



PUBLIC ISSUES BEFORE PARLIAMENT



VIJAY DARDA

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PARLIAMENT

VIJAY DARDA

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**The Book “Public Issue Before Parliament”
is dedicated to the common who considers
Parliament as an embodiment of his hopes
and aspirations.**



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सत्यमेव जयते

राष्ट्रपति
भारत गणराज्य
**PRESIDENT
REPUBLIC OF INDIA**

MESSAGE

I extend my warm greetings and felicitations to Shri Vijay Darda on bringing out the book "Public Issues Before Parliament".

Elected Parliaments and legislatures are the most critical ingredient of any true democracy. In our political system, legislators are representatives of the people. Being a representative of the people is a matter of privilege and a great honour. This privilege however carries with it great responsibility. Legislators are entrusted with the responsibility of enacting legislations, discussing issues of governance and public interest, acting as a voice of the people and redressing their grievances through the legislative forum. The responsibility of ensuring that actions of the Government are in harmony with the wishes and interests of the people rests with elected representatives. It is through the effective discharge of duties by legislators that the Rule of Law becomes a living reality of our society. Legislators must always remember that they act as Trustees of the public and that they need to be exemplary models of good conduct and responsible behaviour.

I hope that the range of topics covered in the book touching upon different issues concerning the common man will be a useful asset to all readers.

I wish the book all success and complement Shri Vijay Darda on this initiative.

(Pranab Mukherjee)

New Delhi
December 11, 2012



सत्यमेव जयते

उप-राष्ट्रपति, भारत

VICE-PRESIDENT OF INDIA

VPS/M-1/2013

MESSAGE

I am happy to know that Shri Vijay Darda, Member of Parliament is publishing his book 'Public Issues before Parliament', which is a compilation of his speeches and questions raised during his tenure in Rajya Sabha.

Shri Darda is a distinguished Parliamentarian who has taken active part in the debates, discussions and proceedings of the august House, of which he is a Member. His areas of interest are people centric, with special focus on rural development and issues related to farmers and children.

I extend my heartiest felicitations to Shri Darda on the publication his book and wish him all success.

(M. HAMID ANSARI)

New Delhi

February 12, 2013



सत्यमेव जयते

प्रधान मंत्री

Prime Minister

MESSAGE

I am happy to know that Shri Vijay Darda is compiling his speeches in Parliament in the form of a book titled "Public Issues Before Parliament".

The Rajya Sabha is an institution whose deliberations over the years have enriched our parliamentary democracy and nurtured our federal polity. Over the last one decade of his tenure in the Rajya Sabha, Shri Darda has been a witness to many historic developments. I am sure that Shri Darda's book will not only throw light on his work as a public representative but will also enhance our understanding of important issues that our country has had to deal with in the recent years.

On the occasion of the publication of Shri Darda's book, I wish him all the very best in his endeavours to serve our country and our people.


(Manmohan Singh)

New Delhi
10 July, 2012



अध्यक्ष, लोक सभा
SPEAKER, LOK SABHA

New Delhi
3 April 2013

MESSAGE

I am happy to learn that Shri Vijay Darda, member of the Rajya Sabha, is bringing out a publication titled, '*Public Issues before Parliament*'.

Shri Vijay Darda has been actively voicing the concerns of the people in the Parliament. He is a renowned journalist known for raising issues of national interest. The present collection reflects his views on a wide range of subjects, as expressed during participation in the business of the Rajya Sabha for over a decade.

I wish Shri Vijay Darda long years of happiness and continued good health.

Meira Kumar (Smt.)



L.K. ADVANI
CHAIRMAN
BJP Parliamentary Party



February 08, 2013

MESSAGE

I am glad to know that Shri Vijay Darda Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) has compiled the speeches he has delivered and the questions he has raised in the House during his tenure in the form of a book titled "Public Issues Before Parliament."

Shri Darda has been an active member of the Upper House, and I am sure that his participation in the discussions of his House must have benefited the deliberations.

Please accept my good wishes for the successful publication of his book.

L. K. Advani
(L. K. Advani)



शरद पवार
SHARAD PAWAR



D.O. No. 1681/JAM
कृषि एवं खाद्य प्रसंस्करण उद्योग मंत्री
भारत सरकार
MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE &
FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

14 June, 2012

MESSAGE

I am happy to know that Shri Vijay Darda, Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) is intending to carryout the task of compilation of his speeches and questions that he had raised in the Rajya Sabha during his decade long tenure in the august house in the form of a book titled 'Public Issues Before Parliament.

Shri Vijay Darda always tried to draw the attention of the Government on many crucial matters and has contributed his mite on every possible issue that the House was seized of. Revisiting those issues which have been deliberated in the Parliament will be a valuable resource material for those endeavouring towards social improvement and also for the students of Political Science. I am sure reading this collection of articles will be a stimulating experience and help them in keeping things in perspective.

My best wishes for a grand success for the ensuing publication on public issues.


(SHARAD PAWAR)



नेता, प्रतिपक्ष
(लोक सभा)



Leader of Opposition
(Lok Sabha)

सुषमा स्वराज
Sushma Swaraj

26 मार्च, 2013

संदेश

अत्यंत हर्ष का विषय है कि श्री विजय दर्डा, सांसद पिछले एक दशक से राज्यसभा में अपने द्वारा दिए गए भाषणों एवं प्रश्नों को संकलित कर Public Issues Before Parliament नामक पुस्तक में प्रकाशित करवा रहे हैं।

इस प्रकार के स्व-आकलन से आत्ममंथन करने का अवसर मिलता है एवं जनता को भी अपने प्रतिनिधि द्वारा किए जा रहे कार्य की जानकारी प्राप्त होती है।

पुस्तक के सफल प्रकाशन के लिए मेरी शुभकामनाएं।


सुषमा स्वराज



ARUN JAITLEY
Member of Parliament
Leader of Opposition
(Rajya Sabha)



सत्यमेव जयते

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Tel. : 23016707, 23034883
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February 16, 2013

Message

I compliment Shri Vijay Darda, on publication of his book '*Public Issues before Parliament*'. Besides being a Member of Rajya Sabha, he is on several Parliamentary committees, which make him conversant with different categories of important issues before Parliament. Also his long career in journalism has given him a ringside view of political & public dynamism.



(Arun Jaitley)



प्रो. पी. जे. कुरियन
Prof. P. J. Kurien



संसद भवन, नई दिल्ली
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उप सभापति, राज्य सभा
Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha

19 February, 2013

MESSAGE

I am very happy to learn that my friend and colleague in the Rajya Sabha, Shri Vijay Darda, is bringing out a book, "Public Issues Before Parliament", highlighting his decade-long parliamentary career.

The most important ingredient that goes into the sustenance of democracy is the people's perception about the institutions and individuals immediately associated with it. The perception about the individual MP and of the collective body of Parliament is crucial in it. A highly commercialised, sensation-hungry and competitive media seldom gives any attention to the painstaking efforts that MPs make in articulating the grievances of the people on the floor of the House and through that in drawing the attention of the government for their effective redressal. The best reward for a hard-working Member is the awareness and recognition of the good work he does for the people by the people themselves, whom he represents ultimately. The attempt by Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Shri Vijay Darda, to record and highlight his performance as a Member over a decade, in the form of a book, is highly commendable as it, apart from recording for posterity, also gives opportunity for introspection. It is in such proud self-assessment that the people's representatives draw the utmost satisfaction.

I extend my best wishes to Shri Vijay Darda, MP, for the success of his venture.



(P.J. Kurien)

Shri Vijay Darda
Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha)
'Yavatmal House'
49, Lodhi Estate
New Delhi - 3



SITARAM YECHURY

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
(RAJYA SABHA)

Leader

CPI (M) Group

CHAIRMAN

DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY
STANDING COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT,
TOURISM AND CULTURE



सत्यमेव जयते

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A.K. Gopalan Bhavan, 27-29
Bhai Veer Singh Marg,
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My dear Brother Vijay Darda,

April 26, 2013

I wish to congratulate my good friend and colleague in Rajya Sabha for undertaking this important venture of compiling his important interventions and questions that he had raised in the House over a decade.

Mr Darda has been an active and alert member losing no opportunity to intervene on issues of regional and national interests. He has raised a range of issues from the peasants' suicides in Vidharbha and other parts of the country; against female foeticide; protection of child rights; protection of whistle blowers; judicial reforms; including extending benefits of information technology to rural areas.

This collection is indeed a report to the people about Mr Vijay Darda's contribution to improving the health of our nation and our people as a public representative in the Indian parliament.

I would only like to wish that he continues to discharge such duties to the country and people in the future.


Sitaram Yechury



**To safeguard democracy the people
must have a keen sense of independence,
self-respect, and their oneness.
~ MAHATMA GANDHI ~**









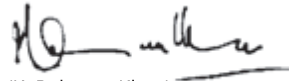
FOREWORD

Mr Vijay Darda is endowed with a multi-faceted personality. Besides being an acclaimed media magnate, he has espoused many causes aimed at improving the lot of the downtrodden and the deprived sections of the society. Having inherited an illustrious legacy and vision of his late father, Mr Jawaharlal Darda, a renowned freedom fighter, a dedicated Gandhian and eminent social activist, Mr Darda's primary mission in life is to carry forward the yeoman and pioneering services of his father in the field of spread of education amongst tribals and economically backward people, and to further strengthen the social and economic infrastructure, the foundation of which was so admirably laid by Mr Jawaharlal Darda. His initiation into journalism was a means to give vent to the aspirations of the common man and uphold the freedom of press. His dedication and perseverance saw him establishing one of the successful media groups – The Lokmat Group of Newspapers (now Lokmat Media Pvt. Ltd.) which is No. 1 in Maharashtra and Goa and number 4 in the country. His services were duly recognized nationally and internationally, by conferring of several awards in the field of journalism and mass media and other related areas. He diversified the educational facilities in Yavatmal, a backward district of Vidarbha, and now more than 16,000 students are studying in disciplines like Academics, Science, Technology, Law, Sports, Teachers Training, etc. The main thrust of his approach is “affordable quality education” to poor and marginalized sections. Social, economic and educational uplift is an article of faith with him.

In Parliament, during his earlier two terms in the Rajya Sabha, Mr Darda's active participation in parliamentary business has been abundantly visible, may be around 3500 questions, introduction

of more than 20 Bills, making around 20 special mentions and moving four resolutions, etc. Through his forceful expression on topical and burning issues that affect millions of our countrymen, he has been instrumental in making the voiceless heard. He has shown his deep understanding of various subjects and has deliberated on such issues with equal élan in the House. His disciplined approach and adherence to rules and procedures and knowledge of the nuances of parliamentary functioning always put him in good stead while participating in the debates. I have always found him participating in meaningful and crucial issues that confront the society. During his present term, he is further enriching the proceedings of the Rajya Sabha through his purposeful, sustained and active participation from time to time.

This publication attempts to recapitulate the significant contributions made by Mr Vijay Darda during his stint in Parliament. All those involved in this publication deserve appreciation and accolades as they have vividly captured the charisma and exuberance of Mr Darda.



(K. Rahman Khan)

Former Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha
and Union Minister

**A HUMANIST
PAR EXCELLENCE**



A HUMANIST PAR EXCELLENCE

The early years of independence India reverberated with the spirit of new-found freedom. To those who dedicated their lives for the country's freedom, those were the heady times when every moment was savoured with a sense of pride and glory, achievement and fulfilment. The feeling of national unity and fraternity was so overriding that each one wanted to be identified with spirit of nationalism.

It was during such momentous time, on May 14, 1950, that a star appeared in the sky of Yavatmal, a small town in Maharashtra, when Mr Jawaharlal Darda and Mrs. Veena Devi were blessed with a son. Mr Jawaharlal Darda, the legendary figure of the freedom movement, was so overwhelmed by the sentiment of victory in the form of the country's Independence that he joyously christened the little boy as 'Vijay' – meaning 'victory'.

To Mr Jawaharlal Darda, more than the name, the deep and abiding symbolism behind it was important. He wanted Vijay to be true to his name; to have the courage of conviction to face any challenge in life; to fight against any kind of evil, oppression and injustice and above all, to imbibe the sublime values and ethos of freedom movement so as to contribute meaningfully to the task of nation building.

He also wanted his son to remain sensitive to the urges and aspirations of the people, especially the poor and the deprived, to lend voice to the voiceless, to help provide accessible and affordable education to the rural poor, to passionately advocate their concerns and to display the highest standards of ethics and morality in public life.

These were, no doubt, the noble expectations, and legitimate ones, of a father deeply rooted in the values and traditions of the freedom movement from his beloved son. As a responsible father, Mr Jawaharlal



Darda was more focused in his parenting. He subtly imparted the life skills, which he earned in the august company of the stalwarts of the freedom movement, to his son with the belief that it would stand him in good stead in the rough and tumble of life.

He helped Vijay imbibe the inspirational values of life and provided him adequate exposure to grow as a self-assured, confident and independent person.

For Vijay Darda, his father was his one and only role model, whose name he bears as a badge of honour. He proudly inherits the rich legacy of his father and constantly endeavours to make his shining legacy lustrous.

As a respectful tribute to the sacred memory of his revered parents, he has founded a number of educational institutions in their name in Yavatmal. These educational institutions working in diverse areas from technical education to physical education and humanities to science have been catering to the varied educational needs of the students of the region and also outside it. He has also got erected a memorial named "Prernasthal" meaning 'place of inspiration' at his native place Yavatmal to commemorate the memory and legacy of his father and this place has been a source of inspiration for all natives of Yavatmal and also a destination of all visiting dignitaries. He is not content with his position as merely the founder of such institutions. He also guides their long-term policy planning and ensures their growth and excellence.

Many would like to believe that being an entrepreneur, he is only expected to set up these institutions to reap profits. But then, he has never been an entrepreneur in the narrow sense of the term. He has displayed a far sighted vision in the field of education.

Like his illustrious father, he has always believed that unless a sound educational base is created in the region, students, especially from the poor and deprived sections, would not have access to quality education



and eventually, to jobs and other economic avenues. Education, he believes, is the key to the progressive empowerment of the poor and the downtrodden.

It is this sacred commitment which is reflected in the mental make-up of the generations of students who have passed out from the hallowed portals of the educational institutions he founded.

Vijay Darda is a fiercely independent person. He believes that personal liberty must be protected at all times. For this, he always underlines the paramount importance of having eternal vigilance. Media, he feels, can play a proactive role of a watchdog.

Vijay Darda has been a tireless and fearless crusader of freedom of Press. His attachment with media is not just sentimental or an avenue to make profits and for self-projection. His approach is that of a professional.

A journalist by education and training, Vijay Darda is a quintessential media person, having unshakable faith in the role and importance of media in a democracy. He has been honoured with several prestigious awards in recognition of his multi-faceted contributions towards enhancing the standards of journalism.

Being the chief proprietor of Lokmat Media Pvt. Ltd. and IBN Lokmat news channel, he presides over one of India's largest media establishments. He is wedded to the ideals of media freedom, wider dissemination of information, citizen's empowerment and democratic governance.

While media's expanding role makes him happy, its increasing decline in probity, credibility and ethics worries him. As a parliamentarian, he is equally perturbed by media's growing preference for sensationalism at the expense of seriousness. He believes that media can become a vehicle for change by building an important interface with legislature and the civil society.

Vijay Darda, in his dual role as a media person as well as a media



manager, has constantly endeavoured to reconcile both the interests in a meaningful way. That is why, today, Lokmat, under his caring patronage, has emerged as a happy and contented family, ever expanding its frontiers and constantly increasing its outreach.

Vijay Darda believes that newspapers must evolve as institutions by extending their canvass beyond mere news and reporting to the concerns of the larger society.

Under his guidance, Lokmat has grown up to become a great institution by espousing larger public issues and the socio-economic development of the state of Maharashtra.

Today, the complexion of media has undergone a sea change and more changes are underway. The single most important catalyst for this change is technology. With revolution in Information and Communication Technologies, the reach of the media has vastly increased, so also its product quality. There is great demand from the readers for better and wider information coverage in a presentable format. Technology has helped media to respond meaningfully.

In the emerging scenario, Lokmat can hardly afford to remain detached from the technological changes. As a dynamic entrepreneur, Vijay Darda, with his educational training in printing technology, visits international printing and printing machinery exhibitions, keeping tab on the latest. He is an authority on the technological side of newspaper production. This gives him the ability to guide Lokmat in acquiring excellence in product quality and stay ahead of others.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Vijay Darda is conscious of the social role a business enterprise must perform, even though increasing social demands might reduce long-term profitability. He is of the view that a literate, educated, healthy, happy and enlightened society is an asset for the corporate sector that ensures balanced and enduring growth of business and industry. He has, therefore, set up several trusts and foundations for promotion of



worthy and noble causes.

Being a socially responsible corporate citizen, Vijay Darda has worked to strengthen indigenous industrial base in the backward region of Vidarbha by setting up many large, medium and small industries.

Vijay Darda is a deeply sensitive person. To him, maximization of wealth generation is as much important an obligation as serving public. Commitment to humanitarian work for him has been an inseparable part of his public life.

Whenever natural calamities have struck any part of the country, he has spontaneously come forward to help the people in distress with relief, rehabilitation and construction of hospitals, schools, hostels and houses for a healthy and safe human habitat.

A devout Jain, service and sacrifice come naturally to Vijay Darda. By following the noble teachings of Bhagwan Mahavir, he is ever keen to trace the fountain-head of universal love and compassion in all his actions and readily offers his services at the altar of suffering humanity. Being at the helm of Sakal Jain Samaj, he has been at the forefront of spreading the universal message of peace and non-violence across the society.

Vijay Darda has always believed that for accelerating economic growth, the country needs a strong infrastructural base. Ours is a vast and diverse country with large variations in infrastructural facilities. Correspondingly, our problems too are massive and complex. Be it roads, airports, ports, irrigation, power, both rural and urban infrastructure – all our needs are large.

It is imperative that adequate infrastructure is put in place for accelerating economic development. He is, therefore, committed to building infrastructural facilities in sectors like power, road connectivity, and water-shed management and so on for the economic well-being of the vast sections of the poor and the deprived inhabiting the backward regions.



To Vijay Darda, economic regeneration of the country as a whole is a prime objective. In his own way, he gives it undivided attention. "We need to rally as a people, as a society, if we are to realise our true potential as a nation," he says.

"An economically weak India with islands of prosperity and oceans of poverty cannot command the respect of international community", he cautions.

Vijay Darda has been deeply concerned at the growing incidence of farmers' suicide in the Vidarbha region. He not only articulated their concerns in the country's highest decision making fora but also facilitated government's special package of assistance for the well being of the farmers of Vidarbha region.

Conscious of the deprivation suffered by the small and marginal farmers, he made all out efforts to ensure timely supply of scientific know-how, agricultural inputs and institutional credits to the farmers in distress. His work for and amongst the farmers, has been truly remarkable. He believes that farmers' problems need to be addressed holistically and for this agriculture must receive the highest national priority. There can be no short cuts.

Vijay Darda has been a serious parliamentarian. Parliament to him is the country's highest democratic forum. "Parliament has immense power and potential to secure the well-being of the common man," he says. He has thus used the varied parliamentary devices to raise the issues of vital national importance.

His speeches in Parliament, shorn of populism and rhetoric, are solid and full of substance. His wide experience in professional and public life enables him to speak on subjects as diverse as agriculture, industry, technology, governance and social welfare.

The flow and clarity of thought, articulated in easy and simple language, invariably ensured that all sections of the House hear him with seriousness. His keenness to utilise the forum of Parliament to



serve the best interests of the common man is the hallmark of his parliamentary life.

Vijay Darda has many virtues, but the most striking is his deep sense of humility, which he has inherited from his illustrious father. He never flaunts his wealth as he feels that he is merely its trustee. Indeed, he has excelled in his endeavour and set up a vast array of institutions aimed at benefiting the people inhabiting the margins of the society. At the core of his heart, he is truly a humanist par excellence.



**A DISTINGUISHED
PARLIAMENTARIAN**



A DISTINGUISHED PARLIAMENTARIAN

Thousands of members have graced the Rajya Sabha since its inception in 1952. Many illustrious personalities served the Upper House with distinction and left an indelible imprint on the nation's polity. Vijay Darda is one such member who has performed his duties as a parliamentarian with remarkable sincerity and commitment and, apart from raising host of important issues ranging from day-to-day concerns of the people to those bearing larger systemic and national significance, he is the lone member to have mooted the idea of establishment of a House Commission to look after the whole gamut of administration of the Rajya Sabha and matters connected therewith. He moved a Private member's Bill to this effect.

Carving a niche in a legislature is a daunting task for any legislator that has others who may be as good, if not better, and equally keen to leave their mark during their terms.

Vijay Darda has shown that in Parliament where members are many and the time is limited, the ideas, the timing and the manner of putting them across, in a succinct manner, is the proper way to leave that mark.

While many prefer to make long speeches and others raise slogans or stall proceedings to make their presence felt, Vijay Darda remains steadfast in introducing and piloting Private Member's Bills. This is a painstaking task, even, at times, drab and dry. A Private Member's Bill seldom finds a way into the statute book. But the interest it generates among the members and the new ideas it brings to the fore have made it a unique parliamentary exercise; it has become the most eagerly awaited item of week's business and most active and dedicated members attach top priority to debate on the Private Member's Bills.

If asked -- Who makes the law in India, many would intuitively answer: Parliament. It is an obvious feature of our representative democracy that the laws governing the institutions of democracy are made by the



elected representatives in Parliament. Making legislation is one of the core functions of Parliament. Logically, therefore, one of the primary responsibilities of a Member of Parliament is to constructively contribute to the law-making process.

Law-making is a fairly complex and elaborate process in which Members of Parliament are required to debate on the purpose of the Bill, besides its clause-by-clause examination on its merit, requirement, and the long-term impact on society and the people at large. When the Bills are referred to the department-related Parliamentary Standing Committees, these committees consisting of MPs call for evidence from experts on the draft legislation and analyze and assimilate the varying viewpoints on the Bill. Members cutting across party lines examine the legislative proposals in the larger public interest and present reports to Parliament largely based on consensus.

In the House, when the Bills are taken up, the members through their valuable interventions and amendments seek to tighten the loose ends of the Bill to obviate any possibility of legal challenge after its passage. They often put forward their political views during the course of the legislative debate, yet the goal of public welfare invariably guides their actions. In the process, they ensure that no legislation is hastily made and the public good is not sacrificed at the altar of political expediency.

This is a sacred duty. Every Member of Parliament is supposed to perform it to ensure that Parliament passes meaningful legislations.

In case of Private Member's Bills, the position is, however, different. This parliamentary process attracts little publicity and often dismissed as individual suggestions to bolster the legal framework. This, at times, is an inconvenience for the government of the day, as the minister concerned replies to the debate. Most members would say, "kuchh hona nahin hai" (nothing is going to materialise). The exception is when it highlights the gaps in the public policies and aims at changing the general law of the land. That is when everyone sits up and takes note of it. A Private Member's Bill also reflects an elected representative's core concerns, his or her vision of an ideal society and often seeks to explore those areas which usually fail to attract a bureaucracy-driven



government's attention. There have been many such ideas coming through Private Member's Bills which later became the main content of a government legislation.

One is reminded of a Private Member's Bill of late G. M. Banatwala regarding maintenance to divorced Muslim women. What would have been a non-descript legislative exercise gained importance in the light of the Shah Bano Case. The government opposed the Bill, but in the light of the Supreme Court judgment, changed its course and brought about its own legislation.

There is a detailed process of bringing Private Member's Bills. A member who wants to introduce a Bill has to give prior notice thereof. The period for introduction of a Bill is one month. The notice is to be accompanied by a copy of the Bill and an explanatory Statement of Objects and Reasons. Members submitting the Bills are supposed to draft the Bills themselves in proper format. Members get the right to discuss such a Bill through the ballot, which is a sort of legislative lucky prize draw. This method is resorted to as the demands for bringing Private Member's Bills are far too many and the opportunities for the same in the stipulated time of less than three hours on a Friday when Parliament is in session, are far too less.

Some members are enormously keen to win the ballot and get the opportunity to discuss legislation for which they have spent much of their public life advocating. Through a Private Member's Bill, they endeavour to make worthwhile changes to the law, knowing very well that the Bill is unlikely to become a law, unless sponsored by the government of the day.

Vijay Darda is one such member who is always passionate to win a ballot to bring forth a Private Member's Bill on an issue of lasting importance. He is always bubbling with new ideas; he is ever enthusiastic to make his mark as a serious parliamentarian.

If one closely follows the parliamentary career of Vijay Darda, one finds an impressive account of his role as a parliamentarian. He is one such member who takes his duty as a Member of Parliament very seriously.



He has demonstrated remarkable dynamism in bringing a host of Private Member's Bills to highlight the gaps in the key areas of public policies, besides delivering on his personal convictions and commitments.

He has fully utilised the legislative process to articulate the legitimate interests and causes he espouses. In his legislative initiatives as a Private Member, welfare of the vulnerable sections of the society, protection of their rights and liberties and issues of larger public interests have figured prominently.

One of the notable features of Vijay Darda's career as a parliamentarian is that he has never shied away from raising the burning issues of the day. Hence, he takes up the cause of whistle-blowers and seeks protection for them. He wants regulation on mobile phones with camera. He does not hesitate to talk about the cash-for-question scam that involves even the fellow parliamentarians.

He was so exercised by the increasing burden of the school bag on the backs of our school children that he wanted the weight of the school bag to be prescribed. It requires a great sensitivity to dwell on this issue, which has been a victim of neglect and apathy of the policy makers. On the other hand, given his familiarity with technology, he wants a legislation to protect database and wants the consumer protected from the fraud played, at times, in the form of 'tele shopping'.

Rarely, if at all, a parliamentarian would have moved so many Private Member's Bills and on such a wide variety of issues that deeply touch the people's lives.

The Statement of Objects and Reasons of some of the Private Member's Bills piloted by Vijay Darda listed below will provide a glimpse of his multifaceted personality which is ingrained in his deep thinking and vast knowledge on several issues of abiding public interests:



(I) The Children School Bags (Limitation on Weight) Bill 2006 :

Small children often have been seen tottering to school with heavy backpacks. The results of this excessive weight are more serious than ever imagined. Some children may develop a permanent stoop due to the heavy pressure on their spinal cord, which would lead to permanent damage to their physical structure and back muscles.

It is a medically proven fact that lifting heavy burdens for a long time or long distance is not good for anyone, especially children. In the tender age, bones are delicate and excessive weight can misalign the spine leading to offensive skeletal and muscle maturity. Carrying a heavy bag on the back often results in aches in the back and shoulders. Forward bending at the back makes the work of breathing harder. Children carrying bags weighing more than 10 per cent of their body weight have been found to have poorer lung function.

Yet, life goes on as before for most families even after they hear their children complaining about pain in back and neck. Growing weight of school bag and its effect on health of the children has become a matter of grave concern for every parent. School authorities have also been expressing their concern over the issue but nothing is being done to lessen the burden of school bags. Along with books, children have to carry their sports uniform, gear and other equipment with them. If lockers are provided to children in schools, it will allow them to leave sports equipment, and certain books and notebooks in schools. Further, the schools should issue common instructions to students in advance that which books will be needed and which can be left at home and teaching the child to put down the bag when waiting at the bus stop, in the assembly, and to use both straps of the bag, etc. Some schools have adopted a way for reducing the weight of school bags. They do not send all the books back home. Only those books are kept in the bags, which the students are required to study at home. This has been working very well for junior classes. Therefore, there is an urgent need to enact legislation for the whole of the country to save the children from carrying heavy loads on their back.



(ii) The Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (Amendment) Bill, 2006:

The Commissions for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005 was enacted by Parliament in December 2005. The Act deals with the constitution of a National Commission and State Commissions for protection of child rights and children's courts for providing speedy trial of offences against children or for violation of child rights. It is a well-known fact that it is the mother who understands the child better than anyone else. But, the women have not been given adequate and desired representation in the scheme of the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights Act, so much so that even the post of Chairperson of the Commission has not been reserved for a woman. It has been felt by the public at large that women should be given a major and significant role in the functioning of the Commission. For this, at least, four of the six members of the commission should be women besides the chairperson who should always be a woman. Further, the Act does not prescribe for any experience to become a member of the Commission. It is also desirable that the members of a Commission should not be appointed without possessing adequate experience in the prescribed field. Hence, it is proposed that the members to be appointed to the Commission must have, at least, ten years of experience in the respective field. Further, apprehensions have also been expressed regarding independence of the Commission in view of the provisions in the Act for appointment of the Chairperson and the members of the Commission. In order to make the Commission more independent, it would be appropriate if the Chairperson and members are appointed on the recommendation of a Committee consisting of the Prime Minister, Leaders of Opposition in Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha and the ministers of Home Affairs and Human Resource Development. Similar provisions have been proposed in the Bill for State Commissions also.

Section 17 of the Bill empowers the State Governments to constitute State Commissions for protection of child rights. The word used in this section is 'may' which gives a wide discretion to the State Governments, which may or may not constitute the Commission. The experience in this regard is not very encouraging, as many of the State Governments



did not constitute the Commissions under different enactments where similar provisions exist.

Therefore, it is felt that there should be a mandatory provision for the states to constitute State Commissions for the welfare and development of the children all over the country. An amendment has been proposed in the Act accordingly. Concerns have also been expressed with regard to matters pertaining to educational and health care of the children, particularly the mentally and physically challenged children. Therefore, it is proposed that the Commission should also look into these issues.

(iii) The Personal Data Protection Bill, 2006 :

In our country, at present, there is no law on protection of personal information and data of an individual collected by various organisations. As a result, many a time, personal information of an individual collected for a particular purpose is misused for other purposes also, primarily for direct marketing without the consent of the individual.

The personal data of an individual collected by an organisation is at times sold to other organisations for paltry sum in connivance with the employees of the organisations. These organisations with the competition to outdo each other enter into the privacy of individual by making direct marketing calls. There has to be some internal confidentiality standard within the system so that personal information of an individual may not be transferred to others, which, at times, causes a lot of distress and embarrassment.

In many countries this right of individual has been recognised as a basic civil right as an extension of right to privacy and laws have been enacted to protect the personal data of individuals. Accordingly, there is a need to have a law in our country also for protection of personal information to ensure that personal information of an individual collected for a particular purpose should be used for that particular purpose only and is not revealed to others for commercial or other purposes. This Bill generated lot of interest in the media and amongst



academicians and researchers. Students and researchers from Canada and Germany made enquiries about the Bill and also sought appointment with Darda to know about the proposed legislation.

(iv) The Mobile Camera Phone Users (Code of Conduct) Bill 2006:

There is a quantum jump in the number of mobile camera phone users in the world. The sale of camera phones has outnumbered the sale of stand-alone digital cameras. Our country is no exception to this boom in the users of camera phones. The number of mobile camera phone users is increasing at a tremendous speed along with its misuse. People are secretly taking photographs of women without their knowledge and consent. At times, intimate and private images of women are taken to harass or blackmail them, since photos snapped with these cameras can be transmitted instantly to other cell phones, to e-mail and even to web.

Digital shoplifting by these camera phones is another area of concern. In many places in the world, people are not buying books and magazines as they are snapping them free from the shops using camera phones. Many bookstores have banned the use of camera phone to shoot pages from periodicals instead of buying them as it has a devastating effect on their sales. The corporate espionage has become easy by camera phone as any disgruntled employee can snap and transmit photo of a product development, specifications of product or secret ingredients and destroy the business. Camera phones present a number of risks to intellectual property, trade secrets and other confidential business operations of companies. Customer information can be easily and surreptitiously caught on a camera phone and passed on to other interested parties. One camera phone manufacturing company has itself banned the use of this phone in their semiconductor and research facilities to stave off industrial espionage.

Another area of concern is the use of camera phones in places where photography is prohibited. People smuggle in small camera phones and take the pictures of various artifacts in museums or in religious places. Use of camera phones can also cause trouble in defence establishments or high security establishments.



Further, camera phones in the hands of students can also be misused by them. There is no need for a child to have a camera phone. At the most, he can be given a cell phone.

The need of the hour is that the government should come forth and frame a national camera phone policy. In Europe, some gyms and swimming pools have banned camera phones in changing rooms. In Japan, Singapore and China also, a restriction has been imposed on use of camera phones in schools and government buildings. Therefore, there is an urgent need to have a legislation on the regulation of use of camera phones in the country.

(v) The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2006:

Article 105(1) of the Constitution provides that subject to the provisions of the Constitution and to the rules and standing orders regulating the procedure of Parliament, there shall be freedom of speech in Parliament. Clause (2) of the same article says that no Member of Parliament shall be liable to any proceeding in any court of law in respect of anything said or any vote given by him in Parliament or any of its Committees. Similar provisions are there for members of State Legislatures under Article 194 of the Constitution.

The Supreme Court in its judgment in 1998 in the JMM pay-off case held that a bribe-taker could claim immunity under article 105 of the Constitution if he has actually spoken or voted as per the wishes of the bribe-giver. As a result what was morally impermissible was made legally permissible. It would have never been the intention of the founding fathers of the Constitution that such a protection shall be given to a person involved in corrupt practices or acts.

The Constitution Review Commission in its report submitted in 2002 observed that such an interpretation of immunity of members of Parliament runs counter to all notions of justice, fair play and good conduct. It has further been observed that freedom of speech inside the House cannot be used by members to solicit or accept bribe which is an offence under the criminal law of the country and JMM verdict makes it necessary to clarify true intent of the Constitution. Any



Member of Parliament accepting money or any other valuable gift in consideration of speaking or raising a matter or giving vote in a certain manner in the House should be liable for action under the ordinary law of the land.

The cash-for-question scam which came to light during the winter session of Parliament in 2005 damaged the image and credibility of the biggest democracy in the world. Therefore, to protect the dignity, honour and respect of Parliament and its members, it is essential to put it beyond doubt that protection against legal action under Article 105 of the Constitution does not extend to cover corrupt acts.

In the UK Parliament, under the advocacy rule, a ban has been imposed by the House of Commons on members lobbying for reward or consideration. It forbids a member to engage in any advocacy that seeks to confer benefit exclusively upon a body from which he has been directly or indirectly receiving a pecuniary benefit. It deals with the same kind of situation that arose in our country in cash-for-question scam.

This situation emerging after JMM case and the recent cash-for-question scam needs to be overcome and hence amendments in the Constitution are inevitable.

(vi) The Whistle Blowers (Protection in Public Interest Disclosures) Bill, 2006:

There is no denying the fact that corruption is rampant in our country. Be it government, public sector or private sector-everywhere, it has crept into the system. It is so deep rooted and channelised that when a whistle-blower tries to raise his voice against corrupt practices from within the system, his voice is scuttled and he is made to suffer because of his audacity to speak up. The instances of a whistle blower being fired, demoted, harassed or punished in other ways while the organisation denies, ignores or quietly buries a disclosure are in abundance. It is true that under normal circumstances, an organisation is entitled to total loyalty and confidentiality from its employees. But when there is serious malpractice or when people's lives are at stake --



as in cheating and corruption, defence deals, destruction of national wealth, conspiracy against state, encounters of innocent persons, toxic leaks from a chemical factory, non-adherence to safety standards in factories, mines and other establishments, false declarations by a company - the public interest demands that such an event be disclosed and the person showing courage for this should be protected rather than punished. Auditors, vigilance commissions, regulators, the Press, society and courts all play an important role in checking the malpractices to some extent. But it is difficult to lay hands on the inside information provided by the whistle blower. Even the recent Right to Information Act, 2005 is not of much use in this regard.

Further, there is the legal bar in the form of Official Secrets' Act and Conduct Rules in the public sector or a Non-disclosure Agreement in the corporate sector by which the employees are gagged from disclosing matters to the public on pain of incurring criminal or civil liability for any breach. It is unreasonable to expect employees to sacrifice their jobs and future in order to protect the public interest. A few daredevils may do it but the majority will not venture out in the area. In trying to protect the whistle blowers, we will not only protect the society and ourselves but also serve as a deterrent to the government and other organisations. In many countries, the laws relating to protection of whistle blowers have been enacted. The UK's Public Interest Disclosures Act, 1998 is a fine piece of legislation providing protection to employees in public, private and non-public sectors including those working outside the UK. Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 enacted by US Congress granted sweeping legal protection to whistle blowers in publicly traded companies. Under this Act, anyone retaliating against a corporate whistle blower can be imprisoned for 10 years with remedies available to the whistle blower include reinstatement, back pay with interest, compensatory damages, special damages, attorney fee and costs.

The issue of protection to whistle blowers has assumed special significance in the light of the murder of National Highways Authority of India's Deputy General-Manager, Mr Satyendra Dubey, who raised his voice against the prevalent corruption in awarding road building



contracts under Golden Quadrilateral Projects. Another brilliant officer of Indian Oil Corporation, Mr A. Manjunath, had to lay down his life for highlighting adulteration and mafia operations in the functioning of petrol pumps. There are numerous cases in our country, which speak volumes of the need for such legislation. Even the Law Commission has stressed the need for a Whistle Blower Protection Act, which will ensure transparency in the administration and will also provide a sense of security to the whistle blower.

(vii) The Pathological Laboratories and Clinics (Regulation and Control) Bill, 2006:

In recent years, there has been sudden spurt in the number of pathological laboratories and clinics in the country. There is, at present, no separate effective law to control and regulate the activities of these laboratories and clinics. Taking advantage of the situation, these laboratories are fleecing the innocent patients. Many of these laboratories are functioning without proper infrastructure, equipment and trained pathologists. Some of these laboratories are working in garages and tents under unhygienic conditions. In view of this, many of these laboratories and clinics are not carrying out the examination in proper way leading to wrong diagnosis. In fact, the persons running these laboratories are actually playing with the lives of the persons going to them for pathological tests and minting money in connivance with doctors who refer their patients to these laboratories/clinics. The plight of a patient can very well be imagined who gets himself treated for a disease only to be informed later on that he was never suffering from that disease.

It is high time that the government should step in and prescribe norms and standards for pathological laboratories/clinics and make provisions for their registration compulsory so as to save the people from this unhealthy business practice of playing with their lives.

This Bill has caught the eyes of the government and a legislation namely "The Clinical Establishment (Registration and Regulation) Bill, 2010 has been brought in Parliament to regulate the clinical establishments including the laboratories, thus setting up parameters



and norms for all clinical facilities in the country.

(viii) The Tele-Shopping (Protection of Consumer's Rights) Bill, 2006:

Purchasing of products and services through 'tele-shopping' has become the order of the day through which a consumer can get a wide range of products manufactured at various places in the world at his doorstep just by placing an order through a telephone call on a given number. It has reduced the distances in global market. While the manufacturers and retailers have exploited this channel of marketing, the lawmakers have not enacted any legislation to protect the interests of consumers in this area. As a result of which there is no specific law to deal with this kind of shopping.

In view of the fact that persons buying any product or service through 'tele-shopping' do not have any face to face contact nor do they get any opportunity to virtually see or feel or examine the product, the chances of getting a bad deal are quite high, unless there are legal provisions to protect the consumer's interest. At times, full information of the product and service is not given and the poor consumer has to suffer because of the faults of the supplier and retailer who, once the deal is struck, impose several conditions for return of the product and service. In many countries, there are laws for the protection of consumers in respect of 'tele-shopping'. These laws provide right to consumers, such as, after receiving the goods if the consumer feels that he does not want it, the product can be returned within a specified time of receiving the goods for a full refund without offering any explanation for the return. Similar regulations are also required in our country for protecting the consumers who are opting for 'tele-shopping'.

(ix) The Rajya Sabha Secretariat (Administration) Bill, 2006:

Article 98 of the Constitution provides for a separate Secretariat for each House of Parliament. It further provides that Parliament may, by law, regulate the recruitment and the conditions of service of persons appointed to these separate secretariats. Till such time Parliament regulates these issues, these powers have been given to the President



to make rules on them. Even after 56 years of the enactment of the Constitution, no law has been framed by Parliament to regulate recruitment and conditions of service of persons appointed to these two secretariats. Therefore, the enactment of such a law is long overdue.

The concept of an independent secretariat for legislature is an essence of parliamentary democracy. Under the democratic set-up adopted in our country, the three wings, i.e., executive, legislature and judiciary, have been envisaged to be separate and independent of each other. This can be realised if the secretariats serving these wings are made independent so that they can discharge their duties in all fairness without any fear or favour. The significance of this conceptualisation of a secretariat independent of the executive was fully realised in the 1920s under the leadership and guidance of Pandit Motilal Nehru, Lala Lajpat Rai and the President of the Constituent Assembly, Shri Vithalbhai Patel.

Therefore, the unique position of the Rajya Sabha Secretariat demands a special sense of dedication and impartiality in discharge of duties from its officers and staff. It also requires a broad-based institutional arrangement for running the House in an effective manner. It is necessary to empower the Chairman for watching and safeguarding the interests of the secretariat staff in the service of the House and its members. Envisaging this, the Bill provides for the establishment of a House Commission to look after the whole gamut of administration of the Rajya Sabha and matters connected therewith.

(x) The Consumer Goods Price Fixation Board Bill, 2007:

Many initiatives have been taken with the sole objective of protecting the rights of the consumers. The government has also brought forward many legislative measures in this regard. These legislations would help consumers fight for their rights and are helpful in checking the malpractices. However, there is hardly any check on the prices of consumer goods. It has been seen that after one per cent increase in the taxation or even for no reason, many unscrupulous manufacturers would enhance prices of their products, sometimes, manifold. There is



hardly any relationship between the quality and quantity of their product on the one hand and the price, on the other.

This problem is acute in the rural areas. In villages, commodities of much inferior quality are being sold at exorbitant prices. Of late, there has been unbridled rise in the prices of essential commodities and other consumer products. The goods of daily use have gone out of the reach of the common man. The same is the position of various services commonly used by the public.

In order to fix the prices of consumer goods and services, it has been proposed that a Board shall be set up with its offices in every State and UT. The Board, apart from determining the prices of products, shall also act as a check on the agencies that increase the prices at their own will. Since the functions and policies of the Board are regulated by the Central government, the prices of the products will be uniform throughout the country to some extent.

(xi) The Compulsory Registration of Marriages Bill, 2007:

In our country, solemnisation of marriage is considered to be one of the pious social ceremonies. Ancient literature assigns great value to the solemnisation of marriage between two individuals. With the degeneration in the social values, instances of abuse of the institution of marriage are on the rise. Many times unscrupulous husbands altogether walk out of their marriage leaving their wives in lurch, in order to avoid providing maintenance, custody of children or share in property. Every year, lakhs of marriages are performed in our country, mostly in traditional way. Most of these marriages have no official record, as hardly a few of these marriages are registered. Recently, the Supreme Court ruled that all marriages should be registered in order to prevent child marriages, check bigamy or polygamy, help women to exercise their rights of maintenance and custody of children and enable widows to claim inheritance. There is no Central law at present to provide for compulsory registration of marriages in the country, though some States have enacted laws for compulsory registration of marriages. The need for a uniform law is long overdue. Therefore, it is



high time that a law on compulsory registration of marriages is enacted.

(xii) The Prevention of Atrocities on Women Bill, 2007:

Women are the most vulnerable lot of our society. Every now and then, women are subjected to atrocities and violence in one form or the other. They are subjected to all kinds of torture, which more often than not go unreported. At times, the administration does not respond with the kind of agility that is required on the incidents of atrocities on women. There is no dearth of incidents when women are paraded naked in many places in our country and, at times, also declared as witches or dayans. This is the worst kind of treatment given to women without any fault of theirs. They are left at the mercy of their fate and no one comes to their rescue. Further, sexual harassment of women in work place is also very common and frequent. The Supreme Court of India has taken this issue very seriously. In the case of Vishaka and Others vs. State of Rajasthan and others, the Supreme Court has laid down norms and guidelines to be followed by employers or other responsible persons in the work places or other institutions to prevent or deter the commission of acts of sexual harassment as also to provide the procedures for resolution, settlement or prosecution of acts of sexual harassment by taking all steps required including setting up of Complaints Committees for redressal of the complaint made by the victim. The National Commission for Women has also taken up this issue very seriously. It has, however, been found that the Complaint Committees have not been formed in a number of cases. Women are mentally and sexually exploited and pushed into flesh trade. Therefore, in order to give women a respectable position in the society and save them from the tyranny of the unscrupulous employers and other persons, it is high time that a law should be framed to protect them from atrocities by providing strict punishment which will serve as deterrent for others.



(xiii) The Information Technology and Infotainment Facilities In Villages Bill, 2007:

India lives in villages as still more than seventy per cent of the population lives there. Sixty-five per cent of the population is still engaged in agriculture or agricultural related vocations which contribute around 20% to GDP. But the condition in most of the villages is pathetic. Farmers are the worst sufferers as they are driven to the extent of committing suicide. According to the NSSO survey, only 29% farmers in the country are aware of MSP scheme of the government and other welfare schemes. Although a lot of development has taken place in the field of information technology, the villages are still deprived of this boom in the technology. Though our country is emerging as a super power in information technology, it is only concentrated in urban areas. The country cannot progress without developing the villages. This is the time that information technology should play a major role in their development by spreading awareness in villages. For this, all the villages should be connected through a network that will be supplying information pertaining to crops, weather, seeds, various schemes of Central and State governments, techniques for effective farming, including the research and development data on various fields. Such information to the farmers at the ground level would go a long way in improving their economic and social status.

Besides, the villages should also be provided with infotainment facilities so that they are aware of various mainstream development and social awareness campaign for good and healthy living.

The social messages through electronic media must reach the doorstep of every village.

(xiv) The Divorced Women (Protection and Welfare) Bill, 2007:

Divorced women are a neglected lot in our country. In the married life of a woman, everything goes well but as soon as she is divorced, all hell breaks loose on her. In rural and remote places, women are still dependent on men for many things. She does all kind of daily chores in



fields and at home, but it is her husband who is the real owner of the moveable and immoveable properties. Once divorced, she has nothing of her own and she is mercilessly thrown out of the house. People at times do show sympathy towards her, but more often than not this hand of help is just to exploit her. People look at her with low esteem as if she has committed a crime and she has to move from one place to another for work and financial help. Even her parental house does not sustain her for long and after some times she starts feeling as if she is a burden on them. Most of these women either are not educated enough to file a suit for maintenance under CrPC or are too shy to do so.

It becomes very difficult for her to survive in the society. There are lakhs of divorced women who are destitutes with no shield or protection from the state.

In a welfare state like ours, it becomes the duty of the state to look after divorced women and support them at the time of distress. The state must support them financially and give them vocational training besides providing them accommodation, etc. The Bill seeks to achieve the above objectives.

(xv) The Supreme Court (Establishment of Permanent Bench at Nagpur) Bill, 2007:

India is the seventh largest country in the world in terms of area. It is the second most populated country next to China. However, there is only one bench of the Supreme Court to decide cases arising in whole of country. Article 130 of the Constitution says that the Supreme Court shall sit in Delhi or in such other place or places as the Chief Justice of India may with the approval of the President from time to time appoint. The language of the article clearly indicates that there was an intention of the founding fathers of the Constitution to have more than one seat of the Supreme Court. But so far no thought has been given to the idea of having another bench of the apex court despite the fact that the population of the country which was around 35 crore at the time of independence has now swollen to over 100 crore and there is proportionate increase in the cases in the Supreme Court. Litigant



public has to travel thousands of kilometers to follow up their cases in the Supreme Court which is seated in Delhi. This not only adds to their financial burden but also results in wastage of a lot of time in travelling and staying in Delhi. The litigants in southern and central part of the country find it inconvenient and expensive. Therefore, it is high time that a bench of the Supreme Court be established for the convenience of the public at large for which Nagpur is the most appropriate place. Geographically, Nagpur is the most ideal place for setting up the bench of the apex court as it is almost at the centre of the country. A bench of the Supreme Court at Nagpur will provide a big relief to the litigant public of southern as well as the central part of the country and will provide them convenient and affordable justice.

(xvi) The National Commission for Hygienic Food, Packed Drinks and Water Bill, 2005:

Food adulteration in our country has reached an alarming level. Numerous cases of adulteration and contamination are reported almost daily but no heed has ever been paid to the gravity of the problem. Right to safe and hygienic food, packed drinks and water is the basic right of each citizen in the country. However, until date, this area of providing hygienic food, packed drinks and water to the citizens has been neglected. Despite the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, adulteration in food and water is very common. Everything you eat or drink -- be it milk, floor, dal, oil, vegetables, sweet, fruit juices or water -- is adulterated. The impact of these adulterants on health is ranging from vomiting and abdominal pain to mental retardation, cardiac arrest and cancer. The worst sufferer of adulteration is milk, which is being adulterated sometimes with urea or chalk and even pesticides or detergents. In the recent past, there has been a controversy on the packaged drinking water when traces of pesticides were found in one of the most popular brands. Once organised adulteration in mustard oil had led to a deadly disease or dropsy in the capital and other parts of the country. People are falling ill after consuming adulterated food or contaminated water but the persons who are responsible for adulteration are not getting any punishment.



