहुत पहले से आता रहा। महोदया, मैं एक बार ट्रेन में ट्रेवल कर रहा था और एक बड़े व्यावसायिक व्यक्ति भी उसमें जा रहे थे। उन्होंने विदेश के सामानों की प्रशंसा करना शुरू कर दी तो मैंने मैसूर सैडल सोप की चर्चा की। मैसूर सैडल सोप के विषय में मैंने

उनसे कहा कि विदेश का कौन सा संदल सोप है जो मैसूर के सैंडल सोप का मुकाबला कर सकता है? कल इस पर भी विदेशी कम्पनियों का यदि कब्जा होगा तो देश कहां जाएगा? मैं आपका ध्यान इसलिए आकर्षित करना चाहता हूँ कि यह गांधी का देश है और गांधी के देश में गांधी ने अपनी जो धारणा बतायी थी, वह मध्यम उद्योग और कुटीर उद्योग बतायी थी। अर्थव्यवस्था पर कई तकनीकी विशेषज्ञों की फाइनैस मिनिस्टर को रिपोर्ट मिलती होगी और मिलती रहेगी। मैं एक बात जानना चाहता हूँ और आशा करूंगा कि मंत्री महोदय जवाब में इसका स्पष्टीकरण देंगे कि क्या यह सत्य नहीं है कि बड़े उद्योगों को खड़ा करने में जितनी पूंजी लगती है, यदि उसका कंपैरिज़न किया जाए तो उस पूंजी से 10 प्रतिशत लोगों को रोजगार मिलेगा और अगर उतनी ही पूंजी मध्यम श्रेणी के उद्योगों में लगाई जाए तो तीस गुणा अधिक लोगों को रोजगार मिलेगा। यदि उसको कुटीर उद्योग-धंधों पर लगा दिया जाए तो 90 प्रतिशत लोगों को रोजगार मिलेगा। कौन सी नीति इस देश के लिए अच्छी हो सकती है? इस देश के लिए वही नीति अच्छी हो सकती है जो बड़े सेक्टर है, जिसमें बड़े उद्योग लगाये जायें लेकिन उनमें यह ख्याल ज़रूर रखा जाए कि इस देश की पहचान जिन उद्योगों के चलते हुई है उनको कभी नष्ट होने का मौका न दिया जाये क्योंकि इस देश के लोगों के सामने सवाल यह नहीं है कि अमेरिका के लोगों जैसी अच्छी ज़िंदगी कैसे जिएं बल्कि इस देश के लोगों के सामने सवाल यह है कि अपनी ज़िंदगी सही ढंग से कैसे जिएं? अच्छी ज़िंदगी जीने वालों की योजना और जिनके सामने ज़िंदगी जीने का सवाल है, इनकी योजना, दोनों में कभी साम्यता नहीं हो सकती है, इसलिए इस पर विचार करना चाहिए।

महोदया, मैं आग्रह करूंगा कि दो-तीन बातों पर कम से कम सरकार ध्यान देने का काम करे और मैं प्वाइंट के रूप में सदन के सामने वे बातें रखना चाहता हूँ। पहली यह कि कारखाने का माल और जो कृषि उपज होगी, उसमें संतुलन रखने के लिए क्या कोई व्यापक और ठोस नीति जनता के सामने लाई जाएगी? एक तो कारखानों के सामान के दाम बढ़ते जाएं और कृषि की उपज की उचित कीमत भी न मिले तो कहां जाएगी इस देश की 80 प्रतिशत आबादी जो इस पर निर्भर है?