Therefore, to protect the interests of the consumer, there is an urgent need to set up a Commission that would look into the whole spectrum of providing safe hygienic food, packed drinks and water to the citizens in the country.

(xvii) The Electronic Waste (Handling and Disposal) Bill 2005:

All kinds of electronic goods have become the household articles today. Every home has not one but a number of electronic products. Once these electronic products become obsolete or discarded, they are either thrown in the garbage or given to kabariwala. The kabariwala sells these products to scrap dealers who dismantle these gadgets and keep what is useful and rest of it is thrown into garbage which then is thrown in the landfills.

This, of course, is not the proper way of its disposal. In this way millions of tones of electronic waste are generated in various metropolitan cities. A number of components in these electronic products are hazardous and should be disposed of in an environment-friendly manner. Many components contain toxic substances like lead, cadmium, mercury, hexavalent chromium, barium, beryllium and carcinogenic agents like carbon black and heavy metals.

These elements can cause serious problems to the health of the person handling it and can also damage the environment if they are not disposed of properly.

In various countries, there are laws for proper disposal of electronic waste products and the procedure for it is also displayed on the product. It is also indicated on the product what can be recycled and what cannot be recycled. But, in our country disposal of electronic waste is nobody's responsibility. This is regrettable and needs urgent attention, considering the growing spread of electronic goods and gadgetry. As of now, there is no law or guideline for the disposal of electronic waste and no account is being taken of how much is being generated and how it is being disposed of. It is, therefore, high time that matter may be regulated before the situation becomes alarming.



Debating Legislation

Apart from the Private Member's Bills, Vijay Darda has contributed to the legislations through his meaningful participation in the debates on the government Bills. He has made far-reaching contributions to the Bills referred to the Committees in which he has been a member. He has elicited vital information from the experts on Bills deposing before the Committees. He takes his committee participation very seriously and never loses any opportunity to examine the Bill or get enlightened on the finer nuances of the Bill.

He has always utilised opportunities for expressing his views and opinions which have ultimately influenced the final legislative output. It is he who has made weighty contributions to important legislations.

There is much criticism about most of the Bills not being adequately discussed and debated in the House. Vijay Darda holds some of the criticism as valid. "People have every right to expect from their legislators meaningful contributions on core tasks of legislations," he says.

"They represent the trust of the people and should, in no circumstances, appear to be betraying it," he emphasises. At times, he blames the petty political posturing which creates deadlock leading to a situation when a few important Bills have been passed in the din, without any structured debate. Debate is the quintessence of parliamentary activities and members must contribute to strengthen the debate culture, of which debate on legislation is the most defining feature.

However, he still takes heart in the fact that our parliamentarians continue to produce legislations of very great importance and quality. An insightful legislator himself, Vijay Darda hopes that parliamentarians would perform their duties with all seriousness and produce path-breaking legislations for the lasting welfare of the people.



**AN ADVOCATE OF
PUBLIC ISSUES**



AN ADVOCATE OF PUBLIC ISSUES

Vijay Darda has not just been a public representative in the narrow sense of the term, but a man of exceptional commitment to public welfare. In his onerous role as a Member of Parliament, he has contributed significantly in making our governance system more responsive to people's needs.

For Darda, public service is not a badge of honour to be displayed, rather it forms an intrinsic part of his public life.

He is an ardent advocate of issues faced by the common man. He articulates the public concerns in Parliament - country's highest deliberative forum with passion and commitment. He draws the attention of the government to the overriding concerns of the masses through several parliamentary devices so as to make the government address them effectively.

"In a democracy, the people are the ultimate sovereigns. Ironically, these sovereign people are often in need of protection from the State. Parliament is the people's bulwark against executive arbitrariness. It is, therefore, necessary that Parliament becomes easily accessible and responsive to the needs and requirements of the people. For achieving this, the Members of Parliament have an onerous role to play," Darda says.

As a member of the Rajya Sabha, he has utilised all the opportunities for raising matters of public importance in the House. He has extensively used the device of making Special Mentions in the House on matters of urgent public importance. Some of his Special Mentions which have made profound impact on the problems faced by the common man are given as under :



Tardy implementation of railway projects in Maharashtra:

Vijay Darda had raised the need for providing adequate railway infrastructure to give a greater fillip to the economic development and industrial growth in comparatively backward, tribal regions of Maharashtra. He pointed out that ten railway projects, which had already been approved for implementation, were pending in the Ministry of Railways for years, and the earliest one was Miraj-Latur, which was approved in 1993-94, at an estimated cost of Rs. 225 crores. The other one, Amravati-Narkher, was originally approved in 1993-94, with an estimated cost of Rs. 120.9 crores and the revised cost of this project had gone up to Rs. 263.79 crores.

These two projects had not been completed after ten years had elapsed since their sanction. Similarly, there were other approved projects, such as Panvel-Karjat and Ahmednagar-Beed-Parli Vajinath in 1995-96; Barmati-Lonand and Puntamba-Shirdi in 1997-98. The remaining four projects were for doubling the line which were approved in 1999-00. They were Diva-Kalyan in 2000-01; Panvel-Jasai-JNPT in 2002-03, and there were other projects such as Pakni-Solapur, etc.

Unless all-out efforts were made to implement these projects, the time overrun and the cost overrun would pose a greater challenge to the Railways which were already in a financial crunch and were facing the mounting operational costs. The Government of Maharashtra was prepared to extend any kind of assistance for a speedy consideration and completion of these projects. He also wished to give an assurance, in this regard, on behalf of the Government of Maharashtra, to extend all supports that were needed.

Similarly, he had been requesting for providing a new broad-gauge line from Wardha to Nanded, via Yavatmal and Pusad in the tribal and adivasi areas. He, along with one minister and three MLAs of Maharashtra, had called on the Railway Minister on 10th July, 2003, and pleaded with him that Yavatmal, being an economically backward area and in the absence of any railway infrastructure, in spite of having a



large segment of landless labour, no industrialisation could take place.

Moreover, this broad-gauge line would result in huge savings in infructuous expenditure being incurred due to circuitous road routes. Mr Vijay Darda succeeded in his efforts when the Minister of Railways promised this project in the Rail Budget and also “Bhumi Poojan” was performed by Mr Lalu Prasad Yadav, the then Minister of Railways. The project is likely to be completed very shortly which will provide impetus to development of the Vidarbha region.

Massive power cuts in Maharashtra especially Grid failure in Vidarbha:

Technical problems coupled with sudden drop in voltage resulted in tripping in most power stations in Maharashtra, forcing power cuts in the entire western Maharashtra, most of Vidarbha and Marathwada. Actually, the nightmare commenced around 10.30 a.m. on 6th October, 2003, apparently due to a massive drawal of power from within the system and the sudden shortfall was as high as 3,300 MW.

MSEB stated that much of generation was lost from all their power stations, excepting three - Chandrapur, Koradi and Khaparkheda. Due to low ground water supplies, farmers resorted to very high levels of pumping in neighbouring states which caused this situation.

This load impacted on industrial activity and several long distance trains came to a grinding halt. The farmers of Maharashtra, already facing a load shedding of the order of 1,600 MW every day, were adversely affected. Maharashtra, plagued with continuing power shortages, its full share of the Central power is generally never replenished because of overdrawal by the neighbouring states. Earlier also, within a month, a situation had developed, probably due to improper maintenance of high tension lines. This time, there was no violation of the grid code.

The Chief Minister, while reviewing the situation, admitted that there had been no addition of power in the last decade due to which the state was facing a chronic shortage of power, and the august House



impressed upon the Union Power Ministry the need to augment power supply to Maharashtra on permanent basis.

International support for India to get permanent seat in the Security Council with veto power:

With the signing of historic partnership pact for peace and economic prosperity, coupled with many high-profile meetings which our Prime Minister had with his counterparts like Chinese and Japanese Prime Ministers, India's role as a major player in Asia was established. The concerted efforts envisaged towards jointly fighting international terrorism and promoting and facilitating flow of foreign direct investments would go a long way towards economic stability of the region, thus gradually improving the quality of life of the people in a tension-free environment.

The agreement outlines multi-pronged plan to boost trade, investment, tourism, and culture, so vital for mutual appreciation of the respective national ethos for ensuring a regional peaceful scenario for Asia. Now, coming to India's role in the UNO and the Security Council, for quite some time, we and other like-minded nations had been lobbying for a permanent membership for India in the expanded eleven permanent-member Security Council with veto power, as presently enjoyed by the USA, Russia, China, France and UK.

Keeping in view the ground realities and the multi-dimensional progress made by fast-developing India, there could hardly be any cogent reasons to deny India this well-deserved coveted position in the UNO. No doubt, diverse interests are also working to dilute or even deny India's role in the expanded Security Council.

A number of proposals were on the anvil, none of which gave a clear indication of the new six permanent Security Council Members being given veto rights, or a four-year term membership for new members on renewal basis being thought of. We would require to strive hard through mobilisation of international opinion towards getting permanent membership with veto rights as per the existing practice.



Diplomatic efforts for gaining prominent position in the Association of South East Asian Nations:

While recognising India as an emerging 'Big Player', the Indonesian President had called for collective regional prosperity by pleading that Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) should expand its relations with India and that ASEAN must stay united and widen the frontiers of its cooperation in the Asia Pacific region. This was a positive development of considerable political relevance to the current efforts of the ASEAN to fashion an East Asian Community.

ASEAN was engaged in defining scope of the proposed East Asian Summit and thus Indonesia's latest call for new ASEAN links with India came in the wake of the perception of elder statesman and Singapore's former Prime Minister for inclusion of India in the proposed East Asian Community. China and India had emerged as important players in this region especially in the coming economic and political scenario. This opportunity for us called for skilful, judicious and prompt action to establish our claim as a big power in this region on a comparatively firmer footing.

Our role towards contributing effectively for strengthening political stability, economic development and ultimately establishing peace and tranquillity in the region, would certainly pay dividends for our collective fight to combat terrorism initially in this South East Asia where terrorist acts had dampened the enthusiasm of many countries for all-round development. This called for vigorous diplomatic efforts both at the bureaucratic and political levels to achieve, to begin with, this commanding position for India in South East Asia.

Dealing with Naxalism threat in the country:

Like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka also faced Naxalite violence and the situation was worsening with the alleged swift movement of Naxalites from Andhra Pradesh. The hide and seek game was very disturbing. With the breakdown of the peace talks with Andhra Pradesh Government, the Naxalites, due to threat of the police action in Andhra



Pradesh, were fleeing to Karnataka and even to Tamil Nadu, as forests in Dharmapuri and Vellore districts had provided sufficient hiding base for extremists. The problem needed to be tackled in a holistic way, and not to be treated simply as a law and order problem.

The socio-economic issues provided a fertile ground for continuous growth of the Naxalites, especially in tribal areas. The lingering problem primarily was due to the lack of development, non-availability of land, no basic health, education and communication infrastructure, etc. Efforts of one single state administration was not being effective towards tackling this expanding base of the Naxalite groups as even eastern and central states up to Nepalese border, had been in the throes of extremist violence from Naxalites from time to time.

It was heartening that the Prime Minister was trying to evolve a consensus with all major political parties in dealing with this sensitive issue. After this consensus, the affected states and the Union Home Ministry needed to evolve a combined threat-cum-development strategy to wipe out this growing Naxalite menace; but, here, time could be the essence of the matter.

Attitudinal changes to make tourism attractive to foreigners:

Taj Mahal, the world famous monument, has been an inescapable sight in global tourists' itinerary. But prevailing conditions in and around the Taj Mahal complex in particular, and other tourist spots in Agra and Fatehpur Sikri had left a sad memory for them.

Thus, Indian tourism industry had suffered as on their return to their countries, these tourists had conveyed their sad experiences to prospective tourists. For example, filthy tongas or battered rickshaws ferrying visitors from the car park to the gate had been a detestable experience. Harassment and cheating started from that spot onward through self-styled guides, petty hawkers selling sub-standard goods, etc.

Cajoling by beggars, even seeking monetary 'bakshish' by government staff manning the Tomb was a constant irritant for foreigners. Moving



from Agra towards Fatehpur Sikri, policemen had started demanding money from hapless travellers or car drivers on flimsy grounds of 'incomplete paper', or vehicles being flagged at the very point where the road bifurcates towards Fatehpur Sikri, and through rowdy behaviours asked for money otherwise their cars would not be allowed to move. "Bhaluwalas or snake charmers" exhibiting "bhalu dance" or "putting snake around the neck" and then demanding huge sums of money was a common sight.

There was also uncalled for illegal tax being collected by wayside strong-men through extremely aggressive methods. What was true of Agra was more or less true of the other famous monuments in other Indian tourist spots. Unless effective measures are taken by those in government to stop these activities either through law-enforcing agencies or through attitudinal change, the tourism industry would suffer a major setback.

National Judicial Commission:

Legal fraternity and enlightened public had been asking for setting up of a National Commission for making appointment of High Court Judges determining their service conditions, drawing up code of ethics, probity, transfers, etc. There had been serious erosion of faith in the judicial system in general public and growing suspicion in the integrity of higher judiciary.

Presently, the Supreme Court has neither administrative control over the High Court Judges, nor the power to enquire into their misbehaviour for malpractices or corruption. Article 124 (4) of the Constitution provides for the removal of a judge only on the ground of proved misbehaviour or incapacity. The process of impeachment is cumbersome.

Thus, introduction of effective alternative measures has become imperative because of the constitutionally-assigned role of the Supreme Court/High Court for protection of the fundamental rights of the people and ensuring justice to the citizens against draconian laws.



The Commission, an institution so strategic and transparent, must be manned by persons of proven integrity and unalloyed honesty beyond any external influence.

One alternative could be the appointment of its members by a Committee comprising the Prime Minister, the Minister of Law and Justice, the Speaker of Lok Sabha and the Leaders of the Opposition in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. The panel of names for the appointment of judges out of which Commission would finally appoint new judges should have the approval of a Committee comprising Chief Justice of Supreme Court and Chief Justices of two High Courts identified by Chief Justice of India on a yearly rotational basis.

Concern over child labour and their exploitation in the country:

Mr Vijay Darda raised a matter regarding rescuing of 43 children in embroidery industry and called for concerted efforts to save juveniles caught in such industries. The intricacy involved in the work requires application of soft and flexible fingers. Conservative estimates put a figure of 20,000 children involved in such industries in Delhi. Children are trafficked from Bihar as nearly 60 per cent of the unit owners come from Sitamarhi region. The unit owners/agents convince the fellow villagers to send their children to 'learn' the art of embroidery and push them into child labour.

These children are kept in dingy accommodation and are forced to work daily for nearly 18 hours, getting a monthly salary of Rs. 300. The owners confine these children by providing tape-recorders, televisions etc. for entertainment, and the nearby custom-built dirty dhabas provide frugal non-nutritious food to them.

Such pressure-oriented working environment results in several children developing orthopaedic and vision-related problems. Thus, after four to five years when they grow older and become unfit for the job, they are driven away by embroidery owners and replaced by younger and more nimble hands. Despite several NGOs working in anti-child labour movement, nothing concrete has emerged to prevent



organised trafficking of children into the capital every day; and thus, their exploitation continues.

Police cannot be oblivious of these illegal activities. Thus, concerted efforts by groups, sponsored by the Government of India, comprising compassionate police personnel and dedicated social workers with well defined time-bound objectives/targets to be achieved, are an immediate necessity to stop this exploitation of children.

Challenges of stabilising population growth:

According to 2001 Census, India's population is 1.028 billion with annual growth rate of 1.93%. By 2050, India will overtake China-1.592 billion Indians compared to 1.392 billion Chinese. Our population programme has not stabilised since 1980s when alleged forcible sterilizations distorted a well-meaning vision. Family planning and population control centred around statistical figures and targets. As signatory to the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, it was mandatory to abandon targets and come up with a programme that moved away from incentives and disincentives.

The National Population Policy of 2000 replaced the targeted approach with a target-free regime with focus on "small family". This target-free strategy means high sense of awareness, strong delivery system, presence of health care workers and doctors at community/health centres, and, institutionalized deliveries, all leading to a reduction in maternal and child mortality. On the intervention of United Nations Population Fund, the programme once again focused on Reproduction and Child Health with a hefty World Bank loan.

As the Prime Minister has said that the Centre does not believe in coercion or setting targets, hopes now rest on National Rural Health Mission, with a single child log. Funds amounting to Rs. 6,700 crores have been subsumed in NRHM. There is a need to muster enough political will to impress upon states to bring their State Population Policy in line with the National Policy, and, a Central legislation for 'two-child' norm based on political consensus could be another positive step.



Implementation of three- language formula in 10th class examination

Students from CBSE and ICSE schools have to study only two languages at the Tenth standard level, whereas the students from the State Boards have to study three languages at Tenth standard level. The Government of India has accepted the 'Three Language Formula' and always insists that the State Governments should follow the same. Surprisingly, the CBSE and ICSE authorities, under the jurisdiction of the Central Government, do not follow the 'Three Language Formula'.

Thus, the Government of Maharashtra wrote to the Central Government on 26th February, 2002, and requested the Union Minister for HRD to implement 'Three Language Formula' in CBSE and ICSE schools up to Tenth standard. The students of the Maharashtra State Board study three languages, that is, English, Hindi and Marathi, which is compulsory for them, whereas the students of CBSE and ICSE Boards have to study only two languages, that is, English and any other language.

Hence, the students from CBSE and ICSE Board may pass Tenth Examination in Maharashtra without studying Marathi or even any other Indian language. The Government of India should immediately issue orders to the effect that CBSE and ICSE Board students must study three languages, that is, English, State language (like Marathi in Maharashtra) plus any other language. This will also implement the 'Three Language Formula' in respect of students of CBSE and ICSE Boards.

Restructuring of civil and criminal laws

There is a need to explore ways to rejuvenate the administration of justice. The main reason for the Judiciary's inability to deliver quick justice is the lack of manpower to clear the gigantic backlog of nearly 30 million cases and absence of reforms in the British-introduced legal system to meet their needs. Of late, people's faith in the Judiciary is increasing due to pro-active role being played by courts in matters of



common interest like lowering the pollution limits, suo motu taking cognizance of media reports of glaring human suffering, either in a solitary case or collectively. Thus, cases are increasing, but the number of judges is small to handle the workload. Thus, fixing time frame for final disposal should be a major determinant factor of any worthwhile judicial reform.

This requires increasing the number of judges, fixing time frame and revamping the whole procedural laws aiming at reducing delays. The rationale behind following a legal system introduced by the Britishers, where lawmakers have designed the system of cases going on for years to give maximum chance to the accused to prove their innocence needs, a fresh look.

One suggestion is to give more powers to the law-enforcing authority with built-in safeguards so that petty cases can be solved at the ground level itself and the burden on the Judiciary can also be reduced. The other suggestion is restructuring the existing civil and criminal laws keeping in view the emerging socio-economic ambience, fixing time-frame, streamlining the appeal and re-appeal system and realistically increasing the number of judges at all levels.

Poverty in the country

There is a confusion relating to the extent of poverty in India. There is a 40 per cent divergence between the poverty estimates of the National Accounts Statistics (NAS) and those of the National Survey Organization (NSSO). The Planning Commission's poverty estimate of 26 per cent is based on the 55th round conducted by NSSO in 1999-2000. If one were to believe in the NAS, our poverty levels are down to 15 per cent. Moreover, the 55th NSS round changed its methodology, giving rise to problems of comparability with the earlier rounds.

The 50th round of NSS in 1993-94 estimated poverty at 37 per cent, based on a 30-day recall period for all items of consumption. Alongside this 30-day recall method, a separate questionnaire was used which deployed different recall periods, 9-day, 30-day and 365-day. Such



anomalies should be addressed and the change explained in a transparent manner so that data is neither open to political misuse nor it gives a distorted view relating to prevalence of the extent of poverty in India. Unless a fairly exact extent of poverty is known, its effective tackling becomes impracticable leading to wastage of financial resources deployed towards mitigating poverty, and, simultaneously, poverty removal programmes, being launched by the Government, from time to time, missing pre-determined targets.

In 2000, the World Bank did observe that Indian reforms had deepened inequality which obviously does not square with our high growth rate. The Planning Commission, NSSO and NAS must initiate measures immediately to enforce built-in safeguards so as to avoid vast difference in arriving at poverty figures by the surveying authorities.

Revival of ailing sugar mills

It is a welcome step to reduce interest on term loan to ailing sugar mills from 15 per cent to 10 per cent; and NABARD is also providing liquidity support of Rs. 500 crore for their restructuring. Whether this package will achieve its envisioned objectives, will depend upon Government's solving the problem in a holistic manner.

Low production due to capacity under-utilization, interruption in power supply, comparatively less sucrose content of the sugarcane, strife in industrial relations, lobbying by vested interests, mounting arrears of payments to farmers, etc. are major contributory factors and vulnerable sugar mills are succumbing to this deteriorating situation, thereby becoming 'ailing'. The proposed reduction in term loan would, no doubt, be a much-needed succour, but it hardly contributes in a significant manner towards revival of all the ailing sugar mills.

This package is for all cooperative sugar mills that were operational in 2002-03, are commercially viable, have term loans outstanding as on March 31, 2005, and, have adequate operational surplus to repay the loans. Even out of this year payments (till May) to farmers, there is an outstanding amount of Rs. 77 crore.



There are 553 sugar mills in 18 States, out of which 55 per cent are in the cooperative sector and NABARD analysed the condition of 170 mills for preparing the package. It is necessary that the government come out with a more comprehensive package whereby this ailing sugar industry is put on a steady road of complete revival, and apart from fulfilling its domestic consumption responsibilities, it simultaneously looks towards its export potential.

Child marriages, female foeticide and growing gender imbalance in the country

The matter concerning girl child marriage, aborting female foetuses and growing gender imbalances is very important. The United Nation's Population Fund Report 2005 says that allowing girls to marry before 18 years puts them at risk of domestic violence and death.

This situation is now further compounded with the Delhi High Court judgement saying that marriage of a minor girl above 15 years is not illegal if it is done under her own free will. Although it is illegal to marry a girl before she is of 18 years, 50 per cent girls get married before they are 18 years. A survey in Madhya Pradesh reported that 14 per cent girls had got married between 10 and 14 years. Young mothers are more likely to suffer, with girls aged 10-14 years being five times more likely to die in pregnancy and childbirth than women aged 20 and above.

Even the Government Reports admit two million female foetuses being aborted each year. The two-child policy that promotes the idea that a perfect family involves one girl and one boy is partly to be blamed for the dwindling number of girls.

Resentment expressed by the National Commission for Women and other Women's organizations in this regard be seriously taken note of and immediate multi-pronged approach be adopted to ensure, on the one hand, strict enforcement through stringent penalties, provisions relating to not allowing girls' marriage below 18 years, and, on the other, creating a realistic social awareness of not resorting to abortion



of female foetuses; and, simultaneously, not only fully protecting the girl child, but, giving maximum all round encouragement for their optimum development, thereby, correcting the growing gender imbalance.

Public preparedness towards disaster management

The role of the Government in any disaster management is of primary importance, but unless people are fully prepared to contribute their best, desired results cannot be achieved. While dissemination of information starts from Government quarters, prior drills to fully acquaint and adequately prepare the community to handle the entire action at the grassroots are a decisive factor.

These include quick evacuation, identification of safe buildings, speedy outsourcing of medical facilities, administration of first aid, centralization of in-bound relief materials and their efficient and equitable distribution to avoid occurrence of any stampede, community cohabitation with special stress on hygiene to eliminate outbreak of any disease. After initial relief and rehabilitation measures have been taken care of, the next step is restoration of livelihood, especially for fishermen, self-employed artisans, small and marginal farmers, petty traders, etc. For them, custom-made measures are required to be initiated with their active cooperation and that of banks and other philanthropic bodies, who either give outright aid in kind or cash, or soft interest-free loans, etc.

The spot functional-level Government officials be given maximum decentralisation of power to take quick and scenario-based decisions based on local needs. If an attempt is made to codify such measures to be followed, indicating modalities how public cooperation is to be enlisted and how general awareness is to be created, it will be a good beginning to effectively tackle natural disasters and minimize human sufferings.



Concerted approach towards rural telecommunication connectivity

Although various policy initiatives have been taken by the Government, particularly setting up of the universal service obligation funds (USOF), the growth of rural tele-density has remained insignificant and the gap between urban and rural tele-density is widening - presently 31 per cent and 1.94 per cent, respectively. It is a clear evidence that existing approach of USOF to fund PCOs and individual rural telephone connections has not been successful to the extent envisaged in increasing tele-density.

The approach seems to be based on the premise that build-up of infrastructure will be far more effective in making telecommunication facilities available in large numbers in rural areas in a manner similar to urban areas, rather than funding of individual telephones. Since the growth in telecom service is taking place through mobile service, the scope of USOF cannot be limited to fixed services only. In fact, the National Telecom Policy (NTP), 1999 did mention that in addition to fixed service providers, other service providers could also be encouraged to participate in USO provisions, of course, subject to technical feasibility and can be reimbursed from the funds of Universal Access Levy.

TRAI's two-pronged approach, while giving recommendations on the growth of telecommunication facilities in rural (i) relaying on mobile communication system and (ii) based on provisioning of broadband type of connectivity, need to be seriously considered in the context of USOF so that a beginning could be made towards substantially increasing the present abysmal low rural density from 1.94 per cent to at least 5 per cent in a foreseeable future.

Indo-China strategic dialogue

With the completion of second round of strategic dialogue in Beijing in January 2005, the two sides have explored the content of their long-term strategic partnership. While the agenda for next talks at Special



Representatives level will be fixed through diplomatic channels, an important consensus has already been evolved for developing friendly abiding mutual relations towards positive initiatives for settlement of boundary- related issues. The Worldwide Institute's State of the World 2006 Report says that India and China are positioned to become world leaders in sustainable energy and agriculture within a decade and thus the two countries need to be inducted in the G8 Club (Group of Eight Industrial Nations) and the International Energy Agency. India's China policy needs to be based on two pivots: Economic and geo-strategic. The important business of trade, technology and regional diplomacy is required to be pursued vigorously. Such Confucian wisdom could lead to a powerful South Asian-North Asian axis stretching from the Persian Gulf in the West to the Korean Peninsula in the east.

The "economies" of the two countries will account, by 2050, for over 40 per cent of world's GDP. The critical test for Indian foreign policymakers will be to balance the conflict of interest that may arise in its bilateral relationship with Washington and Beijing. Such international contours may see India as the first country to become a world power without colonising others. Efforts need to be intensified to ensure that our economic strength and core civilizational values are primary inputs for making us a great power rather than merely a superpower.

Debt and malnutrition in Vidarbha leading to suicide by farmers

Sir, I would like to raise an issue of public importance in the House relating to suicides by farmers in Vidarbha due to debt and malnutrition. Sir, for 2006-07, though we are projecting a growth rate of eight per cent, rural unemployment is rising and the growth of agricultural output is less than two per cent. The agricultural wages are not increasing and the growth is virtually jobless. Thus, the people, like the tribal communities, at the bottom of the pyramid in Maharashtra are remaining stagnant or even sinking further, whereas those at the top of the pyramid are prospering. In Maharashtra, 2,675 children died of malnutrition in April-July, 2005.



They are mainly concentrated in tribal-dominated districts like Thane, Nandurbar, Nashik, Amravati and Yavatmal. For every reported death, several others remain unreported.

Crippling debts drove Vidarbha farmers to death. Paddy cultivators of Bhandara, cotton growers of Yavatmal and Amravati and soyabean growers of other districts, hundreds of farmers, are caught in a debt trap or ravaged by drought. It is not nature's fury alone, but it is equally a man-made disaster. Around 400 farmers, mostly cotton growers in the region, have committed suicide during 2005 due to crop failure and heavy debts. Since the package of Rs.1,075 crores for the crisis-ridden farmers is inadequate, 90 per cent of their short-term credit needs are met by private moneylenders. The rural credit system has collapsed and the banks are simply not helping the farmers.

The rise in the cost of inputs for raising cotton crops, which comes to Rs.2,200 per quintal, and the crash in the price of outputs, which is Rs.1,700, have severely hit the cotton farmers. Dumping of highly subsidized cotton from the rich nations worsened the situation. An all-out effort by the State Government, the Central Government, the financial institutions, etc., is the need of the hour to avoid suicides by farmers and deaths of children due to malnutrition.

Apart from various calamities, which affect the farmers, the recent eruption of bird flu has crippled the poultry industry and many poultry farmers have gone bankrupt. They have lost their future and lost their life-long earnings. They have fallen into heavy debts. The Government should take this crisis situation very seriously and come to the rescue of the farmers immediately.

Poor quality of life in Indian cities

The recent World Bank study has revealed that poor quality of life in Indian cities causes about 30,000 premature deaths, 17 million hospital admissions are due to respiratory problems and three cities, namely, Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata, account for 44 per cent of these deaths. These unhealthy conditions cause an annual loss of 30.5 million



"disability adjusted life years" which is equivalent to Rs.36,000 crores. This calls for appreciating this gigantic task and urgently enforcing strict urban discipline, making implementation machinery effective and locating new financial, technical and managerial resources.

The sewerage system covers 35 per cent of the population of Class IV cities and 75 per cent of Class I cities. About 34 per cent of the people in urban areas do not have any arrangement for drainage of rainwater and about 60 per cent of municipal bodies collect less than 40 per cent of the solid waste generated daily. At least 28 per cent of the urban waste is allowed to decompose and putrefy, thereby choking drains and thus becoming breeding grounds for pests, flies, mosquitoes and cockroaches.

Mumbai floods in July and September, 2005 are a living example of the worst scenario of ineptitude of municipal authorities and reckless constructions. An enlightened vision, strong political will and positive direction can only save our cities from total collapse. A comprehensive land policy needs to be formulated treating land as a source for creating socially and environmentally harmonious communities; and creating a dedicated cadre of urban administrations capable of effectively facing growing challenges.

Irregularities in supply of nutritious diet scheme in the Yavatmal District of Maharashtra

A study has been made by a renowned Group of Newspapers into the incidence of malnutrition in Yavatmal District of Maharashtra and their findings were found to be startling. It has come to light that the cases of malnutrition have not just confined to tribal pockets, but it is present in all the sixteen tehsils of Yavatmal district. As on date, there are 1,67,426 malnourished children in the district and out of them 1,767 children are in the grade IV, that is, in the seriously malnourished category.

Unfortunately, 146 of them also are fighting a battle for survival. Although a grim situation can be attributed to several reasons, the most glaring of them appears to be the irregularities in distribution of nutritious diet scheme.



The Supreme Court also suggested that the job of distribution of nutritious diet be assigned to Self Help Groups, Women's Organisations, and such other NGOs, but no steps have so far been taken in this regard.

Since the scheme is being run under the Integrated Child Development Plan, I would urge upon the Central Government to monitor the scheme so that the distribution of nutritious diet is done through Self Help Groups and Women's Organisations.

Sub-division of Dalits for allotting reservation quota

Vijay Darda raised an issue pertaining to sub-division of dalits for determining reservation quota. In the Indian Constitution, initially, the reservations for Scheduled Castes and Tribes were made for ten years only, but more than fifty years later, caste continues to play a crucial role and reservation continues. The best way of ensuring equitable distribution of quota (reservation) benefits to Dalits would be to identify an economically determined "Creamy Layer" or individuals who have benefitted the most from reservations. This has already been done for the Other Backward Classes following the Supreme Court judgment on the Mandal Commission Report and the same analogy be adopted in the case of SC/ST.

This is to be achieved in such a way as not to attract adverse legal verdict. This can be done either by amending the Constitution or by placing the new legislation in the Ninth Schedule where it would be secured from legal challenge. The present proposal is for allowing the State Governments to divide Dalits into sub-categories to identify some groups who have cornered a disproportionate amount of benefits from the reservation and identifying those who still need quota benefit.

This category-based quota, that too determined by each State, may look complex. It may also generate a severe backlash from left-over dominant SC/ST groups. But, a beginning has to be made to reorient the "Constitutional Reservation" with present socio-economic



scenario so that only the needy get the intended benefits. To face the likely criticism, Government, may, simultaneously, launch a concerted campaign, for ensuring wider acceptability of the proposed changes in the SC/ST quota concept.

Payment through money orders under RTI Act as application fee

At present, under the Right to Information Act, 2005 under sub-section (1) of section 6 and under section 7, an applicant has to pay a fee of Rs. 10/- and other charges, for seeking requisite information by way of cash or by demand draft or bankers cheques only and payment through money order is not accepted. Vijay Darda told that to get demand draft/bankers cheque for smaller amount of Rs.10/- and more, one has to pay Rs.40 to Rs.50 towards bank commission. But the postal commission for money order up to Rs.20/- is Re.1 (one rupee only) and for Rs.50/- commission is Rs.3 and Rs.100/- it is only Rs.5.

The rule that the fees for seeking information can be paid only through cash or demand draft/banker cheque is causing inconvenience and harassment to those persons who live in the area where proper banking facilities are not available. Even if where banking facilities are available payment through demand draft/banker cheque makes one to pay more when this facility can be had through money order at a lesser cost. The Government is urged to make the facilities available through money order. Since this can be done by only amending the relevant rule made under the Act without amending the principal Act, the Government should take prompt action in the matter.

Water quality problems in Maharashtra under the World Bank Agencies

Presently, the Government of Maharashtra is implementing a World Bank funded project. The State Government have requested the Central Government to approve their proposal for tackling the water quality problems by increasing the funds under the ongoing project of the World Bank or a separate approval may be granted to cover the project.



In this regard, the Government of Maharashtra had taken up the matter with the Ministry of Rural Development on 9th January 2006. But so far no reply has been received by the State Government from the Central Government.

Since the quality of water is a major problem, the State Government's proposal should not be ignored under any circumstances. The Central Government is requested to take an early action in this regard.

Tardy progress of research and development in India

Recently, Mr. Eugene Garfield, the American Pioneer in mapping scientific information showed that in 1973 Indian scientists accounted for about half of the developing world's quality science papers. In the seventies, the Science Citation Index placed India at the 8th place behind only the U.S., U.K., USSR, France, Japan and Canada. By 2000, India had slid to 15th position. Two of India's prestigious research missions - on agriculture and defence have comparatively lackluster performance.

Agricultural research has failed to develop groundbreaking techniques for the poor, rain-dependent farmers, etc., and the dismal outcome of which is rising number of suicides by farmers in Vidarbha, in particular, can be seen.

Its bureaucracy has terminated hundreds of good projects mid-way. Similarly, DRDO's projects have failed so often and, at times, it has become a biggest embarrassment in the field of Science and Technology. The Financial Times' Exhaustive Report on innovation 2005, based on the number of patents applied for, shows that with all its knowledge industry claims, India is not among the top 30 countries (China is fifth after Japan, U.S., South Korea and Germany).

Our medical research has virtually no productive link with its rising pharma industry. Thus an immediate appraisal about fuller utilisation of the totality of the research and Development infrastructure and scientists is called for, keeping in view our productivity and competitiveness, which is directly related to R&D.



To begin with, we should see that target of spending 6 per cent of our GDP on R&D and quality scientific education is ensured and realistic projects on R&D, with time-bound, completion and constant monitoring is stressed upon.

Diversification of Indian postal activities

The common man's Post Office, spread across the country, has been meeting the needs of the people for various postal services as also for some small savings schemes, etc. However, recently the India Post has, reportedly, drawn up plans for its diversifications and is looking beyond just postal services, to shore up its revenues.

A business model is being developed and the neighbourhoods' post office may soon become a one-stop-shop for various services, including for making all routine bill payments, road tax, etc., and be the access point availing the Right to Information services as also for getting registered with the electoral rolls etc.

While these fresh initiatives are laudable and welcome towards better utilisation of the national assets - the vast network of infrastructure established throughout the country, even in the interiors and far-flung areas, it is necessary to review the capability and efficiency of the personnel who presently man these postal outlets. A common man visiting these post offices comes back with a question mark on the ambience and quality of services available there.

It is necessary to ensure that the personnel who would handle these additional responsibilities are adequately equipped and suitably trained into various processes/disciplines of the associated trades/professions so that these service centres render adequate, effective and reliable services to the people and become complementary hubs to speed up the pace of economic development of the country.



Need to review safety standards and practices of the IAF

On 21st November, 2006, a MiG-29 fighter aircraft of the Indian Air Force crashed shortly after takeoff from the IAF airfield at Jamnagar, Gujarat. The pilot was able to eject himself from the aircraft. As reported, this is the seventh air crash of an IAF aircraft and also the sixth crash of a MiG aircraft during the year itself. From the Jamnagar airbase alone, this is the third crash of an IAF aircraft after takeoff. Earlier, a MiG-29 aircraft had crashed after takeoff on June 8, caused by an in-flight fire, and prior to that this year, on January 17, a MiG-21 aircraft crash was caused by "explosion of rocket during firing."

Although there have been some on-going controversies over the rising number of MiG crashes, the latest crash has once again brought into focus the safety record of the IAF. Over 90 IAF MiG aircraft have crashed in the past eleven years and some 200 aircraft have been lost during this period. During the last decade, on an average, the IAF lost about 22 aircraft and 16 fatalities were reported every year. It is a matter of serious concern and, therefore, it is urged that the Government may review, on a priority basis, the safety standards, the operating procedures and practices followed by the IAF at various airbases, including Jamnagar, so as to update and upgrade them suitably to save the loss of valuable lives and the costly aircraft.

Tardy progress in creating infrastructure facilities for Commonwealth Games 2010

Delhi had won the bid to host the 2010 Commonwealth Games on November 13, 2003, but the majority of projects are still on papers. The Games Village which promises to translate traditional Indian hospitality into standards of comforts and diversified cuisine, and excellence in all events management, is still a matter of debate amongst Ministries of Environment and Forests, Water Resources, D.D.A., Delhi Government, etc. The suggestion against having the Commonwealth Games Village coming up on the Yamuna bed, or to explore the option of building a temporary Games Village, which can be dismantled later to restore the floodplain, is an impossible proposal.



The expert Committee of Ministry of Environment and Forests vetting projects beyond Rs. 50 crore, should dilute its temporary structure syndrome. Alternative sites in Dwarka and Narela, are too late now. Moreover, the proposed international zone, the dining hall with 3,000 capacity, a polyclinic, residential quarters, hotels, sports facilities like swimming pool, athletic tracks, fitness centres will have to be permanent structures. In 1982 Asian Games, when national prestige was involved, suspension of the regular rules of land management, violations of Delhi's Master Plan, making space by cutting the Siri Fort forests, reclaiming the Talkatora water reservoir to construct swimming stadium, are few precedents which should be followed. Let all of us pull up our socks and sprint towards the finishing line as the deadline of 2010 draws closer.

Sanctuaries, national parks and tiger reserves and regenerating forest cover

Vijay Darda reminded the House that India's former Prime Ministers, Late Smt. Indira Gandhi and Shri Rajiv Gandhi, advocated the need to have sanctuaries, national parks and tiger reserves to regenerate forest cover. There are 67 national parks and 398 wildlife sanctuaries, out of which 17 have been brought under the Project, "Tiger Reserves". Their effective management envisages exclusion of human interference in the form of habitation, domestic livestock, agriculture and other land-use practices. It is a fact that for safeguarding precious gene pool and flora and fauna, concerted steps are indispensable to eliminate human interference, involving relocation of the existing habitations. There is no doubt that about 40 villages have been relocated from the tiger reserves, but more than 125 villages from the tiger reserves are still awaiting relocation.

There may even be more if we take into consideration other national parks and wildlife sanctuaries. In 1989-90, the then Department of Environment, Forests and Wildlife had prepared a scheme, envisaging an expenditure of Rs. 200 crores, during the Seventh Five Year Plan. How and where that money has been spent is hardly visible. Tiger



reserves in Central India remain unrelocated. In Melghat Tiger Reserve, 19 villages out of 22, in Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve 59 villages out of 65, and in Pench Tiger Reserve, 19 villages out of 20, remain unrelocated. Even on the resettled ten villages, grossly inadequate funds have been spent, thus leaving them in the lurch. A complete relocation plan is an immediate necessity, with adequate funds and time-bound implementation thereof.

Recognition of contribution made by Indian migrant workers

India had a foreign exchange reserve of nearly 172 billion dollars by April 2007. The FDI component hovers around 4 billion dollars a year. We all know how this mammoth figure of 172 billion dollars, which we often hold as a mirror of our economic development, has been built brick by brick. Our merchandise exports, our software exports, etc., are nowhere near this magic figure of 172 billion dollars.

The RBI data states that the total remittance by Indian expatriates in the last six years, that is, up to 2005-06, has been a staggering 114 billion dollars, with figures of 2005-06 itself being 24.6 billion dollars. But it may be mentioned that these Non-Resident Indians and People of Indian Origin, are not big entrepreneurs, but millions of migrant workers who slog it out in the Middle-East, Canada and many parts of Africa, are welders, fitters, maids, carpenters, unskilled labour, masons, drivers, etc. Moreover, these remittances have brought about such changes in the developmental landscape of India, which ideally is the Government's responsibility.

These expatriates have literally transformed the destinies of many in States of Kerala, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, etc. But the irony is that instead of recognizing their contribution, what the Government has succeeded in doing is creating unnecessary impediments and terming them as an unorganized force. Thus the Government should not only suitably recognize their contributions, but also create a respectable and enabling environment for seamless flow of these remittances.



Need for comprehensive insurance coverage for our poor and marginal farmers and rural folk

The number of suicides by farmers, particularly in six affected districts of Vidarbha (1,447 in 2006) and in other places is on the increase as primarily they are at the mercy of local money lenders, and are largely victims of utterly indifferent attitude of local Government officials. Major factors for this alarming situation are rain-starved crops, niggardly irrigation facilities, increasing cost of inputs, and inability to recover even the cost of production when mandis become accessible. LIC and General Insurance companies hardly have any presence in rural areas. Thus without any sort of safety net, a majority of India's rural population has no cover for unforeseen contingencies. Now, global insurance majors such as AIG and Aviva are increasingly seeing rural India as a growth area.

They are tailoring their policies to meet the requirements of this segment. Villagers may now have the option of insuring their cattle, damage to their crops, marketing losses, etc. by paying nominal premium. New players' entry will result in competition to woo the farmers/rural community. The Government of India and State Governments should, initially, extend substantial help towards payment of premiums by farmers as this insurance coverage would go a long way towards gradual elimination of trend of resorting to suicides. Rural folk need to be motivated by the Panchayats/Block officials, NGOs, etc. towards this direction so that uneducated villagers get quick and hassle-free insurance claims.

Demand for setting up of a Supreme Court Bench at Nagpur

Vijay Darda raised a matter regarding setting up of a Supreme Court bench at Nagpur. While inaugurating the first phase of the ambitious e-courts project, interlinking of all the courts across the country on 9th July 2007, the former President of India envisaged change in the "face of judiciary" within the next five years. He advised the Supreme Court



administration for fuller utilisation of national e-governance, and visualised a scenario of "a citizen filing a civil dispute case using National ID Card and getting justice within two weeks". Simultaneously, the Chief Justice of India also assured liquidation of huge arrears within a foreseeable future.

Establishing "evening courts", introducing "plea-bargaining system", setting up "fast track courts" etc., undoubtedly, contribute towards liquidation of arrears at district level. Litigants face harrowing time chasing the apex court for getting justice by their constant shuttling from four corners of the vast country to Delhi. Therefore, if a bench of Supreme Court could be established at Nagpur, it will go a long way towards not only liquidating the pending arrears but also assuring quicker delivery of justice in new cases. The UPA Government under the inspiring guidance of its Chairperson in consultation with the Supreme Court and other legal luminaries may initiate a time-bound process so that a Supreme Court bench could be established at Nagpur.

A recent U.N. Report and the Government of India have already identified this city as a future metropolis. Besides its central location, its growing civic communication, aviation and power infrastructure would admirably fit in for setting up a bench of the Supreme Court of India at Nagpur.

Need to identify Bhoodan Lands for distribution to the poor in the country

Ekta Parishad's five-year-long progressive and intensified campaign - now as Janadesh 2007-is a non-violent movement to project people's land rights and obtain Government's commitment for immediate interaction, about 25000 dedicated landless farmers and have-nots from 18 states, having spontaneous support of about 1000 foreign nationals from 19 countries also walked all the way (360 kms) to show their solidarity for the cause.

Vijay Darda told that Bhoodan Yajna -the Lands Gift Mission - in fifties' under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi's foremost disciple, Acharya



Vinobha Bhave, along with well-known social activists like Ms. Nirmala Deshpande and Shri Lalu Dada originating from Pochampalli, Andhra Pradesh and selfless Sarvodaya workers, walked from village to village for 13 years covering 50,000 kms, persuading people to share the land with their landless brethren.

Over ten lakh hectares of land was collected as Bhoodan, of which 40 per cent could be distributed to the landless. The remaining 60 per cent could not be distributed in the absence of a supportive legislation and political will. The nation's consciousness has to return once again to the traditional land rights of Adivasis and landless who are denied either in the name of development or through manipulations of the land mafia. Government's immediate initiative in the shape of setting up an expert committee followed by the National Land Reforms Council is a laudable augury. For giving immediate relief, the Government should initiate identification of Bhoodan lands in various states that are yet to be distributed. The Government should provide legislative and other necessary support to responsible NGOs and complete the unfinished task of Acharya Vinoba Bhaveji. This will be our contribution in the centenary year of Satyagraha Movement and fulfilment of Mahatma Gandhi's prayer to wipe the tear from every eye of the poorest of the poor.

Rural poor to be benefitted by scientific development

While addressing the first Indian-EU Science Ministerial Conference in New Delhi during February, 2007, the President of India, strongly urged for evolving a world knowledge forum to bring together the core competence of different countries and to identify and implement 25 research projects that would take the benefits of scientific development to the grassroots people. He also implored universities to increase the output of higher education from the existing 11 per cent to 20 per cent by 2012, 30 per cent by 2020 and 50 per cent by 2040. His clarion call to equip Indian youth with either a world-class higher education or with world-class skill is timely.



Fostering of India-EU joint programmes in strategically important research fields of advanced materials, nanoscience and nanobiology strengthens our resolve. Joint efforts must be initiated by India and EU initially in the field of education, science, technology and related disciplines.

Formal signing of an expression of interests for participation of the facility for anti-proton and ion reactor, being set up by EU for finding answers to questions dogging the global scientific community relating to evolution of the Universe is just a beginning. The Government is requested that all-out sincere efforts be made to achieve the desired results within a pre-determined timeframe.

Simultaneously, identification of research projects and programmes, and evolving modalities for building a wide and strong linkage between EU and India for increased scope for movement of manpower and resources in both directions will go a long way towards upgrading the quality of life of our deprived 200 million rural and urban people.

Mounting subsidies and their continued failure to bridge the economic disparities

Vijay Darda expressed apprehensions in the House that subsidized higher education, unrealistically low prices of petrol, diesel, LPG, kerosene, is a burden on the Government resources due to majority of the actual beneficiaries being comparatively well-off.

The target segments -BPL population, small farmers, rural households, etc., do not get any relief. Subsidies on fertilizers are cornered by the rich farmers. Public Distribution System does not percolate to the intended poor beneficiaries as they have no ration cards for lack of fixed address; microscopic minority possessing ration cards, do not have money to purchase their weekly quota of food-grains on any one day of the week.

The envisaged objectives sought to be achieved through nearly Rs. 1,00,000 crore subsidies are nowhere near fulfilment. The extant delivery system is replete with corruption, diversion of subsidized



items, atrophied infrastructure assigned for the purpose, and unimaginative procedures.

All types of subsidies should not be tarred by the same brush. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme is targeted towards the rural poor-the relatively well-off will not enroll in such schemes. But a recent CAG report has castigated its working also. Therefore, effective new modalities seem to be the only solution. The Government is urged upon that through a collective wisdom of a Group of Ministers like Finance, Rural Development, Panchayat Raj, Consumer Affairs and PDS, Petroleum etc., a synergetic approach, based on interaction amongst implementing agencies, self-help groups with proven deep rural penetration and actual beneficiaries, may be devised. This may initially fulfil the UPA Government's avowed aim to bring the economic disparities, and gradually, usher in an era of prosperity for aam admi.

Farming of energy through generating power, fuel etc. from agriculture residues

Presently, agriculture is trapped in a low growth rate of around three per cent per annum primarily due to its being non-remunerative. But if food and energy are produced from the same piece of land, agricultural growth will be rapid coupled with production of more power and fuel. Actually, a farmer sells only 25-40 per cent of his crops, whereas the rest of his produce (agriculture residues), which significantly constitutes 60-75 per cent of the product, is a total waste. In such a situation, no amount of subsidies or Government support prices can significantly help farmers. If farm agriculture residues also get money, agriculture will become a profitable proposition for 60 per cent of our agriculture-dependent population.