दूसरा है श्रमिक वर्ग जो इस देश का है। मैं एक बात आप के माध्यम से वित्त मंत्री से यह आग्रह करना चाहता हूँ कि जिस दिन श्रम विभाग पर, रवीन्द्र वर्मा जी के कमीशन की रिपोर्ट इस सदन में डिसकस हो, उस दिन वित्त मंत्री जी सदन में अवश्य उपस्थित रहें। यह मेरा विशेष आग्रह होगा क्योंकि बड़ी आबादी के सामने जो समस्याएं पैदा हो रही हैं, उसके ऊपर उस दिन बहस होगी। मैं यह मानता हूँ कि श्रमिक वर्ग को नई तकनीक तथा रोजगार परक शिक्षा देने के लिए, खासकर जो गरीब राज्य हैं, उनमें इसकी विशेष व्यवस्था की जाए क्योंकि यह देश तो लेबर मार्केट बन गया है और जब लेबर मार्केट बन गया है तो उनको कम से कम अच्छी शिक्षा तो दी जाए कि अगर इस देश में भी वे काम करें तो कारखानों में अच्छी मज़दूरी उनको मिल जाए और अगर बाहर जाएं तो वहां भी अच्छी मज़दूरी मिल जाए, इसके ऊपर ध्यान देने की ज़रूरत है। कृषि और कृषि से संबंधित जितने उद्योग हैं, उनको एक विशेष दृष्टि से देखने की ज़रूरत है। बेशक इनफॉर्मेशन टेक्नालॉजी बढ़े लेकिन आम, लीची, अमरूद और इस तरह के अन्य जो कृषि से निकलने वाली उपज हैं, इनके उद्योगों की बड़े पैमाने पर विस्तार करने की योजना हो, नहीं तो राजस्थान की जो

बोकानेरी भुजिया बन रही है, उस पर भी संकट के बादल मंडरा रहे हैं, वे बड़े खतरनाक साबित होंगे। महोदया, मैं यह भी कहना चाहता हूँ कि निर्धनता रेखा के नीचे रहने वालों की क्रय शक्ति इस देश में कैसे बढ़े, गवर्नमेंट के सामने सबसे बड़ा यह सवाल है और निर्धनता रेखा के नीचे रहने वालों की क्रय शक्ति बढ़ाने के लिए बड़े पैमाने पर आप योजनाओं को बनाएं और उनको लागू करने के लिए एक ठोस कार्यक्रम लोगों के सामने प्रस्तुत करें।

महोदया, एक बात मैं और कहना चाहता हूँ कि बिजली बड़े पैमाने पर मिल जाए लेकिन सस्ती, सुलभ और आम लोगों के पास नहीं जाए तो बिजली की पैदावार का कोई मतलब नहीं होता है। अंत में मैं यही कहना चाहता हूँ कि जिन राज्यों की वित्तीय स्थिति खराब है, केंद्र की योजनाओं को लागू करने की भी उनकी क्षमता नहीं है, उन राज्यों को विशेष सुविधाएं देकर जो सम्पन्न राज्य हैं, उनके बराबर लाने की कोशिश की जाए, नहीं तो एक ऐसी रेखा खिंच जाएगी जो बाद में और संकट और अन्य विवादों का कारण बन सकती है। इसके ऊपर सरकार को विशेष ध्यान देना चाहिए, इतनी बात कह कर मैं अपनी बात समाप्त करता हूँ।

SHRI SHANKAR ROY CHOWDHURY (West Bengal): Madam, like my other colleagues, I begin my speech by complimenting the hon. Finance Minister for bringing out a Mid-Year Review of the country's economy, which is a novelty in itself and sets a very good trend for the future. I think this Mid-Year Review has got a whole lot of data, figures and statistics. But, I think, underlying this debate, today, is the same debate that has gone on over a series of debates in the past whether we are following the correct economic policy. As we speak today, in this debate, we must understand that India, in the Human Development index of the world-whatever may have been our economic, technological or other achievements-ranked at 115th of the total 162 nations which have been taken into account. So, today, we are still a nation in search of a path. We are still a nation in search of a doctrine. Madam, fifty years ago, at the time of our independence, we had two models in front of us. We had the socialist economy and we had the free-market model. Now, two economies were ideologically in conflict with each other because, at that time the Cold War was going on. As a part of the Cold War process, in our effort, perhaps, to maintain an equidistance from both the blocks and also the mind set, the orientation, the background, the education of our leaders also had an effect on this, we consciously chose a mixed economy model with an accent on the public sector and a very small private sector. It was said, at that time, that the public sector would occupy the commanding heights of the economy and we progressed on this model until the end of the Cold War, that is, the demolition of the

Berlin Wall in 1990. After that, we found, that the economic model that we had been following was the socialist model. The chief proponent of it was Russia. When the Cold War collapsed-politically, militarily and also economically—that economic theory also collapsed. Now, why did it collapse? I think this is the interesting part of it. Madam, the socialist economic model collapsed in Russia, along with it the socialist, political doctrine. But, now, when we look at the USA, we found that the so-called free-market model was not really giving very much results as far as the development is concerned. The development of the USA is good. The growth rate of the GDP—though they have a very good GDP—perhaps, largest in the world. The growth rate of the GDP in the USA and the Western countries is not more than 1-1.5 per cent. So, now, when we are adopting a model, based on a Western economy, a Western model, a free market model, these essential basic facts must be behind us. We must keep this fact behind us. Yet, at the same time, we find, when the free-market economy was applied in Brazil and in some of the other South American countries, there was a total disaster. But, funnily enough, the free-market economy succeeded in China, though camouflage, under a new brand name. The new brand name was Communism. So, I think, all of us have, now, to pay more attention on the basic direction that our economy must take. As far as the failure of socialism in Russia or the success of capitalism, or, free-market in China is concerned, we have, I think, to examine the politico-economic context in which these things are happening. In Russia, I feel, the socialist model failed because Russia attempted political liberalisation under Mr. Gorbachev, which is called Glasnost. At the same time, it also attempted economic restructuring. The contradiction became apparent because economic restructuring leads, inevitably, to what President Clinton used to refer as the growing pains of economy. That we cannot afford. It succeeded in China because the Chinese, with a great wisdom, they maintain, politically, a single party dictatorship. No dissent was tolerated there. There are no human rights. No economic dissent. No debate. But, the free-market policy was pushed and China is registering sustained growth of 10 per cent. But, in India, we already have a flourishing democracy. Under those circumstances, we are now trying to implement a change in our economic policy. What is the highest achievable rate of growth for us? The Eight Plan document calls for 8 per cent, there have been statements by eminent public personalities, in the Government, mentioning a figure of 10 per cent. Is this possible for us? That, I think, is the basic debate we have to go into. I think, under our circumstances of political freedom,

with freedom to express dissent, with freedom to oppose, our overall achievable economic growth is, perhaps, not more than 5-5.5 per cent, which, indeed, is the figure quoted by the RBI in this book, though, admittedly, due to other reasons-drought, etc. So, I think, when we discuss the mid-year review, it is not merely a discussion on statistics, it is a discussion on as to which way do we go, and what do we do. And, this point has been made by other speakers also. Our economic policy must also bring with it the social stability. We cannot have an act of dissent, social dissent, as a result of economic policies. If, as a result, we have to go slow, we have to go slow. Secondly, we have to increase the purchasing power of the people. This is not entirely under the purview of the Economic Ministry. The only way to increase the purchasing power of people is land reforms. An example of that is my own State, the truth of which I realised after I left my former profession and went back to my State, and I travelled inside the State. The whole State had been transformed, and I do realise that it was transformed because the purchasing power of the small peasants, the small landholders has increased. That has, primarily, been due to the policy of land reforms. Unless the very basic structure of land reforms takes place in this country, we will not be able to achieve the rate of growth that we set for ourselves to achieve. We have to create jobs, whether they are in the public sector or in the private sector. Technology will not bring jobs. Certainly, we have to get high technology. But it will not bring jobs. We have to have self-employment, small-scale industries, medium-scale industries, all of which are under threat from increasing globalisation. What is the way out? We have to find an answer to that. Finally, when we globalise, when we have free market, we cannot do so at the expense of our indigenous industry or indigenous agriculture. Of course, we have signed the WTO Agreement. There is no backing out of that. But we will have to, proactively, utilize all the provisions of the WTO to ensure that our indigenous capabilities are protected. Ultimately, Madam, I think, the answer for us lies in a restrained growth rate, in a mixed economy, and that is something on which we will have to create a consensus. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If I strictly go by the time, then, there is no time is left at all. There are three more speakers-Shri Manoj Bhattacharya, Shri Lalit Suri, and Shri Robert Kharshiing. Now, you have to decide how much time you are going to take, if I am generous. Two-two minutes?

SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA (West Bengal): 'Two minutes' is no generosity.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I can't be more.

SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Madam, at the outset, I must once again appeal to you that this a very important and sensitive matter. I, on behalf of my party, the revolutionary Socialist Party, have certain particular view. I must be given an opportunity to, at least, speak on this very important matter. If it is not possible in a Short Duration Discussion, we should find out some other way so that we can explicitly discuss about it, because it concerns the entire nation; it concerns the entire population of this country. So, restricting time of speeches creates too much problem for us. How can it be reoriented? I had prepared in some other way. I can't keep on changing every minute. It is extremely difficult. However, without going much into philosophy, I would like to put certain questions, through you, to the hon. Finance Minister. In this Mid-Year Review, one of the conditions of the donor countries was that accountability and transparency should be maintained, even though, they don't mean much to many of the country. However, I am not going into those details, because of shortage of time. Madam, it is written on page 4, 'That during the current year, high value addition in employment intensive industries, like steel and textiles, are showing signs of resurgence. The steel sector appears poised for a turn-around after the subdued performance in the past few years.' My question to the hon. Finance Minister, through you, Madam, is in that case, are they going to review their decision of disinvesting Durgapur alloy Steel Plant, and the Salem Steel Plant, which have a high potential for employment. This is quite important for the nation, since from December 2001, there has been a rise in the international prices. And that a U-turn has been taken, I would like to know from the Finance Minister whether he is going to assure with us that these core sectors of ours will not be, unnecessarily, mindlessly disinvested, thereby, compromising on the employment potential of those as well.

I would like to come to the service sector now. I would like to make some very interesting points here. In this country of ours, the share in services of the GDP has increased. If we compare the figures of 1980's and 1990's we will find that in the 1980's the share of service sector in GDP was 36 per cent, now it has increased to 51 per cent. It is not a unique feat of India alone. Even in Latin America, the share in service

sector has increased from 51 to 58 per cent. In Sub-Saharan Africa, it has increased from 38 per cent to 50 per cent—the hon. Finance Minister must be aware of this. In Pakistan, it has increased from 46 per cent to 52 per cent; and it is also more than that of ours. In Bangladesh, it has increased from 34 per cent to 54 per cent; which is again much more than that of ours. In Sri Lanka, it has increased from 43 per cent to 53 per cent. Now, I would like to make a very interesting point. See the employment potential that has been generated by the service sector in these countries. In Thailand, the employment in service sector is 52 per cent. In Mexico, it is 44 per cent, Brazil, 43 per cent, Pakistan 45 per cent, Malaysia 47 per cent, Indonesia, 37 per cent, and kindly,—Madam, hold your breath—in India, it is only 20 per cent. The share in the service sector of the GDP has increased to 51 per cent, but the employment generated is only 20 per cent. The position of women employment in the service sector of our country is of a much greater concern, Madam, this is for your knowledge also, in Hong Kong, it is 80 per cent, Mexico—62 per cent, Hungary—70 per cent, Thailand—73 per cent, South Korea—65 per cent, Malaysia—58 per cent. And kindly hold your breath, in India, Madam, women employment in the service sector is only 20 per cent. So, for whom the bell tolls? Where has your election manifesto gone? You had assured that you will be creating some one crore jobs every year. The economic policies, which you are pursuing so vigorously, are reducing the job opportunities. That is why we call it a jobless and a voiceless doctrine of perishing the civilization of ours. (*Time-bell*)—I know that you will not be allowing me to speak, even though I can speak for hours together.

One of my colleagues from the Treasury Benches made serious point that India has become resurgent in the pharmaceutical industry. Incidentally, anybody who knows about the development of the pharmaceutical industry in this country, they will agree with me that this industry has taken a turn around after the Government of India had accepted the recommendations of the Hathi Commission, after instituted the public sector undertakings, like the IDPL and many other public sector undertakings which took the lead in the production of life-saving medicines. And, ultimately, when the production increased, prices came down. Whereas during the last three or four years, the situation has altogether changed. I must say that we are being governed by the Western countries. I agree with my revered