Three types of energy can be produced from India's annual 600 million tonnes of agriculture residues--liquid fuels such as ethanol, gaseous fuels like biogas (methane) and electric power. A few large plants in Canada, Japan and US have already been set up by using this technology. Further on-going research inputs can certainly make ethanol production viable and environment friendly. Similarly,



production of pyrolysis (methylene) oil by rapid combustion of biomass is currently being done. Through biomass-based power plants substantial quantity of electric power is presently being produced.

All this is being done by industrially advanced countries, and further intensive and customised R & D activities are continuously on, involving huge investments for achieving pre-determined results. The Government is urged upon to make a thorough study of these processes / equipment / technologies and take effective steps to reap multi-dimensional benefits for the farmers and also meeting multi faceted burgeoning energy requirements of our nation.

Simultaneously, it should be ensured that total agriculture production should not be adversely affected by diverting land towards exclusive cultivation of raw material for bio-fuel production.

II



AN ADEPT QUESTIONER



AN ADEPT QUESTIONER

Question is an important parliamentary device through which members obtain information on a whole range of government responsibilities and performance and hold the Government accountable on a daily basis. This is one of the best parliamentary tools available to any member to mount pressure on ministries to perform, to respond to the larger public needs, to explain their acts of omissions and commissions, and also take the ministers to task for inefficiency, failures and misdeeds.

The Question Hour has traditionally been viewed as the most important time of the House proceedings. It is appropriately the first hour of the business to be transacted by the House. During this hour, ministers directly answer questions and reply to supplementaries asked thereon by the members.

Taking advantage of this device is part of the parliamentary craft of a legislator. Indian Parliament has seen the likes of Prof Hiren Mukherjee, Satyamurthi, Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, Jyotirmoy Bosu, Nath Pai, Madhu Limaye and A R Kulkarni, among others, who excelled in asking searching questions to get the best answers from the government that often frames its answers in such a way as to reveal the least.

“A legislator's ability lies in framing questions that are to the point and compel the government to part with vital information. It is here that the tact of asking supplementaries comes. This has to be framed on the spot, based on the minister's answer, both written and oral. And this is where the home work done matters,” avers Vijay Darda.

He has immense faith in the efficacy of questions as a vital parliamentary device. To him, parliamentary questions constitute the core of executive accountability to Parliament. Its primacy is seldom questioned. Therefore, both the Legislature and the Executive should take parliamentary questions very seriously.



"We are living in times when legislatures have become very turbulent and members, agitated over a certain matter, demand that it should be discussed by suspending Question Hour," says Vijay Darda, who strongly disapproves such a demand. He views the increasing tendency to demand suspension of the Question Hour as an unhealthy development for parliamentary democracy and feels that the most fundamental right of a member - to hold the Government accountable - should not be compromised with. He has always held that the Question Hour has sanctity of its own. By asking questions, members can call upon the Government to explain its position on a wide variety of subjects and hold it accountable. On several occasions, he has called upon fellow-members to resist the temptation of demanding the suspension of the Question Hour to discuss matters of political interest. He emphasizes that the Question Hour should be utilized fully and effectively as an important parliamentary device so as to secure executive accountability. He thinks every member owes at least this much to his constituents.

Vijay Darda is always eager to ask questions - starred and unstarred. He keenly looks forward to the parliamentary calendar to plan and prioritize his questions on different dates. If one flips through the question lists, both starred and unstarred, the name of Vijay Darda would be noticed almost daily. He has asked starred and unstarred questions on virtually the whole gamut of government responsibility. The range of issues he takes up through parliamentary questions is, by all reckoning, outstanding.

A careful look at his questions reveals his overriding concerns on issues that impinge the poor and deprived sections of the society and the neglected areas of our public governance. A wide range of issues has engaged his attention. They include problems faced by agriculture sector, suicide by the farmers, food security, Public Distribution System (PDS), problem of rural and urban poor, credit guarantee scheme for small scale industries, rural development, regional development, tourism, expansion of railway network, youth policy and sports promotion, healthcare to the poor, child labour, drop-outs, AIDS



control, reduction of prices of anti-cancer drugs, rehabilitation of the victims of natural calamities, protection of wild life and so on.

It is often noticed that supplementaries asked by members are sometimes very long and winding. When a member wants to elicit information, he must ask pointed questions. But, it is observed that at times some members instead of asking short and succinct questions indulge in making a speech or a statement.

“A question is a question - not an observation, certainly not a speech. Apparently, many members do not understand this, or find it convenient to use the opportunity to make speeches,” says Darda.

The art of asking pointed supplementaries does not come so very easily. For this, a member has to study the questions in advance, read the material pertaining to the questions and then form some definite ideas on the question in which he is interested in asking supplementaries. By doing so, a member can really pinpoint the faults of the Government and elicit more information.

Vijay Darda, it would seem, has perfectly mastered the art of asking the supplementaries. For asking an effective supplementary, he makes adequate preparation and gathers information on the subject, for he believes that in the absence of adequate preparation, no meaningful supplementary can be asked.

Besides maintaining a general awareness level, he has developed specialization in many important areas such as media and communication, economics and finance. He always does his homework before catching the Chair's eye during the Question Hour for asking supplementaries. What helps him is the fact that the presiding officer invariably looks forward to accommodate those members who generally come prepared and have gained expertise on subjects being discussed.

Vijay Darda has also earned a reputation of asking relevant and crisp supplementaries pertaining to the main question. Ministers, at times, have found a thorough and well-informed groundwork behind every supplementary asked by Vijay Darda. His education and training as a



media person and a media manager has shaped his critical outlook and his wide experience in public life has widened his understanding of the problems faced by the common man.

Not surprisingly, many of his supplementaries have evoked informed debates in the House. His original questions as also the supplementaries are invariably guided by public interest, providing an appropriate ambience for debates in cross-party perspectives.

It would be instructive to note a few of his Starred Questions, which have generated considerable enthusiasm among the Members during the course of the Minister's replies:

DECLARATION OF NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY

प्रश्न संख्या - 694

श्री विजय ज. दर्डा : आदरणीय सभापति महोदय, मंत्री जी ने अपने जवाब में कहा है कि प्रधानमंत्री जी ने ऐसी कोई भी घोषणा नहीं की है और राष्ट्रीय युवा नीति, जो 1988 में बनी थी, उस पर अभी भी विचार चल रहा है, उस पर अभी तक आपने कोई भी निर्णय नहीं लिया है। मैं आपके माध्यम से मंत्री जी से जानना चाहूंगा कि कब तक आप इस नीति की घोषणा करेंगे?

श्री विक्रम वर्मा : सभापति जी, माननीय सदस्य का प्रश्न था कि क्या 12 जनवरी, 2003 तक युवा नीति की घोषणा कर दी जाएगी या ऐसी माननीय प्रधानमंत्री जी ने घोषणा की थी। इस बारे में मैं उन्हें बताना चाहता हूं कि माननीय प्रधानमंत्री जी ने इस तरह की कोई घोषणा नहीं की थी। जहां तक युवा नीति का प्रश्न है, राज्यों से, राज्य सरकारों से, केन्द्रीय मंत्रालयों से, विभागों से, विश्वविद्यालय, राजनीतिक पार्टियों, उनके यूथ विंग्स, सबसे डिस्कशन पूरा हो चुका है, उसका ड्राफ्ट भी तैयार हो चुका है। अब जो प्रक्रिया है कि कैबिनेट में जाना है, कैबिनेट की एप्रूवल के बाद फिर उसको सदन में पुट-अप करना है, यह प्रक्रिया हम प्रारम्भ करने जा रहे हैं। जैसे ही यह प्रक्रिया पूरी हो जाएगी, इसकी घोषणा कर दी जाएगी।

IRREGULARITIES UNDER THE INDIRA AWAS YOJANA

प्रश्न संख्या - 243

श्री विजय ज. दर्डा : धन्यवाद चेयरमैन सर, पिछले तीन वर्षों में इंदिरा आवास योजना के तहत राज्यों के लिए आपने क्या लक्ष्य तय किया है जिसके अन्तर्गत आपने घर बनाने की योजना बनाई है? और



क्या वह लक्ष्य पूरा किया जा रहा है जिसका लाभ बी.पी.एल., ग्रामीण क्षेत्र में रहने वाले लोग, शेड्यूल्ड कास्ट, शेड्यूल्ड ट्राइब्स व आदिवासी लोगों को मिलेगा। क्या यह धनराशि उन पर खर्च हुई है या अन्यत्र खर्च हुई है यह मैं सरकार से जानना चाहूंगा?

श्री अन्नासाहेब एम.के. पाटिल : सभापति जी, हमारा जो एलोकेशन इंदिरा आवास योजना के माध्यम से राज्यों में जा रहा है उसका मैं एक साल बाद ब्यौरा दे रहा हूँ कि करीब 1900 करोड़ से 2100 करोड़ तक तीन साल से हमारा एलोकेशन इंदिरा आवास योजना के माध्यम से है और जिन-जिन राज्यों में इसका काम चल रहा है वह ठीक से चल रहा है। लेकिन कई राज्यों में इतनी अच्छी तरह से काम नहीं चल रहा है। ओवर ऑल इंडिया की फिगर्स देखेंगे तो 100 परसेंट अच्छा काम है लेकिन उसका पांच राज्यों में काम ठीक से नहीं है। मैं इतना ही कह सकूंगा।

श्री विजय ज. दर्डा : सर, मेरी इसमें सेकेंड सप्लिमेंट्री है। 14 राज्यों ने और तीन यूनियन टेरिटोरीज ने इंदिरा आवास योजना के खर्चों का ब्यौरा सरकार को नहीं दिया है। उन राज्यों से नियमित रूप से ब्यौरा मिलता रहे, इसके लिए आपने क्या उपाय योजना बनाई है और जो आपने कहा कि हम राज्यों को लगातार पैसा दे रहे हैं, तो इस फाइव ईयर में आपने उनको कितना एलॉट किया है और इस क्वार्टर के अंदर एक अप्रैल, से 30 जून, 2003 में आपने उनको किस प्रकार से दिया है?

श्री अन्नासाहेब एम.के.पाटिल : सर, जिन राज्यों को जो पहला इंस्टालमेंट दिया था तथा उन्होंने 60 परसेंट और उससे ज्यादा काम किया, उनको तो सेकेंड इंस्टालमेंट दिया है। लेकिन जिन राज्यों में पहला ही बकाया एमाउंट है उनको नहीं दिया गया है। हमने उसको परस्यू करने की कोशिश की है। इतना ही नहीं बार-बार उनकी मीटिंग ली है, उन लोगों को जानकारी दी है और जितना उन पर प्रेशर लाकर काम कराना है उतना हमने करने की कोशिश की है।

श्री विजय जे. दर्डा : सर, मेरा आपसे यह प्रश्न था कि जो 14 राज्यों और 3 यूनियन टेरिटोरीज ने आपको उसका हिसाब नहीं दिया है तो उसके बारे में आपने क्या कार्रवाई की है?

SETTLEMENT OF LABOUR DISPUTES THROUGH TELECONFERENCING

प्रश्न संख्या - 264

श्री विजय जे. दर्डा : सभापति जी, मेरे प्रश्न के उत्तर में कहा गया है कि लेबर डिस्प्यूट्स का तीन और छह महीने में निस्तारण हो जाता है। मैं आपके माध्यम से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि पिछले वर्ष दिसम्बर, 2002 तक स्टेटवाइज और यूनियन टेरिटोरीवाइज कितने लेबर डिस्प्यूट्स पेंडिंग हैं?

श्री साहिब सिंह वर्मा : माननीय सभापति जी, अगर मैं स्टेटवाइज बताऊँ तो 2001 में दिल्ली में 69 मामले निपटाए गए, 2002 में 51 मामले निपटाए गए, चंडीगढ़ में 2002 में 60 मामले निपटाए गए।



चडीगढ़ में अप्रैल 2002 तक 60 मामले और अप्रैल से दिसम्बर तक 34 मामले, कानपुर में 2002 तक 41 मामले, हैदराबाद में 2002 तक 05 निपटाए गए। सभापति जी, मेरे पास इसका पूरा विवरण है अगर माननीय सदस्य चाहें तो मैं उन्हें भेज दूंगा।

श्री विजय जे. दर्डा : सभापति जी, मैंने प्रश्न में पूछा था कि राज्य और यूनियन टेरिटोरीवाइज टोटल कितने डिस्प्यूट्स हैं और 2002 तक कितने निपटाए गए हैं?

श्री साहिब सिंह वर्मा : सभापति जी, प्रश्न में यह पूछा गया है क्या कोई ऐसी स्टडी करवाई गई है, मैंने माननीय सदस्य को इस बारे में जानकारी दी है कि हमने श्रीराम सेंटर फॉर इंडस्ट्रियल रिलेशन्स एण्ड ह्यूमन रिसोर्सेज के द्वारा स्टडी करवाई है जिसमें उन्होंने बताया है कि विवादों के निस्तारण में औसतन तीन से छह माह का समय लगता है। आपने प्रश्न यह किया था कि कितने दिन कराया गया, कितना समय लगता है। अगर आपको इसका विवरण चाहिए तो मेरे पास स्टेटवाइज पूरी फिगर्स हैं। आप चाहें तो मैं इन्हें कुछ फिगर्स दे सकता हूँ।

TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Question No. 127

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA : Sir, I would like to know as to what is the existing financial outlay for over 300 programmes for specific areas to which these relate, and what modalities would be adopted to ensure that funds actually reach the implementing authorities through Zilla Panchayats or local bodies in time through the State Governments.

SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN : Sir, the Government has been implementing a number of Centrally-sponsored Schemes through the Line Departments of State Governments. Through the Seventy-third and Seventy-fourth Constitution Amendments it has imparted status to the PRIs and urban local bodies. Various schemes are being implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development. Major programmes are being put in position. Particularly speaking, the Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana is one of the largest Centrally-sponsored Schemes which is being implemented by the Panchayati Raj Institutions.

Now, the second thing the Hon. Member wished to know was how these schemes were being effectively implemented. Sir, there is a



monitoring mechanism which has been put in position and that monitoring committee, from time to time, reviews the progress of implementation. Sir, officers from the Planning Commission, advisers who have been put in charge of this particular sector, often visit the States and review the progress. This is one type of monitoring mechanism.

The other mechanism is that we try to get reports from time to time from the State Governments with regard to implementation as well as the results achieved, based on both physical and financial outlays. Then, Sir, there is another mechanism which has been put in place.

NABARD has been made one of the monitoring agencies. NABARD has got its branches in almost all the districts. Apart from that, the NGOs and PRIs closely look into these things. Thus, there is an effective mechanism put in position.

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA : Sir, the Hon. Minister has not replied to my question. I had asked him one thing and he is saying something else.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Please, put your second supplementary now

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA : Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I wanted to know which are the States which will come under these schemes and which are the categories that are going to be covered under them.

SHRI M. V. RAJASEKHARAN : Sir, as far as the states and the districts are concerned, I would be very happy to send the details to the Hon. Member. As far as the implementation reports of programmers are concerned, I have already provided the information.



CENSOR CERTIFICATES FOR FILM FESTIVALS AND NATIONAL AWARDS

Q. NO. 530

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Sir, my first supplementary is, are Censor certificates being denied to films in the name of "danger to national security"? What is the Censor Board's precise perception of "National Security", or, "Communal Harmony", etc.? And, also, in how many cases, Films, initially refused the grant of Censor certificates, were granted Censor Certificates after the intervention of judiciary?

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, considerations of 'National Security' and "Communal Harmony" naturally govern the process of issue of certification. Having said that, Sir, these judgements have to be made by the Censor Authority, having regard to the context of each film, each scene. Therefore, there can be no generalization. Sir, as far as the certification process is concerned, you can see, Sir, from the figures that the pictures censored are not too many. Their figure is not too high. Overall, the number of pictures censored comes to less than four per cent.

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Sir, I had asked, how many films have been granted the permission after the judicial intervention? That was my question.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, it is a very good question. There is no doubt about it. But I don't have the figures right now with me. I can supply the figures to the Hon. Member later, because that was not part of the question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Vayalar Ravi.

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Sir, I have to put my second supplementary.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, you are putting the third supplementary.

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: No; Sir, it is my second supplementary. I had to stand up for the second time because he did not reply to my first supplementary.



सभापति : चलिए, पूछिए।

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Sir, my second supplementary is, do the guidelines issued by the Government to Censor Boards have sufficient cushion for elements of 'subjectivity' - personal likes or dislikes - and 'objectivity' - impartiality? They are seldom observed.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, the Censor guidelines have been very imaginatively framed. But, Sir, in the field of cinema, culture, the judgements are inevitably subjective. It is not possible to form objective criteria. Having regard to this limitation, I cannot say that they are all the time applied objectively. But the effort is to see that impartial judgements are made.

SAFEGUARDING INTERESTS OF INDIAN IT COMPANIES

Q. NO. 165

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Sir, I would like to ask the Hon. Minister: Are IT companies, engaged in fulfilling outsourcing assignments of foreign-based companies, adequately protected so far as the receipt of payment of work done is concerned? Security of personnel employed on allegedly flimsy leakage of confidential information charges, etc., has not been paid to those people.

SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN: Sir, as I have mentioned in my statement, the outsourcing companies are totally de-licensed by the Government of India. They work with agreements with the foreign counterparts and basically they are governed by their agreements which they have entered into. If there is any breach of contract they can always go to the court. As far as the second part of the question is concerned, the Member asked about the protection of the employees. Sir, there are some cases which are reported in the paper but, Sir, no complaint has been received whether inside the country for such theft or similarly there was no complaint from the other sources like the countries which claim that their data were sold. No complaints were received officially.



SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: What incentives is the Government giving to the existing or new IT companies to equip themselves better to face the challenges of outsourcing arrangements given by foreign clients to countries like China, Malaysia, like training inputs and financial support? The rate for Mbps and lease circuit is very costly to compete with other nations where the rate is competitively very low. If you want to compete with these people, you have to be competitive. If we don't do anything, we may lose our supremacy or leadership in this field.

SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN: Sir, I agree with the concerns of the Hon. Member. I would like to tell the Hon. Member, through you, that we have the Software Technology Parks of India which the Government of India supports through the Department of Information Technology where we have incubation centers for new entrepreneurs who can come and ask for facilities. There are full-fledged facilities. You have lease-line facilities. You have desktops and there is a complete set up. They come there without much investment, plug into the system, do their business and get trained. The moment they expand their business, they can open and go to their own centres. So, we will be doing very well. This is the basic infrastructure set up which we offer to the IT companies. These have been welcomed and they are present in all the major cities in the country.

As far as the cost of bandwidth is concerned, I would say that we are also very concerned about it. In fact, the Government is not in a position to do much since all the external fibres, which go outside the country, are controlled by private sector companies like VSNL of TATAs, Reliance Infocom and Bharti. So, the Government of India cannot do anything. We only source our external bandwidth to them and the gatekeepers are charging quite a high amount. Recently, I also requested the TATAs to reduce their international bandwidth. To counter this, the BSNL, the State-owned telecom network, is planning to put up a fibre connecting to Colombo so that we can connect CME West and CME East cables. We also have proposals to connect Andaman and from Andaman, to go to Singapore. There are proposals which are still under consideration.



SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Sir, I have to seek a clarification on this issue. You have said that it is not being controlled by the Government and it has been given to VSNL and all that. I agree with that because under privatisation it has to be done. If we lose our control, we will be losing our ground. You look at how other countries such as Taiwan, Malaysia and China are doing.

SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN: The present Government has not taken these decisions. Privatisation was done by the previous Government. Even then, when it comes to pricing of bandwidth, it is under the total control of TRAI. Sir, TRAI is the one which controls the price of bandwidth. And, recently, TRAI has made some recommendations.

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: We set up TRAI.

SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN: Sir, TRAI did something. But, they had gone to court. The court knocked down the recommendations of reducing the international bandwidth. This is the concern which the country is also facing. International bandwidth prices are coming down. But, in India, international bandwidth prices are not coming down because of private players.

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FOREIGN CHANNEL OPERATORS

प्रश्न संख्या - 65

श्री विजय जे. दर्डा : सर, मेरी पहली सप्लिमेंटरी यह है कि भारत में कार्यरत विदेशी चैनलों से सम्बन्धित दो महत्वपूर्ण मुद्दे हैं- एक वित्त से संबंधित है और दूसरा नैतिकता से संबंधित। जहाँ तक वित्तीय स्थिति का प्रश्न है, इससे सरकार को अभी तक कितनी आमदनी हुई है? विदेशी चैनलों के माध्यम से जो कार्यक्रम और विज्ञापन दिखाए जाते हैं, उनमें अंधविश्वास, सेक्स और हिंसा ज्यादा होती है, जो कि बच्चों तथा परिवारों के लिए नैतिक और शैक्षिक दृष्टि से नुकसानदेह है। उदाहरण के लिए - पोगो और कार्टून नेटवर्क। उसके बारे में सरकार के पास अब तक कितनी शिकायतें आई हैं और सरकार ने क्या कदम उठाए हैं?

श्री प्रियरंजनदास मुंशी : सभापति महोदय, यह सवाल जिस आधार पर पूछा गया है, उसमें पहले गलत सूचना सारे अखबारों में हो गई थी, यह जो हमारी डाउन-लिकिंग की गाइडलाइन्स चालू होने के बाद सूचित हुई थी, इसको मैं पहले संशोधित करना चाहता हूँ। चैनल रजिस्ट्रेशन के लिए डेढ़



करोड़, एक करोड़ के प्रावधान के बारे में जो सूचना हुई, वह गलत है। चैनल रजिस्ट्रेशन के लिए फॉरेन चैनल को पांच लाख और हर एडीशनल चैनल के लिए एक लाख का प्रावधान हम लोगों ने किया था, लेकिन जो कंपनी इसके रजिस्ट्रेशन के दायरे में आएगी, फॉरेन चैनल डाउन-लिकिंग के लिए, उसकी वित्तीय स्थिति, उसकी असेट्स, उसकी इक्विटी, इसके लिए हम लोगों ने प्रावधान किया डेढ़ करोड़ का और हर एडीशनल चैनल के लिए एक करोड़। यह तो हुआ, जहां तक चैनल रजिस्ट्रेशन का सवाल है। इसके बाद जो आमदनी का सवाल है, यह जब शुरू हुआ, करीब 20 अक्टूबर से, इसके बारे में हम लोगों ने कदम उठाए, रजिस्ट्रेशन की शुरुआत हो गई, लेकिन पूरी आमदनी कितनी हुई, इसके बारे में अभी फिलहाल मेरे पास पूरे तथ्य नहीं हैं, लेकिन मैं आपकी अनुमति से ये तथ्य जल्दी ही प्राप्त करा कर आदरणीय सांसद महोदय के पास भेज दूंगा।

महोदय, जहां तक चैनल की बात है। इसमें कोई शक नहीं कि बाहर से जो चैनल डाउन-लिक होकर हमारे इंडिया में आते हैं, उसके लिए फिलहाल कोई रेगुलेशन एक्ट या उसको कंट्रोल करने के लिए कि उनके कंटेंट क्या हैं, प्रेजेंटेशन क्या है, इसके लिए उतनी कानूनी व्यवस्था नहीं है, लेकिन डाउन-लिकिंग के लिए हमारे केबल नेटवर्क रूल्स के तहत कुछ कोड हम लोगों ने बनाए हैं और उस कोड के अंतर्गत अगर कोई प्रोग्राम आ जाए तो हम कोई कदम नहीं उठाते हैं, लेकिन अगर इस कोड के बाहर कोई प्रोग्राम, जबरदस्ती केबल नेटवर्क रूल्स को वाइओलेट करके एंटरटेन करे, तो उसमें हम कदम उठाते हैं और उस कदम के अनुसार, जो एक फॉरेन चैनल रेनटेल रूप से आता था, उसको हमने बैन कर दिया है। बाकी जिन दो-तीन चैनल के बारे में बात कही गई है, हम लोगों के पास कोई खास शिकायत नहीं आई है, लेकिन एक बात मैं स्पष्ट करना चाहता हूँ कि शिकायत किसी प्रकार की भी हो, शिकायत है। इस संबंध में हमारा इंडियन ब्रॉडकास्टिंग बिल जो 1997 में बनना था, वह हाउस कोलैप्स होने की वजह से नहीं बन पाया, हमारा कनवर्जेन्स बिल जो तेरहवीं लोकसभा में बनना था, वह हाउस कोलैप्स होने के वजह से नहीं बन पाया था, इन दोनों को संबद्ध करके एक नया कदम उठाने के लिए हम लोग बातचीत कर रहे हैं और जल्दी ही हम लोग इसके बारे में कोई कदम उठाएंगे और सदन को सूचित करेंगे।

श्री विजय ज. दर्डा : सभापति जी, मेरी दूसरी सप्लीमेंटरी। मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ कि यह सत्य है कि आपके पास किसी भी प्रकार की शिकायत नहीं आई है, किन्तु क्या कोई पोगो कार्टून जैसे नेटवर्क का आपका विभाग समर्थन करता है या अभी तक उक्त कानूनों के तहत कितने चैनल आपने पंजीबद्ध किए हैं, उनका ब्यौरा क्या है और कितने चैनलों के खिलाफ कार्रवाई की गई है, जो सेक्स और अंधविश्वास आदि को बढ़ाते हैं? क्या आप सेंसर बोर्ड की धरती पर टी.वी. के लिए भी ऐसा प्रावधान करने का विचार रखते हैं या करना पसंद करेंगे?

श्री प्रियरंजनदास मुंशी : सर, जहां तक फॉरेन चैनल का सवाल है, मैंने पहले बताया कि जो बाहर से अपलिक होकर डाउन-लिक इंडिया में होता है, उसका तो हम उतना नियंत्रण नहीं कर सकते, लेकिन कंटेंट अगर हमारे कोड के खिलाफ हो, तो हम कदम उठा सकते हैं और ऐसा कदम हमने पहले उठाया भी है, जैसा एक टी.वी. चैनल का नाम हमने आपको बताया था। जहां तक आदरणीय



सदस्य महोदय बार बार 'पोगो' की बात कर रहे हैं और दूसरे टी.वी. चैनल की बात कर रहे हैं, सिर्फ यही नहीं, कभी कभी देश के अंदर कुछ टी.वी. चैनल के प्रोग्राम में ऐसी चीजें आ जाती हैं, जो देखने के लायक नहीं होतीं और नैतिकता में बच्चों को एक गलत दिशा देती हैं, इसको रोकने के लिए, इस पर ठोस कार्रवाई करने के लिए हमारी यू.पी.ए. गवर्नमेंट एक कंप्रेहेंसिव लॉ की बात सोच रही है और इसके बारे में इंटर-मिनिस्टर्स बात चल रही है। मुझे हर्ष होगा कि बजट सेशन के पहले अगर हम इसके बारे में कोई कदम उठा सकें।

CONCERN FOR THOSE BELOW POVERTY LINE SUBSIDY ON KEROSENE

प्रश्न संख्या - 83

श्री विजय ज. दर्डा : सर, मेरा प्रश्न सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली के तहत लागू नई परियोजना से संबंधित है। सर, मिट्टी का तेल वितरित करने के लिए सरकार ने जो नई परियोजना लागू की है, उसमें ग्राम पंचायत व ग्राम सभाओं को भी जिम्मेदारी दी है। मैं सरकार से जानना चाहता हूँ कि इस परियोजना के तहत ग्राम सभाओं व ग्राम पंचायतों की सहभागिता किस स्तर पर होगी तथा पंचायतें यह कैसे सुनिश्चित करेंगी कि उन्हें जो तेल दिया जा रहा है, वह शुद्ध मिल रहा है?

श्री मणिशंकर अय्यर : महोदय, इस सवाल के अन्तर्गत बहुत से सवाल पूछे गए हैं और मैं सारे सवालों का सही जवाब देने की कोशिश करता हूँ। हमने अभी-अभी एक नई परियोजना शुरू की है, जिसे हम 'जन केरोसिन परियोजना' कहते हैं। हमने इस योजना के अन्तर्गत कोशिश की है कि इस देश में सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली के लिए तकरीबन 5 लाख जो पी.डी.एस. फेयर प्राइस शॉप्स स्थापित किए गए हैं, उन पर नियंत्रण रखने के लिए हम ग्राम पंचायत और ग्राम सभा के सदस्यगण की तरफ से एक समिति बैठाकर देखें कि यह कैसे चल रहा है। फेयर प्राइस शॉप्स की जो राशन दुकानें हैं, वे एक किस्म से इस चेन का अन्तिम स्थान हैं। हमें यह देखना चाहिए कि जो तेल कम्पनी के डिपो से निकलकर होलसेल डिपो तक पहुँचता है और वहाँ से आगे राशन दुकानों तक पहुँचता है, उसमें किस प्रकार का सुधार लाया जा सकता है।

हमने इस जन केरोसिन परियोजना में सबसे पहले यह तय किया है कि जो टैंकर ट्रक्स डिपो से निकलते हैं, उन पर एक खास किस्म की पेंटिंग और लोगो लगाया जाए जिससे लोगों को पता लगे कि यह जन केरोसिन के लिए है और किसी दूसरे काम के लिए नहीं है। यदि वह कहीं गलत स्थान पर लगा हुआ हो, तो कानून-व्यवस्था के लिए जो अधिकारी हैं, उनको उसे वहीं मौके पर पकड़ लेना चाहिए। हम रफ़ता-रफ़ता यह भी कोशिश कर रहे हैं कि हर टैंकर ट्रक पर एक जी.पी.एस., जिसका मतलब है-जियो पोजिशनिंग सिस्टम, उसकी एक मशीन लगाई जाए ताकि डिपो में कम्प्यूटर पर हम देख सकें कि जो ट्रक तेल वाले डिपो तक पहुँचने के लिए निकला है, वह सीधे वहीं जा रहा है या रास्ते में



कहीं रुक रहा है।

हमने यह भी इंतजाम किया है कि जो मध्य स्तर की पंचायत होती है, जिसे हम कुछ राज्यों में क्षेत्र समिति कहते हैं और कहीं पंचायत समिति कहते हैं, उससे अनुरोध किया जाए कि वे किसी को नियुक्त करें कि जिस वक्त यह केरोसिन तेल ब्लॉक के स्तर पर वहाँ के होलसेल डिपो में पहुँचता है तब वे भी वहाँ यह देखने के लिए मौजूद हों कि उस ट्रक के अंदर जितना केरोसिन होना चाहिए, वह पूरा उपलब्ध है या नहीं।

हमने यह भी कहा कि हमारे ही खर्च पर, मतलब ओ.आई.डी.बी. के खर्च पर, जिस पर हम तेल कम्पनियों को देते हैं, वही सुविधाएँ हम केरोसिन वितरण के लिए उपलब्ध करें, जो ये तेल कम्पनियाँ अपने ही खर्च पर पेट्रोल और डीजल के लिए रिटेल आउटलेट्स में उपलब्ध कराती हैं।

मात्र दो, एक तो स्टोरेज टैंक हो ताकि यह न हो कि केरोसिन तेल वहाँ पहुँचे और खुदा जाने कि वह कहाँ चला गया, वह उस स्टोरेज टैंक में होगा। हम उसके साथ एक डिस्पेंसिंग यूनिट लगा रहे हैं जो कि कैलिब्रेटेड है।

श्री विजय जे. दर्डा : सभापति जी, मंत्री जी की कार्यप्रणाली और क्षमता से पूरा देश वाकिफ है। हर चीज में आप गहराई में जाकर अध्ययन करते हैं और लोगों तक लाते हैं, मगर आपके होने के बावजूद, मिट्टी के तेल की कालाबाजारी हो रही है, उसमें मिलावट हो रही है। पेट्रोल पंपों से शुरू होकर सार्वजनिक प्रणाली तक, गांवों और दुकानों तक इसे जाने में कितने ही रास्तों से गुजरना पड़ता है। यहां तक कि आपके NCAER, नेशनल कौंसिल ऑफ एप्लाइड इकोनॉमिक रिसर्च ने भी इसके बारे में कहा है कि करीब-करीब 40 से 50 प्रतिशत तक यह वहां तक नहीं पहुँचता है। आपने पकड़ने की बात कही है, तो क्या उसको सिर्फ ऑफिसर लोग ही पकड़ सकेंगे या सार्वजनिक जीवन में काम करने वाला कोई व्यक्ति भी उसको पकड़ सकता है? दूसरा, जैसे पंजाब, असम, छत्तीसगढ़, तमिलनाडु, उत्तरांचल, बिहार, चंडीगढ़, झारखंड और उड़ीसा से लगातार अत्यधिक मिलावट की खबरें आ रही हैं।(व्यवधान) ... मैं आपसे यह दरखास्त करूंगा कि आपकी क्षमता के बावजूद भी, हर व्यक्ति आज जानता है, किस दंग से यह हो रहा है या किस दंग से माफिया ऑपरेट कर रहे हैं।(व्यवधान)

श्री सभापति : ठीक है, आपने पूछ लिया अपना क्वेश्चन। बोलिए मंत्री जी। आपके उत्तर में मिलावट नहीं होनी चाहिए।

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, I am grateful for the opportunity to bring to the attention of the House the NCAER Study which was formally presented to me only about a month ago and which has, for the first time ever, provided a scientific basis to apprehensions, concerns, that have been expressed for a very long time. The first point that I wish to make with respect to the Study is that it has shown that of



the people who know about the scheme among the BPL cardholders - and that figure is about 85 per cent - nearly 90 per cent are collecting their entire entitlement of kerosene. Now, that is an astonishing finding for me. At the same time, the Study reveals that there is 18.1 per cent diversion to adulteration and another nearly 20 per cent diversion which is taking place from the PDS to the open market for sale back to household use but at market prices. So, these are two separate problems. It used to be said that about half of kerosene is being diverted for adulteration.

This Study does not confirm that. The adulteration element is just little under 20 per cent. That is one very encouraging factor. But, where does it come from? It would appear, this is my rough conclusion, that while the BPL cardholders are, to a very large extent, collecting their entitlement, except to the extent they are not aware of it, which is close to 22 per cent of the BPL cardholders and for whom we have to have an awareness programme, when it comes to the APL cardholders that is where the diversion it would appear, to the open market for re-sale is taking place. Also, a disproportionately large amount of the kerosene which we allot to the states is being allotted by the states to the urban areas rather than the rural areas, and the diversion for mixing and adulteration seems to be much more from the urban areas than from the rural areas.

INDIAN APPROACH PAPER AT WTO-PROTECTION FOR INDIAN FARM PRODUCTS

प्रश्न संख्या - 104

श्री विजय ज. दर्डा : सभापति महोदय, मैं मंत्री जी को इस बात के लिए बधाई देना चाहता हूँ कि वे डब्ल्यूटीओ में हमारा अच्छा प्रतिनिधित्व कर रहे हैं..(व्यवधान)..मंत्री जी कर रहे हैं, ऐसा मैंने कहा है। मगर मैं उनसे जानना चाहता हूँ कि वे सेंसेटिव भारतीय कृषि उत्पादों को संरक्षण के संबंध में आने वाली वार्ता में क्या कर रहे हैं? सेवा संबंधी वार्ता के संबंध में मोड-4 एक्सेस की मांग भारत उठाता रहा है। यूरोपियन यूनियन तथा अन्य विकसित देश इसका विरोध करते रहे हैं। हांगकांग मंत्री स्तरीय वार्ता में इस प्रस्ताव को कौन-कौन से देश संरक्षण दे रहे हैं तथा दक्षिण एशियाई देश विशेष रूप से साफ्टा देशों की इसके बारे में क्या राय है?



SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Sir, the negotiations among various trading partners are continuing and this is the penultimate stage before the Hong Kong Ministerial Conference. It is true that we are interested, especially, in Mode-1, which is cross-border supply, and in Mode-4, which provides for movement of natural citizens, service providers and business professionals. It would be difficult at this stage to indicate which of the countries would be interested in supporting our concerns about service providers, that is, Mode-4. For instance, the United States of America is hardly moving from the position which they took in the Uruguay Round of discussions. I don't think the European Union has also made any forward movement. The Issue Paper which we presented and some of the countries of the Core Group which we constituted-the Core Group consists of EU, US, Egypt, China, India, Malaysia, Brazil, Canada, Japan, Australia, Mexico, Korea, Argentina, Singapore and Chile-are in favour of having a forward movement in Mode-4.

If one is acquainted with the structure of negotiations in WTO, he knows that everybody would like to have forward movement. But, at the same time, everybody would like to protect his own national interests. It is not easy to reconcile various conflicting interests. Keeping that in view, my colleague, Shri Kamal Nath, who was to reply to this question, is engaged in having negotiations with various countries. We hope it would be possible for us to have some sort of satisfactory solutions or resolutions of the problems in the Hong Kong Ministerial Conference.

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Sir, while putting my first supplementary, I had asked, "What are the sensitive agricultural products of India which will remain protected in the current negotiations?" But he did not answer this question.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Sir, I cannot say whether it will be protected or not. But surely, our concern in the negotiations would be to protect our vital interests on sensitive agricultural products. There are various rules. When these negotiations take place, we will offer certain things because this is a process or methodology which is being adopted in



these negotiations. There are two things, i.e. request and offer. Request means some sort of demand and offer means in response to those demands what we are prepared to concede. Therefore, we are very much interested in protecting sensitive agricultural products, but, of course, within the framework of the guidelines which have been adopted.

STATES LAGGING BEHIND IN THE PMGSY

प्रश्न संख्या - 309

श्री विजय ज. दर्डा: महोदय, भारत सरकार ने 2009 तक पूरे देश को, जहां पॉपुलेशन केवल 1000 है और हिली एवं ट्राइबल एरियाज, जहां पॉपुलेशन 500 है, रास्ते से जोड़ने का एक संकल्प लिया है। मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहूंगा कि प्रधानमंत्री ग्राम सड़क योजना शत-प्रतिशत सब्सिडी पर आधारित है, इसके बावजूद भी सभी प्रदेशों में इसकी प्रगति एक जैसी नहीं है। कुछ राज्य जैसे बिहार, झारखंड, मणिपुर इत्यादि काफी पिछड़े हुए हैं, जबकि उत्तर प्रदेश एवं कर्नाटक की स्थिति कुछ सामान्य है, इसके क्या कारण हैं और क्या इन राज्यों में जिला पंचायतों एवं ग्राम पंचायतों को विश्वास में लिया गया है?

श्री रघुवंश प्रसाद सिंह : सभापति महोदय, माननीय सदस्य पंचायत के संबंध में जानना चाहते हैं। स्टेट गवर्नमेंट हमारे पास जिन सड़कों की सूची भेजती हैं, उन्हें वह जिला परिषद द्वारा पारित कराने के बाद ही हमारे पास भेजती है। महोदय, उसमें राज्य सरकारों को कुछ कठिनाइयां हैं, उनकी कंज्युमिंग कैपेसिटी अपने यहां कम है, उनके विभाग का जो आर्गेनाइजेशन है, वह कमजोर है और कांटेक्टर्स का भी अभाव है। इन कारणों से सभी राज्य सरकार, जिनको जितना अलाटमेंट होता है, उतना वह खर्च नहीं कर पाते हैं। फिर भी, हमने दो बार बैठकें की हैं, जो राज्य पीछे छूट गए हैं, करीब 19 राज्य हैं, अपना जो इस साल तक का हिस्सा उन्हें लेना चाहिए, वह अभी तक उन्होंने नहीं लिया है। हमारी सभी राज्यों के सेक्रेटरीज के साथ बैठक हुई है और माननीय मुख्यमंत्रीगण को भी हमने लिखा है, जिन राज्यों का आबंटित पैसा समय पर खर्च नहीं हो रहा है। उनसे हमने आग्रह किया है कि आप अपने स्टेट की कंज्युमिंग कैपेसिटी बढ़ाएं और कांटेक्टर्स की कमी को कैसे पूरा कर सकते हैं, इसके लिए उपाय किए जाएं, जिससे भारत निर्माण की जो महत्वाकांक्षी योजना जो चार वर्षों के अंदर, हजार की आबादी समतल में और 500 की आबादी हिली और ट्राइबल एरिया में पक्की सड़कों से जोड़ देना है, उसको पूरा किया जा सके। महोदय, पहले इस पर ढाई हजार करोड़ रुपए सालाना खर्च होता था, अभी इस साल हमारा बजट करीब 4200 करोड़ रुपए का हुआ, अगले साल 9000 करोड़ रुपए का होगा, इस प्रकार चार वर्षों में हमको 48000 करोड़ रुपए, प्रति वर्ष 12000 करोड़ रुपए खर्च करना है। इसका मतलब है कि पहले जो क्षमता थी, उसकी क्षमता में पांच गुणा



वृद्धि करनी है। चूंकि गांव में भी सड़क हो और रूरल रोड्स जो देशभर में करीब 26 लाख किलोमीटर हैं, इसीलिए क्रमवार आबादी के हिसाब से उसको जोड़ने का लक्ष्य है। उसमें हम राज्य सरकारों के बराबर सम्पर्क में हैं। उनकी क्षमता क्या है, उनकी कठिनाइयां क्या हैं? वे अपनी कंज्युमिंग कैपेसिटी बढ़ाएं, उनको पैसे की कमी नहीं होगी, इसके लिए केन्द्र सरकार ने राज्य सरकारों को पूरा आश्वस्त किया है कि पूरा पैसा खर्च किया जाए और गांव के विकास के लिए लोगों को यातायात की सुविधा प्रदान की जाए।

श्री विजय ज. दर्डा : सभापति महोदय, मेरी दूसरी सप्लीमेंट्री है। मंत्री महोदय आपने संकल्प लिया है कि सन् 2009 तक आप पूरे देश को पक्की सड़कों से जोड़ देंगे। आपने अभी उसको दोहराया है कि पैसे की भी कोई कमी नहीं पड़ेगी, आपकी क्षमता है, मगर उसके बावजूद 19 राज्यों ने अभी तक प्रोग्रेस नहीं की है, तो आप उसको कैसे पूरा करने वाले हैं? क्या आपके पास महाराष्ट्र से कोई ऐसे प्रपोजल्स आए हैं और क्या आंध्र प्रदेश से भी ऐसे प्रपोजल्स आपके पास आए हैं? जो लैंड एक्वीजिशन की समस्या है, यह एक बड़ी जटिल समस्या बनकर खड़ी है, तो क्या आप उस दृष्टि से राज्यों से बातचीत कर रहे हैं?

श्री सभापति : यह तो राज्यों का काम है। इसको राज्यों से करवाइए।

श्री रघुवंश प्रसाद सिंह : सभापति महोदय, जो जमीन का काम है या जो लैंड एक्वीजिशन का काम है, वह राज्य सरकारों का काम है, हम केवल सड़क बनाने के लिए धनराशि देते हैं। माननीय सदस्य ने महाराष्ट्र और आंध्र प्रदेश का नाम लिया है। महाराष्ट्र में कुछ काम पीछे चल रहा था, लेकिन अब इम्प्रूवमेंट हुआ है और आंध्र प्रदेश के सभी माननीय सदस्यों के साथ, हमने परसों आंध्र भवन में बैठक की है, उसमें राज्य सरकार के लोग भी मौजूद थे, उन लोगों ने प्रधानमंत्री ग्राम सड़क योजना को ज्यादा तरजीह देने की मांग की, हमने उनकी मांग को स्वीकार कर लिया है कि सड़क को बढ़िया बनाया जाए।

BILATERAL AGREEMENT WITH CHINA IN OIL SECTOR

Q.NO. 43

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Sir, I would like to know from the Minister which are the countries with which India has bilateral agreements for oil exploration and production. I would also like to know whether the quality and the nature of crude oil thus becoming available to India can be refined in our refineries. If so, whether the installed capacity of the existing refining units in India can take this load.

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Sir, we have bilateral agreements and MoUs with



counterpart governments in Venezuela, Romania, South Africa, Turkey, South Korea, and China, and these MoUs are not commercial in nature. Our public sector companies like OVL and GAIL have commercial agreements with overseas companies in respect of oil production in Russia, Sudan, Vietnam and Syria. The quantity of oil and gas being produced by the Indian PSUs in the above four countries is, approximately, five million tonnes oil, and oil-equivalent of gas.

As far as the refining capacity is concerned, we have more refining capacity than the oil produced here, and the oil which we import from the joint ventures abroad can be easily refined in our refineries.

DISBURSEMENT OF SUBSIDIES TO BPL POOR AND MARGINAL FARMERS

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श्री विजय ज. दर्डा : धन्यवाद आदरणीय महोदय, मुझे बहुत दुःख हो रहा है.....

श्री सभापति : मुझे भी बहुत दुःख हो रहा है कि आप दुःखी हैं।.....

श्री विजय ज. दर्डा : माननीय मंत्री जी द्वारा जिस प्रकार से इस सवाल का जवाब दिया गया है, मैं उससे बिल्कुल संतुष्ट नहीं हूँ। यह एक गंभीर विषय है कि जो बी.पी.एल., पुअर और मार्जिनल फार्मर्स हैं, उनको सब्सिडी नहीं दी जाती है। जो अनाज प्रोक्योर होता है वह सब बड़े फार्मर्स से होता है और वे ही लोग सारी सब्सिडी का लाभ उठाते हैं। तो यह जो जवाब दिया गया है वह हमको बिल्कुल संतुष्ट नहीं करता है। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहूंगा कि क्या इनके पास ऐसा कोई मैकेनिज्म है या व्यवस्था बनाई है जिससे आप गरीब मार्जिनल फार्मर्स के लिए कुछ करने वाले हैं? आप प्रतिदिन देखते हैं कि किसानों द्वारा आत्महत्याएं की जा रही हैं। उनका कारण भी यही है। माननीय मंत्री जी, इसका जवाब दें।

डॉ. अखिलेश प्रसाद सिंह : सभापति महोदय, जो हम लोगों ने उत्तर में दिया है, उसमें मैं माननीय सदस्य को बताना चाहता हूँ कि भारत सरकार कंज्युमर सब्सिडी देती है और कंज्युमर सब्सिडी में जो इन्होंने सवाल उठाया है कि जो 5 स्टेट्स हैं, वहीं ज्यादा हिस्सा चला जाता है। इनकी जानकारी के लिए मैं बताना चाहता हूँ कि जिन 5 स्टेट्स का इन्होंने जिक्र किया है -आंध्र प्रदेश, छत्तीसगढ़, हरियाणा, पंजाब और उत्तर प्रदेश जहां से ज्यादा प्रोक्योरमेंट होता है, वहां परसेटेंज ऑफ सब्सिडी केवल 29 परसेंट है। अगर अलग-अलग स्टेट का ब्यौरा माननीय सदस्य को चाहिए तो आंध्र प्रदेश का उसमें 10 परसेंट हिस्सा है, छत्तीसगढ़ का हिस्सा ३ परसेंट है।



श्री सभापति : वह नहीं चाहिए उनको ।

श्री विजय ज. दर्डा : सर, वह भी चाहिए । मंत्री जी, आप हमको गुमराह कर रहे हैं ।....

डॉ. अखिलेश प्रसाद सिंह : आपने जो प्रश्न पूछा है, मैं उसका उत्तर दे रहा हूँ । ...

श्री विजय जे. दर्डा : नहीं-नहीं, मेरा सवाल यह नहीं था, मैंने सब्सिडी के बारे में ...

डॉ. अखिलेश प्रसाद सिंह : आप जिस स्टेट से आते हैं, आपने जिन पांच स्टेटों का जिक्र किया है, अगर उसमें से उत्तर प्रदेश को हटा दिया जाए, तो महाराष्ट्र का जो हिस्सा है, वह 9 परसेंट है । इस प्रकार 4 स्टेट से ज्यादा महाराष्ट्र को मिलता है । तमिलनाडु मेजर प्रोड्यूसिंग स्टेट नहीं है, उसको 10 परसेंट फुड सब्सिडी मिलती है ।

श्री विजय जे. दर्डा : सर, मेरा प्रश्न यह नहीं है । मैंने कहा था कि आप जो प्रोक्योरमेंट करते हैं, वह बड़े किसानों से करते हैं और उन्हीं को उसका लाभ मिलता है ।

डॉ. अखिलेश प्रसाद सिंह : सर, भारत सरकार प्रोक्योरमेंट अमीर-गरीब और ..

श्री रवि शंकर प्रसाद : सर, माननीय सदस्य सवाल क्या पूछ रहे हैं और मंत्री जी जवाब क्या दे रहे हैं ? उनका नीतिगत प्रश्न है और मंत्री जी खाली महाराष्ट्र का प्रतिशत दे रहे हैं । आप उनके प्रश्न का उत्तर दीजिए । ..

श्री सभापति : आप बैठ जाइए । ..

डॉ. अखिलेश प्रसाद सिंह : मैं माननीय सदस्य के प्रश्न का उत्तर दे रहा हूँ ; आपको पेशेंस तो रखना चाहिए । आप उत्तर सुनने के लिए धैर्य तो रखिए । ...

श्री सभापति : आप उनको बोलने दीजिए । माननीय सदस्य बीच में इंटरवीन करने की जरूरत नहीं है । आप मंत्री जी को बोलने दीजिए ।

डॉ. अखिलेश प्रसाद सिंह : माननीय सभापति महोदय, मैंने जैसा कि बताया 69 प्रतिशत सब्सिडी का हिस्सा दूसरे राज्यों को जाता है और जो छोटे-छोटे 9 राज्य हैं, उनको 2 परसेंट जाता है । इसलिए ऐसा बिल्कुल नहीं है कि मेजर स्टेट को ही सब्सिडी का हिस्सा जाता है ।

श्री विजय जे. दर्डा : सर, मैं पूछ क्या रहा हूँ और मंत्री जी क्या उत्तर दे रहे हैं?

श्री सभापति : आप बोलने दीजिए । आप पहले संतुष्ट हो जाइये, फिर बोलिएगा । ...

डॉ. अखिलेश प्रसाद सिंह : सभापति महोदय, सारे प्रदेशों में जो कंज्युमर सब्सिडी जाती है, उसके सारे आंकड़े मेरे पास उपलब्ध हैं । सभापति महोदय, ...

श्री सभापति : ठीक है, आप बाद में बता दीजिएगा ।

श्री विजय ज. दर्डा : सर, मुझे दूसरा सप्लीमेंट्री क्वेश्चन पूछना है ।



श्री सभापति : ठीक है। सेकेंड भी ऐसा ही होगा, जैसा पहला था।

श्री विजय जे. दर्डा : नहीं सर। इसमें मैं आपको अमेरिका ले जा रहा हूँ। ..(व्यवधान).. सर, अगर हम यू.एस. की पुअर की परिभाषा दें - वहां पर आदमी अपनी वन-थर्ड इनकम को खाने पर खर्च करता है, तो वह पुअर कहलाता है, जबकि इंडिया के अंदर 95 परसेंट लोग उस हिसाब से पॉवर्टी लाइन में आ जाते हैं। चीन में यह स्टैंडर्ड 60 परसेंट है, इस हिसाब से हमारी 80 परसेंट जनता पुअर है। फिर भी, एक सर्वे के मुताबिक 20 प्रतिशत जनता को फुड सेक्योरिटी नहीं है, ऐसा आया हुआ है। क्या सरकार ने अभी कोई सर्वे कराया है जिससे यह पता चल सके कि फुड सेक्योरिटी के हिसाब से, कैलोरी के हिसाब से पर्याप्त खाना नहीं मिलने वाले ऐसे लोगों को पीडीएस से लाभ पहुंचाने की कोई योजना बना रहे हैं? डॉ. अखिलेश प्रसाद सिंह : सभापति महोदय, माननीय सदस्य ने जो प्रश्न उठाया है, मैं उनको बताना चाहता हूँ कि भारत सरकार की प्राथमिकता है, जो टारगेटिड पब्लिक डिस्ट्रिब्यूशन सिस्टम के माध्यम से हम लोग देश में बफर स्टॉक बनाकर रखते हैं और पीडीएस के माध्यम से जो लोग गरीबी रेखा के नीचे रह रहे परिवार हैं, उनको 50 परसेंट पर चावल और गेहूँ मुहैया कराने का काम करते हैं। अंत्योदय अन्न योजना में 75 परसेंट सब्सिडी पर, दो रुपये गेहूँ और ..

श्री विजय जे. दर्डा : सर, मैं आपका प्रोटेक्शन चाहता हूँ। सर, मैं आपका प्रोटेक्शन चाहता हूँ।

श्री सभापति : प्रोटेक्शन आपको भी दूंगा और इनको भी दूंगा।

श्री विजय जे. दर्डा : सर, मैंने पूछा क्या है और मंत्री जी जबाब क्या दे रहे हैं? ..

श्री सभापति : आपको प्रोटेक्शन की जरूरत नहीं है। प्रोटेक्शन बीपीएल परिवारों को चाहिए।...

डॉ. अखिलेश प्रसाद सिंह : उनको 38-40 परसेंट सब्सिडी देकर खाद्यान्न उपलब्ध कराते हैं और जब से यूपीए सरकार आई है तब से मैं कह सकता हूँ कि इस देश में भूख से कोई नहीं मरे, यह हमारा संकल्प है और इस संकल्प के लिए हम निरंतर काम कर रहे हैं।

श्री विजय जे. दर्डा : मंत्री जी, आपकी मजबूरी क्या है, यह तो बता दीजिए।...

श्री सभापति : आपकी मजबूरी क्या है, यह बता दीजिए।...

श्री विजय जे. दर्डा : मंत्री जी, अपनी मजबूरी बता दें कि क्यों नहीं वे जवाब दे रहे हैं?



ISI ACTIVITIES IN KASHMIR VALLEY

प्रश्न संख्या - 381

श्री विजय जे. दर्डा : सर, मैं मंत्री जी से पूछना चाहता हूँ कि भारत सरकार ने जो आतंकवादियों की लिस्ट सौंपी थी, उस पर पाकिस्तान ने क्या कार्रवाई की है? महोदय, उस लिस्ट के कुछ नाम जैश-ए-मोहम्मद और लश्कर-ए-तैयबा से संबंधित हैं। साथ ही अभी ब्रिटेन में पकड़े गए आतंकवादियों के साथ जुड़े हुए जो नाम हैं, विशेष रूप से यू.एस.ए. और ब्रिटेन से, उनके बारे में पाकिस्तान की क्या प्रतिक्रिया है? महोदय, इन गुटों ने हाल ही में एक टी.वी. चैनल को दिए इंटरव्यू में दिल्ली, मुंबई और बंगलुरु तथा अन्य ठिकानों पर हमलों की चेतावनी दी है। इस पर सरकार ने क्या कार्रवाई की है और क्या इस मामले को पाकिस्तान के साथ उठाया जाएगा?

श्री शिवराज वी. पाटिल : महोदय, हमारे देश भारत के गृह सचिव और पाकिस्तान के गृह सचिव मिलते हैं। उसमें इन विषयों पर चर्चा हुई है और जो लिस्ट हमने उनको दी है, उस पर भी चर्चा हुई है। वह भी कभी-कभी हमको कुछ कागज देते हैं। जहां तक सारे नामों का सवाल है, वे सारे नाम tally होते हैं या नहीं होते हैं, वे पूरी लिस्ट देखने के बाद दिए हैं, लेकिन हमने उनको बार-बार बताया है कि कुछ नाम तो ऐसे हैं जो सबके सामने हैं, सबकी मालूमात के हैं। उन के बारे में कुछ दिक्कत नहीं होनी चाहिए, लेकिन उसके बाद भी उसके ऊपर पूरी तरह से कार्रवाई होती हमको नजर नहीं आती है। जहां तक लंदन में हुए हादसे की बात है तो उसमें कौन से नाम हैं, नहीं हैं, वह अलग बात है, मगर यहां कुछ एक-दो लोगों के नाम भी उसमें आए हुए हैं।

श्री विजय जे. दर्डा : सर, इंडो-नेपाल बॉर्डर पर आई.एस.आई. की गतिविधियाँ लगातार बढ़ रही हैं। पिछले दिनों देखने में आया है कि आई.एस.आई. या तो इंडो-नेपाल बॉर्डर से या बांग्लादेश के रास्ते से आतंकवादियों को भेज रही है। इंडो-नेपाल बॉर्डर पर रक्सौल तथा अन्य क्षेत्रों में भी अभी 3 हजार से अधिक ऐसे लोग हैं, जिनका नाम इंडिया और नेपाल, दोनों की वोटर लिस्ट में है। इन गतिविधियों पर काबू पाने के लिए सरकार क्या कर रही है? क्या सरकार ने नेपाल और बांग्लादेश के साथ लगने वाली सीमाओं के प्रदेशों की सरकारों तथा इंटरलिंग्वेज एजेंसियों के साथ चर्चा की है? अगर की है, तो भारत सरकार उस कॉरपोरेशन के साथ किस प्रकार से इंटरलिंग्वेज शेरिंग कर रही है?

श्री शिवराज वी. पाटिल : श्रीमान्, हमारी और बांग्लादेश की जो ट्रीटी है, उसके मुताबिक वहाँ के लोग यहाँ पर और यहाँ के लोग वहाँ पर बिना वीजा के जा सकते हैं और आ सकते हैं। यह जो बॉर्डर है, उसके खुले होने की वजह से जो लोग आतंक पैदा करने के लिए या ऐसे ही कुछ काम करने के लिए आना चाहते हैं, उनको आसानी जरूर हो जाती है। इसलिए सरकार की ओर से हमने जो कदम उठाए हैं, वे इस प्रकार के हैं-

एक तो यह जो बॉर्डर है, वह एस.एस.पी. को दिया गया है और एस.एस.बी., जो हमारी फोर्स है, उसको दिया गया है। हमारे यहाँ उसकी 20 बटालियंस थी, उसको हम करीब-करीब 40 बटालियन तक बढ़ा रहे हैं। उसकी संख्या बढ़ा रहे हैं। उसके ऊपर के जो पोस्ट्स हैं, हम उन



पोस्ट्स की संख्या भी बढ़ा रहे हैं। दूसरे, स्टेट गवर्नमेंट की और हमारी जो केन्द्रीय इंटेलिजेंस एजेंसीज हैं, उनको भी कहा गया है कि उसका इंटेलिजेंस ज्यादा से ज्यादा पैमाने पर एकत्र करके वहाँ पर जो लोग हैं, उनको दिया जाए। इसके साथ ही यह बात नेपाल की सरकार के साथ चर्चा में भी उठाई गई है और उसके ऊपर चर्चा हुई है।

श्री विजय ज. दर्डा : सर,

श्री सभापति : नहीं, अब नहीं हो गया, क्वैश्चन हो गया। अब नहीं ...श्रीमती शोभना भरतिया जी

श्री विजय ज. दर्डा : सर, मेरे एक प्रश्न का उत्तर ...

श्री सभापति : नहीं, अब क्वैश्चन नहीं बुरी आदत न पड़ जाए

श्री विजय जे. दर्डा : नहीं, सर, मैंने यह पूछा था कि आतंकवादी के खिलाफ जो ...

श्री सभापति : वह ठीक है, ठीक है

श्री विजय जे. दर्डा : उसमें यू.एस. और ब्रिटेन की क्या प्रतिक्रिया है?

श्री सभापति : वे आपको बता देंगे।

IMMIGRATION REFORM BILL DISCUSSION IN US CONGRESS

प्रश्न संख्या - 401

श्री विजय जे. दर्डा : सभापति जी, अभी अमेरिका में हजारों ऐसे भारतीय नागरिक हैं, जो बिना immigration status के काम कर रहे हैं तथा कुछ ऐसे लोग हैं, जो बचपन में अपने रिश्तेदारों के साथ गए थे, लेकिन कुछ कारणवश उनका immigration status समाप्त हो गया है। ऐसे लोग वहाँ पर लगातार security agencies द्वारा harass किए जा रहे हैं या कंपनियों द्वारा exploit किए जा रहे हैं। क्या आने वाले बिल में इन लोगों को राहत मिलने की संभावना है, अगर नहीं है, तो क्या सरकार उनको ससम्मान वापस लाने के बारे में सोच रही है? क्या भारत सरकार के पास ये आंकड़े हैं कि कितने लोग अमेरिका में working visa लेकर काम कर रहे हैं या उनका immigration status समाप्त हो चुका है तथा कितने ऐसे भारतीय हैं, जो illegal immigrants घोषित हो चुके हैं तथा जिन्हें deport किया जाना है? क्या नए बिल के आने के बाद family visa संभव हो सकेगा? Working visa की validity जो अभी 6 साल की है, वह 10 साल की हो सकेगी ... (व्यवधान)



श्री सभापति : आप question कर लीजिए।

श्री विजय ज. दर्डा : सभापति जी, मैं question ही कर रहा हूँ। मैंने question ही किया है।

श्री सभापति : यदि इतना लंबा question होगा, तो 5 question ही हो पाएंगे।

श्री आनंद शर्मा : सभापति महोदय, माननीय सदस्य ने जो प्रश्न किया है, अमेरिकी कांग्रेस के सामने दोनों सदनों ने वहां पर जो immigration reforms Bill पास किया है, यह उससे संबंधित है, न कि illegal immigrants से संबंधित है। यह सही है कि दोनों सदनों ने वहां एक विधेयक पारित किया है, लेकिन अभी उसका अंतिम स्वरूप सामने नहीं आया है। जो House of representative का बिल है, जो उन्होंने पारित किया है, उसमें नए immigration के लिए सख्त प्रावधान किए गए हैं और कोई ऐसा प्रावधान नहीं है जिससे वहां पर visa में बढ़ोत्तरी हो। जो सीनेट का बिल है, Senate Version of Bill, उसमें जरूर यह प्रावधान है, विशेषकर H2C Category उन लोगों के लिए कायम की गई है, इसमें दो लाख visas हैं, पूरी दुनिया से जो लोग वहाँ पर आते हैं, एक साल के लिए स्थायी रूप से Visa देने की। जहाँ तक इस पर हमारी प्रतिक्रिया का प्रश्न है, अभी जब तक उसका अन्तिम स्वरूप नहीं आता, हम यह नहीं कह सकते कि उसका कितना लाभ भारत के नागरिकों को मिलेगा। जहाँ तक हमारे वे नागरिक, जो वहाँ पर रह रहे हैं, जिनका Visa समाप्त हो गया है, जैसा माननीय सदस्य ने कहा, उनको हर तरह का सहयोग देने के लिए हमारी मिशन को हिदायत है। मैं माननीय सदस्य को यही आश्वासन देना चाहता हूँ कि ऐसे भारतीय नागरिकों को हमारे दूतावास के माध्यम से, हमारे कौंसुलेट जनरल के माध्यम से, हर तरह से सहयोग मिलता है।

श्री विजय ज. दर्डा : सर, मैं माननीय मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहूंगा कि क्या यह सही है कि 9/11 के पश्चात अमेरिका में सुरक्षा व्यवस्था कड़ी कर दी गई थी, वहाँ पर कुछ समय पहले Compulsory registration शुरू किया गया था, जिसमें सारे Immigrants का Registration हुआ है? लोगों ने यह सोचा कि Registration के बाद उनके Problems समाप्त हो जाएंगे, किन्तु वहाँ पर यह देखा जा रहा है कि जो एशियन कम्युनिटी के लोग हैं और उनमें से कुछ विशेष समुदाय के जो लोग हैं, उनका सिक्योरिटी के नाम पर काफी Harassment भी हो रहा है। वहाँ वर्किंग क्लास के ऐसे हजारों लोग हैं, जो Visa लेकर गए हैं, उनका Visa भी Cancel कर दिया गया है। इस दृष्टि से क्या सरकार कोई ऐसी व्यवस्था कर रही है, जिसकी वजह से मजहब के आधार पर लोगों को वहाँ तकलीफ नहीं हो और वहाँ पर जो करीब-करीब 18,000 एशियन लोग हैं, उनको वहाँ से deport कर दिया गया है? इसके बारे में मैं आपकी प्रतिक्रिया जानना चाहूंगा।

श्री आनन्द शर्मा : सभापति महोदय, माननीय सदस्य ने स्थिति पेचीदा कर दी है। उनका जो मुख्य प्रश्न था, वह केवल उस विधेयक से सम्बन्धित है।...

श्री विजय ज. दर्डा : मैं ऐसा मानता हूँ कि Reform Bill का असर उस पर होना है।



श्री आनन्द शर्मा : जो नया कानून अमेरिका की कांग्रेस लाने जा रही है, उस विधेयक के द्वारा जो Visas देने हैं - H1, H1B, Category L1 Category, केवल वहीं तक सीमित है। 9/11 के बाद वहाँ जो परिस्थिति पैदा हुई है, उसके आँकड़े क्या हैं, वे मेरे पास नहीं हैं। जैसा मैंने पहले कहा, जहाँ तक हमारी सरकार का प्रश्न है ...

श्री विजय ज. दर्डा : आपके पास आँकड़े क्यों नहीं हैं?

श्री आनन्द शर्मा : माननीय सभापति महोदय, अमेरिका के अन्दर वहाँ पर वहाँ की इंटरनल एजेंसीज क्या कार्रवाई कर रही हैं, कितने लोग Deport हुए हैं, वे आँकड़े नहीं हैं और न ही माननीय सदस्य ने इसे मांगा है। यह प्रश्न केवल अमेरिकी कांग्रेस में जो नया कानून बन रहा है, उससे सम्बन्धित है। मैंने पहले स्पष्ट किया है कि जो भी भारतीय नागरिक हैं, अगर वे किसी ऐसी कठिन परिस्थिति में हैं, जिनका Visa समाप्त हो गया हो या जिन्हें वहाँ पर अवैध रूप से illegal immigrants 'घोषित किया गया हो, उनको हमारे दूतावास पूरी तरह से सहयोग, सुविधा देंगे।



ISSUES OF AAM AADMI



ISSUES OF AAM AADMI

Those who have seen parliamentary proceedings from close quarters know that some MPs develop expertise on certain subjects according to their areas of interest or activity. But Vijay Darda is among the rare members whose interests look like a rainbow of people's concerns, national priorities and futuristic vision. His performance as a parliamentarian has been extraordinary at least in one sense; he has displayed not only an in-satiable quest for getting information on a wide range of subjects, he also has demonstrated deep understanding of varied and intricate subjects.

Agriculture, Rural Development, Poverty and Unemployment

Questions asked by Vijay Darda in Rajya Sabha are perhaps the finest indicator of his holistic approach to societal development and vision for nation-building. Sponsored or motivated questioning invariably expose the shallow or partial understanding of those who occasionally dabble in subjects not close to their heart. Vijay Darda's in-depth knowledge of subjects and commitment to finding long-term solutions to vital problems are vividly manifested through the wide range of questions he asked on different subjects. He understood the integrative nature of agriculture and rural development and his questions range from research to production, from marketing of produce to rural employment, from water crisis to farm credit. He based his probing questions on field experience, credible data and long-term vision of holistic development that targets every section of the society, from the most vulnerable poor to the rising middle class.

If he wanted to know from the Government answers to such specific local issues like loss of kharif season crops in Vidarbha, he also sought replies from the ministry if the Indian Council of Agriculture Research



planned to reorient its research & development in agriculture to meet the newer challenges and requirements. If these concerns indicate a mature outlook for addressing the problems in the agriculture sector from the top to the bottom – from solving fundamental problems to expanding the horizon – persistent questioning on the effective implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) and policy for alternative sources of fuel to meet the challenges thrown by use of cultivable land for bio-fuel show he was capable of seeing the big picture of rural India and of thinking ahead of his time.

He was alive to the fallouts of a narrow vision and compartmentalized approach and hence always vouched for a comprehensive policy framework for giving a new deal for rural India. He knew agriculture cannot be analyzed in traditional terms of cultivation as optimum use of scientific research, expansion of marketing network, creation of new employment opportunities and exploration of alternative avenues to reduce the pressure on shrinking volume of cultivable land were essential. His questions were not born only out of the desire to know, he used this parliamentary device to influence the government to think ahead and plan for the future in an innovative manner. He used the empirical evidence, from data released by the World Bank to information collected from the field in different parts of Maharashtra and the rest of the country to formulate his questions. If he asked about the Government's preparation for tackling hunger, giving specific statistics given out by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), he also wanted to know if the repayment schedules of agriculture credit were being maintained. The range of his questions was amazing; if he grilled the Government one day on drinking water crisis, the other day he mounted pressure on the Government for the poor performance in tackling child malnutrition. We rarely find a Member of Parliament with such broad framework of reference, with such a wide spectrum of concerns.

Vijay Darda's deep understanding of rural life was also reflected through his questions. If he wanted to know about the extent of the role



gram panchayat would play in the distribution of items under PDS, he also grilled the Government on rural roads, land acquisition, subsidy to marginal farmers. For a leader who spent most of his life in urban centres and rose to become a successful businessman, it is truly exceptional to find his commitment to rural India, farmers and the poor. His understanding of the ground realities in villages and remote areas of the country is equally remarkable.

Here are a few questions he asked in Rajya Sabha on subjects related to agriculture and rural development:

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 926

ANSWERED ON 27.11.2009

NEED TO RE ORIENT R D IN AGRICULTURE SECTOR

926 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) proposes to reorient its research and development (R&D) in agriculture and bridge critical gaps;
- (b) if so, whether there is also need to revise the course curriculum of agricultural education to make it more relevant; and
- (c) if so, the steps Government/ICAR has taken/propose to take to re-orient research and development in agriculture sector?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD
& PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

- (a) The Indian Council of Agricultural Research continuously examines



all its ongoing schemes through various review mechanisms and, wherever felt necessary, the schemes are reoriented keeping in view the national priorities, and to bridge critical gaps.

(b) Revision of PG course curricula and syllabi was undertaken in 2009 and extant 95 P.G. courses were revised and reorganized into 83 courses. The agricultural universities have agreed to adopt the revised course curricula and syllabi. In accordance with Deans Committee Report, Agriculture Universities have adopted the revised syllabi for UG courses in Agriculture and Allied Sciences.

(c) During the XI Plan, several new initiatives have been pursued to meet the emerging challenges in agriculture. In this endeavour, establishment of three new institutes has been initiated viz., National Institute of Abiotic Stress Management (already established at Baramati, Maharashtra), National Institute of Biotic Stress Management, and Indian Institute of Agricultural Biotechnology (already approved in principle by Planning Commission and in the process of seeking approval). New tools of science such as marker assisted selection, gene prospecting and allele mining, gene knock down technology, bioremediation, nanotechnology, etc. have been incorporated in research, with due capacity building of scientists through national and international training programmes.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 132

ANSWERED ON 27.11.2009

AGRARIAN CRISIS IN INDIA

132 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :-

(A) whether Government is aware of the views of globally famed Agriculture Scientist Professor M.S. Swaminathan expressed during



April, 2009, while releasing the book 'Agrarian Crisis in India', relating to 100 million plus small farms, comparing Government's agrarian crisis solving approach as 'blind men feeling an elephant'; and

(b) if so, whether Government will be concentrating on 'differentiation between the problems of farming and those of the farmers', to achieve more than 4 per cent annual growth in agriculture?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a) & (b): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) AND (b) OF RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.132 FOR 27/11/2009 REGARDING AGRARIAN CRISIS IN INDIA.

(a): As per a news item appearing in the web edition of the Hindustan Times dated 7th April, 2009, Prof. M.S. Swaminathan has reportedly made such remarks while releasing the book titled 'Agrarian crisis in India'.

(b): Agriculture is a State subject and all necessary initiatives continue to be taken by the State Governments. However, the Government of India has been supplementing the efforts of the State Governments in this regard and has always laid great emphasis on solving the problems of the farmers. In fact, the National Agricultural Policy, 2000 has been replaced with National Policy for Farmers (NPF), 2007 to give centrality to farmers and to ensure that human dimension must be the principal determinant of agricultural policies. It may be specifically mentioned here that the National Commission on Farmers (NCF), set up under the Chairmanship of Prof. M.S. Swaminathan, submitted a revised draft National Policy for Farmers along with its fifth and final Report in October, 2006 incorporating its main recommendations. The NPF, 2007 is based on the said revised draft NPF submitted by the NCF. The NPF, 2007 mentions about the need to focus more on the economic well-being of the farmers, rather than just on production.



Accordingly, the first major goal of the NPF 2007 is to improve economic viability of farming by substantially increasing the net income of farmers and ensure that agricultural progress is measured by advances made in this income.

A plan of action for operationalisation of NPF 2007 has been drawn and a monitoring mechanism put in place to oversee the progress of the implementation of the provisions contained in NPF. This along with an array of other initiatives by Government like substantial increase in the minimum support prices of important agricultural crops, Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, National Food Security Mission, National Horticulture Mission, setting up of National Rainfed Area Authority, Micro Irrigation, Agriculture Technology Management Agency Scheme, National Agricultural Insurance Scheme, Comprehensive Credit Package, Debt Waiver Scheme, Revival of Cooperative Credit Institutions, Technology Mission on Oilseeds & Pulses, etc. will ensure that not only the 4 per cent annual growth in agriculture is achieved but it also results in substantial improvement in socio-economic well-being of the farmers.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 144

ANSWERED ON 20.11.2009

DAMAGE TO KHARIF CROPS IN VIDARBHA

144 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether it is a fact that in Vidarbha, Kharif season crops like jowar were completely lost, soyabean suffered more than 60 per cent damage and cotton crop equally faced the heat;
- (b) if so, whether crops in three million hectares have suffered the worst; and
- (c) whether long-term war-footing measures were adopted to



substantially upgrade the abysmally poor irrigation facilities to give a modicum of relief to the farmers?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD
AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION) (SHRI K.V. THOMAS)

(a)&(b): In Vidarbha region, Kharif jowar has been sown on an area of 2.73 lakh hectare, soybean on 19.31 lakh hectare and cotton on 13.14 lakh hectare. Due to long dry spell, soyabean crop on 5.00 lakh hectare is damaged to the extent of about 50 per cent and 1.60 lakh hectare is damaged up to 30 per cent. There is likely a reduction in yield of cotton by 25 to 30 per cent in about 2.70 lakh hectare and 15 to 20 per cent on 10.40 lakh hectare. In jowar crop, there is likely a reduction in yield by about 30 to 35 per cent on 0.16 lakh hectare area and 10 per cent reduction on 2.50 lakh hectare.

(c): To make effective use of available water, drip irrigation system is promoted through various Centrally Sponsored Schemes. Drip irrigation sets on 9366 hectares of cotton area are installed and 17,300 farm ponds have been dug for rain water harvesting in Vidarbha region. Further, various in-situ water conservation measures like ridges and furrows, dead furrows etc. are promoted through TMC.

MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 3477

ANSWERED ON 04.08.2009

CENTRE STATE INTERACTION REGARDING NREGS

3477 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :-

(a) whether the Central Government has directed the States to ensure transparency and efficiency in effective implementation of the National



Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme(NREGS) and other schemes for the benefits of rural population;

(b) if so, the details of guidelines issued and whether the State Governments have sent representation to the Central Government to plug the loopholes in the various rural development schemes; and

(c) if so, the reaction of the Central Government thereon?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI PRADEEP JAIN `ADITYA`)

(a) to (c): Yes, Sir. With a view to ensure transparency and effective implementation of NREGS, the following measures have been undertaken:

(I) A comprehensive Web-based MIS www.nrega.nic.in has been implemented which places all data in public domain. States have been asked to put all Muster Rolls(MR) on the web site of NREGA and make on-line reporting of the MRs verified and works inspected at block and district level.

(ii) Payment of wages to NREGA workers to be made through their accounts in Banks/Post Offices.

(iii) States have been directed to conduct social audit under NREGA. The Ministry has put in place a comprehensive system of monitoring of all its programmes, including NREGA, to achieve the programme objectives and maximize funds utilisation. The monitoring tools are District-wise data management, periodical progress reports, Area Officer scheme, Utilisation Certificate/Audit Reports, review by Union Ministers, Performance Review Committee (PRC), National Level Monitors (NLM) and Vigilance and Monitoring Committees at State and District level. The Ministry has adopted five-pronged strategy comprising



- (I) creation of awareness about the schemes,
- (ii) people's participation,
- (iii) transparency,
- (iv) accountability and
- (v) strict vigilance and monitoring of rural development programmes

The Ministry has not received any representations from the State Governments with regard to plugging of loopholes in various rural development schemes.

MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 283

ANSWERED ON 23.07.2009

DEMAND FOR WATER IN THE COUNTRY

283 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether any estimate of the demand for water in the country for various purposes including irrigation, drinking and energy has been made;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Supreme Court has also directed Government to immediately constitute a high powered committee of scientists to evolve ways to overcome any water crisis; and
- (d) if so, the reaction of Governments in this regard?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND WATER RESOURCES
(SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL)

- (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.



MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 1525

ANSWERED ON 17.07.2009

CULTIVATION OF RAW MATERIAL FOR BIO FUEL

1525 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether World Bank's findings have revealed that 83 per cent increase in food prices has taken place in the last four years;
- (b) if so, whether 30 per cent hike is attributed to cultivation of raw material for bio-fuel; and
- (c) whether this major factor is being taken into consideration while formulating policy for alternative sources of fuels so that people are not pushed to poverty due to availability of reduced land for food crops?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION) (SHRI K.V. THOMAS)

(a) & (b): The World Bank has observed that the price of staple crops have increased leading to 83% increase in world food prices in last three years due to increased demand, poor weather in some countries and increase in the use of land to grow crops for transport fuels. However, in India, yearly Wholesale Price Index (WPI) with Base Year 1993-94=100 has increased from 195.3 in 2005-06 to 239.8 in 2008-09 showing an increase of 22.78 per cent.

©: Yes, Sir. Regarding the anticipated food shortages, the concerns have been taken care of by the National Mission on Bio-diesel, wherein bio-fuel cultivation has been proposed only on wastelands and degraded forest lands, which are not suitable for production of food grains and other agricultural crops. As such, the apprehension of availability of reduced land for food crops due to production of bio-fuel is misplaced.



MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 411

ANSWERED ON 07.07.2009

CONVERGENCE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME IN NREGS

411 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether Government proposes to strengthen the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) by converging other rural development schemes in it;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the employment avenues in the scheme are likely to grow after convergence of other rural development schemes in NREGS; and
- (d) if so, the estimated growth of employment avenues as a result thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI PRADEEP JAIN 'ADITYA')

(a) to (d): Yes, Sir. The issues are under examination of the Government.

MINISTRY OF FINANCE, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 304

ANSWERED ON 07.07.2009

AGRICULTURE CREDIT

304 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether the Public Sector Banks achieved the envisaged agriculture



credit target of Rs. 250000 crores during the fiscal 2008-2009;

(b) if so, what are the projected targets of agriculture credit for 2009-2010;

(c) whether the repayments schedules are maintained;

(d) if not, what is the percentage of non-payments by farmers; and

(e) whether the percentage of repayments for agriculture credit and industrial credit is same?

ANSWER

(SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) Minister of State in Ministry of Finance

(a): As against the agriculture lending target of Rs.1,95,000 crore set for the year 2008-09, the domestic commercial banks, including Public Sector banks, have lent Rs.2,23,668 crore to the agriculture sector.

(b): The Government has enhanced the target of agricultural credit flow to Rs.3,25,000 crore, by the banks, for the year 2009-10.

(c) to (e): The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha.

MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 369

ANSWERED ON 18.02.2009

WORLD BANK FINDINGS ON RURAL WATER SUPPLY SCHEMES

369 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :-

(a) the findings of the World Bank Study entitled 'Review of Effectiveness of Rural Water Supply Schemes', launched in July, 2008;

(b) the percentage of functional efficacy of the current rural water schemes, flow of funds and expenditure incurred, performance of



schemes, cost of supply, household coping strategies and costs, etc.;

(c) whether any study has been made about the rural household willingness to pay and affordability thereof; and

(d) if so, the gist of findings?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU)

(a) to (d): The study was made by World Bank in ten States covering 38,033 rural households, which is 0.027 percent of the total rural households out of the 138,271,559 households listed as per 2001 census. The number of schemes covered in the sample for the study was 765 handpumps and 521 piped water supply schemes. The report has not been accepted by Government of India as the sample studied and analyzed in the report is not representative of all the water supply schemes of the country. The major findings related to percentage of functional efficacy of the current rural water schemes, flow of funds and expenditure incurred, performance of schemes, cost of supply, household coping strategies and costs, rural household willingness to pay and affordability thereof is annexed.

Annexure referred to in the reply to part (a) to (d) of the Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 369 admitted for reply on 18.02.2009

Major Findings:

i) Rural water supply schemes are commonly weak in performance.

ii) Rural households are bearing huge coping.

iii) Supply driven programmes incur large institutional costs, substantially raising the cost of service provision.

iv) Capital cost of piped water supply schemes is excessive.

v) Operation and maintenance (O&M) expenditure is inadequate, causing schemes to perform below design and shortening their useful



life. O&M cost recovery is low.

vi) Significant wastage of resources arises from over-provisioning by some schemes, defunct schemes and the existence of multiple schemes.

vii) Total cost of piped water schemes is much higher than efficient cost of service delivery

viii) Economies of scale are yet to be realized ix) Multi village schemes use more resources without commensurate service benefits.

x) There is strong demand and willingness to pay and service improvements are affordable.

The percentage of functional efficacy of the current rural water schemes, flow of funds and expenditure incurred, performance of schemes, cost of supply, household coping and costs, rural household willingness to pay and affordability thereof:

i) Compared to the cost norms, the capital cost of schemes is found to be higher by 50% or more in 18% cases. It is higher than the norm by 100% or more in 11% cases.

ii) The average annual flow of funds for rural water supply during the period 1997-98 to 2005-06 for the 10 states ranged from Rs. 0.8 billion (Punjab) to 8.2 billion (Maharashtra).

iii) The analysis of survey data on the quantity of water supplied by schemes shows that actual supply is often less than the design, especially in summer.

iv) The total expenditure on rural water supply schemes from 1993-94 to 2004-05 (2004-05 prices) was about Rs. 500 billion.

v) The coping strategies adopted by households response to the inadequacies of water supply include travelling considerable distances and standing in long queues to collect water, storing water, incurring expenses on private water sources and incurring expenses on repairing public water sources. The average coping cost per household is Rs. 81



per month ranging from Rs 32 to Rs. 287 per month across different categories of schemes.

vi) A study on willingness to pay provides an indication of the value that consumers place on improved water supply and an assessment of the demand for service improvement. The underlying assumption is that if poor households can pay 3 per cent of their income towards the water bill, then households with higher income can also spend 3 per cent of their income on the water bill. The average expenditure on non-essential items incurred by rural households in various states is commonly more than the estimated willingness to pay and affordability for a private connection. The analysis shows that an additional Rs. 4 billion could be made available each year, if households are charged according to their willingness to pay. With these resources, the coverage can be increased by 14 per cent.

MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 54

ANSWERED ON 23.02.2010

CHANGE IN WPI AND GAS PRICES

54 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:-

(a) when were the Administered Price Mechanism (APM) rates last revised in respect of gas produced by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India Limited (OIL) from gas fields given to them on nomination basis;

(b) whether Government has established any fool-proof and fair mechanism to coincide changes in the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) and the price of gas produced by Public Sector Oil Exploration Companies; and

(c) if so, whether the interest of Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies



duly kept in view to safeguard them from unduly huge losses being presently suffered due to unpredictable fluctuation of international crude prices?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA)

(a): The price of natural gas produced by ONGC and OIL from their nominated fields was last revised with effect from 1.07.2005.

(b): In accordance with the directions of the Cabinet, the issue of determination of the producer price for ONGC & OIL was referred to the Tariff Commission (TC). TC recommended that for every 10 points change in Wholesale Price Index- all commodities (WPI) (base year 1993-94) over 189.40 of March 2005, the producer price of natural gas would require change by Rs. 55/mscm (thousand standard cubic metres). Decision regarding increase in APM prices of natural gas has to be taken by the Government.

(c): As passing on the entire impact of the increase in the oil prices to the consumers would result in a steep increase in the domestic prices and aggravate inflationary conditions, the Government has been following an equitable Burden Sharing Mechanism, to ensure that the burden of under-recoveries is shared by all the stakeholders; namely the Government, the Public Sector Oil Companies and the consumers in the following manner: Government through issue of Oil Bonds/Cash Subsidy Domestic upstream oil companies through price discounts to OMCs. OMCs to bear a portion of the under recoveries and Consumers to bear small price increases.

By adopting this approach, the Government has not only protected the consumers from high international oil prices but has also ensured the financial health of the OMCs.



MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION
RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 414

ANSWERED ON 17.12.2009

HOUSING FOR RISING POPULATION

414 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state :-

(a) whether in view of growing need of housing for the rising population, there is a need to develop more townships to accommodate them;

(b) if so, whether the experts have sought the intervention of Government to help develop the micro-financing sector and make land available to private developers; and

(c) if so, the action plan formulated by Government to build low cost housing sectors in cities?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF HOUSING & URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION
(KUMARISELJA)

(a) to (c): A Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 414 FOR 17.12.2009 REGARDING HOUSING FOR RISING POPULATION.

(a): The National Urban Housing & Habitat Policy, 2007 advocates that in order to improve the quality of life in urban areas, it is of critical significance that the housing stock is improved through urban renewal, in situ slum improvement and development of new housing stock in existing cities as well as new townships.

(b): The High Level Task Force under the Chairmanship of Chairman,



Housing Development Finance Corporation Limited (HDFC) on 'Affordable Housing for All' while examining the issue of fiscal and financial framework for affordable housing has observed that there are few institutions that are systematically giving affordable loans, especially to slum dwellers. The Task Force has proposed the need for a housing finance company whose main focus will be on micro-housing loans. It has also recommended strengthening of existing institutions through support and upscaling by effecting changes in the existing regulations that constrain their operations.

The Task Force has noted that additional lands will need to be brought in for meeting the housing needs and land requirements of other sectors and recommended simplification of the procedures and processes for bringing in additional lands into the market; review the process of Master Planning and effecting changes as necessary for making a proper assessment of land requirements; and allocation of such lands for different uses, including land for affordable housing. The Task force has further suggested that "affordable housing" be treated a 'public purpose'.

The Task Force has recommended upward revision of Floor Area Ratio (FAR)/Floor Space Index (FSI) across cities of different sizes commensurate with investment in infrastructure that it will necessitate. The Task Force has further recommended in situ development via security of tenure for those living in such settlements.

(c) : 'Land' and 'Colonisation' being State subjects, it is primarily the responsibility of State Governments to provide for adequate Shelter at affordable cost. However, the Union Government has formulated the first urban area focused National Urban Housing & Habitat Policy, 2007 to set in motion a process in providing 'Affordable Housing for All' particularly the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) and Low Income Group (LIG). This policy intends to promote sustainable development of habitat in the country with a view to ensuring equitable supply of land, shelter and services at affordable prices to all sections of society.

Apart from this, Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission



(JNNURM), launched by the Government in the year 2005 caters to provision of housing and basic services to urban poor in 65 specified cities under the Sub Mission Basic Services to the Urban Poor (BSUP) and in other cities and towns under the Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme (IHSDP). A total of 462 projects under Basic Services to the Urban Poor (BSUP) and 842 projects under Integrated Housing & Slum Development Programme (IHSDP) have been approved all over the country so far envisaging construction/upgradation of 9,95,183 and 4,64,089 dwelling units respectively.

A new scheme – Interest Subsidy Scheme for Housing the Urban Poor (ISHUP) has been launched for providing interest subsidy on housing to urban poor to make the housing affordable and within the repaying capacity of Economically Weaker Sections (EWS)/ Low Income Group (LIG). The scheme encourages poor sections to avail of loan facilities through Commercial Banks/Housing Finance Companies for the purposes of construction/acquisition of houses and avail 5% subsidy in interest payment for loans upto Rs. 1 lakh.

Further, with a view to encourage allotment of land for EWS, under the newly launched Scheme of 'Affordable Housing in Partnership', Central Government assistance will be provided on a progressive scale vis-à-vis built up area earmarked for EWS/LIG as a percentage of total constructed area. The assistance would be available for the provision of civic services such as water supply including ground level/overhead service reservoirs, storm water drainage, solid waste management, sewerage including common sewerage treatment facilities, rain water harvesting, approach roads, electricity lines etc.

The newly announced scheme of Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) seeks to create a slum free India in partnership with states that are willing to assign property rights to people living in slum areas.



MINISTRY OF PLANNING, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 1611

ANSWERED ON 03.12.2009

HUNGER SYNDROME

1611 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) declared during 2007 that 854 million people go hungry around the world and also predicted worse position during 2008;
- (b) if so, whether this particular aspect has been kept in view in the perspective planning for Twelfth and Thirteenth Five Year Plans; and
- (c) in what manner we can tackle this 'hunger syndrome' while expecting a four per cent agricultural growth and simultaneously, enormous growth in population?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY)

(a) to (c): Yes, Sir. According to the Food and Agricultural Organisation's (FAO) Global Hunger Index for the year 2007, it was estimated that 854 million people go hungry around the world. Food security considerations remain an area of priority in the process of perspective planning. The National Food Security Mission which has been set up during the Eleventh Five Year Plan, aims at increasing the food grains production by 20 Million Tonnes by the end of the Plan. A new Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) has been launched to provide additional financial resources to state governments to finance agriculture development programmes emerging from district level agriculture plans which take into account district specific agro-climatic constraints. In addition, expansion of Accelerated Irrigation Benefit



Programme (AIBP) and a renewed thrust at watershed development has been planned. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) gives priority to the projects aimed at water conservation, and effective convergence of resources available under National Rural Employment Guarantee Schemes (NREGS) with ultimately serving the larger objective of enhancing agriculture productivity.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 1293

ANSWERED ON 01.12.2009

RANKING OF INDIA BY GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX.

1293

SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :-

(a) whether according to the Global Hunger Index for 2009 India has been ranked at a poor 65th position with an alarming rating;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government's poor performance in controlling undernourishment, child malnutrition and child mortality has exposed the factual position in the world; and

(d) if so, what immediate corrective steps Government proposes to take in this regard?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABIAZAD)

(a) & (b) India is ranked 65th on the Global Hunger Index (GHI), 2009 (as brought out by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) – an alliance of 64 governments, private foundations and international and regional organisations. The index is based on prevalence of child



malnutrition, rates of child mortality and the proportion of people who are calorie deficient. The Global Hunger Index for India has declined from 32.7 to 23.9 for the period 1990 to 2009.

(c) & (d) The percentage of children under age three who are underweight has declined from 52% as per National Family Health Survey I (1992-93) to 40% as per National Family Health Survey – III (2005-06). The rate of under five mortality has declined from 117 per thousand live births in 1990 to 72 in 2007 as per the State of World's Children, 2009. The Government has initiated various measures to improve the health and nutritional status of vulnerable population i.e. infants, children pregnant and lactating mothers of the country. The important measures are given at Annexure.

ANNEXURE

The measures taken to improve the health and nutritional status of population

1. A National Nutrition Policy has been adopted in 1993 and a National Plan of Action for Nutrition (1995) is being implemented through various Departments of Government. The National Nutrition Mission has been set up.

2. Reproductive Child Health Programme under National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) includes:

Emphasis on appropriate Infant and Young Child Feeding. Janai Suraksha Yojana (JSY)

Maternal Health by promoting institutional deliveries improved coverage and quality of ANC skilled care to Pregnant women, Post-partum care at community level. Immunization Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Illness and malnutrition.

Treatment of severe acute malnutrition through Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres (NRCs) set up at public health facilities.

Specific Programme to prevent and combat micronutrient deficiencies of Vitamin A and Iron & Folic Acid through Vitamin A supplementation



for children till the age of 5 years and Iron & Folic Acid supplementation for Pre-school Children, pregnant and lactating women. Iron and folic acid syrup has been added in the programme for children in the age group of 6 to 60 months.

National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme (NIDDCP)

3. Nutrition Education to increase the awareness and bring about desired changes in the dietary practices including the promotion of breast feeding and dietary diversification.

4. Integrated Child Development Services Schemes (ICDS) including supplementary nutrition.

5. National Programme of Nutritional support to Primary Education (Mid day meal Programme)

6. Improving agricultural and horticultural produce.

7. Improving the purchasing power of the people through various income generating schemes, availability of essential food items at subsidized cost through Targeted Public Distribution System.

MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC
DISTRIBUTION, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 959

ANSWERED ON 27.11.2009

INTEGRATED APPROACH FOR FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

959 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :-

(a) whether the prices of foodgrains in the last few months have increased manifold in the country and millions of families living in rural areas are unable to afford the same;

(b) if so, whether severe food and nutritional scarcity in the country has



affected almost half the children under three years of age and more than one-third of women;

(c) if so, whether any integrated approach has been formulated to achieve food and nutritional security in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (Prof. K.V. Thomas)

(a) : There has been an increase in prices of foodgrain items such as cereals, pulses and sugar. The Government has taken steps to protect poor sections of society through Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and Antodaya Anna Yojna (AAY). Under the TPDS, wheat, rice, coarse grains and kerosene are allocated to State Governments/UTs for distribution through the Fair Price Shops. The offtake of wheat and rice under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) has been going up. For TPDS, wheat and rice offtake have gone up from 296.52 lakh tonnes in 2004-05 to 316.39 lakh tonnes in 2006-07 and 348.45 lakh tonnes in 2008-09. During the period 2009-10 (up to August 2009), 183.07 lakh tonnes of wheat and rice have been allocated under TPDS.

The Central Issue Price for rice and wheat has not been revised since 2002. For wheat it remains at Rs 4.15 per kg for BPL and Rs 2 per kg for AAY. For rice, it is Rs 5.65 per kg for BPL and Rs 3 per kg for AAY.

(b) : As per National Family Health Survey report (2005-06) that the proportion of children under three years of age who are underweight decreased from 43 per cent in NFHS-2 to 40 per cent in NFHS-3 and the proportion of ever-married women who are thin has decreased to 33 per cent in NFHS-3 from 36 per cent in NFHS-2.

(c) & (d): Ministry of Women and Child Development indirectly contributes to the masses through complementary approach towards the food and nutrition component through its various programmes and schemes like:



(I) Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme which is the world's largest programme addressing children under 6 years of age and pregnant and lactating mothers where ICDS provides the following six services:

Supplementary Nutrition, Immunization, Health Checkups, Referral services, Pre-school non- formal Education, Nutrition & Health Education.

As on 31.3.2009 approximately 10.70 lakhs AWCs are operational for the benefit of 8.63 crore children below six years and pregnant/lactating mothers who are given supplementary nutrition and other facilities under ICDS. The target is to operationalise 14 lakh Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) all over the country.

(ii) Nutrition advocacy and awareness generation programmes of Food & Nutrition Board under the aegis of the Ministry Nutrition Education and Training for both the masses and ICDS functionaries, Training in Home Scale Preservation of Fruits and Vegetables and Nutrition, Providing Fruits & Vegetable Processing facilities, Mass Media Communication on nutrition awareness, Food Analysis and Standardization,

(iii) The two programmes viz. Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls and Kishori Shakti Yojana seek to address the problem of inter-generation cycle of malnutrition by taking care of the malnutrition among adolescent girls.

MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 559

ANSWERED ON 24.11.2009

RURAL LPG SCHEME

559 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:-



- (a) Whether his Ministry has surpassed targets set for first 100 days of Government by rolling out path breaking rural LPG scheme, raising oil and gas output and laying of road map for expanding city gas services;
- (b) Whether beginning of production from Mangala oil field in Thar desert of Rajasthan and ramping up of output from Krishna-Godavari (KG) basin gas field have been the hallmark of 100 days; and
- (c) if so, what are other main achievements made by the Ministry in 100 days target for oil production and what are other main steps to make country self-sufficient in gas and petroleum productions?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRI JITIN PRASADA)

(a) to (c): Introduction of Rajiv Gandhi Gramin LPG Vitarak Yojana, commencement of crude oil production from Mangala oil field in Rajasthan and ramping up of gas output from Krishna-Godavari (KG) basin gas field were major achievements for the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas in the first 100 days of the new Government. Road map for extending city gas services to 202 cities/towns by 2015 has also been prepared.

In addition, for easy and efficient way of booking refills, Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have launched SMS/IVRS facility in Delhi on 31.8.2009. This facility would cover all the towns having a population of 5 lakh and above in the entire country in a phased manner by 2015.

Further, in order to have a simple, unique and rememberable helpline for all customers across the country to air their complaints relating to marketing of petroleum products, the OMCs have launched on 31.8.2009 a common short code six digit Toll Free Number 155233 for registration of suggestions and complaints.

Pace of oil and gas exploration was intensified through offering of block under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) VIII and Coal Bed Methane (CBM) IV rounds. Investments have also been made in equity oil abroad.



MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC
DISTRIBUTION, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 179

ANSWERED ON 20.11.2009

STORAGE INFRASTRUCTURE OF FCI

179 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether the storage infrastructure for wheat, rice, etc., procured annually by FCI, are adequate and safeguards are adopted by them to avoid wastage during storage;
- (b) the total storage capacity of FCI, State-wise;
- (c) whether new storage capacity are being created to take care of procurement of cereals by State Governments, if they approach the FCI, in this regard; and
- (d) whether North-East states have storage capacity for wheat, rice, etc. to maintain buffer stock as per norms?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD
& PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a): As on 30.10.2009, FCI is having 278.59 lakh MTs of storage capacity and the total stocks held are 214.46 lakh MTs. If wheat procurement in RMS 2010-11 follows the trend of procurement in RMS 2009-10, the present storage capacity may not be adequate to store wheat stocks. To avoid wastage during storage, the stocks are stored in scientifically constructed godowns/plinths and they are chemically treated periodically.