colleague, Dr. Alexander, when he said that we are being dictated. We have been dictated by the Western countries. We are not doing all these things on our own. We have been dictated by the Western countries, the advanced developed countries. All these things have been dictated. And what is the form of dictation? Here is the document in my hand. It is Intellectual Capital, which is being published from Mumbai. It is a newsletter on Intellectual Property Rights and healthcare. We have amended our Patents Act. The second amendment has already been done, even though I did not like it. I wanted that 1970 amendment should be here. For the information of the hon. Minister of Finance, I must say that one Dr. Eric Noehrenberg, he represents International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association, IFPMA, even after second amendment of the Patents Act, where we have converted from process patent to product patent, where you have really gone by the wishes of the multinationals corporations, wishes of the advanced developed countries—in the October-November, 2002, issue—while addressing a meeting of the organisation of Pharmaceutical Producers of India, he has demanded that the lack of clarity in the Indian Patents Act could discourage investment by foreign players and curtail domestic innovation. Dr. Noehrenberg, while speaking at the 36th Annual General Meeting of the Organisation of Pharmaceutical Producers of India (OPPI), observed that the Indian Government should fine tune patent regulations by bringing in more legal clarity and certainty in laying down the criteria for compulsory licensing. Madam, this is the situation. And, by and large, over the last 3-4 years, prices of all essential medicines have gone up by leaps and bounds. For whom the bell tolls? Once again, I ask the hon. Finance Minister. A large population of our country is deprived of the minimum health care. The Government could not ensure even this thing. We talk about China. But, in China, there is a social security net. The Government stands for it. The food is assured, shelter is assured, growth is assured. When you make a comparison with China, you should compare it in totality. You should also compare the social security net of China with the social security net of India. Poverty is growing. The poor people are becoming poorer and the rich people are becoming filthily richer. This is the situation. This is the economy you are following. Once again, I will say that this is the economy which is benefitting the upwardly mobile middle class of this country, who wants to live as per the standards laid down by the America, as per the standards laid down by the Western European

countries, as per the standards laid down by Germany. This economy is not for us. We have never joined the Government to support this sort of economy. (*Time bell rings*). I am concluding, since the time is not in my favour. This doctrine is a doctrine of jobless growth and voiceless growth. This will jeopardise the democracy and the polity of our country that is to come. With these words, I conclude. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Bhattacharya. I think, I believe in progressive and not retrogressive attitude. Now, there are two more names. I think, it is too late. So, I take the sense of the House that if they volunteer themselves not to speak, I will be very happy, because I don't want to invite their anger, is it okay? What will you speak in two minutes? There will be other opportunities.

SHRI ROBERT KHARSHIING (Meghalaya): Madam, I will take only two minutes.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am not sure that you will take two minutes. Okay.

SHRI ROBERT KHARSHIING: Madam, while preparing this speech, I was tempted to speak from a party line. Blame the BJP for the present and the Congress party for the past. But I asked myself, "in economic matters, irrespective of party affiliations, what does the country need today at this moment?" I will restrict my speech to offering three humble suggestions which have a common goal. First is the consensus. In that, I support my senior colleague, Mr. Nilotpal Basu's call for consensus. I strongly urge the Government to formulate its economic policies on the basis of consensus. In the introduction to this document 'Mid-year Review'—the Government has used these words— "The Ministry of Finance deals with public funds as a Trustee". Let us be Trustees for all the people of India, especially the poor and the most marginalised. For years, the German economy was known as the 'motor' that drove ahead the economy of Europe. That is a well-known fact, but on the economic policy of consensus—political consensus. This consensus was their bedrock. The same is the case with the Swiss. In fact, the Swiss call their brand of political and economic consensus their 'magic formula'. They were one of the poorest countries of Europe, involved in fighting and killing among themselves till the four Parties decided to bury their differences for the sake of the country, and formed an all-party perpetual coalition. I, therefore, suggest that the Government sets up an all-party Economic Task Force. Call it by any name, but let it

include everyone and give it teeth. Madam, we will be surprised at the results. There will then be continuity and stability in Government Economic Policy. The country and our allies abroad will know that a change in Government will not change our policies. The Government may argue that it is difficult to agree with the Left Parties. Madam, I belong to the Opposition. But I am not from the Left, but when they speak, I listen. There will be issues on which we disagree with them, but if there is one group to whom I will give a keen ear, it is the Left, in my humble opinion, they are the 'social conscience' of this House. If we can build economic consensus between the BJP, the Congress and the Left, we will send the right message to the whole country. India will become an economic giant. This will be a unique Indian economic model, not Left, not Right, but straight and together, which brings me to my second suggestion.