(b): The statewise storage capacity available with FCI as on 31-10-09 is given in the Statement.



(c): The State Governments of DCP states have to create storage capacity on their own to meet their annual TPDS/CWS requirements. In the non- DCP States new storage capacity is proposed to be created by FCI for wheat & rice.

(d): As on 30-10-2009, FCI in North East Zone is having a total storage capacity of 4.43 lakh MTs as against average offtake of 2.1 lakh MTs per month. As per the present norms, each State should have a storage capacity of 4 months offtake which includes two months of buffer stocks, one month of strategic reserves and one month of operational stocks. Based on the above formula, the total requirement in North East Zone is 11.78 lakh MTs (at 75% Utilization). Thus the storage gap comes to 7.35 lakh Mts.

To bridge the gap, in the 11th Five Year Plan, the Planning Commission has approved Rs.24 crores, as Grants-in Aid to be given to the North-East states including Sikkim and Jammu & Kashmir for construction of storage godowns.

MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY
ALLEVIATION, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 64

ANSWERED ON 19.11.2009

ESTIMATE OF SLUM POPULATION

64 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state :-

(a) whether Government has estimated 70 million slum population during the forthcoming 2011 Census as 2001 Census did not reflect the actual population living in slums due to definition and methodology deficiencies;

(b) if so, in what manner the Ministry proposes to actually provide housing facilities and deliver envisaged benefits to target BPL groups during the Eleventh Five-Year Plan;



(c) the budgetary allocations during 2007-08 and 2008-09 for providing housing and other facilities to slum-dwellers; and

(d) whether these targets were achieved?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF HOUSING & URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION
(KUMARISELJA)

(a) : No such estimation has been made.

(b) : The Government has launched the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) on 3rd December, 2005 with the objectives of augmenting infrastructure in cities and towns along with provision of shelter and basic infrastructure facilities to slum dwellers/urban poor. Additional Central Assistance is provided to States/UTs for taking up projects for housing and infrastructural facilities for slum-dwellers/urban poor in 65 select cities in the country under the Sub-Mission of Basic Services to the Urban Poor (BSUP) under JNNURM. Other cities and towns are covered under the Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme (IHSDP). The duration of the Mission is seven years from 2005-06 to 2011-2012. The Government has also launched a new scheme called Affordable Housing in Partnership in 2009 with an outlay of Rs. 5,000 crores for construction of 10 lakh houses for EWS/LIG/MIG categories with at least 25% of the units for EWS. The scheme is a part of JNNURM and is aimed at partnership between various agencies: Government, parastatals like Housing Boards and Urban Development Authorities, Urban Local Bodies and developers. The Government has also started the scheme of Interest Subsidy for Housing the Urban Poor (ISHUP) in December, 2008. This scheme envisages the provision of interest subsidy to the tune of 5% to EWS and LIG beneficiaries on loans up to Rs.1 lakh to enable them construct or buy houses. Furthermore, the Government has announced a new scheme called Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) for the slum-dwellers and the urban poor. This scheme aims at providing support to States that are willing to provide property rights



to slum-dwellers. The Government's effort would be to create Slum free India through the implementation of RAY.

(c): Budget allocation for housing and related infrastructure facilities for 2007-08 and 2008-09 have been as follows:

(d) The releases made against the budgetary allocations during 2007-08 and 2008-09 have been as follows.

MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC
DISTRIBUTION, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 3078

ANSWERED ON 31.07.2009

**DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CENTRE AND STATES REGARDING
DETERMINATION OF POVERTY LEVEL**

3078 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :-

(a) whether it is a fact that several state governments have expressed their disagreement with Centre's method of estimating poverty levels and allocating foodgrains on the basis of these much lower numbers;

(b) if so, whether the State Governments have no alternative but to subsidise the foodgrains at their cost under the public distribution system; and

(c) whether there is any proposal that the States shall have no say in extending the benefits to other beneficiaries beyond those allowed by the Central Government?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD
& PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)



(a)&(b): The Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is jointly operated with shared responsibilities by the Central and State/UT Governments. The responsibility for identification of BPL and AAY families as per the Planning Commission estimates and guidelines of Ministry of Rural Development and Ministry of Housing & Urban Poverty Alleviation and issuance of ration cards to them, lifting of allocated foodgrains and its proper distribution to the eligible families through Fair Price Shops is of the State/UT Governments.

Under the TPDS allocation of foodgrains is made @ 35 kg. per family per month for 6.52 crore Below Poverty Line (BPL) families, including the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families in the country on the basis of 1993-94 poverty estimates of the Planning Commission projected on the population estimates of Registrar General of India as on 1.3.2000. As provided under PDS (Control) Order, 2001, State Governments are expected to identify BPL families as per their respective share within this ceiling limit and issue foodgrains @ 35 kg. per BPL family per month. However, State Governments have issued 10.86 crore ration cards to BPL families as against 6.52 crore BPL families accepted for allocation. Based on 2004-05 poverty estimates and March, 2009 population estimates, number of BPL families works out to 5.91 crores in the country. However, presently, allocations of foodgrains under TPDS by Central Government are being continued for 6.52 crore BPL & AAY families.

(c): Government proposes to enact the National Food Security Act. Under the proposed law, every BPL family is to be entitled to receive 25 kg of foodgrains per month. Details of eligible BPL families to be covered, methodology for their identification, issue of targeted identification cards to them, scope for State Governments to extend benefits to non-BPL families, etc. are yet to be worked out.



MINISTRY OF PLANNING, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 2950

ANSWERED ON 30.07.2009

STEPS TO REDUCE POVERTY LEVEL

2950 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether it is a fact that there are around 260 million poor people in the country whose income is less than Rs.356.30 a month in villages and Rs.638.60 a month in cities;
- (b) if so, the steps that are proposed to be taken during the Eleventh Plan period (2007-12) to reduce the poverty level;
- (c) the perspective planning till 2020 in this regard when the country hopes to become a developed country; and
- (d) the long-term measures that are being adopted to remove poverty from India in a foreseeable future?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY)

(a): As per the latest estimates of the Planning Commission, the number of persons whose consumption level is less than Rs. 356.30 per capita per month in rural areas and Rs. 538.60 per capita per month in urban areas is estimated to be 301.7 million in the country for the year 2004-05 accounting for 27.5% of the population.

(b): The Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-12) envisages reduction in the headcount ratio of consumption poverty by 10 percentage points. The Government is implementing a number of poverty alleviation programmes such as: National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

(NREGS), Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), Indira Awaas



Yojana (IAY), Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna (PMGSY), Swarna Jayanti Shahri Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY), Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), Mid-day Meal Scheme, Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY), Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), etc.

(c): As per the document `India Vision 2020` brought out by the Planning Commission in 2002, achievement of GDP growth rate of 8.5 to 9 per cent over the next 20 years would result in almost eliminating the incidence of poverty in the country.

(d): The strategy of the Government in reducing poverty includes asset generation programmes and increasing wage employment in order to raise the income levels of the poor. In addition, a number of anti-poverty programmes that have a direct impact on poverty reduction are being implemented.

MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC
DISTRIBUTION, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 1557

ANSWERED ON 17.07.2009

ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES ACT TO CHECK HOARDING PRICE RISE

1557 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :-

(a) whether provisions of Essential Commodities Act are adequate to enable states to prevent hoarding of wheat, pulses, etc., thereby checking undue price rise;

(b) if so, how many traders were booked for crossing limits imposed by state Governments since August, 2006 when powers under this Act were invoked and regularly renewed every six months till now state-wise; and



(c) the other steps taken to prevent further price rise of foodgrains meant for vulnerable sections of the society?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a) : Yes sir.

(b) : Data available on action taken by the State Governments/UTs under the provisions of Essential Commodities Act, 1955 from the year 2006 is given below:

YEAR	No. of raids	No. of Persons arrested	No. of Persons prosecuted	No. of Persons convicted	Value of goods confiscated (Rs. in Lakhs)
2006	135025	5421	3244	498	977.21
2007	235405	6944	4872	1022	4003.96
2008	268775	8001	6425	790	6095.22
2009					
(upto 30.06.2009)	56990	3152	1691	24	1314.79

(Updated as on 13.07.2009)

(c) : Under the Public Distribution System, Government of India, procures and provides essential commodities to the state governments for distribution to the vulnerable sections of the society. In addition, through a mix of monetary, fiscal and trade policies steps have been taken to contain the price rise for essential commodities.



MINISTRY OF PLANNING, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 1119

ANSWERED ON 26.02.2009

BPL SEGMENT OF POPULATION

1119 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether the below poverty line segment of population is assessed on the basis of calorie intake or per capita income of the families;
- (b) if so, the latest NSSO survey estimate of the BPL families as on 31st December, 2007;
- (c) whether there is any different yardstick for classifying BPL families in rural and urban areas; and
- (d) the percentage of BPL families in relation to total population of the country?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY)

(a): The Planning Commission assesses the percentage of persons living below the poverty line using an exogenously determined poverty line. The poverty line is defined as per capita consumption expenditure of Rs.49.09 per month in rural areas and Rs.56.64 per month in urban areas at 1973-74 prices at national level. This corresponds to a basket of goods and services anchored on a norm of per capita daily calorie requirement of 2400 kcal in rural areas and 2100 kcal in urban areas. The state-specific poverty lines are derived from the national level poverty lines, using state-specific price indices and inter-state price differentials.

(b): The Planning Commission estimates poverty at national and state



levels from large sample surveys on consumer expenditure conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) at an interval of approximately five years. The latest estimates of poverty are available for the year 2004-05 based on the National Sample Survey Data on consumer expenditure of the 61st Round. As such, the estimates of BPL families as on 31st December, 2007 are not available. As per the latest estimates, 27.5% of the population in the country are estimated to live below the poverty line in 2004-05.

(c): The yardstick to separate poor from the total population is based on persons and not on families. The poverty line, which is used as the yardstick are different in rural and urban areas. The national poverty line in 2004-05 is measured as consumption expenditure of Rs.356.30 per capita per month in the rural areas and Rs.538.60 per capita per month in the urban areas.

(d): As per the latest available estimate made by the Planning Commission, 27.5% of the total population of the country lived below the poverty line in 2004-05. The estimate of BPL families is not available.

MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC
DISTRIBUTION, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 606

ANSWERED ON 20.02.2009

REVIEW OF BAN ON FUTURE TRADING OF FOODGRAINS

606 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :-

(a) whether Government is likely to review ban on future trade on foodgrains;

(b) if so, the facts and the details thereof;

(c) whether prices of agricultural commodities are likely to rise, if ban



on future trade on foodgrains is lifted; and

(d) if so, the corrective steps Government proposes to take in this regard?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN)

(a) & (b): Forward Markets Commission had suspended futures trading in commodities namely tur, urad, wheat and rice in 2007. Subsequently, futures trading in chana, soya oil, potato and rubber were also suspended in May, 2008 till November, 2008. The suspension of futures trading chana, soya oil, potato and rubber has not been extended after November, 2008.

(c) : No Sir, the Government had set up an expert committee under the chairmanship of Professor Abhijit Sen, Member, Planning Commission to examine whether futures market was responsible for rise in the price of agricultural commodities. The Committee observed that the period during which futures trading has been in operation is too short to make any conclusive assessment regarding the impact of futures trading on the spot prices of commodities. Futures market only provides a platform for price discovery and is not per-se responsible for any rise/fall in the price of any commodity.

(d) : Does not arise.

Infrastructure Development and Regional Area Development

Not many parliamentarians are credited with a futuristic vision to develop the country's planning and infrastructure which is in tune with the fast changing world. Vijay Darda's amazing range of interest is reflected in the subjects he chose for seeking information on – from cinema to governance, from zilla panchayat to WTO, from poverty to



planning. If he took up the issue of subsidies to BPL farmers one day, he sought the Government's assurance on the accountability of foreign television channels the other day. And the nature of questions clearly indicate that he was not a member who casually dabbled in everything, rather he understood the subject, did his homework and showed commitment to contribute to the process of governance as an alert representative of the people. His question on safeguarding the interests of Indian company illustrates this: he wanted to know whether the Government is aware of unscrupulous operators doing fraud on Indian companies by branching process operations and then probed if the existing laws were adequate to deal with this crime and also the number of cases detected so far and the steps taken to counter this menace. This demonstrates the member's expertise of the complex subject. But the same member displays his concern for the ordinary poor with equal commitment, asking whether the rural development ministry why 15 states had lagged behind in implementing the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna and why such lapses could not be detected in the annual review.

His focus on infrastructure development was reflected in a host of questions he asked about power plants, rail and road projects, functioning of airports and shipping ports and even new technologies to replace conventional fuel. He was well-versed with the specifics of the problem and his range was so diverse as to cover subjects like fire in Dhanbad's coal belts and structural deficiencies in flyover designing. Questions he asked on infrastructural issues are as follows: Infrastructural Development (Road, Rail, Ports, Airports, Power Sector) and Culture and Tourism.



MINISTRY OF POWER, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 2742

ANSWERED ON 14.12.2009

UTILIZATION OF NATURAL GAS BY POWER PLANTS

2742 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether the State-owned power plants have the requisite infrastructure and adequate capabilities to process the expected increase in supply of natural gas from fields like Krishna-Godavari Basin as natural gas cannot be stored;
- (b) if so, the installed capacity of our power plants and whether it is being fully utilized; and
- (c) whether, due to depleting sources of coal and uncertain availability of water resources, modifications will be made in power plants so that natural gas could fill in the gap?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI)

(a): Gas allocation from KG Basin has been made to only existing projects (including 2009-10 projects) which have connectivity and requisite infrastructure for gas consumption. Most of the state-owned power plants have requisite infrastructure and adequate capabilities to absorb the increase supply of natural gas from KG Basin. In fact many of them have already started drawing gas from KG Basin D-6 field.

(b) : Existing capacity of gas based stations and utilization pattern is given in Annex. Since the start of gas production from RIL's KG D-6 gas blocks in the month of April 2009 and the allocation of gas to power sector on priority, the utilization capacity has improved considerably. Gas from this block has been allocated by Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM) to existing power projects to run at 75% Plant Load



Factor (PLF) for plants located in Andhra Pradesh and 70% PLF for Plants located outside Andhra Pradesh. Besides Ratnagiri Gas Power Private Limited (RGPPL) has been allocated 5.67 million metric Standard cubic meter per day (mmscmd) of gas which is its actual requirement at present. The gas has been allocated on firm basis to those projects likely to be commissioned during 2009-10. All existing gas-based power plants and those plants commissioned this year could draw gas on fallback basis also up to a maximum of 12 mmscmd, to further increase their PLF.

(c) : Modification of existing coal-based plants to enable them run in gas will amount to inefficient use of gas and is, therefore, may not be desirable. However, depending upon availability of gas, new gas-based capacity, which are more efficient can be planned.

MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 1802

ANSWERED ON 04.12.2009

SHARING OF COST OF RAIL PROJECTS BY STATES

1802 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether many States have urged Railways to go ahead with rail projects as they have agreed to share cost of these projects;
- (b) if so, whether project like gauge conversion, laying new tracks or doubling of tracks would be done soon in the States which have readily agreed to share part of cost;
- (c) if so, whether her Ministry is likely to go ahead with these projects; and
- (d) the total cost to be involved and the States that have agreed to share the cost?



ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E.AHAMED)

(a) to (d): A Statement is attached.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1802 BY SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA TO BE ANSWERED IN RAJYA SABHA ON 04.12.2009 REGARDING SHARING OF COST OF RAIL PROJECTS BY STATES

(a) to (d): State Governments which have agreed to share cost of the projects include States of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand & West Bengal. The sharing of cost of the projects by State Governments would expedite the implementation due to availability of additional funds. Many of the projects are already ongoing. The new proposals are also considered on merits. The total cost of projects where sharing has been agreed by State Governments is about ₹ 10,920 crores.

MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 89

ANSWERED ON 25.11.2009

RAISING OF FUNDS FOR ROAD PROJECTS

89 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :-

(a) whether with an ambitious plan to award road projects worth ₹ 2 lakh crores in the next two years on public-private partnership basis, Government is looking at various options to raise funds;

(b) if so, whether in addition to above, Government may allot part of the ₹ 10,000 crores tax-free bonds raised by India Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd. directly to National Highways Authority of India for refinancing of road projects; and



(c) if so, to what extent Government has agreed for fund raising options to meet viability gap for road projects and by what time the decision will be taken?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF ROAD TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS (SHRI KAMAL NATH)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Government has approved various recommendations made by the Chaturvedi Committee, with the proviso that the financing plan for 2010-11 onward would be considered by an Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM) for further action including such changes to the work plan as may become necessary. The Government has also approved "in-principle" support to the NHAI for various fund-raising options as indicated in the enclosed statement as laid on the table of the House.

THE STATEMENT REFERRED IN THE REPLY TO THE PART (C) OF THE RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 89, FOR ANSWER ON 25TH NOVEMBER 2009 ASKED BY SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA AND DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY REGARDING RAISING OF FUNDS FOR ROAD PROJECTS.

Government approval of 'in-principle' support to the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) for:

(i) Issuance of tax exempted bonds

(ii) Guarantee cover to the Borrowing Plan of NHAI.

(iii) Out of the borrowing approval of ₹ 30,000 crores earlier provided to IIFCL, ₹ 10,000 crores under the fiscal stimulus package will be transferred to NHAI, as per its borrowing requirement.

(iv) Assistance in negotiating non-sovereign multilateral loans from World Bank, ADB, JBIC etc. by providing back to back support, if necessary.



(v) Providing a Letter of Comfort from Ministry of Finance confirming the availability of Cess at least till 2030-31.

MINISTRY OF CULTURE, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 25

ANSWERED ON 19.11.2009

STEALING OF ANTIQUES FROM MUSEUMS

25 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state :-

- (a) the number of cases of thefts that were detected where `Antiques` were stolen from the museums or sites maintained by ASI, during 2007 and 2008;
- (b) whether FIRs are lodged in all cases or selectivity is exercised keeping in view the value and nature of `antique pieces` stolen; and
- (c) the conviction percentage and the number of cases where stolen antiques were recovered or returned by the convicted persons?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR PLANNING AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS
(SH. V. NARAYANASAMY)

- (a) No theft of antiquity has taken place at any of the site museums of the Archaeological Survey of India during the years 2007 and 2008. However, seven cases of theft involving twelve antiquities have been reported during these two years in respect of Monuments/Sites maintained by ASI. Details are at the Annexure.
- (b) Yes, Sir. FIRs have been lodged in all cases.
- (c) Only one object has been recovered. Details are at the Annexure.



MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 3170

ANSWERED ON 31.07.2009

KATARA BANIHAL RAIL LINK SEGMENT

3170 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :-

- (a) the time schedule for completing the rail alignment between Katara and Banihal, including constructing the mega-arch bridge over the river Chenab;
- (b) whether there has been escalation in cost for this rail link segment over the original estimated cost; and
- (c) if so, whether it is attributable only to inflation and rise in cost of material, or there are other significant factors like changes in the original planning from time- to-time?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMED)

(a) to (c) : Railway alignment between Katara-Banihal, including the alignment over river Chenab has been reviewed by the Expert Committee. The recommendations of the Committee are under consideration of the Ministry. Time schedule and cost of the project can be ascertained after final decision is taken by the Ministry.



MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 2839

ANSWERED ON 29.07.2009

OPPOSITION FROM WILDLIFE EXPERTS TO WIDENING OF NH7 .

2839 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether wildlife experts have opposed widening of NH-7 from Seoni to Nagpur as this is resulting in cutting the wildlife corridor between Pench and Kanha and Pench and Nagzira-Navegaon;
- (b) if so, whether the alternative to develop the existing State Highway Nagpur-Katol-Pandhurna-Saoner-Chhindwara-Seoni-Jabalpur-Narsinghpur or Nagpur-Katol-Teegaon-Betul-Bhopal-New Delhi has been approved; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI R.P.N. SINGH)

(a) Yes, Sir. A number of objections have been received from wildlife experts to the alignment proposed by NHAI with a request to realign the NH-7 passing through the Pench Tiger Reserves to save the bifurcation of the tiger habitat. NHAI has taken these concerns into consideration and proposed a number of animal passes of adequate width and height at suitable locations as per the advice of the Forest Department and referred the proposal for the consideration of Ministry of Environment and Forests. The matter has subsequently been referred to the Central Empowered Committee (CEC), who after a series of hearings, has referred the matter for the consideration of Supreme Court.

(b)&(c) A final decision on following the existing alignment or an alternative alignment can be taken only after the decision of the Supreme Court.



MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 2079

ANSWERED ON 22.07.2009

CONSTRUCTING SERVICE LANES ALONG NHS

2079 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether structural designing of flyovers is contributing towards happening of fatal accidents, involving motor bikes and smaller 800 CC vehicles;
- (b) if so, whether constructing service lanes along all four and six lanes highways would be considered as majority of victims are pedestrians, bicyclists, and other slow moving machines; and
- (c) will enforcement of strict laws against drunken driving, making helmets mandatory, exceeding speed-limits, etc. be made more deterrent?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI R.P.N SINGH)

- (a) & (b) Flyovers are constructed to prevent accidents by reducing the conflict points at busy side roads. The structural designing of these flyovers is to be done as per Indian Roads Congress Codes, and hence it is not expected to contribute to fatal accidents. Provision of service lanes on four/six lane National Highways along built-up stretches is taken up depending upon the traffic and availability of funds.
- (c) The Government proposes to enhance the penalties for various traffic offences including drunken driving, non-wearing of helmets and driving at excessive speed.



MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 1627

ANSWERED ON 17.07.2009

QUALITATIVE CHANGE OF RAILWAYS

1627 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :-

(a) during 2007-08, the Railways earned a profit of ₹ 25,000 crores and provided better connectivity to Aam Aadami from 2004, whether focus, would be now towards qualitative change of Railways by creating world-class infrastructure like high-speed corridors, etc. so that Indian Railways matches the best railway system of developed countries by 2020; and

(b) if so, whether this profit of ₹ 25,000 crores was invested for that purpose, coupled with generation of internal resources and diversion of need-based budgetary support allocated during Eleventh Five-Year Plan for creation of world-class infrastructure?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMED)

(a): During 2007-08 Railways generated a cash surplus before payment of dividend and appropriation to Depreciation Reserve Fund, Development Fund, Capital Fund, etc. of ₹ 25006 Crores. From 2004 onwards, 1093 Kilometers of New Lines, 4717 Kilometers of Gauge Conversion and 1688 Kilometers of Doubling have been completed to provide better connectivity to rail users. Qualitative change of the Railways by creating better infrastructure through modernization and technology upgradation to match advanced railway systems is an ongoing process. As regards high speed passenger corridors, pre-feasibility studies are planned on selected routes and study on Pune-Mumbai-Ahmedabad route is in progress.

(b) In 2007-08, out of the above cash surplus, after payment of dividend to general revenues, an investible surplus of ₹ 19,972 Crores was set



aside to be deployed for appropriation to various Railway funds for Plan utilization for the purpose of asset renewal, creation and modernization of the Railway infrastructure.

MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 1301

ANSWERED ON 15.07.2009

IMPROVING ROAD SAFETY

1301 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:-

(a) whether adequate attention is being paid, while designing traffic management programmes, towards traffic engineering, accident investigation, driver training, assessment and traffic enforcement, etc. so that free flow of traffic with nearly accident-free rate could be achieved;

(b) if so, whether the Seminar organized in Delhi in February, 2008 and attended by high-profile Institute of Road Traffic Education and Commission of United Nations Global Road Safety, gave specific suggestions towards road safety; and

(c) whether these are being implemented in India?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI MAHADEO SINGH KHANDELA)

(a) The State Governments are primarily responsible for designing traffic management programmes, towards traffic engineering, accident investigation, driver training assessment and traffic enforcement. It is expected from the States to take appropriate steps on each of these aspects.



(b) The Institute of Road Traffic Education & the Commission for Global Road Safety organized a one-day Conference 'Road Safety Investments in India' in February 2008 in New Delhi. The Conference made specific recommendations to improve the road safety, some of which are: political prioritization of road safety in India, implementation of a single road safety administration, investment of 10% of the road construction & maintenance budget for road safety management, creation of road safety awareness at all levels, development of tools and systems for driver training and stricter licensing process, updation of road design & traffic engineering standards, development of new standards and implementation of scientific traffic management and Road Safety Audits (RSAs).

(c) Recommendations made by the Conference can be broadly classified into two aspects i.e. policy and enforcement. As regards policy issues, the Government has taken necessary steps to finalize policy directives for improving road safety. Since the states are responsible for enforcement issues, they have been urged to take appropriate measures for enforcement of Road safety provisions from time to time.

MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 1175

ANSWERED ON 14.07.2009

REGULATION OF PORTS

1175 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state :-

(a) whether the government has decided to set up an authority to regulate the functioning of major ports along the coastline of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the authority would be given powers to monitor



performance standards of the port authorities and also to check smuggling activities at the ports; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI G.K. VASAN)

(a) to (d): A Committee under the Chairmanship of Additional Secretary & Financial Advisor, Ministry of Shipping was formed to examine the role of Tariff Authority for Major Ports (TAMP), Mumbai, vis-a-vis its performance regulation, the organizational structure and the statutory framework for the purpose of strengthening of Tariff Authority for Major Ports. The Committee has finalized the draft Major Ports Regulatory Authority Act, 2009 and the same has been hosted on the website for inviting comments/views of the various stakeholders on the proposed Act. The Act, if enacted, will be a successor to the provisions currently enshrined in the Major Ports Act, 1963 in so far as the working of Tariff Authority for Major Ports is concerned. No final decision on the issue has yet been taken.

MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 1174

ANSWERED ON 14.07.2009

PORT DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

1174 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state :-

(a) whether in a bid to speed up port infrastructure development, his Ministry has decided to award over 20 major port development projects in the current financial year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any criteria has been laid down for awarding the project



development task;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the names of the firms or companies to which ports development task was awarded during the past three years; and

(e) the achievements and progress of task being handled by those firms or companies?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI G.K. VASAN)

(a) & (b): Yes, Sir. It has been decided to award 22 Projects through private investment mainly under Public Private Partnership (PPP) to speed up port infrastructure development during the current financial year. The details of these projects are at Annexure-I.

(c): Yes, Sir. The PPP projects are awarded as per criteria specified in the Model Request for Qualification and Request for Proposal.

(d): The details of the projects which have been assigned by the ports to various companies/firms for the last 3 financial years are at Annexure-II.

(e): Most of the projects are at different stages of construction as per the provisions specified in the respective Concession Agreements signed between the companies/firms and Port authorities.

ANNEXURE-I REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) & (b) OF UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1174 - LIST OF PROJECTS FOR AWARD DURING THE CURRENT FINANCIAL YEAR IN THE MAJOR PORTS SI.No. Name of project proposed to be awarded

1. Mechanisation at HDC berth no 2 at Kolkata Port
2. Mechanisation at HDC berth no 8 at Kolkata Port
3. Multi-purpose berth at Paradip Port Trust Project-1
4. Multi-purpose berth at Paradip Port Trust Project-2
5. Mechanisation of Cargo Handling Project-1 at Paradip Port



6. Mechanisation of Cargo Handling Project-2 at Paradip Port
 - 7 Installation of Mechanised handling facilities for fertilizers at EQ 7 in the Inner Harbour at Vizag
 8. Mechanised Coal handling facilities at General cum cargo berth in the Outer Harbour at Vizag
 9. Container Terminal at outer Harbour OR1/OR2 at Vizag
 10. Development of East berth at Vizag (since split in to following two projects – 2 RFQs issued) (1) Development of North Cargo Berth in East Dock (2) Development of South Cargo Berth in East Dock
 11. Installation of Mechanised handling facilities at WQ 8 at Vizag
 12. Development of Dry Port & Multi-Modal Logistic Park at Chennai
 13. Creation of Mega Container Terminal at Chennai
 14. Construction of North Cargo Berth No- II at Tuticorin
 15. International Bunkering Terminal - Construction of Multi-purpose Liquid Terminal at Cochin
 16. International Cruise Terminal-Cum-Public Plaza Cochin
 17. Development of stand alone container handling facility with a quay length of 330 m North of NSICT Terminal at JNPT
 18. 4th Container Terminal at JNPT
 19. Development and operation of 3 conventional cargo terminal at Indira Dock- at Mumbai
 20. Creation of berthing and allied facilities of Tekkra near Tuna (outside Kandla Creek) - Phase-I
 21. Setting up of Single Point Mooring (SPM) and allied facilities off Veera in Gulf of Kutch – Kandla
 22. Development of Container Terminal at NMPT - ANNEXURE-II REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (d) OF UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1174 -
1. Paradip Port Trust – Deep Draught Iron Ore Terminal Awarded on BOT basis to M/S Blue Water Iron Ore Terminal Pvt Ltd, a consortium of Noble Group Ltd, Gammon Infrastructure Project Ltd and MMTC.
 2. Chennai Port Trust – Development of 2nd Container Terminal Licence awarded to Consortium of Port of M/s. Singapore Authority (PSA) and M/s. South India Corporation Agencies Limited (SICAL).
 3. Ennore Port Ltd. - (a) Development of Coal Terminal to handle 8 MTPA Coal for users other than TNEB. The Licence awarded on BOT



basis to M/S Chetnad International Coal Terminal Private Ltd., a consortium of South India Corporation Ltd, Portia Management Services Ltd and Navayuga Engineering Ltd (b) Construction of Iron Ore Terminal- The Licence awarded on BOT basis to M/S SICAL Iron Ore Terminals Ltd, a consortium of SICAL Logistics Ltd, L&T Infrastructures Development Projects Ltd and MMTC Ltd.

4. Cochin Port Trust - Captive LNG Port and Re-Gasification Terminal at Puthuvypeen. Awarded on BOT basis to M/S Petronet LNG Limited (PLL).

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 262

ANSWERED ON 03.07.2009

SAFETY OF RAIL TRACKS IN COAL BELT AREAS .

262 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :-

(a) whether due to raging of underground fire for the last 100 years in the coal belt areas of Dhanbad, Jharia, Asansol, Raniganj, etc. leading to instability of the ground, Railways have taken adequate safeguards for the rail tracks for running of train services in these areas;

(b) whether regular monitoring is being done so that sudden eventuality of unforeseen caving of land and thereby accidents could be eliminated; and

(c) whether the technology being adopted for the monitoring is in accordance with advancement in such techniques being developed globally?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMED)



(a) & (b): Regular monitoring is done by the colliery authorities (under Ministry of Coal). Railways have liaison with colliery authorities for regular monitoring of spread of underground fire and taking measures for safeguarding railway tracks, as required.

(c) Monitoring is done by the colliery authorities. Railways have adequate liaison with them for the safety of railway tracks. As such monitoring technology is not used by the Railways directly for the purpose.

MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 807

ANSWERED ON 24.02.2009

OIL POTENTIAL OF KG BASIN .

807 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:-

(a) whether it is a fact that Krishna-Godavari Basin has the potential of reserves of about 12 years as first flow of oil from the D6 Block of RIL in September, 2008 is an indication;

(b) if so, by when the peak production of estimated 5.5 lakh barrels of oil and gas per day is expected; and

(c) the present ratio of domestic production and imported petroleum products to meet the country's energy needs?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL)

(a) Yes, sir. As per the production profile, the reserves will be evacuated in about 12 years.



(b) Peak production of gas is likely to be achieved by the year 2012 @ 80 MMSCMD (5.7 lakh barrels of oil equivalent).

(c) During April-December, 2008 the ratio of domestic production and imported petroleum products was 7.95: 1.

MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 733

ANSWERED ON 24.02.2009

BLENDING IN JET FUEL

733 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :-

(a) whether Government is aware that Air New Zealand has successfully completed a two-hour flight of passenger jet powered in part by vegetable oil;

(b) if so, whether such technology would be imported or indigenously developed;

(c) whether initially one engine of the aeroplane can powered by a 50-50 blend of oil from jatropha plants and standard jet fuel; and

(d) whether the factor of environment sustainability would also be taken in account while evaluating the viability of such a fuel?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL)

(a):- A report on the matter has come to the notice through media. However, no authentic report has been received from International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) or International Air Travellers Association (IATA).

(b), (c) and (d):- No such proposal is under consideration with the Ministry.



MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN
POVERTY ALLEVIATION, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 486

ANSWERED ON 19.02.2009

PRIVATE DEVELOPERS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSES FOR LIG NO.

486 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state :-

(a) whether the Union Government has been considering to encourage private developers and builders to construct affordable houses which would be purchased by them for weaker sections and low income groups (LIG) in the country;

(b) if so, the details of private developers and builders who have shown interest for constructing low cost houses in the country;

(c) whether the housing shortage for weaker sections and low income groups is continuously increasing; and

(d) if so, the extent to which such shortage of houses is going to be met?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING & URBAN
POVERTY ALLEVIATION (KUMARISELJA)

(a)&(b): National Urban Housing & Habitat Policy (NUHHP), 2007 intends to promote sustainable development of habitat in the country with a view to ensuring equitable supply of land, shelter and services at affordable prices to all sections of society. Given the magnitude of the housing shortage and budgetary constraints of both the Central and State Governments, the Policy focuses the spotlight on multiple stakeholders namely, the Private Sector, the Cooperative Sector, the Industrial Sector for labour housing and the Services/Institutional Sector for employee housing. In this manner, the Policy seeks to



promote various types of public-private partnerships for realizing the goal of `Affordable Housing for All. However, as the subjects `land` and `colonization` come under the purview of State Governments, it is primarily the responsibility of the State Government to develop and implement models for associating private sector in initiatives envisaged under NUHHP-2007.

(c)&(d): According to the estimates made by the Technical Group constituted by the Ministry for assessment of the urban housing shortage at the end of the 10th Five Year Plan, the total housing shortage in the country is 24.71 million. Out of this, shortage of 24.67 million units is for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) and Low Income Group (LIG). The Technical Group has estimated an addition of 727 million dwelling units during the 11th Plan Period.

MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 187

ANSWERED ON 17.02.2009

TAXATION OF PETROLEUM PROJECTS

187 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:-

(a) whether his Ministry is hopeful of resolving issues relating to taxation of petroleum projects with the Finance Ministry in a manner that would not affect investor sentiment for the bidding process of seventh round of New Exploration Licensing Policy;

(b) if so, whether the issue was affecting investors and responses for NELP VII and the Petroleum Secretary has pointed out that experience shows that 85-90 per cent of the responses came in during first two days deadline for receipt of exploration bids; and

(c) if so, by what time the final decision in this regard is likely to be taken and to what extent it has been helpful?



ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL)

(a) to (c) In the seventh round of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP-VII) highest number of bids (181) were received as compared to earlier round of NELP. The bidding and award process for NELP-VII have been completed on the basis of the Bid Documents, Notice Inviting Offer (NIO) and clarifications issued including clarification relating to taxation.

MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 99

ANSWERED ON 13.02.200

NIGHT VISION GOGGLES AND CAMERAS

99 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :-

(a) what is the result of the experiment of 'night-vision goggles and cameras' to make drivers see signals and tracks in zero-visibility conditions;

(b) what is the envisaged degree of reliability regarding 'Image Amplification' technique, which is innovative in nature; and (c) whether it is Railways' own indigenous technique or it is being imported?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (DR. R. VELU)

(a): No such experiment with night vision goggles and cameras to make the drivers see signals and track in zero visibility conditions has been made.

(b) & (c): Do not arise.



MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 86

ANSWERED ON 13.02.2009

DEDICATED FREIGHT CORRIDOR

86 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :-

- (a) how many dedicated freight corridors have been planned and what is their construction schedule;
- (b) whether the funding would be done from Railways' own resources or loans from international financial bodies like World Bank, Asian Development Bank etc. had to be resorted to; and
- (c) whether the proven world-wide technology would be an important input keeping in view the long gestation period and emerging excellence and speed level rolling stock?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (DR. R. VELU)

- (a): The Government of India has approved the construction of Dedicated Freight Corridor Projects on Eastern Route (Ludhiana-Dankuni) and Western Route (Jawaharlal Nehru Port near Mumbai to Dadri/Tughlakabad). They are targeted for completion in about 5 years from the start of construction of the Project.
- (b): The Dedicated Freight Corridor Project is proposed to be financed through a mix of internal generation, market borrowings, budgetary and non-budgetary resources including multilateral and bilateral funding. For funding of Eastern and Western Corridors, Ministry of Railways is negotiating with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), World Bank and Asian Development Bank.
- (c): It is proposed to use the state of the art technology for implementation of the project.



MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 2150

ANSWERED ON 19.12.2008

ACCIDENT CLAIMS

2150 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :-

- (a) how many Railway claims tribunals are functioning in India, which adjudicate admissibility of claims in stray cases of accidents involving individuals;
- (b) whether the Mumbai-based such tribunal is not functioning since November, 2007, resulting in delay for providing relief to such accident victims;
- (c) what is the number of accident claim cases settled in 2007 and total amount paid, tribunal-wise;
- (d) how many cases are pending, tribunal-wise; and
- (e) how may have been pending for more than six months?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (DR. R. VELU)

- (a) There are 21 Benches of Railway Claims Tribunal which adjudicate claims cases at 19 places.
- (b) No, Sir.
- (c) & (d): A statement is attached.
- (e) 18539 cases (untoward incidents) are pending for more than six months.



MINISTRY OF PANCHAYAT RAJ, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 2102

ANSWERED ON 08.12.2009

SUBJECT UNDER AMBIT OF PANCHAYATS

2102 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of PANCHAYAT RAJ be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether all the 29 subjects for which the Panchayats are responsible for under the Eleventh Schedule have actually been devolved to the Panchayats;
- (b) if so, whether the envisaged targets have been fulfilled as the financial and administrative powers are still controlled by the higher tiers of Government; and
- (c) whether the extant procedures and rustic wisdom of Sarpanches and Panches is adequate to deal with all the 29 subjects?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (Dr. C.P. JOSHI)

(a)&(b): According to the provisions of the Article 243G of the Constitution, the State Governments may endow the Panchayats with powers and authority to plan and implement schemes for social justice and economic development. The State Governments are accordingly to consider the 29 subjects listed in the Eleventh Schedule for devolution to the Panchayats. The number of subjects devolved to the Panchayats varies across the States/UTs.

(c): The elected representative of the Panchayats are provided training and capacity building under various schemes of the State and Central Governments to exercise powers and functions assigned to the Panchayats.



MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 3789

ANSWERED ON 07.08.2009

**LAYING OF NEW RAILWAY LINES IN VIDARBHA AND NORTH
EASTERN STATES .**

3789 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :-

(a) that as funding of rail-link with Kashmir Valley is being done from the Consolidated Fund of India, whether similar consideration would also be shown to laying new railway lines in tribal and backward regions of Vidarbha, or inhospitable terrain in remote North-East states;

(b) if so, the nature of considerations kept in view for laying of such new railway lines; and

(c) by when the new railway line projects approved in 2008-09 railway budget would be completed and the priority fixed project-wise?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMED)

(a) & (b): The projects undertaken for the development of Jammu & Kashmir and North East Region resulting in greater integration with the rest of the country have been categorized as 'National Projects' having different funding pattern.

(c): The completion of projects would depend upon availability of resources and allied factors.



MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 704

ANSWERED ON 20.02.2009

UPGRADATION OF NAGPUR STATION

704 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether it is a fact that a recent study of Nagpur railway station has opined construction of at least five more platforms at that station to cope up with the increasing load;
- (b) if so, whether upgradation of Nagpur station to world class would ensure that five more, i.e. a total of 12 platforms would be available; and
- (c) whether request of the Federation of Investors, Traders and Industries, to start new trains from Nagpur be implemented during 2008-09?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (DR. R. VELU)

(a): No, Sir. No study of Nagpur station has been conducted by the Railways.

(b): Nagpur has been identified as one of the 26 railway stations proposed for development into World Class Stations. As far as the number of platforms is concerned, it is difficult to indicate the same as feasibility study has not yet been commissioned.

Social sector & sustainable development

A Rajya Sabha member from Maharashtra asking about a tragic incident in a remote Andhra Pradesh village in which 11 people lose their sight owing to faulty cataract surgery is a healthy commentary on our federal spirit. Darda upheld that spirit while performing his parliamentary duties. As a politician, his commitment to the welfare of people has been undiluted over the decades and he raises every issue



of human misery that touches his heart, ranging from child mortality to gender gap, from medicinal pricing to management of chronic diseases. If his stress on infrastructure development reflected his long-term vision for the country as a whole, his deep insight into the causes of sufferings of the poor helped him highlight micro issues that affects their daily existence. His questions on infant mortality, healthcare in rural and semi-urban areas, efficacy of integrated child development Services and missing children show how concerned he has been on the most vulnerable section of our society.

He understood the importance of social sector and hauled up the government to implement its schemes honestly and even explore new horizons of planned management to meet unforeseen challenges. He once asked the Health Ministry to explain if 15,000 patents of our medicinal plants had been lost to the West and asked if the Government had evolved a policy framework to deal with this problem. This was a neglected area which required immediate attention owing to unscrupulous practices being done through patenting war by global players. His questions on social sector covered a wide variety of issues. If he one day asked about the financial assistance given to business held by SC-ST, another day he asked about management and educational institutions. He often picked up intricate subjects which are not part of regular public discourse; for instance, protecting traditional knowledge in medical formulations in a digital library. Other such instances are: Reforming tax structure to ease the prices of essential medicines and plan for distinguishing genuine art works from fakes keeping in view the fast growing Indian art market. Sample questions are as follows:



MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 87

ANSWERED ON 23.02.2010

INCIDENTS OF BLINDNESS AFTER EYE SURGERY

87 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:-

- (a) whether eleven people lost their vision during free cataract surgery operations in October, 2009 in Nellore, Andhra Pradesh;
- (b) if so, whether such a grim situation had developed due to procedural surgery lapse, infection due to contamination of drugs or instruments used;
- (c) whether any Government guidelines exist to be followed when such free eye surgery camps are organized and prior permission is required to be obtained from District/State health authorities; and
- (d) what precautions Government would adopt so that such situations are eliminated?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD)

- a): As per report received from Government of Andhra Pradesh, 24 people lost their eye sight in a screening eye camp conducted by Bollineni Eye Hospital & Research Centre, Andhra Pradesh on 19-20th October, 2009 in Nellore, Andhra Pradesh.
- (b): As per the findings of Central Investigating Team, the probable cause of infection was due to contaminated ringer lactate bottles.
- (c) : 1. "Guidelines for Pre-operative, Operative and Post operative precautions for Eye surgery" is in existence and has been circulated to the States and other eye care facilities for strict compliance.



2. As per guidelines, all identified Non-Governmental Organizations/ Private Practitioners are required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the concerned District Health Society for a period of twelve months for conducting eye operations, renewable from time to time. As long as the MoU is in operation/valid there is no need for seeking specific permission of the District Programme Manager for holding Screening camps or other approved activities under this particular scheme.

(d): With a view to improve quality in Eye care service delivery, following instruction have been issued to State Governments:-

i) Different fluids/solutions/drops used during eye operations should be re-autoclaved before use.

ii) The Eye Operations should be conducted preferably in a regularly functional operation theatre which is periodically disinfected.

iii) The Hospitals conducting eye surgery should have disinfection, sterilization and autoclave services available on permanent basis and universal infection control procedures are to be observed all the time.

MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 3535

ANSWERED ON 21.12.2009

CONVENTION ON CHILD RIGHTS

3535 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:-

(a) : whether the country has participated in the 20th anniversary celebration of the Convention on the Rights of the Child held during October- November, 2009 which has always upheld a universally agreed-upon set of non-negotiable basic human rights, standards and obligations, including the right of survival and protection;



b) : whether the convection forcefully reiterated its rhetoric recommitment to protecting girls and ending sons preference; and

(c) : if so, whether any guidelines for eliminating gender-gaps were formulated and synergetic implementation modalities evolved?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH)

(a) to (c): Yes, Sir. In India, the anniversary was marked by the release of 'The State of World's Children Report', special edition, in a function organized in Delhi by UNICEF on 20th November, 2009. The function was attended by the representatives of the Government. The focus of the event was on overall progress of children in India and the remaining challenges. Specific details of protecting girls' rights and the guidelines for eliminating gender gaps were not discussed.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 1311

ANSWERED ON 01.12.2009

CAUSES OF INFANT DEATHS

1311 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :-

(a) whether it is a fact that the respiratory and gastro-intestinal disorders are two major causes of infant deaths;

(b) if so, whether our district and block level hospitals are having specialists in these fields and are equipped with the requisite infrastructure; and

(c) what is the extent of penetration of healthcare in semi-urban and rural areas, in addition to rural health coverage under the Grameen Swasthiya Yojana?



ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABIAZAD)

(a) As per the Report on causes of death in India 2001-2003, by the Registrar General of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, the leading causes of infant deaths are as under :-

1. Perinatal conditions (46%);
2. Respiratory infections (22%);
3. Diarrhoeal diseases (10%);
4. Other infectious and parasitic diseases (8%);
5. Congenital anomalies (3.1%)

(b)&(c) Under the umbrella of the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) (2005-2012) the Reproductive and Child Health Programme Phase II, aims to improve access for rural people, especially poor women and children to equitable, affordable, accountable and effective primary health care, with a special focus on 18 States which have weak public health indicators and weak infrastructure. This includes creation of new health facilities and upgradation of the existing ones, need based hiring of skilled manpower and provision of required equipment and drugs.

MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 1199

ANSWERED ON 30.11.2009

EXPANSION OF ICDS

1199 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :-

(a) whether her Ministry is set with its plans for expansion of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) in the country;



- (b) If so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether experts have criticized the scheme on several counts; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and corrective steps taken by government to make the scheme purposeful and result-oriented?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH)

(a)&(b) Yes, Sir. It is the endeavour of the government to universalize the Scheme of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) so as to cover all the habitations, with special focus on SC/ST and minority habitations, across the country.

At the end of IX Plan, there were 6 lakh sanctioned Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) in the country. The coverage of ICDS was not universalized and covered 42% of the habitations. The process of universalisation of the Scheme commenced only in Tenth Plan.

As a follow up, the Scheme has been expanded in three phases in the years 2005-06, 2007-08 and 2008-09. With these expansions, total number of sanctioned AWCs/Mini-AWCs increased from 6 lakh, as on 31.3.2002 to 13.56 lakh, as on 31.03.2009 (125% increase). As a part of universalisation, State Governments/UT Administrations have also been requested to submit requirements, if any, for 'Anganwadi on Demand', which can be sanctioned in case there are at least 40 children in a habitation without an AWC.

(c)&(d) There has been general debate about the efficacy of the Scheme that it has not been able to reduce the level of malnutrition significantly. Besides, there have also been some comments based on misconceptions that ICDS is running everywhere, for long and is solely responsible to achieve better nutritional indicators.

The problem of Malnutrition is, however, not only the result of a single cause but is a multifaceted problem acting singly or in combination



with other complex factors, like health care, poor sanitation & safe drinking water, illiteracy, poverty, food availability etc. It, therefore, needs to be tackled through holistic coordinated interventions in areas of health care, nutrition, education, sanitation and safe drinking water, food security and poverty alleviation.

Government has recently taken various steps to increase the effectiveness of the delivery of services under the ICDS Scheme which include Universalisation of the Scheme, revision in cost norms of existing interventions including Supplementary Nutrition, revision in Nutritional and Feeding norms of Supplementary Nutrition, provision of flexi fund at Anganwadi Centre level and new World Health Organization (WHO) Growth standards for monitoring growth of children etc. Government is also conscious of the need of effective convergence and has, therefore, been constantly impressing upon the States to ensure effective convergence with health, nutrition, education, sanitation and safe drinking water services under various programmes. Besides, Nutrition Education, Awareness, Counseling and Advocacy would continue.

MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 3335

ANSWERED ON 03.08.2009

BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS FOR STS AND SCS

3335 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether Government is aware that out of 51 per cent business establishments owned by socially disadvantaged sections, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are having a slim contribution;
- (b) if so, whether a special drive would be launched to equip SCs/STs financially, attitudinally, well-structured training, etc., so that like OBCs, they also gradually increase their share of owning business



establishments; and

(c) whether incentives like exclusive reservation for SCs/STs would be made, keeping in view their socio-economic factor, traditional vocations, etc.?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (DR. TUSHAR A. CHAUDHARY)

As per information received from the Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprise and Ministry of Statistics and Programme implementation :

(a) The share of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes managed/owned enterprises in the total enterprises of the country, estimated as per Economic Census, 2005 is given below:

Total no. of enterprises ; Enterprises managed by Share of SCs STs SCs STs 41826989 3690260 1520900 8.8% 3.6%

(b) & (c) The details of various schemes/programmes implemented by the Government for promotion and development of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the country which includes the entrepreneurs from Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and OBCs are as under:

I) National Manufacturing Competitiveness Programme aims at providing credit, infrastructural development, technology upgradation, marketing and entrepreneurial/skill development, etc. to MSMEs.

ii) A Policy Package for stepping up credit to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) announced in August, 2005 envisages public sector banks to fix their own targets for funding MSME sector.

iii) The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Act, 2006, has come into force from 2nd October, 2006.



iv) A 'Package for Promotion of Micro, and Small Enterprises' was announced in February, 2007, with the objective of providing support in various areas including inter-alia those related to credit, technology upgradation, marketing and infrastructure etc.

v) Under the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), financial assistance (subsidy) is provided on the loans taken from Scheduled Commercial Banks for setting up MSMEs by the entrepreneurs in the rural and urban areas. The scheme provides for special treatment for the socially disadvantaged sections like SCs, STs and OBCs.

MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 2678

ANSWERED ON 28.07.2009

REVISION OF ACCREDITATION CRITERIA BY AICTE

2678 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:-

(a) whether the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has revised the criteria for accreditation of institutes to bring them at par with the international level;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether several institutes which are not accredited with the AICTE are functioning in the country and advertising themselves as 'accredited with AICTE'; and

(d) if so, the action contemplated by Government in such cases?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SMT. D. PURANDESWARI)



(a) : Yes, Sir.

(b) : Accreditation is based on a 1000 point scale on the following broad criteria: -

S.No	Criteria	Maximum Points	Qualifying Points.
I	Organization and Governance, Resources, Institutional Support, Development & Planning	150	115
II	Evaluation & Teaching Learning	175	115
III	Students Entry & Outputs	150	100
IV	Faculty Contribution	150	100
V	Facilities and Technical Support	75	
VI	Continuous Improvement	75	
VII	Curriculum	125	
VIII	Programmes Educational	100	

Objectives – Their Compliance and Outcomes Total 1000

Programme scoring 750 or more (and meets qualifying criteria) accredited for 5 years. Programme given "Provisionally Accredited" status for two years in case of scoring less than 750 and higher than 600 and with weaknesses that could be overcome. · Programme scoring less than six hundred not accredited.

(c) to (d): As per information given by the AICTE, one complaint of the Institute of Business Management (IBM), Jadavpur, has been received in this regard. The name of the said institute is displayed as an unapproved institution for information to the students and the general



public. The name of the institute has been forwarded to the concerned State Government for taking action.

MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 2669

ANSWERED ON 28.07.2009

DECISION ON THE YASHPAL COMMITTEE REPORT

2669 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether a Committee headed by eminent scientist Shri Yashpal has suggested scrapping of several powerful bodies like UGC, AICTE, etc. and setting up of a super regulator instead;
- (b) if so, whether a seven-member Panel to regulate all the academic bodies, is also a recommendation;
- (c) whether these recommendations are under consideration; and
- (d) if so, by when a decision is likely to be taken?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SMT. D. PURANDESWARI)

(a) & (b): The "Committee on Renovation and Rejuvenation of Higher Education" (Yash Pal Committee) has recommended the creation of an all-encompassing National Commission for Higher Education and Research (NCHER) with constitutional status to replace the existing regulatory bodies including All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) and the Distance Education Council (DEC). It has also been recommended that the other regulatory bodies in professional education such as the Medical Council of India (MCI), Dental Council of India (DCI), Bar



Council of India (BCI) etc. should be divested of their academic functions and the universities be made responsible for the academic content of all courses and programmes of study including professional courses. It has been further recommended that the proposed NCHER may have a seven-member board with a full time chairperson.

(c) & (d): The need for an overarching regulatory body in higher education has been accepted by the Government as one of its priorities and its functions are yet to be finalized as the report is under consideration and no time limit can be prescribed at present.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 2330

ANSWERED ON 24.07.2009

PATENT OF MEDICINAL PLANTS

2330 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:-

(a) whether it is a fact that we lost more than 15,000 patents of our medicinal plants to the West;

(b) if so, how many such patents were opposed during the last five years;

(c) the number where our claims were upheld; and

(d) whether the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library, containing documentation of over two lakh medical formulations will safeguard our interests in future?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD)



(a) to (c) In a study carried out in the year 2000 by the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) Task Force appointed by the Government, 4896 patent references were found on the medicinal plants at the international level which increased to 15,000 in the year 2003. However, in a study carried out in the year 2005, the number of patents found on medicinal plants at a global level were 35,587. After successfully fighting the wrong patents granted at United States Patents and Trademarks Office (USPTO) on turmeric and basmati, and at European Patent Office (EPO) on neem, traditional Knowledge Digital Library database has been created, since fighting the wrong patents at International Patent Offices is expensive and time consuming. TKDL establishes prior art for approximately 2.04 lakh formulations transcribed in five international languages, namely, English, French, German, Spanish and Japanese and prevents the grant of wrong patents, if claimed at the International Patent Offices.

The access to TKDL database has been given to the European Patent Office in February 2009 for its use in search and examination process so that wrong patents are not granted. Efforts are being made to give access to the TKDL database to other major patent offices also so as to prevent the grant of wrong patents in these offices also.

(d): Yes.

MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 2293

ANSWERED ON 24.07.2009

TAXES AND TARIFFS ON MEDICINES

2293 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that taxes and tariffs are contributing significantly towards raising the prices of life saving medicines;

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to ensure that economically



weaker segments are able to purchase life-saving medicines so that their lives are saved; and

(c) what are the details of the reduction in taxes, tariffs, etc. to keep the life-saving medicines within the reach of poor patients, during 2006, 2007 and 2008?

ANSWER

THE MINISTRY OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SRIKANT KUMAR JENA)

(a) : Yes, Sir.

(b) : This Department has launched Generic Drug Campaign by opening JAN AUSHADHI stores for providing unbranded quality generic medicines at affordable prices. (c) : In 2006 Union Budget, a concessional basic duty @5% were provided on 10 specified anti-AIDS; 14 specified anti-cancer and 4 specified life saving drugs including their bulk drugs. These drugs were also exempted from countervailing duty by way of excise duty exemption. In 2007 Union Budget, there was no change in duty structure of drugs. In 2008, Union Budget five specified life saving drugs including their bulk drugs and one specified anti-cancer diagnostic kit, were provided a concessional 5% basic custom duty with nil countervailing duty by way of excise duty exemption. Further one anti-AIDS drug and the bulk drugs for the manufacture of the said drug were also fully exempted from excise duty. In same year, the Central Excise duty on pharmaceutical products including drugs/medicines were reduced from 16% to 8%. Thereafter, the Central Excise duty on drugs/medicines was further reduced from 8% to 4% with effect from 7th December, 2008.



MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 1243

ANSWERED ON 15.07.2009

MISSING CHILDREN IN DELHI

1243 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

(a) whether Delhi High Court had taken a suo-motu cognizance of the issue of 'Missing Children' in Delhi on March 2, 2009 and observed that the case of missing children was a grave issue and asked the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights to look into it;

(b) if so, what are the outcomes from such an enquiry and how many FIRs for missing kids were lodged by Delhi Police in the years 2007 and 2008; and

(c) how many children were traced and united with their parents?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN)

(a) to (c): The Hon'ble Delhi Court had taken suo-motu cognizance of the news item reported in "Mid Day" on 26th February, 2009 with respect to missing of children. During the hearing of the case on 22.4.2009, Chairperson of the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights, inter alia, submitted before the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi that the Commission will investigate the matter and submit its report within three months i.e. before 22.7.2009. The Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights has not submitted its report. The details of the FIRs registered and the number of children traced are given below:

Year	Total number FIR registered	Number of children traced
2007	1364	6440
2008	1242	5625



GOVERNMENT OF INDIA MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND
FERTILIZERS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 741

ANSWERED ON 10.07.2009

SHORTAGE OF ESSENTIAL MEDICINES

741 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether according to World Health Organisation there is an alarming shortage of essential medicines in the public sector;
- (b) if so, whether the essential medicines are not available at a reasonable price to the needy;
- (c) if so, whether Government propose to have a price control on essential drugs; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND
FERTILIZERS (SHRI SRIKANT KUMAR JENA)

- (a) As per the information available in this Department, there is no recent report from World Health Organisation regarding shortage of essential medicines in the public sector as specified in National List of Essential Medicines 2003.
- (b) Does not arise.
- (c) to (d) The Drug Policy as amended from time to time envisages making available quality medicines at reasonable prices to the masses. Besides this Department has recently launched Generic Drug Campaign by opening Jan Aushadhi Generic Drug Stores with the cooperation of State Governments & Pharma CPSUs. The generic medicines available in these stores are cheaper as compared to the branded drugs available in the market.



A draft National Pharmaceuticals Policy, 2006 was prepared by this Department in consultation with various stakeholders and submitted before the Cabinet for its approval. One of the recommendations made in the draft Policy is to bring essential medicines under price control subject to certain conditions and exceptions. The Cabinet considered the Policy in its meeting held on 11.1.2007. It was decided that the matter may, in the first instance, be considered by a Group of Ministers (GoM). The GoM had held four meetings but did not make recommendations to the Cabinet.

MINISTRY OF CULTURE, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 753

ANSWERED ON 24.02.2009

FAKE WORKS IN THE INDIAN ART MARKET

753 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether Government is aware that Indian Art industry is presently estimated to be Rs. 2,000 crore and is expected to grow in tandem with our economic prowess;
- (b) if so, whether Government would evolve such modalities to keep "fakes" of art works as was recently found in the cancelled exhibition of India's famous and well-known painter S.H. Raja; and
- (c) whether a National inventory of art works is being thought of to be maintained by Lalit Kala Akademi in collaboration with galleries and Artists?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SMT. AMBIKA SONI)

- (a) & (b) The private galleries and their activities are not under the control of this Ministry. The offences of keeping "fakes" of art works are punishable under different sections of the Indian Penal Code.
- (c) No, Sir.



MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 59

ANSWERED ON 13.02.2009

MANUFACTURE OF MEDICINES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

59 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether it is a fact that the WHO is pressing for implementation of changes in regulatory mechanism for manufacturers of medicines in developing and poor countries with the objective to weed out the competitiveness of India and China;
- (b) if so, the reasons as to why Indian Health Officers have not inspected the companies in the developed countries including China whose drugs are allowed to be imported into India; and
- (c) the reasons for laxity of the regulatory authorities in India to impose strict regulatory measures to the units whose drugs were allowed to be imported into India?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

- (a) No sir. This Ministry is not aware of any recommendation of WHO for changes in regulatory mechanism for manufacturers of medicines. The manufacture and sale of medicines is regulated under the Drugs & Cosmetics Act and Rules made there under.
- (b) Inspections have been carried out in the past in China, whenever required, to ensure that the drugs exported by those manufacturers comply with the Good Manufacturing Practices and conform to the standards prescribed for them.
- (c) The quality of drugs imported into India is regulated through the system of registration and licensing of the overseas manufacturers and their products as provided under the provisions of Drugs and Cosmetic Act and Rules made there under.



MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 58

ANSWERED ON 13.02.2009

PHASING OUT OF BRANDED DRUGS

58 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :-

- (a) what is the therapeutic and quality difference in pharmacopeial medicines and the same sold as branded medicines;
- (b) whether Government grants permission of medicines on therapeutic rationality of the active pharmaceutical ingredients or for the therapeutic rationality of the branded medicines;
- (c) the steps taken by Government till date to enforce the recommendations of the Hathi Committee to phase out branded drugs in the public interest; and
- (d) the reaction of Government in the matter?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

- (a): There is no therapeutic and quality difference between pharmacopeial medicines and the same sold as branded medicines as both are required to conform to the standards specified in the concerned pharmacopeia.
- (b): The permission is granted for manufacture and or/import of new drug as raw material (bulk drug substances) or finished formulation based on safety and efficacy data generated in animal and human as per Schedule-Y to Drugs & Cosmetics Rule, 1945.
- (c) & (d): The Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers (Department of Pharmaceuticals) has informed that the Government laid a statement on the table of the Lok Sabha on 29th March, 1978 containing its decisions on the recommendations of the Committee. Later this came to be known as Drug Policy, 1978.



MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 54

ANSWERED ON 13.02.2009

MEDICAL CARE TO PATIENTS SUFFERING FROM CHRONIC DISEASES

54 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether Government is aware that the number of people suffering from chronic diseases are rapidly increasing in the country;
- (b) if so, whether the existing health-care facilities are not found adequate to treat patients of such chronic diseases in the country;
- (c) if so, the facts and details thereof; and
- (d) whether Government proposes to improve its medicare facilities throughout the country and also to ensure that the patients suffering from chronic diseases are treated timely?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a) : Yes, Sir. Reports indicate that the number of people suffering from chronic diseases is increasing in the country.

(b) to (d): Healthcare services for different ailments are available to the people throughout the country though the Government health facilities at Primary Health Center, District Hospital, State Medical Colleges and National level Institutions. The facilities are reviewed from time to time under various programme of National Rural Health Mission and the National Programme on Diabetes, Cardiovascular diseases and Stroke (NPDCS). An outlay of Rs.1660.50 crore has been provided for the NPDCS during the 11th Five Year Plan. NPCDS have been initiated in 10 districts in 10 States in pilot phase.



MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 197

ANSWERED ON 15.12.2008

SETTING UP OF CENTRAL UNIVERSITIES

197 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether Government has decided to set up 12 more Central Universities, adding to its present strength;
- (b) whether the budget allocation for opening of these universities was Rs.3,280 crore;
- (c) if so, what are total universities at present in the country;
- (d) to what extent creation of 12 more universities would help in improving the education in the country;
- (e) whether there are still many States where these universities are not set up; and
- (f) if so, by when these universities would start functioning?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH)

(a) to (f): A Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha. STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 197 FOR 15.12.2008 REGARDING SETTING UP OF CENTRAL UNIVERSITIES ASKED BY SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA AND DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY.

(a) and (b): With a view to increasing access and improving quality of higher education in the country, it is proposed to provide sixteen Central Universities - one in each State which does not have a Central



University. This includes conversion of four existing State Universities into Central Universities and establishment of a new Central University in each of the remaining twelve uncovered States. The Central Universities Bill, 2008 has already been introduced in Lok Sabha for establishment and incorporation of these Universities. The financial requirement to meet the recurring and non-recurring expenditure of these Universities during the remaining part of the 11th Plan period is estimated at Rs.3,480 crore.

(c) to (f): There are 24 Central Universities at present, and together with the proposed Central Universities every State will have at least one Central University. Even though Central Universities constitute only a small segment of the higher education system in India, these institutions make a significant contribution in setting standards of quality education and research, besides helping in removing regional imbalances in access to higher education. The establishment and functioning of the new Central Universities is dependent on the passing of the "The Central Universities Bill, 2008" and hence no definite timeframe can be indicated at this stage.



MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 1888

ANSWERED ON 07.12.2009

CONSERVATION OF CARBON STORING FORESTS

1888 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :-

(a) whether Government is aware of the remarks made by DG World Agroforestry Centre in Nairobi, during August, 2009, that farmers are protecting and planting trees spontaneously thereby strengthening Government's efforts to conserve carbon-storing forests; and

(b) if so, whether a sustained programme can be launched to motivate farmers to plant and nurture maximum number of fruit bearing trees, which apart from giving them additional income, would also be a positive step towards combating global warming?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a)&(b) The initiatives of Government for plantation of trees including fruit bearing trees are as under:

(I) Ongoing Centrally Sponsored Scheme "National Afforestation Programme" being implemented by the Ministry of Environment and Forests for regeneration of degraded of forests and adjoining areas in the country encourages production of non-timber products such as wax, honey, fruits and nuts from the regenerated areas.

(ii) Plantation of fruit bearing trees by SCs/STs/small farmers is a permissible activity of Nation Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) of Ministry of Rural Development.

(iii) A new scheme 'Gram/Panchayat Van Yojana for afforestation on non-forest lands involving Panchayati Raj Institutions' has been mooted by this Ministry which includes one component for agro-forestry/farm forestry.



MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 395

ANSWERED ON 23.11.2009

MEGA SOLAR ENERGY INITIATIVE

395 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether after having approved a mega solar energy initiative, Government is planning to give a major thrust to overall renewable energy as it was way for the future and would go a long way in meeting India's energy needs in addition to reducing environmental hazards;
- (b) whether the Ministry had declared to launch a solar mission programme across the country from November 14; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken to implement policy for launching solar mission programme?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY (DR. FAROOQ ABDULLAH)

(a), (b) & (c): The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has set a target to install 14,000 MW capacity renewable energy based grid power generation plants during the 11th plan period in the country.

Government has also approved Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission to develop solar energy technologies to make solar power competitive to conventional grid power. The Mission aims at setting up of 20,000 MW grid solar power and 2,000 MW of off-grid solar power including 20 million solar lights. In addition, it aims at installation of 20 million square metre solar thermal collector area by 2022. The Mission will be implemented in three phases. Government has approved the target to set up 1,100 MW grid connected solar plants and 200 MW capacity equivalent off-grid solar applications in the first phase of the



Mission, till 2012-13. In addition, the Mission will also support research and development to reduce cost, improve efficiency and overall performance of solar energy systems and also for development of new materials and devices.

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 333

ANSWERED ON 23.11.2009

LIMITING EMISSIONS AND TRANSFER OF CLEAN ENERGY TECHNOLOGY

333 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :-

(a) whether any binding targets to limit emissions and transfer clean energy technology to developing nations by developed countries have been fixed so that significant contributory efforts to combat global warming are made; and

(b) if so, whether India and China, who were at the core of global negotiations during August 2009 to finalize a successor to Kyoto Protocol, have made any progress towards achieving this objective?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) As per the Kyoto Protocol agreed by the Parties, Annex I Parties (Developed Countries) have to reduce their emissions by 5.2% over the 1990 levels by the end of first commitment period i.e. 2008-12 while there are no binding emission reduction targets for Developing Countries. Further, as per the Article 4.3 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, Annex I Parties are supposed to transfer finance and clean technologies to developing nations to help



them reduce their emissions. Current negotiations under the Bali Action Plan are aimed, inter alia, at deciding institutional arrangements for development and transfer of clean technologies through technology cooperation and provision of financial resources to developing countries to enable them to adapt to and mitigate climate change.

(b) India along with other like-minded countries including China has strongly urged the Annex I Parties to take deeper emission reduction commitments of at least 25-40% below the 1990 levels, in post-2012 period. India and China have actively participated in the negotiations in the Adhoc Working Group on Kyoto Protocol to pursue this objective. Hectic negotiations in this forum are underway in order to reach an outcome at the forthcoming meeting of Conference of Parties at Copenhagen in December 2009.

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 2447

ANSWERED ON 27.07.2009

ENVIRONMENT IMPACT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

2447 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether Government proposes to overhaul the process of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) system;
- (b) if so, the details of representations received by Government against the EIA process during the last one year and the action taken thereon;
- (c) whether Government proposes to upgrade the quality of EIA process and also to create National Environment Protection Authority for early clearance of various projects; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?



ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) & (b) Ministry of Environment & Forests has proposed amendments in the Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006, vide S.O. 195(E) dated 19th January, 2009 for obtaining comments / suggestions from all concerned. The proposed amendments, some of which are clarificatory in nature and some seek to make the notification more comprehensive, inter-alia include:

(i) enhancement of threshold limit for construction projects from 20,000 sq.m. to 50,000 sq.m,

(ii) modernization and expansion projects without increase in pollution load to be exempt from the provision of EIA Notification, 2006,

(iii) prospecting of minerals to be exempt from EIA Notification, 2006,

(iv) biomass based power plants up to 50 MW to be exempt from EIA,

(v) category 'B' projects to be exempt from scoping for three years, and

(vi) proactive / voluntary disclosure of information relating to grant of environmental clearance for ensuring effective implementation and enforcement of environmental regulation through the creations of societal vigil. The comments / suggestions on the proposed draft amendments have since been received from all concerned including

(i) Ministries / Departments of Central Government,

(ii) State Governments,

(iii) Civil Society and

(iv) Industry Associations. The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 provides a time limit of 365 days for finalization of the draft Notification from the date of its issue after taking into consideration the comments received.



(c) & (d) A proposal to set up a National Environment Protection Authority to strengthen enforcement and monitoring of compliance of environmental statutes and to improve environmental planning and management is in a conceptual stage.

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 905

ANSWERED ON 13.07.2009

CONTROL ON POACHING OF WILDLIFE

905 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :-

(a) whether state-of-the-art techniques are being utilized to effectively control the poaching of wildlife;

(b) if so, whether these techniques are adequate to find the origin of smuggled animal parts, develop intelligence networks, track traders and also to use automatic weapons in the war against rampant poaching;

(c) the reasons for which the incidents of poaching are increasing; and

(d) the percentage of conviction relating to poachers arrested during 2005, 2006 and 2007?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) & (b) A number of initiatives have been taken by the Ministry to control effectively the poaching of wildlife. One of the latest initiative is setting up of the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau with the mandate of collection and collation of intelligence related to organized wildlife crime, coordination with State Governments and other authorities in connection with the enforcement of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972,



developing infrastructure and capacity building for scientific and professional investigation into wildlife crimes and assist State Governments to ensure success in prosecutions related to wildlife crimes. Financial assistance to State/UTs Governments is also provided under various Centrally-Sponsored Schemes by the Ministry for conservation of wildlife. A special Tiger Protection Force has also been set up to control the poaching of tiger.

So far as technique to find origin of smuggled animal part is concerned, it is at research and development stage for tiger.

(c) Main reason of poaching of wild animals is thriving international market outside India especially with respect to tiger, leopard and rhino products. It is further aggravated due to man-animal conflict.

(d) Information is being collected and will be laid in the Table of the House.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 713

ANSWERED ON 10.07.2009

SUSTAINABLE UTILIZATION OF MARINE RESOURCES

713 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :-

(a) Whether Government is aware of a U.K. Government's well articulated document "Fisheries 2007 – A long-term vision for sustainable Fisheries"; and

(b) If so, whether our future fisheries policy would keep in mind inputs like (i) balance on economic, social and environmental priorities (ii) identify the roles and responsibilities of different stake holders in achieving sustainability, and (iii) a realistic cost and benefit profile, as the need of the hour is for sustainable utilization of India's vast marine resources?



ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE, CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a) & (b): Yes, Sir. The Government of India has notified the comprehensive Marine Fishing Policy in November, 2004 with a focus on sustainable development of Coastal and Deep-sea Fisheries with a view to achieve harmonized development of marine fishery resources of the country. The objectives of the Comprehensive Marine Fishing Policy are (i) to augment marine fish production of the country up to the sustainable level in a responsible manner so as to boost export of sea food from the country and also to increase per capita fish protein intake of the masses, (ii) to ensure socio-economic security of the artisanal fishermen whose livelihood solely depends on this vocation, and (iii) to ensure sustainable development of marine fisheries with due concern for ecological integrity and bio-diversity. These objectives are incorporated in the schemes and projects undertaken by the Government.

Finance, Industry and Defence

There have been few members who have shown such variety and knowledge, such probing instincts and vision, such hard work and commitment as Darda did in his tenure, asking questions on such a wide range of subjects. Politicians do get feedback on social sector issues from the people but having a keen interest in larger issues that affect the common man and help the country propel to greater heights are often not their domain. Darda asked questions on finances & industry with equal ease as he probed the government on social sector. His questions ranged from social banking to non-performing assets, from public-private partnership to corporate fraud. The rising burden of non-performing assets on the banking sector – to the tune of Rs 50,000 crore -- has become a big problem in our country. Coupled with this, corporate frauds like Satyam posed new challenges to the Government. Darda raised these topical questions, asking for details of steps to recover bad loans.



He always cared for small enterprises as is reflected in his question about instructions to the private and foreign banks to give loans to micro, small and medium enterprises. Darda also asked several questions on defence requirements as our forces heavily depend on purchases from outside, even from very smaller countries. His concern got reflected in a question about the preparations of the Defence & Research Development Organisation (DRDO) to manufacture military hardware and software. The shocking Bhopal tragedy reminds us of the need for industrial safety, specially when India is about to enter nuclear industry in a big way. Darda expressed his concern by asking questions about the agreement with France to set up a nuclear plant in Maharashtra and the safety norms and training of personnel. His question about ONGC's plan to divert its activities to uranium exploration and nuclear plants shows the trait of an alert and aware parliamentarian.

MINISTRY OF FINANCE, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 73

ANSWERED ON 23.02.2010

MAINTENANCE OF CREDIT GROWTH

73 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :-

- (a) the details about maintaining credit growth levels, supporting social banking and ensuring employment growth, etc. so as to strengthen the economic recovery ahead;
- (b) the allocations of credit through Public Sector Banks for Agriculture, Micro-Small-Medium Industries, during 2007, 2008 and 2009;
- (c) whether these allocations were fully utilized; and
- (d) the recovery status during 2007, 2008 and 2009 and its percentage thereof viz-à-viz loans?



ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

(a): With a view to maintaining credit growth and low interest rates to support recovery, the RBI has not changed the repo rate and the reverse repo rate since April 2009. Credit growth has shown a turn around from November 2009 onwards. Economic growth too has picked up which in turn should ensure employment growth.

(b) & (c): No allocations of credit are made for any sector. However, under priority sector lending, public sector banks are required to lend 18% of adjusted net bank credit to agriculture. Though advances to small enterprises and micro enterprises is included under priority sector lending target of 40%, there are no separate individual targets for these sectors. Most of the public sector banks were able to meet priority sector lending targets during 2007, 2008 & 2009.

(d): Data on recovery of loans and its percentage vis-à-vis total loans is not maintained.

MINISTRY OF FINANCE, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 2824

ANSWERED ON 15.12.2009

NPAS OF BANKS

2824 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :-

(a) whether it is a fact that the Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) of Public Sector Banks have risen to Rs.44,000 crores till March, 2009 despite the fact that last year (2008) Government had waived off a large portion of such bad loans through Agricultural Loan Waiver Scheme;

(b) if so, whether around 20 per cent to 50 per cent of the NPA



component of Public Sector Banks relate to agricultural loans and credit extended to small scale industries; and

(c) with the gradual revival of our economy from ongoing recessionary trends, what is the loan recovery amount between 1st April to 30th September, 2009?

ANSWER

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance (Shri Namo Narain Meena)

(a): The Gross non-performing assets (NPAs) of Public Sector Banks (PSBs) have increased from Rs.40,452 crore as on 31st March, 2008 to Rs.45,196 crore as on 31st March, 2009. However, the Gross NPAs to Gross Advances ratio of these banks have decreased from 2.2% to 2% between March, 2008 and March, 2009. The increase in amount of gross NPAs is in small senile industry (SSI) sector, other priority sector and non-priority sectors, whereas the amount of gross NPAs in agriculture sector have decreased between March 2008 and March 2009. The increase in the absolute amount of NPAs may be attributed, inter-alia, to the consolidated impact of business cyclically, delay in implementation of projects and credit growth across the banking industry during the last few years.

(b): The share of NPAs of Agriculture sector and small scale industries sector in outstanding Gross NPAs, in respect of PSBs as at the end March 2009, is 12.96% and 15.86 % respectively.

(c): While a satisfactory recovery trend has been observed from the banks during the period from 01.04.09 to 30.09.09, the Reserve Bank of India has no specific information pertaining to loan recovery by banks during this period as the requisite data is collected annually on financial year basis. The actual recovery during the year ended March 2009 was Rs 10,966 crore and the amount of NPAs written off (including compromise) during this period was Rs.7,217 crore (by PSBs).



MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 607

ANSWERED ON 25.11.2009

STEPS TAKEN FOR GROWTH OF EXPORTS

607 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether effective steps are being taken to give fillip to the growth of exports in view of the shrinkage of exports during the financial year 2008-09 due to global recessionary trends;

(b) if so, will the emphasis be on exploring further markets or introducing new export-items customized to emerging export markets; and

(c) the percentage decline in exports during 2008-09 vis-a-vis 2007-08?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA)

(a) & (b) Yes, Sir. To arrest decline in exports due to global recessionary trend, and to give fillip to growth of exports, the Government and the RBI, have announced stimulus packages, the highlights of which are as given in Annexure 'A'. In addition to this, in the Foreign Trade Policy 2009-14, significant emphasis has been laid on exploring new markets for Indian export products, and to introduce new export items customized to emerging export markets. The highlights of these are as given at Annexure 'B'.

(c) The exports from India in 2008-09 have registered growth (in dollar terms) of 13.6% viz-a-viz 2007-08. Annexure 'A' REMEDIAL STEPS TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA TO ARREST DECLINE IN EXPORTS DUE TO THE GLOBAL ECONOMICS LOW DOWN.

(A) Measures taken by the Government:



- (1) Interest subvention of 2%, provided till 30.09.2009, extended up to 31.3.2010, to the following labour intensive sectors for exports:- Textiles (including Handlooms), Handicrafts, Leather, Gems & Jewellery, Marine Products and SMEs;
- (2) Additional funds of Rs. 350 crore provided in December, 2008 for Handicraft items in Vishesh Krishi and Gram Udyog Yojana (VKGUY);
- (3) Higher incentive of 2% of Duty Credit Scrip under Market Linked Focus Product Scheme (as against normal incentive of 1.25%) granted to exports of Apparels & Clothing accessories and Leather products & Leather footwear, to USA and EU for the period from 1.4.09 to 30.09.09;
- (4) Rs 1100 crore provided to ensure full refund of pending claims of CST / Terminal Excise duty /Duty drawback on deemed exports;
- (5) Exporter-friendly and the popular Duty Neutralisation Scheme, i.e., Duty Entitlement Passbook (DEPB) Scheme extended up to 31st December, 2009;
- (6) DEPB rates for all items where they were reduced in November, 2008, restored to higher rates with retrospective effect;
- (7) Duty Drawback rates on certain items restored to higher rates effective from 1st September, 2008;
- (8) DEPB and Freely Transferable Incentive Schemes allowed without the initial requirement of Bank Realisation Certificate (BRC);
- (9) Export Obligation Period under Advance Authorization Scheme enhanced from 24 months to 36 months, without payment of composition fee.
- (10) Back-up guarantee made available to ECGC to the extent of Rs. 350 crore, to enable it to provide guarantees for exports to difficult markets/ of difficult products. ECGC has now been able to widen its coverage;
- (11) Additional funds of Rs. 1400 crore provided to the Ministry of Textiles to clear the backlog claims of textile units under Technology



Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS);

(12) MDA Scheme- Allocation increased to Rs.124 crores (increased by 148%);

(13) Additional items allowed within the existing duty free imports entitlement for the following labour and employment-oriented sectors:

(i) 5 additional items for sports goods sector;

(ii) Additional items for leather garments and footwear and textile items.

(14) Fringe Benefit Tax (FBT) abolished;

(15) Section 10A and 10B related to Sunset Clauses for STPI and EOUs schemes respectively extended for the financial year 2010-2011. Anomaly removed in Section 10AA, related to taxation benefit of 'unit vis-à-vis assessee';

(16) Export duty on iron ore fines eliminated, and for lumps, reduced to 5%;

(17) Some pending issues relating to Service Tax refund on exports—resolved. Some of these are:

(i) Exemption from Service tax on services linked to exports:

(e) On service related to transport of export goods by road from any CFS or ICD to the port or airport and on service related to transport of export goods by road directly from their place of removal, to an ICD, a CFS, a port or airport; (f) Services provided by Foreign Agent Commission service.

(ii) Procedure for refund of service tax simplified by allowing refund on self certification in case refund claim does not exceed 0.25% of FOB value of exports; and certification by Chartered Accountant in case of others;

(iii) Time period for filing refund claim increased to 1 year from the date



of export (as against half-yearly).

(18) For Fast Track Resolution of a number of procedural issues, thereby reducing delays for the exporters, a Committee constituted under the Chairmanship of Finance Secretary including Secretaries of Department of Revenue and Commerce. A number of issues sorted out accordingly;

(19) Excise duty reduced across the board by 4 per cent, for all products except petroleum products and those products where current rate was less than 4%. Excise Duty was further reduced by another 2% in certain products like Leather etc.;

(20) The guarantee cover under Credit Guarantee Scheme for Micro and Small Enterprises on loans doubled to Rs. 1 crore, with a guarantee cover of 50%. The guarantee cover extended by Credit Guarantee Fund Trust increased to 85% for credit facility upto Rs. 5 lakh. The lock-in period for such collateral-free loans reduced.

(21) Adjustment Assistance Scheme, initiated in December '08 to provide enhanced ECGC cover at 95% to the badly hit sectors, to continue till March, 2010;

(22) To protect the domestic manufacturing industry from dumped/cheap imports, in particular from China, import restrictions have been imposed on HR coil, Carbon Black, Polyester Filament Yarn (PFY) and Radial Tyres (Bus & Trucks);

(23) Mega Handloom clusters in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu and Powerloom cluster in Rajasthan and New Mega clusters for carpets in Srinagar and Mirzapur approved;

(24) Basic customs duty of 5% on Rough / Unworked corals abolished;

(25) Import duty on naphtha for power sector eliminated;

(26) CVD on TMT bars & structurals and cement removed;

(27) Exemption from basic customs duty on Zinc and Ferro Alloys withdrawn;



(28) Regular monitoring mechanism:-

(A) The situation is being regularly monitored at the highest level of Government, so that immediate further corrective measures, can be taken as may be required. In this regard, the Government has constituted the following two High Level Committees which have been deliberating the issue on regular basis:

(i) An Apex Group chaired by Prime Minister with Finance Minister, Commerce Minister, Deputy Chairman (Planning Commission), RBI Governor;

(ii) Committee of officers chaired by Cabinet Secretary, including Finance Secretary, Commerce Secretary, Secretary(DIPP), Secretary (Planning Commission)- to meet regularly to look into the suggestions made by Trade and Industry and the respective Administrative Ministries in respect of the current global economic and financial crisis and to recommend action to the Apex Group.

(b) Department of MSME and Department of Financial Services to jointly monitor on the progress of the meetings of Monthly meeting of State level Bankers' Committee for resolution of credit issues of MSME.

(B) Measures taken by RBI:

I. Increase in Liquidity to the banks for improving credit flow, by :

(i) Reducing CRR, SLR, Repo rate and Reverse Repo rate (from Oct '08, CRR reduced from 9% to 5%, SLR reduced from 25% to 24% (now restored to 25% in Oct.'09), Repo Rate reduced from 7.5 % to 4.75%, and Reverse Repo Rate reduced from 6% to 3.25%).

(ii) Refinance facility to the EXIM Bank for an amount of Rs. 5000 crores for providing pre-shipment and post-shipment credit in Rs. or dollars;

(iii) A special re-finance facility has been put in place for banks for the purpose of extending finance to exports, micro and small enterprises, mutual funds and NBFCs. Provisioning requirements have been lowered. Export Credit Refinance facility for commercial banks increased to 50% of the outstanding Rupee Export Credit.



II. Increase in FOREX Liquidity:

(i) RBI's assurance for continued selling of foreign exchange (US \$) through banks, to augment supply in the domestic foreign exchange market;

(ii) To enable banks to profitably lend to exporters in Foreign Exchange, Ceiling rates on export credit in foreign currency has been raised to LIBOR + 350 basis points, subject to the condition that the banks will not levy any other charges, i.e., service charge, management charge, etc. except for recovery towards out of pocket expenses incurred.

III. Easing of Credit Terms:

(i) The period of pre-shipment and post-shipment Rupee Export Credit enhanced by 90 days each;

(ii) Time period of export realization for non-status holder exporters increased to 12 months, at par with the Status holders. This facility which was available up to 03.06.09, has been extended for one more year.

(iii) PSU Banks, consequent to measures announced by RBI, reduced the margin money on Guarantees for export units.

(c) Measures taken in the FTP, 2009-14 announced on 27.8.09. Measures in the FTP 2009-14, announced on 27.8.2009, have been laid down before the Parliament, and are available in public domain, which can be viewed /downloaded from the website <http://dgft.gov.in>

Annexure 'B' The following significant measures have been taken in the Foreign Trade Policy 2009-14, announced on 27.8.2009, with an emphasis on exploring new markets and to introduce new export-items customized to emerging export markets:

(1) Twenty six (26) new markets in Latin American and Asia-Oceania Blocks have been included under the Focus Market Scheme, in the Foreign Trade Policy 2009-14 (announced on 27.8.2009), in addition to the existing 83 markets, with an emphasis on exploring and developing new market base for Indian exports, and to reduce their dependence on EU and USA. With this measure, exports to these 109 markets have



become eligible for duty credit scrip at the rate of 3% of F.O.B. value of exports.

(2) Further, 13 new major emerging export markets, viz., Algeria, Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Ukraine, Brazil, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand, Cambodia and Vietnam have been added in the Market Linked Focus Product Scheme, and exports of over 1400 new products (at 8 digit ITC HS codes level) to these markets are eligible for duty credit scrip incentive at the rate of 2% of F.O. B. value of exports.

(3) In addition, over 500 new focus products (at 8 digit ITC HS codes level) have been included in the Focus Product Scheme, which are eligible for duty credit scrip at the rate of 2% of the F.O.B. value of exports. The details of all the measures taken in the FTP 2009-14, (announced on 27.8.2009), are available in public domain. Full details can be viewed/down loaded from the website <http://dgft.gov.in>

MINISTRY OF FINANCE, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 1837

ANSWERED ON 21.07.2009

LENDING TO MICRO SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

1837 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :-

(a) whether Government has warned private and foreign banks of tough action if they do not improve on lending to micro, small and medium enterprises which are reeling under the impact of global meltdown;

(b) if so, the details of guidelines/instructions issued to private/foreign banks;

(c) whether the role of private/foreign banks in providing loans to micro, small and medium enterprises are under watch of Government; and (d) if so, the details thereof?



ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

(A), (b), (c), & (d): All Scheduled Commercial Banks, are expected to achieve the target of priority sector lending, including small and medium enterprises, under guidelines issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), which is 40% of ANBC (or credit equivalent amount of Off-Balance Sheet Exposure, whichever is higher) and/or agriculture target 18% of ANBC (or credit equivalent amount of Off-Balance Sheet Exposure, whichever is higher). No direct penalty is imposed by RBI for non-achievement of such priority sector targets, which also include MSME Sector lending. However, disincentive for non-achievement of priority sector targets/sub-targets is by way of contribution of an allocated amount of shortfall to the RIDF administered by NABARD. This is obligatory for the domestic scheduled commercial banks, including private banks. For foreign banks, the shortfalls are deposited with SIDBI or funds with other financial institutions as specified by Reserve Bank of India for such purposes as may be stipulated by RBI from time to time. The credit flow to the MSME sector is regularly monitored by the Government and forms the agenda for the quarterly meeting of the Finance Ministry with CEOs of Public Sector Banks.



MINISTRY OF FINANCE, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 1086

ANSWERED ON 26.02.2009

INDIA'S POTENTIAL FOR HIGH GROWTH

1086 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether Government is aware of World Bank Report released in June, 2008 "Global Development Finance 2008" wherein it has been indicated that "India has the potential to sustain a high rate of growth for a longer period, but must remove infrastructure bottlenecks";
- (b) if so, whether Government agree with this premises in the wake of current (2008) global recessionary trends; and
- (c) whether our public-private partnership policy for raising new infrastructure is meeting our anticipated objectives of sustained high growth rate?

ANSWER

Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance (Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal)

- (a) No Sir, there is no such sentence in the Global Development Finance 2008, but one of the lead Economists of World Bank was quoted saying this while making a presentation on the findings of this report.
- (b) Does not arise.
- (c) Government is focusing on both public and private investment for developing new infrastructure for sustained high growth rate. The public Private Partnership (PPP) initiatives of the Government are also supporting this objective. These initiatives include viability gap funding for Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd (IIFCL), support for meeting project development expenditure and capacity building of functionaries engaged in Public Partnerships (PPPs).



MINISTRY OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 741

ANSWERED ON 24.02.2009

STEPS TO PREVENT CORPORATE FRAUD QUESTION

741 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of CORPORATE AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether Satyam episode is due to negligence on the part of regulatory authorities of Government system failure, or it is just a case of criminality;
- (b) if so, whether the contributory negligence of independent Directors or willing connivance of auditors, be main focus of investigations; and
- (c) whether Government will immediately initiate positive steps to avoid such recurrences in Corporate sector, or will it wait for the final outcome of long-drawn investigations and other legal implications?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS (SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA)

(a) The events relating to Satyam Computer Services Ltd. relate to a particular company and do not represent a failure of the regulatory system and relevant Regulatory authorities. The events have been caused by an apprehension of fraud and possible falsification of the financial statements of the company having implications under the Companies Act, 1956, Indian Penal Code, SEBI Act and other allied statutes.

(b) The Ministry has ordered investigation under the Companies Act, 1956, to be carried out by Inspectors drawn from the Serious Fraud Investigation Office, into the affairs of Satyam Computer Services Ltd. including, inter-alia, into the involvement and role, if any, of independent directors, internal and statutory auditors of the company and exercise of due diligence by the statutory auditors to ensure true and fair financial reporting.



(c) There is already an elaborate regulatory framework in place to deal with such incidents. This framework, under the Companies Act, 1956 (the "Act"), provides for disclosures by companies for information of the stakeholders about the state of affairs of such companies, have been mandated. To facilitate making of such disclosures by companies, and for stakeholders and regulatory agencies to easily access and view them, Government has set up an electronic registry with round-the-clock access through internet. The Government has powers of inspection of the books of accounts of companies and also to investigate their affairs, if need be, under the Act. In addition, the Act provides for appointment of independent, statutory auditors to audit the accounts and report to the shareholders. Such audited accounts are also displayed on the electronic registry for general viewing. While the reporting requirements are regulated under the Companies Act, 1956, the conduct of auditors is regulated under the Chartered Accountants Act, 1949. In addition, for listed companies, compliance with these statutory requirements is required to be certified by a company secretary in practice, who in turn is regulated under the Company Secretaries Act, 1980. Government has amended the Chartered Accountants Act, 1949 and the Company Secretaries Act, 1980 in 2006 to provide for a more effective disciplinary mechanism to deal with cases of misconduct by Chartered Accountants, Company Secretaries respectively. In 2006, the Government has notified Accounting Standards to enable accounts of companies to be drawn up and disclosed on the basis of fair, transparent and internationally accepted principles. The Government has also introduced Companies Bill, 2008 in the Lok Sabha to provide for a comprehensive revision of the Companies Act, 1956 including, inter alia, provisions that would enable more effective checks against irregularities/frauds by companies.



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 2191

ANSWERED ON 09.12.2009

COMPAGN BY DRDO TO MEET COUNTRY'S DEFENCE REQUIREMENTS

2191 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO) is launching a campaign aiming to meet 70 per cent of country's requirement of military hardware and software for the Defence Forces;
- (b) if so, how the existing 30-70 per cent ratio in favour of foreign armament manufacturers is designed to be reversed by the end of Twelfth Five-Year Plan (2012-2017);
- (c) the details of percentage of budgetary allocations made towards pursuing R&D activities during 2007-08 and 2008-09; and
- (d) whether these actually spent or some of the funds lapsed to Government?

ANSWER

(SHRI A.K. ANTONY) MINISTER OF DEFENCE

(a) & (b): No, Sir. Achieving self-reliance for military hardware and software for the Defence Forces is a joint responsibility of Ministry of Defence (MoD), Defence Industries (both public and private), Ordnance Factories (OFs) and Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). As per provisions in Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP) for "MAKE" Category, DRDO is concentrating only on development of strategic, complex and security sensitive systems. Provisions have also been made in DPP for the development. "High Technology Complex System & upgrades under "MAKE" category" to share the fund between MoD and Indian Defence Industries in the ratio of 80:20.

(c) The percentage of budgetary allocation during the year 2007-2008



and 2008-2009 for Department of Defence Research and Development was about 6% of the total Defence Budget.

(d) The Department of Defence Research and Development achieved 97.57% and 99.44% of expenditure during the year 2007-2008 and 2008-2009, respectively out of total allocated budget.

MINISTRY OF ATOMIC ENERGY, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 2106

ANSWERED ON 23.07.2009

URANIUM MINING

2106 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of ATOMIC ENERGY be pleased to state :-

(a) whether ONGC has shown keen interest in starting with uranium mining and setting up an N-Power Plant in the near future;

(b) if so, whether in view of precarious petroleum product position and constant fluctuation of prices of crude all over the globe, ONGC's diversion to altogether a different activity will not adversely affect the exploration of crude and gas from our reserves both onshore and off-shore; and

(c) estimated reserves of uranium in India and quantity of uranium produced through mining during 2006 and 2007 by Uranium Corporation of India or others engaged in this process?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY AND EARTH SCIENCES (INDEPENDENT CHARGES), PMO, PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS. (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN):

(a) Uranium Corporation of India Limited (UCIL), a Public Sector undertaking under the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) has signed



a MoU with Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) on 11th November 2008 for sharing of exploration data within India and exploration & exploitation of uranium outside India.

(b) ONGC has clarified that Exploration and Exploitation of uranium will not interfere with their Exploration & Production business.

(c) The total in-situ reserve of uranium ore explored by Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration & Research (AMD) in the country is 1,29,511 t of U₃O₈. At present uranium is produced only by UCIL and the quantity is not disclosed in public interest.

MINISTRY OF ATOMIC ENERGY, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 573

ANSWERED ON 09.07.2009

MOU WITH NUCLEAR POWER CORPORATION OF INDIA

573 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of ATOMIC ENERGY be pleased to state :-

(a) whether French Energy has agreed to sign an MoU with Nuclear Power Corporation of India;

(b) if so, whether two reactors will be set up in Maharashtra;

(c) whether this agreement could cover setting up of civil nuclear plant in India, training and safety regulations;

(d) whether IDRAC which is leading a delegation of 20 French companies has met Chairman, Atomic energy Commission and also met Chairman, Tata Group of Cos;

(e) if so, whether any agreement in this regard was reached between the two; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and by what time the project is likely to be completed?



ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY AND EARTH SCIENCES (INDEPENDENT CHARGES), PMO, PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS. (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN):

(a) to (c) Consequent to signing of the inter-governmental agreement between India and France on co-operation in nuclear energy, an MoU was signed between Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) and AREVA of France for engagement into discussion for setting up two six 1650 MWe EPR units at Jaitapur in Maharashtra. The training and safety aspects will also form a part of discussions. The details, including the scope of work will emerge only after the discussions in this regard are concluded.

(d) Yes, Sir. Mrs. Anne-Marie Idrac, French Minister of State for Foreign Trade met Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission in February, 2009.

(e)&(f) During the meeting, time required by the French side for ratification of the "Co-operation agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the French Republic on the development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy" signed on 30.09.2008 was discussed. Chairman, AEC also agreed that a delegation from France can visit India for discussions with their Indian counterparts. No specific agreements were signed by Madam Idrac and Chairman, AEC.

Internal Security and Foreign Affairs

No parliamentarian of recent times can escape the overriding concern of the nation about the rising menace of terrorism. This is one issue that has dominated the public discourse in India and the world for quite some time now. A member of Rajya Sabha from Maharashtra will obviously feel more aggrieved by this menace as Mumbai and other cities of the state have suffered most. The 26/11 strike stands out as the most audacious terror act of the world, emerging as a tragic landmark of turbulent Indo-Pak relations. Like most MPs, Darda too got deeply



anguished by the tragic attack and raised questions in Parliament about Government's preparedness to face the challenge. Internal security and terrorism were one of the core concerns of Darda as he believes development cannot happen without peace.

Darda asked the Government whether in view of major terrorist attacks like 26th November in Mumbai, has the Government assessed and made preparations to meet threats to security of vital installations, critical assets and community at large, especially in view of pro-active role of Taliban near Indo-Pakistan border, phenomenal increase in activities of belligerent and insurgent outfits like Naxalite, Maoists, ULFA, Fundamentalists, Extremists? Darda regularly grilled the Government on Pakistan's approach to this issue, training camps for terrorists and the Government's efforts in mobilizing world opinion on this issue. Darda was also worried about police modernization and once asked the Home Minister about the process of 14,000 police stations across the country being linked through a cyber network to improve the connectivity and increase crime-fighting capabilities.

Darda took a holistic view of foreign affairs and understood the importance of financial engagement with global powers. He also questioned the Government on India's role in powerful international bodies like G-20, G-8 and the United Nations. Some questions he asked are as follows:

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 2988

ANSWERED ON 16.12.2009

TACKLING TERRORISM AND INSURGENCY EFFECTIVELY

2988 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

(a) whether the Supreme Court has held that since terrorism threatens the security of the whole country, it falls under the first item of Union



List, 'Defence of India', rather than the first item of the State List 'Public Order';

(b) if so, whether Government proposes to implement this epoch-making decision of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, so that crimes like terrorism, insurgency, etc. could be tackled more effectively; and

(c) whether Government is aware that USA is endowed with an FBI despite a full-fledged federal system in which States have far greater autonomy than they do in India?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI AJAY MAKEN)

(a) to (c): In relation to challenge to a particular legislation connected with terrorism, the Supreme Court has opined that it fell under List I of Schedule VII to the Constitution. The Government is, however, committed to combat terrorism, inter-alia, by administrative, legislative and other measures etc. Accordingly, the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, which is the comprehensive Central Act to combat terrorism, was amended in 2004 and further amended and notified on 31.12.2008 to strengthen the punitive measures to combat terrorism. The National Investigation Agency Act has been enacted and Notified on 31.12.2008 and under the said Act the National Investigation Agency has been constituted, to investigate and prosecute offences under the Acts specified in the Schedule, which, inter-alia, includes offences under Unlawful Activities (prevention) Act.



MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 2229

ANSWERED ON 09.12.2009

POLICE STATIONS LINKED THROUGH CYBER NETWORK

2229 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether the process of 14,000 police stations across the country linking through a cyber network to improve the connectivity and increase crime-fighting capabilities, has commenced;
- (b) if so, how many police stations, beyond 2,760 already connected, had been included in the June 09 approved cyber network; and
- (c) the time-frame within which all these 14,000 will become part of this cyber network?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI AJAY MAKEN)

(a) & (b): Under the recently launched Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems (CCTNS) Project, about 14000 Police Stations and 6000 other police offices at various levels would be interconnected through a nationwide networked infrastructure for evolution of IT-enabled state-of-the-art tracking system. Police stations were not connected through the cyber network under the previous plan, namely, the Common Integrated Police Application (CIPA) programme.

(c): The Police Stations are likely to be connected by the end of 2010-2011.



MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 2032

ANSWERED ON 22.07.2009

**SECURITY ASSESSMENT AND PREPARATION TO MEET
TERRORIST THREAT**

2032 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

(a) whether in view of major terrorist attacks like 26th November in Mumbai, has the Government assessed and made preparations to meet threats to security of vital installations, critical assets and community at large, especially in view of proactive role of Taliban near Indo-Pakistan border, phenomenal increase in activities of belligerent and insurgent outfits like Naxalite, Maoists, ULFA, Fundamentalists, Extremists, etc.; and

(b) if so, law and order being a State subject whether wide-ranging consultations have been held and consensus on the line of action arrived at?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN)

(a) & (b): The Government has been on a continuing basis reviewing the security arrangements in the light of emerging challenges, including terrorist and Naxalite activities and a number of important decisions and measures have been taken. These measures include augmenting the strength of Central Para-Military Forces, establishment of NSG hubs at Chennai, Kolkata, Hyderabad and Mumbai and strengthening coastal security. Besides the National Investigation Agency has been constituted and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act 1967 been amended and notified in 2008 to strengthen the punitive measures to combat terrorism. Further, the Central Government supplements the efforts of the State Governments by providing assistance for security



and development which, inter-alia, include deployment of CPMFs, CoBRA Battalions, provision of funds for modernization of weapons and for other socio-economic and developmental works.

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 1244

ANSWERED ON 15.07.2009

**PROVISIONS IN POLICE ACT FOR SPEEDY DISPOSAL OF
TERRORIST CASES**

1244 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

(a) as the police is still governed by the archaic Police Act passed way back in 1861, whether Government propose to ensure that quick provisions are made to tackle various facets of terrorism and terrorist activities including financing terrorism;

(b) if so, whether strengthening the arrangements for speedy investigation, prosecution and trial of cases related to terrorism and other heinous crimes are proposed; and

(c) what was the rate of conviction in such cases during 2006, 2007 and 2008?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI AJAY MAKEN)

(a) & (b): The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 has been amended and notified on 31.12.2008 which, inter-alia, provides more stringent punitive measures to tackle all forms of terrorism including financing of terrorism. Further, the National Investigation Agency has been created by enactment of the National Investigation Agency Act, 2008 to investigate and prosecute offences under the Acts mentioned



in the schedule, which, inter-alia, includes the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. The National Investigation Agency Act also provides for constitution of special courts for trial of scheduled offences. This Act, inter-alia, also provides for trial by a special court on a day-to-day basis on all working days.

(c): The details regarding conviction of all such cases is not Centrally maintained.

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 494

ANSWERED ON 08.07.2009

EFFICACY OF NDMA FOR HANDLING TERRORISM RELATED DISASTERS

494 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

(a) whether our National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) is fully equipped to handle all kinds of disasters especially relating to counter-terrorism;

(b) if so, as response speed is a decisive factor, whether they need clearance from other bodies for starting operations and depending upon others for infrastructure requirements; and

(c) whether ground-level drills are organized periodically to monitor efficacy of the disaster management techniques?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN)

(a): NDMA is capable of handling various types of disasters. However, disasters such as terrorist incidents etc., that need close involvement of security forces and/ or intelligence agencies, are not handled by



NDMA.

(b): In relation to natural disasters such as Cyclones, Floods, Earthquakes etc., the NDMA has necessary infrastructure in the form of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) for providing specialist response. The general superintendence, direction and control of NDRF rests with NDMA.

c): NDMA regularly organizes mock drills in different parts of the country periodically to test the efficacy of disaster management techniques.

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 482

ANSWERED ON 08.07.2009

ACTION PLAN TO STRENGTHEN POLICE AND INTELLIGENCE MACHINERY

482 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

(a) whether nearly three months after PM proposed 100-day plan to address emergency security challenges, the Home Ministry had finalized action plan to strengthen police and intelligence machinery;

(b) if so, whether under 100 days action plan the Ministry prepared details for how police, internal security, Naxal and other wings thereof would provide better security infrastructure across country;

(c) if so, what action on the action plan has been taken; and

(d) to what extent the security has been strengthened in the country?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI AJAY MAKEN)



(A) to (d) : Yes, Sir. The Action Plan to strengthen Police and Intelligence machinery includes, inter-alia, initiatives for gearing up intelligence machinery, sharing of intelligence and operational co-ordination between different agencies of the Central and the State Governments; establishment of online, dedicated and secure connectivity between designated Members of Multi-Agency Centre (MAC), MAC and the Subsidiary Multi-Agency Centres (SMACs) in 30 important identified locations and between the SMACs and the State Special Branches to enhance the level of preparedness and upgrade the security infrastructure; modernizing, strengthening and upgradation of the State Police and security forces; establishment of NSG hubs in 4 locations; activation of the National Investigation Agency; amendment of the CISF Act to enable deployment of CISF in Joint Ventures or Private Industrial undertakings; expediting procurement of equipment and weaponry; etc. and these security arrangements are being reviewed from time to time.

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 203

ANSWERED ON 03.12.2009

CHARGES OF FOMENTING TROUBLE IN BALOCHISTAN

203 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether Pakistan has recently, again indicted India in fomenting trouble in the restive Balochistan province;
- (b) if so, the facts and details thereof;
- (c) whether Government has strongly protested on the charges of Pakistan; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof.



ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S. M. KRISHNA)

(a) & (b) Government has seen reports regarding statements attributed to Pakistani leaders, including the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and Interior Minister of Pakistan, alleging Indian interference in Balochistan.

(c) & (d) Government has firmly rejected, including at the highest level, such unfounded allegations. Prime Minister had told Prime Minister of Pakistan that India has no interest in destabilising Pakistan and that our conduct is an open book.

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 35

ANSWERED ON 19.11.2009

COUNTRY S POSITION IN GLOBAL ORGANIZATIONS

35 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

(a) whether Government has been able to mobilize world opinion for India playing its destined role and share its assigned responsibility, giving voice to the hopes and aspirations of over a billion people through its de jure positioning in global organizations like Security Council of UNO, G-20, G-8 etc.; and

(b) should India not be a member of G-20, which is a grouping of developed and emerging economies, if not the G-8, which is a club of wealthy countries?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(SMT. PRENEET KAUR)



(A) & (b) The Government continues its efforts to ensure that India plays an important role in global organizations and expresses views on issues of interest to the country at various multi-lateral fora. India is a member of G-20 since its inception. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh has attended all the three G-20 Summits held so far in Washington DC, USA (November 2008), London, UK (April 2009) and Pittsburgh, USA (September 2009) in the wake of the international financial and economic crisis. India has actively participated in all G-20 meetings and articulated views on issues of interest to the country. India is not a member of G-8 which brings together developed countries. There is no proposal for expansion of the G-8 to include developing economies like India. However, India has participated in the G8 – Outreach Summits along with Brazil, China, Mexico and South Africa. India has been pursuing its candidature for Permanent Membership of the UN Security Council (UNSC). The first and necessary condition for this is expansion of the category of Permanent Membership of the UN Security Council. India is working towards this objective with a number of other Member States interested in genuine reform of the United Nations. Besides actively participating in the debates on Security Council reform at the United Nations, the Government continues to discuss with various countries to mobilize further support for India's candidature.



MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 610

ANSWERED ON 09.07.2009

TRAINING CAMPS IN PAKISTAN

610 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether a large number of terror training camps are functioning in Pakistan;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government has urged Pakistan to take strong, effective and sustained action against the terror networks;
- (d) if so, whether any assurance has been given by Pakistan to take firm action against terror networks;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the strategy Government proposes to adopt to face the terror networks of Pakistan?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA)

(a) & (b) Yes. There is an infrastructure of terrorism in territories under the control of Pakistan.

(c) to (e) India has consistently emphasised to Pakistan the need to implement its solemn commitments of 06 January 2004 and 24 September 2008 made at the highest level that it will not permit any territory under Pakistan's control to be used to support terrorism in any manner against India.

(f) Government will take all such steps as are necessary to safeguard the country's interests.



MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 62

ANSWERED ON 02.07.2009

DEFAULTING AGENTS SENDING PEOPLE ABROAD

62 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

- (a) the number of cases that were detected during 2008 about the defaulting agents sending people abroad relating to maltreatment or working in inhuman conditions;
- (b) whether any institutional steps have been codified to specifically and effectively deals with such cases; and
- (c) whether these agents of Indian origin or foreign nationals have also found either doing this in connivance with Indians or they are indulging in such activities independently depending upon their sources?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) (b) and (c) During 2008, action on 118 cases against Registered Recruiting Agents and 93 cases against Unregistered / Unauthorised Agents have been initiated for offences committed under Emigration Act.

Instances of complaints of exploitation of Indian emigrant workers by Recruiting Agents, Foreign Employers and unscrupulous middlemen are received by the Ministry and the Indian Missions abroad from time to time. These complaints mainly pertain to cheating, overcharging, contractual violations by employers such as non-payment / delayed payment of salary, non-availability of medical facilities and proper food, unhygienic living conditions etc. Such harassment include withholding of passports and even physical abuse by the employers.



On receipt of such complaints this Ministry swings into action against such elements. In the case of Registered Recruiting Agents (RA), on receipt of a complaint, a show cause notice is issued. If the RA fails to redress the grievances of overseas Indian workers, action is taken to suspend/cancel his registration and forfeit his Bank Guarantee. Complaints against Unregistered / Unauthorised Agents are referred to the concerned State Police authorities for investigation and action under the law. Concerned Protector of Emigrants (POEs) are also instructed to initiate due action. State Governments and Union Territory Administrations have been advised to instruct all Police Stations to keep a strict vigil on the activities of unscrupulous agents. Foreign Employers (FEs) who are found to be harassing the Indian Workers, are placed in the Prior Approval Category.

IT, Media, Youth Affairs and Sports

Darda always believed in use of modern technology in administration and governance, particularly the need for exploiting the revolution in information technology to the hilt. In one of his questions, he suggested use of tele-conferencing for solving labour disputes. His questions in this area also had a wide variety, from video piracy to sports policy. His question on the upcoming Commonwealth Games in Delhi indicates his deep interest in sports. He wanted to know from the government whether performance charts of all the core group athletes received from all sports federations whose disciplines are in the 2010 Commonwealth Games have been processed and whether intensive training in various disciplines has started.



MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 442

ANSWERED ON 21.12.2009

FILM AND VIDEO PIRACY

442 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether Government proposes to formulate stringent law to check film and video piracy in the country;
- (b) If so, the details of the bottlenecks found in the existing law;
- (c) Whether Government is also aware that several State Governments have completely failed to implement the law to check film and video piracy;
- (d) If so, whether the film industry has been affected adversely as a result thereof; and
- (e) If so, by when the new law to check film and video piracy is likely to be enforced?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING (MS. AMBIKA SONI)

(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT AS REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (e) OF THE RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 442 FOR ANSWER ON 21.12.2009.

(a) : No, Sir.

(b), (c), (d) and (e): The Government is aware of the problems relating to infringement of copyright resulting in piracy, which arises due to a host of factors, such as, non-availability of filmed entertainment at an



affordable price, lack of normal channels of distribution to a large chunk of population, relatively high rates of entertainment tax, relatively easy availability of cheap pirated films as well as lack of awareness among the public. Piracy and infringement of copyright adversely affect the owners of copyright. Measures have been taken by the Union Government, and the State Governments towards reduction in the rates of custom duty, service tax and entertainment tax, amendments in the Copyright Act, improving the enforcement machinery and enhancing public awareness for checking film and video piracy.

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 3001

ANSWERED ON 16.12.2009

SOFTWARE FOR DISASTER MANAGEMENT

3001 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether the Disaster Management Organization proposed to be strengthened to enhance its capability in the country for undertaking real-time as well as the systematic scientific surveys so as to improve their functional efficiency both at the detection and implementation levels;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether a software will be created to simultaneously detect, implement and estimate the financial inputs of immediate relief and rehabilitation?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN)



(a) to (c): The National Policy on Disaster Management (NPDM) envisages for Hazard zonation, mapping and vulnerability analysis in a multi-hazard framework utilizing Geographic Information System (GIS) based databases such as National Database for Emergency Management (NDEM) and National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI). The NPDM also stresses the need to establish, upgrade and modernize the forecasting and early warning systems for all types of disasters. It recognizes the need for partnership with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Pacific Tsunami Warning System and other regional and global institutions. The NPDM has also stressed for Research and Development support to the Disaster Management architecture in the country. Such measures are expected to strengthen & enhance the capability for response, relief & rehabilitation and reduce the adverse impact of natural disasters in the country. This Ministry is not developing any software for detecting, implementing, and estimating financial inputs of immediate relief and rehabilitation.

MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 2260

ANSWERED ON 23.07.2009

PERFORMANCE CHARTS OF CORE GROUP ATHLETES

2260 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether performance charts of all the core group athletes received from all sports federations whose disciplines are in the 2010 Commonwealth Games, have been processed;
- (b) if so, whether intensive training in various disciplines has started;
- (c) the number of disciplines in which foreign coaches have been involved in the training; and
- (d) whether physical fitness and other test reports have been made



mandatory and taken into consideration every month so that large number of our athletes win medals?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS & SPORTS (SHRI PRATIK PRAKASHBAPU PATIL)

(a)&(b) Yes, Sir. After due scrutiny, the Government has identified 1135 elite core group of athletes for the disciplines of Commonwealth Games, 2010 and their intensive training /competition in India and abroad is continuing regularly.

(c) Foreign Coaches have been approved for 15 sports disciplines, out of which coaches for 12 disciplines are in place.

(d) Yes, Sir.

MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS, RAJYA SABHA

QUESTION NO 1483

ANSWERED ON 16.07.2009

ATHLETES FOR COMMONWEALTH GAMES

1483 SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA

Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state :-

(a) the number of athletes who have been identified in each core group, and are likely to participate in the Commonwealth Games 2010;

(b) apart from athletics in which other disciplines sportspersons are participating in these Games;

(c) the allocation of funds for training and keeping fit to all the players/athletes; and

(d) the ratio of training expenditure relating to players and the officials associated with such training programmes?



ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI PRATIK PRAKASHBAPU PATIL)

(a) The required details have been indicated in the Annexure.

(b) Apart from athletics, the sportspersons will participate in sports disciplines of Archery, Aquatics, Badminton, Boxing (M) , Cycling, Gymnastics, Hockey , Lawn Bowls, Netball (W), Rugby 7s(M), Shooting, Squash, Table Tennis, Tennis, Wt. Lifting, Wrestling, Elite Athletes with Disability (Athletics, Powerlifting, Table Tennis and Swimming)

(c) & (d): To improve the performance of the Indian contingent in the

Commonwealth Games, 2010, a Scheme with allocation of ₹ 678.00 crore (2008-09 to 2010-11) is being implemented for providing training to elite sportspersons in all the disciplines of the Commonwealth Games, 2010. There is no ratio or separate earmarking of funds for players and the officials associated with the training programme.



SPEECHES OF RENOWNED PARLIAMENTARIANS AND WORLD LEADERS

The Indian Parliament has thrown up some very powerful orators who swayed the public perception on many a social issue. This section comprises some of the most stirring speeches made in the House by leaders of various political parties and world leaders. The speeches give a glimpse of the march of Indian democracy and the thought process of the lawmakers of the country.



**The Constitution is the guide
which I never will abandon.
~ GEORGE WASHINGTON ~**





PT. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

‘TRYST WITH DESTINY’

(The speech of Jawaharlal Nehru delivered
on 14th August 1947)



Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially.

At the stroke of midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, then an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance. It is fitting that at this solemn moment we take the pledge of dedication to India and her people and to the still larger cause of humanity.

At the dawn of history India started on her unending quest, and trackless centuries are filled with her striving and the grandeur of her successes and her failures. Through good and ill fortune alike she has never lost sight of that quest or forgotten the ideals which gave her strength. We end today a period of ill fortune and India discovers herself again.

The achievement we celebrate today is but a step, an opening of opportunity, to the greater triumphs and achievements that await us. Are we brave enough and wise enough to grasp this opportunity and accept the challenge of the future?

Freedom and power bring responsibility. That responsibility rests upon this assembly, a sovereign body representing the sovereign people of India. Before the birth of freedom we have endured all the pains of labour and our hearts are heavy with the memory of this sorrow. Some of those pains continue even now.

Nevertheless, the past is over and it is the future that beckons to us now. That future is not one of ease or resting but of incessant striving so



that we might fulfill the pledges we have so often taken and the one we shall take today. The service of India means the service of the millions who suffer. It means the ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity. The ambition of the greatest man of our generation has been to wipe every tear from every eye. That may be beyond us but so long as there are tears and suffering, so long our work will not be over.

And so we have to labour and to work, and work hard, to give reality to our dreams. Those dreams are for India, but they are also for the world, for all the nations and peoples are too closely knit together today for any one of them to imagine that it can live apart. Peace has been said to be indivisible, so is freedom, so is prosperity now, and so also is disaster in this one world that can no longer be split into isolated fragments.

To the people of India whose representatives we are, we make appeal to join us with faith and confidence in this great adventure. This is no time for petty and destructive criticism, no time for ill-will or blaming others. We have to build the noble mansion of free India where all her children may dwell."



DR B R AMBEDKAR

'THERE IS DANGER OF DEMOCRACY GIVING PLACE TO DICTATORSHIP'

(Speech at the Constituent Assembly)



It is not that India did not know what is democracy. There was a time when India was studded with republics, and even where there were monarchies, they were either elected or limited. They were never absolute. It is not that India did not know Parliaments or Parliamentary procedure. A study of the Buddhist Bhikshu Sanghas discloses that not only there were Parliaments for the Sanghas were nothing but Parliaments - but the Sanghas knew and observed all the rules of Parliamentary procedure known to modern times. They had rules regarding seating arrangements, rules regarding Motions, Resolutions, Quorum, Whip, Counting of Votes, Voting by Ballot, Censure Motion, Regularization, Res Judicata, etc. Although these rules of Parliamentary procedure were applied by the Buddha to the meetings of the Sanghas, he must have borrowed them from the rules of the Political Assemblies functioning in the country in his time. This democratic system India lost. Will she lose it a second time? I do not know. But it is quite possible in a country like India - where democracy from its long disuse must be regarded as something quite new - there is danger of democracy giving place to dictatorship. It is quite possible for this new born democracy to retain its form but give place to dictatorship in fact. If there is a landslide, the danger of the second possibility becoming actuality is much greater".

"** So far as the ultimate goal is concerned, I think none of us need have any apprehensions. None of us need have any doubt. Our difficulty is not about the ultimate future. Our difficulty is how to make the heterogeneous mass that we have today take a decision in common and march on the co-operative way which leads us to unity. Our difficulty is not with regard to the ultimate, our difficulty is with regard to the beginning. Mr. Chairman, therefore, I should have thought that



in order to make a thought, in order to induce every party, every section in this country to take on to road it would be an act of greatest statesmanship for the majority party even to make a concession to the prejudices of people who are not prepared to march together and it is for that, that I propose to make this appeal. Let us leave aside slogans, let us even make a concession to the prejudices of our opponents, bring them in, so that they may willingly join with us on marching upon that road, which as I said, if we walk long enough, must necessarily lead us to unity.

JAI BHIM.

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SARDAR VALLABHBHAI J. PATEL

‘LET PARAMOUNTCY BE DEAD’

(Excerpts from the speech of Vallabbhai Patel in Parliament on 10th Oct. 1949 on the draft Constitution)



I give you this inner history which nobody knows. I agreed to Partition as a last resort, when we had reached a stage when we could have lost all. We had five or six members in the Government, the Muslim League members. They had already established themselves as members who had come to partition the country. At that stage we agreed to Partition; we decided that Partition could be agreed upon on the terms that Punjab should be partitioned - they wanted the whole of it- that Bengal should be partitioned - they wanted Calcutta and the whole of it. Mr. Jinnah did not want a truncated Pakistan, but he had to swallow it. We said that these two provinces should be partitioned.

I made a further condition that in two months' time power should be transferred and an Act should be passed by Parliament in that time, if it was guaranteed that the British Government would not interfere with the question of the Indian States. We said, "we will deal with that question; leave it to us; you take no sides. Let paramountcy be dead; you do not directly or indirectly try to revive it in any manner. You do not interfere. We shall settle our problem. The Princes are ours and we shall deal with them." On those conditions we agreed to Partition and on those conditions the Bill in Parliament was passed in two months, agreed to by all the three parties. Show me any instance in the history of the British Parliament when such a Bill was passed in two months. But this was done. It gave birth to this Parliament."

"What is the use of talking that the service people were serving while we were in jail? I myself was arrested, I have been arrested several times. But that has never made any difference in my feeling towards people in the services. I do not defend the black sheep; they may be there. But are there not many honest people among them? But what is the language that you are using? I wish to place in record in this House that if, during



the last two or three years, most of the members of the services had not behaved patriotically and with loyalty, the Union would have collapsed. Ask Dr. John Matthai. He is working for the last fortnight with them on the economic question. You may ask his opinion. You will find what he says about the Services. You ask the Premiers of all provinces. Is there any Premier in any province who is prepared to work without the Services? He will immediately resign.

He cannot manage. We had a small nucleus of a broken Service. With that bit of Service we have carried on a very difficult task. And if a responsible man speaks in this tone about these Services, he has to decide whether he has a substitute to propose, and let him take the responsibility. This is not a Congress platform. It is said that we promised Rs. 500 for the Ministers in the Karachi resolution. There is a long distance between Karachi and Delhi today. It is a different thing. You want Rs. 45 a day free of income-tax. What is the use of taking about Rs. 500 today? It is very wrong."

"I would refer to you to the Indian Independence Act which gave birth to this Parliament and you find that the guarantees have been included there. When the Indian Independence Act was to be passed in Parliament the draft was sent here. The leaders of the nation were called for; the Cabinet was there, the Congress President was there, your President was there and your Leader today was there. Mahatma Gandhi was also present. Every section was scrutinised and the draft was approved. After that it was passed in Parliament. Now, these guarantees were circulated before that to the provinces. All provinces agreed. It was also agreed to incorporate these into the Constituent Assembly's New Constitution.

That is one part of the guarantee. Have you read that history? Or, you do not care for the recent history after you began to make history. If you do that, then I tell you we have a dark future. Learn to stand upon your pledged word, and also; as a man of experience I tell you, do not quarrel with the instruments with which you want to work. It is a bad workman who quarrels with his instruments. Take work from them. Every man wants some sort of encouragement. Nobody wants to put in work



when every day he criticised and ridiculed in public. Nobody will give you work like that. So, once and for all decide whether you want this service or not. If you have done with it and decide not to have this service at all, even in spite of my pledged word, I will take the Services with me and go. The nation has changed its mind.

The Services will earn their living. They are capable people. They were trained in a different setting. I know a senior Member of the Service with about twenty-five years service who went to England for higher education and training in the Civil Services, spent about fifty thousand rupees. He took a loan; he had not the money. But there is a glamour for the Civil Service on the part of the Indian youth. He went there, he passed with distinction and came here.

He served very ably, very loyally the then Government and later the present Government. His business is to serve the Government—that he is serving. He had a sense of patriotism. Often he came into difficulties with the then Government when he had to carry out orders against the Congress people, putting them in jail and otherwise. But he could not go beyond a certain limit. Now all his balance today at the end of twenty-five years' service is ten thousand rupees, and his wife and children, when he dies, will get some provident fund."

"If you want an efficient all-India service, I advise you to allow the services to open their mouth freely. If you are a Premier it would be your duty to allow your Secretary, or Chief Secretary, or other services working under you, to express their opinion without fear or favour. But I see a tendency today that in several provinces the services are set upon and told, "No, you are servicemen, you must carry out our orders." The Union will go- you will not have a united India, if you have not a good all-India service which has the independence to speak out its mind, which has a sense of security that you will stand by your word and, that after all there is the Parliament, of which we can be proud, where their rights and privileges are secure.

If you do not adopt this course, then do not follow the present Constitution. Substitute something else. Put in a Congress Constitution



or some other Constitution or put in R.S.S. Constitution- whatever you like- but not this Constitution. This Constitution is meant to be worked by a ring of Service which will keep the country intact. There are many impediments in this Constitution which will hamper us, but in spite of that, we have in our collective wisdom come to a decision that we shall have this model wherein the ring of Service will be such that will keep the country under control.

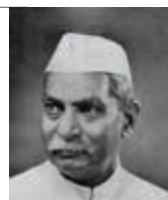
II



DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD

WHAT THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF INDIA DREAMT OF ABOUT REPUBLIC OF INDIA

(THE Speech is what the Constituent Assembly of India dreamt of about Republic of India)



Before I do that, I would like to mention some facts which will show the tremendousness of the task which we undertook some three years ago. If you consider the population with which the Assembly has had to deal, you will find that it is more than the population of the whole of Europe minus Russia, being 319 millions as against 317 millions. The countries of Europe have never been able to join together or colaesce even in a Confederacy, much less under one unitary Govt. Here, in spite of the size of the population and the country, we have succeeded in framing a Constitution which covers the whole of it. Apart from the size, there were other difficulties which were inherent in the problem itself. We have got many communities living in this country. We have got many languages prevalent in different parts of it. We have got other kinds of differences dividing the people in the different parts from one another. We had to make provision not only for areas which are advanced educationally and economically; we had also to make provision for backward people like the Tribes and for backward areas like the Tribal areas. The communal problem had been one of the knottiest problems which the country has had before it for a pretty long time. The Second Round Table Conference which was attended by Mahatma Gandhi failed because the communal problem could not be solved. The subsequent history of the country is too recent to require narration here; but we know this that as a result, the country has had to be divided and we have lost two big portions in the north-east and north-west.

"Some people have doubted the wisdom of adult franchise. Personally, although I look upon it as an experiment the result of which no one will be able to forecast today, I am not dismayed by it. I am a man of the



village and although I have had to live in cities for a pretty long time, on account of my work, my roots are still there. I, therefore, know the village people who will constitute the bulk of this vast electorate. In my opinion, our people possess intelligence and commonsense. They also have a culture which the sophisticated people of today may not appreciate, but which is solid. They are not literate and do not possess the mechanical skill of reading and writing. But, I have no doubt in my mind that they are able to take measure of their own interest and also of the interests of the country at large if things are explained to them. In fact, in some respects, I consider them to be even more intelligent than many a worker in a factory, who loses his individuality and becomes more or less a part of the machine which he has to work. I have, therefore, no doubt in my mind that if things are explained to them, they will not only be able to pick up the technique of election, but will be able to cast their votes in an intelligent manner and I have, therefore, no misgivings about the future, on their account. I cannot say the same thing about the other people who may try to influence them by slogans and by placing before them beautiful pictures of impracticable programmes. Nevertheless, I think their sturdy commonsense will enable them to see things in the right perspective. We can, therefore, reasonably hope that we shall have legislatures composed of members who shall have their feet on the ground and who will take a realistic view of things.

We have prepared a democratic Constitution. But successful working of democratic institutions requires in those who have to work them with willingness to respect the view points of others, capacity for compromise and accommodation. Many things which cannot be written in a Constitution are done by conventions. Let me hope that we shall show those capacities and develop those conventions. The way in which we have been able to draw this Constitution without taking recourse to voting and to divisions in Lobbies strengthens that hope.

Whatever the Constitution may or may not provide, the welfare of the country will depend upon the way in which the country is administered. That will depend upon the men who administer it. It is a trite saying that a country can have only the Government it deserves. Our Constitution



has provision in it which appear to some to be objectionable from one point or the another. We must admit that the defects are inherent in the situation in the country and the people at large. If the people who are elected are capable and men of character and integrity, they would be able to make the best even of a defective Constitution. If they are lacking in these, the Constitution cannot help the country. After all, a Constitution like a machine is a lifeless thing. It acquires life because of the men who control it and operate it, and India needs today nothing more than a set of honest men who will have the interest of the country before them.

There is a fissiparous tendency arising out of various elements in our life. We have communal differences, caste differences, language differences, provincial differences and so forth. It requires men of strong character, men of vision, men who will not sacrifice the interests of the country at large for the sake of smaller groups and areas and who will rise over the prejudices which are born out of these differences. We can only hope that the country will throw up such men in abundance. I can say this from the experience of the struggle that we have had during the period of the freedom movement that new occasions throw up new men; not once but almost on every occasion when all leading men in the Congress were clapped into prison suddenly without having the time to leave instructions to others and even to make plans for carrying on their campaigns, people arose from amongst the masses who were able to continue and conduct the campaigns with intelligence, with initiative, with capacity for organization which nobody suspected they possessed.

I have no doubt that when the country needs men of character, they will be coming up and the masses will throw them up. Let not those who have served in the past therefore rest on their oars, saying that they have done their part and now has come the time for them to enjoy the fruits of their labours. No such time comes to anyone who is really earnest about his work. In India today I feel that the work that confronts us is even more difficult than the work which we had when we were engaged in the struggle. We did not have then any conflicting claims to



reconcile, no loaves and fishes to distribute, no powers to share. We have all these now, and the temptations are really great. Would pray to God that we shall have the wisdom and the strength to rise above them, and to serve the country which we have succeeded in liberating”.

Mahatma Gandhi laid stress on the purity of the methods which had to be pursued for attaining our ends. Let us not forget that this teaching has eternal value and was not intended only for the period of stress and struggle but has as much authority and value today as it ever had before. We have a tendency to blame others for everything that goes wrong and not to introspect and try to see if we have any share in it or not. It is very much easier to scan one's own actions and motives if one is inclined to do so than to appraise correctly the actions and motives of others. I shall only hope that all those whose good fortune it may be to work on this Constitution in future will remember that it was a unique victory which we achieved by the unique method taught to us by the Father of the Nation, and it is up to us to preserve and protect the independence that we have won and to make it really bear fruit for the man in the street. Let us launch on this new enterprise of running our Independent Republic with confidence, with truth and non-violence and above all with heart within and God over head.



INDIRA GANDHI

'I STAND FIRMLY FOR AN INTEGRATED STATE'

(Excerpts from Lok Sabha debates on Mulki Rules

– December 21, 1972– Prime Minister's Reply :

The Prime Minister, minister of atomic energy,
minister of electronics, minister of home affairs,
minister of information and broadcasting and
minister of space Shrimati Indira Gandhi)



All these matters have to be thought of not in terms of emotions but in terms of calm and collective thought. And not in terms of today, or tomorrow or the day after but of what it will mean to them and the country ten years hence, 20 years hence, a hundred years hence. "Former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi impassioned observation in 1972 during the height of Jai Andhra Agitation makes more sense today than ever. Her full statement in Parliament below :

Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is really not much need for me to speak as my colleague, Shri Chavan, has brought a cooler and calmer atmosphere to prevail in the House and has dealt with the really important points. But some hon. Ministers even of the Opposition had earlier expressed the opinion that it might be misunderstood if I did not clearly state our views on some points which have been mentioned here before. They are not new, nevertheless, they thought I should do so and that is why I have got up.

Parliament discusses many important issues which are highly emotional, and the Mulki Rules have become one such issue. Matters which involve regional feelings quite often do arouse the emotions of the people in this country as in many other countries, and we certainly cannot ignore the emotions of the people. But I should like to stress what Chavanji has said, that no solution can be found while the atmosphere remains charged with emotion. Any solutions, any answer, has to be found in a very cool, calm and rational manner.



Therefore, although I was also, as were many other hon. Members, touched by the emotions expressed by hon. Members, by the difficulties of our friends from Telengana and friends from other parts of Andhra Pradesh, we were certainly touched by the difficulties and emotions. I should very respectfully say to them that all these matters have to be thought of not in terms of emotions but in terms of calm and collective thought. And not in terms of today, or tomorrow or the day after but of what it will mean to them and the country ten years hence, 20 years hence, a hundred years hence.

Hon. Members have been discussing here, and separately with me, the question of a few posts or a few matters like this. As Chavanji very rightly said, does this really touch the lives of the people? It does not. The whole problem of employment has assumed vast proportions for us. There is unemployment all over the country. Not only in our country but in almost every country of the world. This is one of the phenomena of contemporary society. I am not saying this to excuse our own shortcomings or difficulties. The problem has to be faced. This is why this question has assumed such vast proportions.

Naturally, if you put to the people that a particular development has affected their employment, it has affected their rights they will become emotional. I do not know how many people have gone to the public at large and said, Let us sit down and think about it, what difference will it make in terms of employment, in terms of other opportunities for the people in the Telengana region, for the people in the other districts of Andhra Pradesh? So, I don't think that the issue has been fully and squarely put before all the people there. Therefore, the reaction today has to be also viewed in that light.

Now, the present debate, with all due respect to hon. Members, is not about socialism. It is not about the welfare of the country at large or many of the points which were raised, especially by the hon. Member who spoke first. This is a very limited issue; a very small issue. It deals specifically and only with the Mulki Rules, and the situation that arose because of the Supreme Court judgment. Some hon. Members said that nothing had happened. But I would respectfully say that a great



deal has happened all these years.

There was, if not to our entire satisfaction, certainly a degree of calm; not the calm of the graveyard as some friends are so fond of repeating; and the situation was moving towards improvement. I am not saying that it had vastly improved. But certainly it was moving towards improvement. Then this judgment on the Mulki Rules was delivered and suddenly it was as if a fire had been started all over the State. How did the whole situation with regard to the Mulki Rules arise? The State of Hyderabad was the largest of the old princely States. One hon. Member has said and rightly that in this State there were individuals, there were families of very high culture. But for the vast majority of the people there was poverty, they had not had opportunities of education or social welfare or of public health, or any kind of amelioration of their living conditions. When the composite Andhra State came into being all sections of the people recognized that for greater cohesions certain special measures of a transitory nature were necessary. The leaders of the people unanimously arrived at a gentleman's agreement which we all accepted.

Since Shri Joshi is here I should like to just remind him. He cut a joke, he thought all our expense, on the word 'gentleman'. But in those days 'gentleman' was not a polite phrase at all; 'gentleman' was used for a particular section of people who were completely divorced from the rest of the people. It is just like the earlier an argument over 'lady' and 'woman'. I had then very categorically said that we were women, bearing burdens and responsibilities as well as wanting our rights, we did not want to be 'ladies' and 'gentlemen' sitting on some platform above everybody else.

So, there was this agreement. Now, regardless of any agreement we all know that even within a family there are differences and disputes. There is no State in India which does not have backward areas. Relatively backward and advanced areas exist not only in all States but in different regions of the same State. In the Andhra region many Members have drawn attention to areas such as Rayalaseema and Srikakulam. The Telengana region, may be backward region but it does have better-off



areas.

Merely because an area is comparatively backward is not reason enough for taking drastic or irreversible decisions. Where will this process end? I am not at all afraid of this being catching; that is not the point. But where does any one draw the line? Will each district want to be separated? Some people have advised the division of U.P. Where to divide into two, three, four, into how many areas do you divide it? Do you go back to the old, very small States, princely States, do you go back to that? Somewhere a line has to be drawn. You cannot just say that because of backwardness there should be division. As Chavanji has rightly pointed out, economic backwardness can go only through hard work and the effort of the entire nation.

While there will always be sympathy and understanding for the special hardship of the backwardness of any special group or any special area, I do not think that anyone should be allowed to develop a vested interest in backwardness. This is really a general problem and it is a part of the very much larger problem of poverty itself. There is, I am afraid, no immediate solution to it. In the early stages of development it is always more difficult to allot resources because the general level is so low that any extra provision is extremely difficult, but in spite of this, an effort was made in the third and fourth Plans. As the House is aware, on the basis of the recommendations of the National Development Council, 225 districts were earmarked for concessional finance from public financial institutions. In this are included district from the Andhra region as well from the Telengana region.

In the Fifth Plan, it is our intention to launch a massive minimum programme. I do not want to go into the premise of this programme, some of which you know and some you will soon learn about. This is the only way in which a real solution can be found. While transitional measures may be necessary in some areas for historical or other reasons, I think we should all view the problem and the possibilities of its solution in the proper perspective. So far as the present Bill is concerned, Shri Mirdha has already explained the scope of its provisions and I do not want to go into it again. However, I should like



to make just a few general observations. As the House is aware, the Supreme Court held that section 2 of the Public Employment (requirement also residence) Act, 1957 which sought to repeal the Mulki Rules, was bad. This was a complex situation. This was not the first time. In between many things have been going on.

The Mulki Rules themselves were declared invalid and so on. It is not at all a static situation. But this has created a complex situation. It is obvious that the administration could not be run on the basis that Mulki Rules would apply to posts under the State Government at all levels. Certain appointments made in the past also had to be regularized. My friend opposite was much concerned about this. He felt that it might mean going back and reinstating people. I should like to re-assure him that this is not at all the case. I do not want to go into the details of this. But I think his fears are unfounded. We had also to consider the past assurances given to the people of Telengana area with regard to public employment and also their present needs.

We have not at all gone back on any assurance given and I should like to re-assure the hon. Members that we are deeply concerned with their problems. But we feel that this is not the way of solving them. In fact, as I said on an earlier occasion, merely talking of separation is not an end of the problem. It is the beginning of another very big problem not for other States but also for that area, that State itself. The decisions which we announced on the 27th November, 1972 were in the response to the request by the leaders of the State; they themselves have said that we should do something.

Regarding this Bill, several members have suggested that we might circulate it for public opinion, send it to the Supreme Court and so on. They asked, what was the hurry? The hurry is in the immediate interests of the proper administration of the State. It is obvious that any delay would create serious complications. I stand firmly for an integrated State, but I should like to say that so far as this matter is concerned, even had there been two States, it would have made no difference to this Bill because it deals mainly with the problem of the twin cities and also the rest of Telengana. That problem would remain no matter what



other things you do because a large number of non-Mulkis is there.

Unfortunately, even in the speeches have some little bitterness crept in. It does not matter how many States we have, you still will be neighbours and you still will have to deal with one another in a hundred and one things. Thinking that just because you are separated, you can get rid of these people or we have got rid of this problem is a very facile way of thinking. Our experience has not shown that this comes true.

Rightly there is a strong feeling in the country that any residential qualification for public employment goes against the very concept of common citizenship which is enshrined in our Constitution. But at the same time, the framers of the Constitution did realize that the safeguards available to people who suffer from special hardships could not be abrogated straightaway. This was one of the purposes of article 35. It kept alive the Mulki Rules, which had come to be looked upon as a valuable safeguard and had generated an emotional attachment. When the Telengana area was merged with Andhra, there were assurances from the Andhra region that this safeguard would be continued in certain respects. This approach was accepted by successive Governments in Andhra Pradesh all along, even while there were different judicial pronouncements on the Mulki Rules.

This is a fact which some people tend to forget. The present Bill retains the Mulki Rules in certain respects but provides for their phased repeal. I should like to make it clear that it is not the intention of the Government to come to the House again to extend the time limits in the Bill. As I have said earlier, in the life of a State, a period of five to eight years is an exceedingly small one. Recognising the fact that the capital belongs to both regions, the Central Government has decided to repeal the Mulki Rules in the twin cities three years earlier than in the remaining Telengana region. Even during the intervening period, employment opportunities in the capital are being extended and educational facilities expanded for the citizens of the other regions of Andhra Pradesh also.

This again gives rise to certain doubts and fears in the minds of our



friends from Telengana. I should like to assure them that the present Bill not only keep intact the safeguards voluntarily agreed to in the Public Employment Act, which was struck down subsequently, but seeks to go a little way beyond that.

The Bill covers three of the five points mentioned in our decisions. The two other points do not require any legislation. I am mentioning this, because this matter was commented upon from the Benches opposite. Considerable work has already been done on the scheme of regionalization of services, and the whole scheme will be finalized before long. The State Government will then make necessary amendments to their existing service rules and put the scheme into operation. The other decision related to the expansion of educational facilities in Hyderabad – Secunderabad. The Ministry of Education has already discussed this matter with the State Government and in the light of these discussions the State Government is framing specific proposals. Suitable machinery will be devised so that these measures are faithfully carried out.

While we were seeking a solution to this particular situation, other points have been raised. It is said that the continuance of the Regional Committee for the Telengana area impedes the integration of the State of Andhra Pradesh. Shri Raghu Ramaiah and others have spoken about the separate budget for Telengana. A third point was that Telengana is not the only backward area in the State.

As you know, the Regional Committee is a committee of the legislature itself, set up at the time of the formation of the State, to give confidence to the people of the Telengana region that the assurances given to them were being properly implemented. It provided for the closer association of the people of Telengana in the development of their area.

The budget, of course, is not really separate, as Shri Raghu Ramaiah said. There are two separate sheets, but it still forms part of the same budget. But the basic problem is not of mathematical calculations. It is a question of the overall economic condition. I can appreciate the



feelings of those who want all barriers which stand in the way of the fuller integration of the State to be removed. I look forward to a day when all these walls are demolished and there is no need to have such special arrangements. Such a situation will emerge progressively with the disappearance of economic disparities. May I remind this House that even the Constitution visualizes them as temporary and transitional?

Meanwhile, of course we are giving special thought to what to do for the other backward areas of the State. The speedy development of those areas is equally important and suggestions have been made for some special arrangements which we are looking into.

We would also be quite willing to have one or more regional committees or development boards for such areas, if the people so desire, and the details of this can be worked out in consultation with the leaders of the State.

Perhaps, there is a feeling that the norms adopted in allocating receipts and expenditure under different heads could be improved so as to make them more equitable to both regions. This question can also be gone into and if any assistance from the Central Government is called for we shall try to provide it. Because what is really needed is the provision of adequate resources and this is always dependent upon how much Shri Chavan can find for the entire country. He also does not have a magic bag into which he can dip for resources.

It is obvious that the resources of the entire State will have to be mobilized for this purpose. This is generally the approach which we have adopted for the removal of imbalances in the development. Whatever resources the Central Government can provide for this purpose will, I hope, be forthcoming.

Mr. Frank Anthony is not here. I have just one rejoinder to make. He was speaking about minorities and our friends of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and about their reservations. It is quite true that with all the reservations, everything that we had hoped to do has not been done. There are still many disabilities. But he addressed his remark to



the wrong person, Shri Bhandare. Shri Bhandare is the one person who has always been elected from a general seat. He does not come from a reserved seat. So, his remark that 'you will not be elected once reservation is removed', was to the wrong person. An Hon. Member : Mr. B. P. Maurya also. Shrimati Indira Gandhi : Yes, Shri B.P. Maurya also.

Sir, Parliament represents the will of the whole nation. Its duty is not merely to go into the rights and wrongs of a situation but also to view problems from the national point of view. Shri Chavan has stressed this point. But I would like to repeat it. While all of us here are elected from particular constituencies, once we are in this hall, I think we should consider ourselves not as merely the representatives of one little area but as the representatives of the whole country and the entire people of India. And each problem has to be viewed from that angle.

The very first article of our Constitution declares that India is a Union of States. Each State has had a long cultural and historical tradition and each State has become a political entity in its own special way. Andhra Pradesh has been a distinctive cultural unit for thousands of years. The name has been found in the earliest Buddhist writings. All the parts which now constitute Andhra Pradesh have been under one umbrella for long periods of history. Let us not look at just the immediate period of history.

Perhaps, it was this long history which inspired the Telugu-speaking people when they yearned and struggled for several decades to form a unified Andhra Pradesh.

May I cite a little bit of my personal experience? I happened to be touring parts of the South just before the Report of the States Reorganisation Commission was made public and my ears are still reverberating with the full-throated cries of Vishal Andhra. It was really the will of the Telugu-speaking people which prevailed over the proposal of some people to retain the old Hyderabad State. I have taken a lot of time. I should like to make one more point. Mr. Frank Anthony is absent. He spoke at length and he has on previous occasions spoken about the great mistake of forming linguistic States.



There are some things which are part of our national life. It is true that the question of linguistic States was very much a part of the national movement. There was no getting away from it. The units of every part which was in existence at a time, were formed on the basis of language in spite of the British Provinces having different areas. There is an overall rationality in the formation of our various States and we should be very careful not to break this foundation of rationality in momentary passions. As I said at the beginning we should consider the feelings of people but it would be very wrong for the Government to be swept away by feelings. We must see what is in the larger interest of the people themselves. We are not saying that the interest of the people of Telengana should be sacrificed for our interest or for the interest of other parts of India. But the Government must think in a very calm manner about the interest of the people of that very region and see what will serve their interest best.

The Telugu-speaking people have a reputation of forthrightness but they also have an unsurpassed tradition of service to the nation. I am sure that no Telugu-speaking person whether he lives in the coastal region or in Rayalaseema or in Telengana will ever do anything even in anger or in desperation which is not in the larger interest of their entire State and also in the interest of the country as a whole. I can understand the emotions of our friends here. This has been a period of great agony for us all to watch the developments in Andhra Pradesh and the tragedies that are taking place. I also should like to express my deep sympathy with the parents and families of those who have lost their lives. But we must look at this matter in the larger perspective. This particular Bill of course does not touch the larger aspect at all. This is a very limited Bill but because hon. Members have talked about other things, I also had to give my views on them.



ATAL BEHARI VAJPAYEE

'OUR STRENGTHENED CAPABILITY ADDS TO OUR SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY'

(Excerpts from the speech of Prime Minister
Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee in Parliament on 27th May, 1998)



India is now a nuclear weapon state. This is a reality that cannot be denied. It is not a conferment that we seek; nor is it a status for others to grant. It is an endowment to the nation by our scientists and engineers. It is India's due, the right of one-sixth of human-kind. Our strengthened capability adds to our sense of responsibility. We do not intend to use these weapons for aggression or for mounting threats against any country; these are weapons of self-defence, to ensure that India is not subjected to nuclear threats or coercion. We do not intend to engage in an arms race.

We had taken a number of initiatives in the past. We regret that these proposals did not receive a positive response from other nuclear weapon states. In fact, had their response been positive, we need not have gone in for our current testing programme. We have been and will continue to be in the forefront of the calls for opening negotiations for a Nuclear Weapons Convention, so that this challenge can be dealt with in the same manner that we have dealt with the scourge of two other weapons of mass destruction-through the Biological Weapons Convention and Chemical Weapons Convention.

Traditionally, India has been an outward looking country. Our strong commitment of multilateralism is reflected in our active participation in organisations like the United Nations. This engagement will continue. The policies of economic liberalisation introduced in recent years have increased our regional and global linkages and my Government intends to deepen and strengthen these ties.

In this, the fiftieth year of our independence, we stand at a defining moment in our history. The rationale for the Government's decision is



based on the same policy tenets that have guided us for five decades. These policies have been sustained successfully because of an underlying national consensus. It is vital to maintain the consensus we approach the next millennium. In my statement today and in the paper placed before the House, I have elaborated on the rationale behind the Government's decision and outlined our approach for the future. The present decision and future action will continue to reflect a commitment to sensibilities and obligations of an ancient civilisation, a sense of responsibility and restraint, but a restraint born of the assurance of action, not of doubts or apprehension. Avoiding triumphalism, let us work together towards our shared objective in ensuring that as we move towards a new millenium, India will take its rightful place in the international community.





RAJIV GANDHI

STRESS ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN FOR THE BACKWARD COMMUNITIES

(Rajiv Gandhi's Speech on Reservation issue
in Parliament on September 6, 1990)



Sir, before I start on what I really wanted to say, I must say that I have been terribly pained with what I have heard just now from one of the members of the government, one of the ministers. It is extremely sad that the thinking in this government revolves around caste...

We, the Congress, are in favour of a comprehensive action plan, an affirmative action plan for the backward communities. We need that. The problem cannot be solved by playing politics or by limited politically motivated manipulations... Is the government looking at one particular vested interest or is the government really looking at the socially and educationally backward classes? This is the question I want to put to the Prime Minister...