Madam, I humbly suggest the establishing of an another all-party Committee—or the same could look into this—on poverty alleviation. Madam, it is agonising to see the starvation deaths and the suicides. Poor, tribal and backward people in remote areas are reduced to eating the plants, the leaves and the grass which they earlier used to grow for pigs. I strongly urge upon the Government to convene and establish an all-party body to help the poor.

7.00 P.M.

Madam, my last suggestion is the setting up an all-party Committee to ensure the highest quality standards and transparency in whatever we do, especially, in economic matters, awarding of contracts, etc. There should be no witch-hunting. What has happened in the past has happened. There is no point in looking at the past and blaming people. I suggest a body that will look ahead, at what we can do from now to establish India as a land of quality and openness. In this connection, I welcome the Government's statement that this is a part of the process of opening up of the entire Budget-making process. Sir, this is a very important suggestion because, a lot of money is being wasted. A number of huge American companies have collapsed because of this lowering of standards and fudging of accounts. The newspapers today—The Times of India, the Hindustan Times and other papers—have highlighted the fact that Indians pay about Rs. 26,728 crores or Rs. 267 billion in bribes. People identified 'lack of accountability' as the main factor for this. This is a sad state of affairs. But there is hope. I urge upon the Government of India, through the Ministry of Finance, to take this initiative to immediately set upon an all-party body to suggest and establish the

highest quality, standards and transparency in India...(*Time-bell rings*)... Madam, I would just conclude.

Madam, when I suggest all-party body, I do not mean a one-time meeting, not a one-time consultation but firm, definite and permanent bodies. This should be a permanent process. With these words, I conclude my speech. Thank you, Madam.

SHRI LALIT SURI (Uttar Pradesh): Madam, since the time is very short, I will just speak for only two minutes.

Madam, I compliment the hon. Finance Minister for bringing this Mid-year Review of the Economy.

Because of paucity of time, I would just like to highlight one or two things.

The greatest generation of employment is in three sectors—housing, infrastructure and tourism. What we feel is that all these three sectors have not been properly geared up to the expectations. Therefore, the employment is not as much as it should be in these sectors.

I shall just emphasise on the tourism sector. We see in neighbouring countries tourism has grown many-fold. It has increased from 1.5 million, which was there in China a few years ago, to about 30 million right now. In this particular sector, we see that there is a lot of growth potential for the country. The maximum employment we can generate out of this particular sector if it is properly looked into.

These days we see there are a lot of travel advisories. These set us back quite a lot. For instance, today we read in newspapers that Israel has issued a travel advisory not to travel to Goa for fear of some terrorist attempt there. Travel advisories in the past have also been carried out. They actually, to me, are a back-door economic sanctions to a country. The reason for this is that with the travel advisories, not only tourists, but also business people and executives do not travel. With a travel advisory this particular sector of the country goes haywire, with the result nobody wants to travel to the rest of the country. For example, in November, there was a half-page advertisement in London saying that at the famous Pushkar fair there is going to be a terrorist attack. The result was that the people who should have gone there, did not go. Similarly, during the Gujarat elections, the same thing happened. The Government, especially through the hon. Finance Minister, could use

its influence and take a strict action and see that travel advisories are curtailed as far as possible. If you see on 9/11 in America, such a big incident happened, but there was no travel advisory against them. Similarly, in England, the IRA is frequently resorting to attacks, but there was no travel advisory. My request is that if the travel advisories could be somehow stopped, this will add to the much needed foreign exchange earnings for the country. With these words, I conclude.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Reply would be tomorrow after the Question Hour. The discussion is complete with the satisfaction of everybody. Therefore, the House is now adjourned till 11 A.M. tomorrow.

The House then adjourned at two minutes past seven of the clock till eleven of the clock on Thursday, the 19th December, 2002.