What objection can there be to what I am saying? In fact, every objection that I am hearing is only confirming my fear that this government is aiming these benefits at a particularly privileged group and not looking at the really poor... I think the honourable Prime Minister has totally missed the point. The point is within a particular class, who do you want to help? Do you want to help those persons within a particular class who are already well-off?... I will answer how many. If the number is negligible, if the number is only one or two, then you should have no objection at all because you are only eliminating two out of the 42 or 43 crores. What is your objection then? The fact is that within a class when you want to give some assistance, it should go to the poorest. I would recommend it... Sir, it should go not only to such under-privileged groups and many others like them, but to people from all religions who are under-privileged and this is where I have a grave difference with what the government is bringing in. They are



looking almost entirely at caste...Not only that. They have not included very large sections of the minority who should be included. If you look at the Muslims, the vast majority of the Muslim community in India is backward -educationally, socially, economically everywhere. The same thing is true for Christians. The same thing is true even for Sikhs who are by and large okay, but there are still groups who are not all right. It is true for almost every religion as groups who are socially and educationally backward. Why should they not be included? The government must explain this; the country wants to know.

The second point which must be a part of the national goal is a casteless society. The Constitution very clearly differentiated between Scheduled Castes and backward classes. Why did our Constitution makers make this distinction? They had something in their minds. Why have we lost that distinction today?

Three important sociologists were involved with the Mandal Commission- Prof B.K. Roy Burman, Prof Srinivas and Prof Jogendra Singh. They have been thanked in the preface of the Mandal Commission Report for the work they have done. But reading the newspapers recently, I found that they have declined the honour and they have clearly said that they were denied any real opportunity to participate in the findings...The three important sociologists who were involved with this Commission have today said that they have not contributed to this Commission. Then, how did this Commission get its information? There was a Research and Planning team which met for only three days. I read out para 11.3 where it says: "To begin with, a Research Planning Team of sociologists met in Delhi from June 12th to 14th, 1979, to draw up a plan of studies and researches which should be undertaken by Backward Classes Commission for determining, in a scientific and objective manner, the criteria for defining socially and educationally backward classes."

Then he says it is appended on the back...The task of this team was solely to draw up a plan of studies - not to do the studies only but to draw up a plan of studies. They did not do the studies. This group was never consulted again. Then, the Srinivas Panel did meet only for five



days. So, the research team met for three days, the Srinivas Panel met for five days:

Para 11.4. "Subsequently, a panel of experts led by Prof. M.N. Srinivas, met in Delhi from July 16 to 20th, 1979, i.e. for five days, and, after detailed deliberations, prepared a complete design of the survey along with a set of scheduled, dummy tables, instructions, etc."

So, these two groups in a sense laid down, what the Commission could do. Now, what did the Commission actually, do with it, because neither of these teams was consulted after this? This means no specialist, no sociologist was involved with this report, apart from those eight days...

The only expert advice that this committee has got was from the Technical Advisory Committee headed by a bureaucrat, the Director General of the Central Statistical Organisation, a professional statistician...not a sociologist...This was the level, the intellectual level at which the data that has been received, has been processed. These are the intellectual inputs that have gone into it. But what of the data; what is the quality of the data that was collected?... I am going to give you quotations from Mr Mandal himself on what he thinks about the data that he has collected and presented. Paragraph 3.15 says:

"On the basis of 1891 and 1931 Census, data was collected and analysed with a view to getting a frame for the linkage of traditional occupations by caste." Now, what are we talking about? We are talking about data which is 100 years old, or 60 years old. Is that valid today? Can we really interpolate from 1891 and 1931, to 1990, or, does something better needs to be done.





DR RAM MANOHAR LOHIA

DAILY EARNINGS OF AN INDIAN

(From one of the most famous speeches ever delivered in Parliament was Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia's speech on 6 September 1963 in Hindi.

The debate came to be known as the 'three annas versus fifteen annas')

This government has turned into a government of directionless experts and whatever recommendations the experts make, the government blindly follows them. The ministers have little knowledge about agriculture, industries, national income, etc. The hon'ble ministers should apply their own mind instead of blindly following the recommendations of the experts. They should think over the recommendations and then give directions because the statisticians and the economists are like poisonous snakes who dance to the tune of the snake charmers. But if you are incapable of playing the flute the results are bound to be disastrous.

I would like to claim that if the distribution of national income is rationalized, it can be increased by twenty rupees every year and this can be done by any ordinary individual but only when everyone gets a share in the increase in the national income.

Combating Corruption; 21 December 1963

From the speech on combating corruption delivered on Dec 21, 1963

Misconduct and corruption are just synonyms and while discussing this issue we should examine that if corruption exists at the apex level, would it be worthwhile to conduct the cleansing operation at lower level? I would request the hon'ble members to exercise utmost restraint while discussing corruption at the apex level. They should not direct their resentment against me but against the situation today in which India is rotting. I shall try to exercise restraint but the other hon'ble members should also exercise restraint and deliberate on the issue dispassionately.



What else is corruption? It is not only dishonesty but lack of realization also. I find this thing in Parliament as well that people take corruption as dishonesty only. I want to say that it is not only dishonesty but lack of realization also. If we do not comprehend the situation in India and the world as a whole and do not try to know the circumstances which cause corruption and why corruption exists and do not identify the areas of corruption, we shall not be able to eradicate it. I still find that the government has not understood the problem because in order to eradicate corruption, the government is proposing to create an institution of Central Vigilance Commission. What is meant by it? It means that the Central Vigilance Commission would identify the areas of corruption and curb the same. This may be a remedy. This is a way of awarding punishment for the crime that has already been committed. The government has not so far thought of any way out to prevent corruption.

There is another criterion which I want to place before you. It is very often said whether ministers do not have sons? Its first reply is whether others do not have sons, whether only ministers have sons, who would always reap the benefit in all respects. But in the present situation, in today's economy, there is one sphere of competition and there is another sphere of permit, quota, licence, etc. We should learn to distinguish between the two. They talk about independent countries like Germany, Britain, etc., which allow open and free competition in which the government does not interfere. Mostly this is the situation there. If here in India, the sons, daughters and the relatives of ministers are more intelligent, let them face free competition and if they succeed, let them prosper. In a trade in which some quota or permit or licence is required to be given by the minister then there the relatives up to two generations of the ministers should not come forward. So long you do not follow this policy, the relation between the government and the trade will remain strained.

There is no harmony among the different castes. They are harming each other, they have different thinking, different ideologies. Their vested interest, justice, thinking, discretion have attained different



meanings. When they think of their self-interest they forget the distinction between profession, practice, justice and injustice, honesty and dishonesty. These ten thousand units are plundering the country and it is happening for the last fifteen hundred years. As long as a distinction is not made between them, corruption cannot be eliminated because everybody will think that if anybody has done any good to his caste, community and sons, what is wrong in it. It has been carried forward from our scriptures, I would not mention them, that if someone attains a high place, he should help and benefit his people. Till today, it is happening.

This is incumbent on our part to find out remedies of these maladies. The glaring inequality prevailing in the society and the ever-increasing desire of the people for raising their standard of living often induces them to resort to corrupt practices. I would like to submit that special attention is required to be paid, particularly by the members of this House, towards these inconsistencies. The era of Mahatma Gandhi was the era of simple living and dedication to duty, but the present era of the hon'ble prime minister is an era of fashion and luxury. In order to safeguard the interests of a handful of five million people, you ignore the general condition of the masses. I find people here blindly following the lifestyle of the people of USA and European countries. To them, I can say that the people there could be in a position to enjoy the present standard of living after putting in constant hard labour during the last three hundred years for increasing the production of farms and factories, whereas here we are yearning for the lifestyle of the Western countries without increasing our production. In such circumstances, corruption is bound to afflict the society. That is why I would like to put these two points before you.

I would like to tell you one thing which has been badly pinching me to the core of my heart. The matter would have been discussed in the House. You please see as to how rules are to be applied. A grave danger is looming large over the country. Is it a good parliamentary tradition to discuss the same thing again and again? Tension is building up on all fronts but tension at one front only has been discussed in the current



session of the House again and again. The government has an agency through which it feeds the newspapers the news suiting its convenience, diverting the attention of the people by giving news of killings, dacoities and firings, etc. Of course, the government of Pakistan is notorious for its stance but the Government of India also does not think all these things and creates such conditions which are not in good taste.

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V. K. KRISHNA MENON

THE KASHMIR CASE

(From the speech delivered
on April 22, 1960 on the Kashmir issue.)

Defence minister V.K. Krishna Menon intervening in the debate on 22 April 1960 explained the reasons why India could not withdraw the Kashmir case from the United Nations.

We have to remember is this, that we have not taken a 'dispute' to the United Nations. There is no dispute, so far as we are concerned, about Kashmir. There is no more a dispute about Kashmir than there is a dispute about Uttar Pradesh. What is before the Security Council, under the terms of the Charter, is a 'situation' which is very different from a 'dispute'. And, what is more, the Security Council has not got the powers under the Charter to adjudicate in a legal dispute. That could become the function of the World Court if we agree to its jurisdiction. But no legal issues can be resolved at the Security Council under the terms of the Charter. Therefore, if it is a dispute, it must be either a boundary dispute or a legal dispute. If it is a boundary dispute, it would have to be settled under the terms of a pacific settlement where there must be agreement on both sides. Therefore, we have referred no dispute. We have referred a situation - I have forgotten the relevant clause of the Charter - which was inimical to the peace of the world, which was deteriorating the relations between the two countries and which might lead to this, that and the other.

Kashmir is a live issue with us, because it is part of our sovereign territory, not because it is a piece of land; it is part of our history, it is part of our kinship, it is a sector of our people. What is more, the economic development of that territory, the development of its resources, and the prevention of the intrusion of the apparatus of international conflict into the Asian continent, is very much dependent upon our ability to maintain our hegemony over this strategic area.



Pakistani Aggression and State of War

(4 December 1971)

Coming to war, this country never wanted to wage a war. But when our frontiers beyond the cease-fire line are unfortunately compromised by the action of another country, when another country decides to indulge in border violation and things of that kind I think a new situation arises. Therefore, while we believe in peace at any price we are in the position of an old American President who is reported to have said 'I am a man of peace at any price but the present price is war.' But, in the present case, we do not have to make a choice; the enemy has made the choice. War action has taken place by the bombing of our airfield, for the crippling of our jawans, not of our striking power. And I have no doubt that in the operations which we are forced to undertake, as Shri Indrajit Gupta has rightly pointed out, we have no quarrel with the people of Pakistan and we do not propose to indulge in, we will make sure that we do not propose to indulge in, the Nazi form of war, the war of exterminating peaceful population. It is only in the extreme circumstances where military targets are bombed - and our firing will never fail - that people will be put to hardship; we will not use those deadly weapons called napalm bombs and things like that which cripple young people. If you see people who have been affected by that you would never allow them to be used. These are things which at this time and on this occasion we should not forget in the enthusiasm of crushing the enemy. I know that the enemy can never be crushed; if he is crushed he will rise again but we have to pull out those fangs that try to kill us.

Finally, I hope the prime minister will at no time heed the counsel of unwisdom which says the Parliament must go. That proceeds on the assumption that Parliament is a luxury which we tolerate. That is not so. Parliament is a necessary establishment, in order that in case there would be reverses - and there is no doubt about it that there would be reverses; there can be no war without reverses except in the thinking of people sometimes - Parliament can act as the safety valve on such occasions. So, this Parliament has to sit. When bombs were raming over



London, the British Parliament had midnight sessions and two bombs actually struck the House when they were sitting. This is the thing which shook Hitler that people do not go away even when bombs are showered. Our people are also the same. We have passion for defending this country. When we could shake a mighty empire to its foundations, so we can shake the mighty empires that support the aggressor when aggression takes place and we should warn the world that any assistance given to the aggression in India is an act of aggression against India itself.

II



FEROZE GANDHI

THE LIFE INSURANCE SCANDAL



(Feroze Gandhi, son-in-law of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and husband of Indira Gandhi was an accomplished parliamentarian in his own right. Single-handedly, he unearthed serious scandals like the Mundhra shares being purchased by the Life Insurance Corporation at a price much higher than the market price. It was obvious from Feroze Gandhi's speech that he had done his homework and was in full command of the facts)

Public expenditure shall be subject to severest public debates, it is a healthy tradition, especially so in an era of growing public enterprise. There is nothing to be ashamed of if a public undertaking has made a mistake, if some people have made a mistake. We should confess it. Parliament must exercise vigilance and control over the biggest and most powerful financial institution it has created, the Life Insurance Corporation of India, whose misapplication of public funds we shall scrutinize today.

Much as I have tried to, I have failed to understand how the Life Insurance Corporation became a willing party to this questionable transaction with the mystery man of India's business underworld...

Mr Speaker, there is going to be some sharpshooting and hard hitting in the House today, because when I hit, I hit hard and expect to be hit harder. I am fully conscious that the other side is also equipped with plentiful supplies of TNT.

A friend of mine in this House, sir, mentioned to me that the finance minister's statement was well fortified. Let me see, if I can breach the ramparts at the very first shot. It appears the Life Insurance Corporation has committed a breach of privilege of this House by causing to be placed on the table of the House a statement withholding important information. May I know why one important transaction with Shri



Mundhra has been kept secret from the House? In the absence of this vital information the statement of investments becomes worthless, not even worth the paper on which it is cyclostyled.

It has not been easy to collect all these facts and place them before the House in a concise way because the transactions go into lakhs and lakhs. An unfortunate thing has happened. But I don't think there is any reason to be ashamed of it. I am a champion of the public sector. I was one of the persons who championed life insurance nationalization. I am not ashamed to face an inquiry. I would like the public to know, I would like the government to know, and I would like the members of Parliament to know that in the public sector, if such a thing happens, we are prepared to face an inquiry and get to the bottom of it.

II



Y.B. CHAVAN

ALL CITIZENS HAVE THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT TO RESIDE AND SETTLE IN ANY PART OF INDIA

(From a speech of Y.B. Chavan, then Minister of Home Affairs in Lok Sabha on June 12, 1967)



We are all born in certain linguistic groups. As somebody is born in the Tamil group, or Telugu group, I have been born in the Marathi group, and I am trying to serve my country in my humble way.

Unfortunately, the conditions in the country today are full of regionalism and linguism and some poison is coming out of it. Shiv Sena is the result of it. I quite concede that thing especially. But I must say one thing before I make a statement, I have brought something written and I would like to read it out. But before doing that, I would like to say that the allegations made against me or the Government of Maharashtra are very unfair. Again, I must say that Shiv Sena represents the entire people of Maharashtra is very unfair ...

... Maharashtra has a tradition of nationalism, and Maharashtra has produced leaders as humble servants of the nation. The poison of regionalism or linguism, just as it is making its appearance and is raising its ugly head elsewhere made its somewhat ugly appearance in Maharashtra also. Certainly, we shall have to condemn it and make every effort to remove that poison.

Our Constitution accepts only one citizenship and all citizens have the fundamental right to reside and settle in any part of India.... to acquire, hold and dispose of property anywhere and to practice any profession, or to carry on any occupation, trade or business. This fundamental right must be unreservedly respected both by the governments in the country and by the people. It is in the interest of the economic development of the country and of national integration that any citizen of India should feel free to go to any part of the country, seek



employment or pursue any business or occupation of his choice. He should have the confidence that while doing so, there will be no discrimination of any kind against him and that in a very real sense the principle of equality of opportunity would be respected.

In the matter of public employment, equality of opportunity has been guaranteed by the Constitution itself and this is a guarantee which we have been endeavouring, and will continue to endeavour, to be fully respected by all the public authorities in the country. In respect of the Central Government's corporate public enterprises, we have been issuing instructions that there should be no discrimination against people who come to seek employment from other parts of the country or against the local people. The only preference which our instructions provide is that at the lower levels of employment special consideration should be shown to people who had been displaced by a project.

I am sure the House will agree that this is a sound and humane policy. Complaints are sometimes made of discrimination in the organised sectors of private employment. This is not a matter in which anything can or should be done through legal regulation, but the wider interests of the country require, as indeed does the enlightened self-interest of the employers themselves that here too the principle of equality of opportunity should be observed.

People will have grievances. Sometimes they are justified and sometimes they are not. Obviously, where there are any legitimate grievances, they should be redressed to the extent possible. But one thing is certain, nobody has any right to seek redress of his grievances, genuine or otherwise by unlawful means. There can be no justification whatsoever for creating hatred or illwill for one section of the community to show any kind of antagonism to another. If there is anything of this kind, it should be strongly condemned and where legal action is possible, such action should be taken.



NO – CONFIDENCE MOTION

(From the speech of Y.B. Chavan the then Home Minister, on the no-confidence motion in Lok Sabha on Feb. 19, 1969)

I must say, at the outset, that I am ashamed of what happened in Bombay. But I am sorry that the analysis that some members made about it - if it were true, certainly I won't mind and if some people are really responsible they should face the consequences - takes us astray from the real problem. I find that Shiv Sena is by its very character, by its very nature and ideology, a peculiarly Indian fascist movement. It is a fact. And, as every fascist movement takes advantage of gullibilities of other political parties - I hope I will be excused for using this term - they have very characteristically exploited those gullibilities of all political parties in Bombay including the Congress. I find that at the time of some by-election and during general elections the Shiv Sena people did push themselves in the Congress ranks and propagated for the Congress candidate. But that does not mean that they have anything to do with the Congress as such. They tried to win the sympathy of the Swatantra workers. It is a known fact and I do not think anybody can deny it. I can say that this had nothing to do with national leadership of the Swatantra Party.

I do not understand the jubilation of the Right Communists. My Hon. friend, Shri H.N. Mukerjee, was very eloquent about it. Whenever he speaks, we always listen to him with great respect. May I ask him what is the performance of his party in other States? May I warn his party and other political parties in Bengal that after a couple of years possibly they will come to this H. on. House and say, "We are sorry we joined with the other political party."

I never like to make political prophecies, but I would certainly like to make this political prophecy, that all those political parties who are today very joyful for having united with the Communists (Marxist) will after a couple of years find that they are prisoners of that 'United Front'. If this prophecy is proved wrong. I will be happy, but my fear is that I am not going to be wrong in this matter.



My main point is this. They have won the elections there, but why no-confidence in this Government? If you have won the elections, please run that government. I do not see any relation between their victory in Bengal and no confidence in this Government.

Certainly the political background of India is in the process of change. It is some sort of a transitional period. Every political party is trying to put its point of view before the people.

In this matter, whether political parties are wise or not, I don't know, but I am glad that the people of India are very wise. I have got great faith in the wisdom of the people of India. Parties may come and go; parties may prove wrong or right; ultimately it is the will of the people that is going to triumph in this country. We are very glad about it. We are a Government here because people are with us and as long as people are with us, we shall remain here. They may move any number of no-confidence motions, but that is not going to change the people.

II



JAGJIVAN RAM

FORMULATING DEFENCE POLICY

"It is but natural that in our thinking of defence matters, Bangladesh has permeated and has all been pervasive in this discussion."



Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am thankful to the hon. Members of this House for taking such a keen interest in the Defence Budget and the Defence Ministry.

It is but natural that Bangladesh should permeate the discussion. It is quite natural that on an issue on which the whole world is exercised, the hon. Members of this House feel so much exercised. It is but natural, as I have said, that in our thinking of defence matters, Bangladesh has permeated and has all been pervasive in this discussion.

The defence of a country depends upon so many factors and the defence policy is to be determined taking into consideration all those factors, such as, our relation with our neighbouring countries, our relations with other countries of the world, our external policy, the internal policy and all that. So many factors influence the determination of the defence policy of the country. While considering the defence policy of the Government, one will have to take into consideration the various factors.

Sir, I was talking the other day about the tragic developments in Bangladesh. The resurgence of sentiments for Bangladesh after the brutal intervention by West Pakistan military forces had exposed in all its nakedness the colonialist design of the present regime in West Pakistan. It has further proved that the root of democracy is too deep and strong to be sapped by a military rule of nearly a quarter of a century.

The people of Bangladesh are manfully resisting the efforts of the Pakistan junta to suppress freedom and democracy. The terror which has been unleashed on Bangladesh has stirred the conscience of the



world. I can well appreciate the anger of hon. Members. The bravery and heroism of those engaged in this struggle is widely admired and applauded. The House has expressed its support and sympathy for our friends in distress. A significant percentage of the population of Bangladesh has been forced out and has sought shelter in India. Shri Viswanathan described this exodus as demographic aggression against India. Shri H.M. Patel called it an undeclared war on India. It is clear that the Pak Army is engaged in a ruthless genocide of the people of Bangladesh and is the process mounting a serious threat to our economy, to our society and to the basic principles which our Constitution enshrines. The values we cherish and the commitment we have made for our own social and economic development, are in jeopardy. Governments are alive to their responsibility to meet this threat.

The House is aware of the intrusions that have been attempted by the Pak Army on our Eastern Borders. The House is also aware of the reports which have appeared in the Press in regard to the preparations which are being made on our western borders, more particularly across the ceasefire line. Hon. Member, Shri Tombi Singh, drew our attention to the situation in the eastern sector. He mentioned particularly Pakistan's plans to train and launch some Naga and Mizo hostiles for disrupting tranquility in this part of our country. Hon. Members, Shri Inderjit Malhotra and Shri Shamim Ahmed, desired greater attention to be paid to the defence of Kashmir and asked for vigilance against Pakistani infiltrators to be intensified.

The House is aware of the frantic attempts which are being made by the Pakistani military junta to raise new regiments, to conscript their youth and to procure military hardware, arms and ammunitions stealthily or through the agency of their friends in some countries. All these preparations are being made with a view to extinguishing the flame of freedom and democracy on this sub-continent. We hope that those who are helping them in this effort are conscious of their responsibilities and are aware of the purpose for which these death-dealing weapons are being procured.



We have had occasions to discuss these threats to our security in this House. I can only say that we keep on reviewing these matters from day to day and I can assure the House that vigilance has been strengthened all along the Eastern and Western Borders, and every precaution has been taken to defeat all possible man oeuvres on the part of our adversaries. Our security forces have instructions to deal firmly with infiltrators and other hostile elements which may attempt to intrude into our territory. Our people on the borders, whether it is in Kashmir, Jammu, Nagaland, Meghalaya or anywhere else, are conscious of the stakes.

The brutal methods employed by the Pak Army in Bangladesh have strengthened their determination to resist and defeat the Pak manoeuvres. The demand for the early recognition of Bangladesh by Government has been reiterated by various sides of the House. We are aware of the feeling in the country on the question of recognition of Bangladesh. Our Prime Minister has explained Government's stand on the matter on more than one occasion in the House and outside. There is nothing to add to what the Prime Minister has said on the subject.

One thing, however, is clear. The indomitable courage of the freedom fighters of the Mukti Fauj will ultimately succeed in establishing Bangladesh. Reports trickling from across the border indicate how manfully freedom fighters are harassing the Pakistan Army. One guerilla, one commando of the Mukti Fauj is worth many marauders of the imperialist army of Pakistan.

With the ever increasing activities of the freedom fighters, it is clear that the military junta will not be permitted to continue their exploitation of the people of Bangladesh to establish a democratic order in Bangladesh, freedom fighters have all our sympathy and support.

There has been insistent demand for improving our defence preparedness by Shri Indrajit Gupta and others. Many hon. Members complained that while the report of the Ministry of Defence has given details of the threats to our security, sufficient information has not been given in regard to the arrangements made by us to meet them. I



think, if the details given in the report are studied carefully, it will be found that there is no cause for worry. For obvious reasons, caution has to be exercised in disclosing our strength and our preparations. I can, however, safely say that in every arm and in every role, we are more than a match for our adversary. The House has naturally not been apprised of the enormous exertions our armed forces have made to improve their skills in the use of the equipment which has been given to them. Every effort has been made to enhance the mobility of our land forces, to increase the fire power of the infantry and artillery and of our armoured units. Our anti-tank capability has been enhanced by the introduction of missile units. New methods of weapon, training and battle inoculation have been introduced. Altogether, the defensive capability and striking force of the Indian Army cannot but cause serious concern to our adversaries.

It is true that Pakistan has acquired Mirage aircraft. Our Air Force has fully taken into account the increase in Pakistani air power. The strength and capability of our holdings are superior to Pakistani acquisitions. Our fighter bomber squadrons have been progressively modernised. We have recently carried out a re-organisation of Commands in the Air Force. Operations exercises including Weapon Meets are being continually conducted to ensure a state of operational readiness. Heavy repair and depot maintenance facilities have been modernised and augmented. I have every reason to hope that as a result, the rate of serviceability of our aircraft will improve. The measures which have been taken do not merely increase the striking power of our Air Force. They also ensure the most effective co-ordination of air operations in support of actions on land and on high seas.

The N.C.C. Scheme is designed to provide facilities for our young men to develop character and leadership and to help those who wish to make Armed Forces their career. We propose to increase the quota for filling the vacancies in the Commissioned ranks from the N.C.C. cadets. The N.C.C. cadets also get some advantage when they apply for recruitment into other ranks of the three services.

Shri Birender Singh Rao suggested the introduction of compulsory



national service. I trust that he is familiar with the National Service Scheme and the National Sports Organisation which are operated by the Ministry of Education. I would wish these three schemes to be better integrated with one another. These together constitute in my view a better alternative to the compulsory national service that Shri Birender Singh Rao has in mind.

From the point of view of the Armed Forces, it is not necessary for us to introduce compulsion. The voluntary character of our formations is a source of strength. A sufficient number of volunteers has been forthcoming to man the Armed Forces. We have had no difficulty in keeping the Indian Army young. There has however, been some gap in the strength of officer cadres. We have taken remedial measures to bridge this gap.

Some hon. Members have made observations on the composition of our Armed Forces. Shri Samar Mukerjee said that this should not be based on caste and religion. Shri Mulki Raj Saini said and rightly so that the distinction between martial and non-martial communities is a myth. Shri Birender Singh Rao eulogised the bravery of a company of officers and jawans. I also pay my tributes to them. He pleaded for the establishment of an Ahir Regiment and also a Chamar Regiment. Prof. Narain Chand Parashar, on the other hand, wanted a Himachal Regiment to be raised. Shri Tomi Singh talked in terms of a Manipur Regiment.

There is demand for a Bengal Regiment as well. I am not unaware of the sentimental value attached to the regimental names, nor of the value of appeal to past history, or to regional affiliations.

Nevertheless, it has been the policy of Government to ensure that our Armed Forces are broadbased and derive their strength and motivation from their loyalty to the nation. I would like to remind the House in this connection that our policy is fully effective in the Air Force, in the Navy and in the officer ranks of the Army. An element of class composition, however, has persisted due to historical reasons in some regiments of the infantry. Into those regiments also, persons belonging to other



classes are now being gradually recruited. I propose to bear this aspect in mind in determining the nomenclature we adopt for any formation we may raise in future.

Our recruitment policy has already undergone many changes. Fifteen selection boards and 68 recruiting centers have been established in different zones so as to cover all areas in the country. Quotas of recruitment have been fixed for each zone. Further steps will be taken to ensure that opportunity to serve in the Armed Forces is not denied to anyone, who volunteers for such service and is found suitable for it, merely on the ground of caste, race, religion or domicile.

The interest taken by hon. Members from all parts of the House in the conditions of services of officers and men in the Armed Forces will warm their hearts and encourage them to do their duty. We are a developing country and our resources are limited. Our officers and men themselves appreciate that we cannot do all that needs to be done for them. We have, however, attempted to make some improvements over the recent years.

Personnel serving in forward areas, or at high altitudes, or in uncongenial climate are entitled to extra rations and clothing, special compensatory allowance, free conveyance for families, retention of married accommodation by them and postal concessions. Schemes of additional annual increments have been sanctioned for personnel who have reached the maximum of their pay scales. Interim relief ranging from Rs. 15 to Rs. 45 per month for other ranks and officers was sanctioned in March 1970. In September 1970, an additional relief was provided to Armed Forces to the extent of Rs. 4 per month for jawans. It has also been possible to raise with effect from July 1971 the condiments allowance to troops to the level of Rs. 2.35 per man per month for units with a strength above 50 and Rs. 2.50 for manning other units.

A proposal to increase the allocation for amenities for other ranks from Rs. 25 lakh a year to 50 lakh a year is under consideration. Pensionary benefits have also been liberalised. In September 1970, a scheme of



death-cum-retirement gratuity was introduced as a supplement to pensions. The minimum for pensions was raised last year to Rs. 40 per month. The procedure for payment of pension has been streamlined.

"May I, on behalf of the ex-servicemen, express to hon. Members their gratitude for the interest taken in their welfare? We have to keep our Armed Forces young. That is why servicemen are retired at a comparatively young age. Nearly 50,000 persons retire every year, out of whom more than two thirds stand in need of rehabilitation assistance in one form or the other. Their training and discipline are an asset to the nation. It has been our endeavour to provide facilities for them to enter different civil vocations. Shri Chand Vakar and Rao Birender Singh suggested re-employment of ex-servicemen in Government departments and Public Sector Undertakings. The House will be glad to hear that a series of reservations and relaxations have been made by different Ministers and Public Sector Undertakings and State Governments.

A number of concessions have been given by the Union Government to facilitate absorption of ex-servicemen in their employment. For instance, 20 per cent of the vacancies in Class IV have been reserved for them. Similarly, ten per cent of vacancies in Class III posts have been reserved for ex-servicemen. Age limits have been relaxed to the extent of the military service rendered by ex-servicemen plus a grace period of three years. Minimum educational qualifications have also been relaxed. Reservations have been made in All India and Central Services for ECSs/SSCOs, both in respect of permanent and long-term temporary vacancies. Twenty per cent of the vacancies in the IAS and IFS have been reserved for them. Twenty seven per cent of the vacancies in the IPS have also been reserved. In Class I, the reservation is to the extent of 25 per cent and in Class II posts to the extent of 27 per cent. A special competitive examination is held by the UPSC exclusively for EC/SSC officers. The age limits in their case have been relaxed and the prescribed age limit i.e., 24 years is applied with reference to the year in which the officer joins his pre-Commission training. Most State Governments have extended similar concessions for appointments to



posts under their control.”

Efforts have also been made to provide orientation training to ex-servicemen for improving their employability. A scheme for their training has been drawn up in consultation with the State Governments. Under this scheme, armed personnel will be enabled to join Industrial Training Institutes six months before the date of their retirement and to continue their training for a further period of three to six months. They will be paid by Government during the period of training. Thus they will be imparted full-fledged vocational or technical training at these institutes. I am hoping that this scheme will help ex-servicemen to set up small industries and also to provide disciplined manpower for our industries in the private and the public sectors.

The House is aware of the Special Fund which has been created to provide finance on concessional terms to ex-servicemen for starting some business for employment. Such finance is available on an individual or co-operative basis. A sum of Rs.75 lakh was contributed to this fund during 1970-71. Thus a total sum of Rs. 8 crore is available in the fund to finance economic activities of ex-servicemen.

Shri Inderjit Malhotra made the useful suggestion for ex-servicemen to be settled in border areas. We have already been trying to do so. So far, it has been possible to settle about 140 ex-servicemen in NEFA and another 100 in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. A scheme for the settlement of ex-servicemen in the border areas of Rajasthan is under discussion with the Rajasthan Government.

The House is aware of the provision for medical care to military pensioners and their families. The scheme was sanctioned in 1966, Government have now extended the scheme to cover the provision of dental treatment and dentures.

Shri S.M. Banerjee drew my attention to a number of points concerning industrial and non-industrial workers in the Defence establishments. He is aware of the steps that have been, or are being taken with regard to them. I am grateful to him for assuring the House that the Defence workers will do their duty and make their contribution to maximise the



production of equipment and stores needed by the Defence Services. I have always held that in their sense of patriotism, civilian workers of the Defence Ministry wherever they may be engaged are second to none. They will not regard any sacrifice too great and any work too hard when the national interest so demands. He has been pressing for what he calls a permanent negotiating machinery to be set up. I think he knows that the joint consultative machinery is doing its best to tackle these problems. I would invite him and the organisation he represents to contribute to the effectiveness of these efforts. He is always welcome to meet me.

The progress made in developing and augmenting production and in organising the production of the stores, the weapons and equipment needed by the Defence Services has been explained by my colleague, the Minister of Defence Production.

I will refer briefly to the complaints made by Shri Shreekantan Nair in regard to the alleged discrimination in the matter of location of the Public Sector Undertakings. I would like to clarify that sites for defence production units have been and are selected after a full study of techno-economic considerations. A full techno-economic survey has been carried out before the location for the new electronic factory under the B.E.L. was decided. A number of techno-economic criteria have been set up for this study. The suitability of a location in Kerala was considered. Judged by these criteria, the location in Kerala got a low rating. There has been no discrimination whatever against Kerala, or against any other State.

Shri Sawant spoke about disparity between General Duty Officers on the one hand and Technical Officers on the other in the Air Force. The functions and roles of these cadres are different. It is therefore, inevitable that there should be some difference in the rules regulating recruitment, and pay and allowances. I would like to add that officers for the Technical Branch are selected from amongst engineering graduates. Officers of the Flying Branch have to be paid better because of the risk and strenuous nature of their duties and because of the shorter span of the active service.



Shri D.N. Tiwary drew my attention to the implementation by the Ministry of Defence of Government's language policy. I would like to assure him that efforts are being made to increase the use of Hindi in official work. I am keeping a personal watch over the progress of these efforts. We have set up an Official Language Implementation Committee in the Ministry. This Committee is headed by a Joint Secretary. Similar Committees have been set up in Services headquarters and Inter-Service Organisations. The progress made by these Committees is reviewed periodically.

It should be remembered that the arduous duty which personnel in the Armed Forces undertake at snow-bound altitudes or at places infested with health hazard, or keep vigil in furious weather conditions is not capable of being adequately compensated. Any monetary compensation will be too poor a reward. The proper reward for such a service is the appreciation by the nation of the sense of patriotism which inspires the personnel of the three forces to undergo any risk for the sake of security of the country. I take this opportunity to send my compliments to all personnel of the Armed Forces for the splendid work that they have been doing for the defence of the motherland.

Jagjivan Ram on atrocities on women : Excerpts from the speech

"At present we have a great lady at the helm of affairs of the Government. During the election, the ladies of this country voted massively for her party in the hope that her assurances and promises are going to be implemented. She had promised to restore law and order in the society. The ladies of the country are looking up to her. Will she rise to the occasion? Will she establish order in the country? Will she arouse the conscience of the nation that if the honour of one lady is threatened, hundreds of men will be prepared to protect it even at the cost of their lives.

That is what is required and I am sure if Smt. Indira Gandhi takes it into her head, she can create that spirit in this country. That is what is required. You cannot depend upon the police. It has been proposed that if a lady is taken to the police station, she has to be escorted by a



lady constable. But we have completely lost our faith in the lady constables after what happened in Madhya Pradesh. Any lady who has the slightest character in her would not ask a son to violate his mother. That was done by a lady constable.

I would suggest to the Home Minister that before a lady is appointed as a constable, it should be fully examined as to what has been her sexual past. Unless that is done, a lady should not be appointed a lady constable. Again no lady should be taken to the police station for investigation. It is not enough that she should be accompanied by a lady constable or even by her own family members, because instances have come to notice where the family members, husband and son have been driven out of the police station and the ladies have been violated. It is for the consideration of the Home Minister whether it should not be provided that only an advocate will accompany a lady to the police station and if the cost has to be borne, it should be borne by the Government. The cost involved is not much in comparison with the protection of the honour of this country's motherhood.

"I will suggest another thing. It has been suggested that deterrent punishment should be given to those who violate the honour of ladies in this country. Violation of a lady's honour is worse than her murder. The punishment therefore should be for that of murder. But I am going to suggest another thing. Our whole jurisprudence is based on English jurisprudence. A lady who has been violated has to prove that she has been violated. Is it possible in our society? Statistics have been quoted that, so many cases of rape have taken place.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. Any lady who has been violated will try to keep it a secret otherwise, she becomes a fallen lady. A fallen lady has no place in our society. So the statistics quoted give just a proportion of the actual incidents that are taking place in this country. We have already changed in some cases the concept of British jurisprudence. In this matter I will suggest that when a person is charged with the crime of rape, it should be his responsibility to prove that he is innocent. It is not for the lady to prove that she has been violated. This is not the first time that I am suggesting this.



This concept of jurisprudence that the accused is innocent until proved guilty has been changed in a few cases already by this House. I will suggest for the consideration of the Home Minister that it should be done at the earliest opportunity. The responsibility of proving his innocence should be that of the person who is charged with a crime of rape. This is required. It is not the question of Harijan lady; it is not the question of scheduled Tribe lady; it is the question of the Indian lady. Have not the Brahmin ladies been violated? Only yesterday, it was being discussed in the U.P. Assembly that 17 ladies had been violated during the course of these few months by the custodians of law and order alone and Brahmin ladies are included in that. Ladies belonging to minority community are also included in that.

What has happened at Narayanpur? Smt. Bajpai was waxing eloquent about Narayanpur. She is not aware of the fact that it is not the Harijan ladies who were violated; it is the minority Muslim ladies who were violated. So, one should be sure of facts. So, I will not restrict it to this small point. It is the question of honour of the Indian motherhood. And let the Government take stringent action. We open the newspapers in the morning and some incident somewhere is reported. Why is it happening like that? Because people are feeling emboldened. It has happened in Narayanpur but nothing has happened to the culprits. The Home Minister does not have even up-to-date Information. What legal action has been taken and at what stages these cases are pending? What has happened at Narayanpur? Where are the culprits? What action is likely to be taken against them?"



DR SHYAMA PRASAD MOOKERJEE

THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

(From the speech delivered on Dec. 6, 1950)



We want peace. We want to avoid war. We would like to follow the policy of negotiation. We would like to be patient though, not as the prime minister said, too patient, always. At the same time, we must guard ourselves against following a policy of drift. We must be able to arrive at decisions - we hope correct decisions - at the right time. We must also guard against the possibility of trying to please everyone. That is a dangerous pastime and very often we are reminded of the fate that overtook the old traveller - who was no doubt guided by moral principles - who tried to cross over a rickety bridge with his son and his donkey, sometimes riding on the donkey himself, then, persuaded by others, put the son on the donkey, then, placed both himself and the son on the donkey, and ultimately carried the donkey on his shoulders, with the result that he lost the donkey. In this case, if we try to follow the same policy, we may or may not lose any donkey, but we may lose our country. In any case, we must be able to make up our minds, especially at this critical juncture, as to what should be our outlook and our policy with regard to international matters.

What is happening in the world today? The world is in the grip of lust for power, possession, and prestige. These are the three things which are ruling the world. Naturally, we do not wish to take sides openly, and blatantly. We do not wish it to be known that we are simply the torch-bearers of somebody else, because we have also our own philosophy and our own ideology. The doctrine for which India has stood for has been the doctrine of live and let live. At the same time, if the danger signal comes, if the red signal comes, what is it that India will do? Suppose the Himalayas, which were considered to be impregnable, that huge border covering two thousand miles for which no separate



precaution or defence was thought to be necessary, but which has suddenly become an important frontier, happen to be the line through which there is penetration or infiltration into India, how is India going to defend herself? That also is very much connected with the internal conditions prevailing in India. The growing deterioration in our economic conditions is a menace to our internal security and our ability to check infiltration or aggression. I have nothing to say against Communist philosophy as such. The Indian people may decide to adopt whatever ism they like to adopt. But, we do certainly believe in democracy. We shall tolerate no external interference. I am not referring to the ideologies for which England or America may stand for, or their sins of omission and commission. But, there are certain fundamental and basic ideologies for which India has stood for, and even stands today. We stand for freedom of expression, for freedom of thought, for freedom of association and religion and our constitution has been based on the sound principles of democracy. India will not, therefore, and cannot accept any principles attached to totalitarianism or dictatorship. If there is an ultimate conflict between these two ideals, we cannot just sit on the fence. By all means let us try to negotiate, but if there is ultimate conflict, then what will India do? If the possibility of danger comes to India, can India alone, by herself, defend her territory against a big aggression? These are big question marks. It is not my purpose to go into these detailed questions today. But, I would certainly tell the prime minister that the people of India expect that there should be a more realistic approach in respect to the foreign policy of India. No doubt, we stand for peace; but the inconsistencies and uncertainties of our foreign policy are making us slowly drift towards something which may bring disaster to India more quickly than many think to be.

PROBLEMS OF MIGRATION BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND INDIA

(From the speech delivered on Nov 15, 1952 by Dr Shyama Prasad Mookerjee on problems of migration between India and Pakistan)

It is not for us to suggest remedies nor can many remedies be openly discussed. There sits the government. They are doing whatever they



like in respect of all matters. Does the Opposition go on giving advice to the government and is there any moral obligation on the government to accept that? We may have the privilege of making some suggestions and let him have the pleasure of rejecting them. But, it would not do for him to say it is fantastic and all that. Let him find a solution which will, in the real sense of the term, solve the problem. We will all be with him. Let there be a solution. We want to settle the question by peaceful methods. Here our Communist friends will speak. They have not agreed with us. We, all the parties barring the Communists, have stood on one platform in this respect. The Congress cannot come. But, I know there are lakhs of Congressmen who feel in the same manner as we do. If any peaceful method can be found, do it. Who wants war? Who wants trouble? I know what the horrors of war are. No one is saying, declare war tomorrow. Find out an effective solution by which these people can be enabled to live exercising their elementary rights without being ruined as refugees or beggars or slaves.

THE FIVE YEAR PLAN

(From the speech delivered on Dec. 18, 1952, Dr Mookerjee tried to show the impracticability of some of the Planning Commission proposals)

We are not enemies sitting face to face before each other. You feel for the country; we feel for the country as well. We want that this country should develop, we know that the political freedom will be meaningless and fruitless if it is not followed by economic freedom and by social equality. But let us proceed not on party lines. Let there be more tolerance; let there be more appreciation of the other man's point of view. If some of us do not agree with you, do not see eye to eye with you, do not immediately think that we are traitors or enemies of the country. We are here to serve the country and that is the spirit in which I have spoken. I have given you certain constructive suggestions; I have indicated certain lacunae. It is a beautiful cage that you have prepared. It may not be solid gold. It may be gold-painted; but the bird which is inside it is not a bird that has life. You have painted something, true, but



give life to let it be a living one. In what you have created there is lack of real enthusiasm of life. It shows tremendous intelligence; it shows tremendous driving power of the people who have been associated with it and I certainly, without any hesitation, pay my tribute not only to the persons at the top, but also to men below who worked in the Planning Commission for the last one year or so. I know some of them and how they were genuinely imbued with an idea of producing something which will carry the message to the people.

MOTION OF THANKS ON PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

(From the speech on the motion of thanks on President's address on 17 February, 1953)

Motion of thanks on the President's address, Dr. Mookerjee made a powerful attack on the government's policies in various areas as outlined in the address.

I know the prime minister levels the charge of communalism on all of us. Whenever he cannot meet an argument that is the answer that he has to give. (An hon'ble member: He knows nothing more). I am quite prepared, I am not making a challenging suggestion, because I am getting sick of this charge which is unfounded, if we want to consider whether communalism exists in the country or whether it is openly advocated as a plank by any political organization, let us fix a date for a debate and let us discuss the matter. Let government bring forward its charges. Let us have a chance of replying. We do not want communalism in this country. We do not want that on the basis of religion or on the basis of caste a section of Indians should go on hating other sections. We want to develop a society where people of diverse religions will be able to live as common citizens and enjoy common rights. If there is a feeling that something is being done opposite to this policy - which we say not - instead of talking in an abstract way! let us meet, privately if he so desires, let us all, against whom such charges are levelled, sit together and discuss. We are not enemies of this country. We are not people guilty of treason because we do not agree with you. It does not matter to which party people may belong. None of us is here for doing harm or deliberate injury to the state. Therefore, if the



government comes forward with such a charge-sheet it is only fair and just that it must be a real charge-sheet and we must be able to understand each other's point of view. We may differ. But let us agree to differ in a gentlemanly way and not go on exchanging fireworks and exchanging abuses with each other, because it does not carry us anywhere.

These are matters which have got to be finalized. On the question of the flag, let me say it is not a question of mere sentiment. The prime minister said the other day: 'Oh, these people who are agitating about this want their bhagwa flag to be raised over the Red Fort if the occasion arises.' He mistakes the issue. It is not a question of the bhagwa flag. The Congress accepted its flag with some alterations. It is the national flag of India now. Supposing some party, when they come into power, decide to change the design or the colour of the flag, that is not a crime. We have not said that the bhagwa flag should be flown where the RSS rule; the Communist party will have the red flag where they rule or the Socialist party will have their red flag where they rule or the Congress will have their own flag flying where they govern. Nobody has suggested that. Let there be one flag for the whole country. The prime minister has assured me and he has publicly stated that the Indian flag is the supreme flag and the other flag is subordinate to it. Very well. Let us accept it. Through that way I see the path of compromise. Let the Indian flag fly over Jammu and Kashmir state every day like other states. That point can be settled - the state flag may be used on special occasions.

II





SOMNATH CHATTERJEE

(Excerpts from his speech introducing the Hiren Mukerjee lecturer by Amartya Sen)

Social Justice is a theme, which was dealt with extensively by Prof. Hiren Mukerjee during his lifetime. The running theme of Prof. Hiren Mukerjee's conviction was the concern for the poor and the downtrodden, and until the last, he believed in the need to change the society for the all-round development of the country and the citizens.

Prof. Amartya Sen too is an ardent and articulate advocate of a just and inclusive society, in which no section of the people, particularly the poor, will be denied social and economic opportunities and the fruits of progress and prosperity, will be enjoyed by all. Given Prof. Hiren Mukerjee's and Prof. Amartya Sen's social and intellectual sensitivity and deep humanism, it is only appropriate that the theme of today's lecture is "Demands of Social Justice".

We have introduced this Lecture Series with a view to help bring in some of the issues of great concern to the common people of our country and of contemporary relevance to the centerstage of our socio-political discourse. It is only appropriate that the Parliament, being the highest representative body of the people, should initiate that process.

We have to go a long way in building a progressive and prosperous India that our founding fathers had visualized for the country at the dawn of Independence. Providing social and economic justice to the vast segments of the masses who have been kept out of the mainstream of our socio-political life should be among the core concerns of our country today, and it is a great challenge before our national leadership to look beyond partisan and confrontational politics and to work unitedly to realize this unfulfilled promise of our Freedom within the framework of a healthy democratic society.



I am sure that Prof. Sen's Lecture this evening, will stimulate a national debate on the need to create conditions for all our citizens, regardless of their caste and creed; to enjoy justice and equality; and other democratic rights for a dignified existence.

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AMARTYA SEN

‘NITI’ AND ‘NYAYA’

(Excerpts from Amartya Sen’s Hiren Mukerjee Lecture
at the Indian Parliament on August 11, 2008)

As I will discuss presently, this is a critically important distinction in the history of theories of justice, including those in Europe and the West. But I begin with a demarcation that has a clear role in Indian intellectual debates. Two distinct words – “niti” and “nyaya” – both of which stand for justice in classical Sanskrit, actually help us to differentiate between these two separate concentrations. It is true, of course, that words such as niti and nyaya have been used in many different senses in different philosophical and legal discussions in ancient India, but there is still a basic distinction between the respective concentrations of niti and nyaya.

Among the principal uses of the term niti are organizational propriety and behavioural correctness. In contrast with niti, the term nyaya stands for a more comprehensive concept of realized justice. In that line of vision, the roles of institutions, rules and organization, important as they are, have to be assessed in the broader and more inclusive perspective of nyaya, which is inescapably linked with the world that actually emerges, not just the institutions or rules we happen to have.

To consider an example, early Indian legal theorists talked disparagingly of what they called matsyanyaya, “justice in the world of fish,” where a big fish can freely devour a small fish. We are warned that avoiding matsyanyaya must be an overwhelming priority, and it is crucial to make sure that the “justice of fish” is not allowed to invade the world of human beings. The central recognition here is that the realization of justice in the sense of nyaya is not just a matter of judging institutions and rules, but of judging the societies themselves. Whatever the propriety of established organizations, if a big fish can devour a small fish at will, then that is a patent violation of human justice.



Let me consider a very simple example to make the distinction between *niti* and *nyaya* clearer. Ferdinand I, the Holy Roman emperor, famously claimed in the sixteenth century: “*Fiat justitia et pereat mundus*,” which can be translated as: “Let justice be done, though the world perish.” This severe maxim could figure as a *niti* – a very austere *niti* – that is advocated by some (indeed Emperor Ferdinand did just that), but it would be hard to accommodate a total catastrophe as an example of a just world, when we understand justice in the broader form of *nyaya*. If indeed the world does perish, there would be nothing much to admire in that accomplishment, even though the stern and severe *niti* leading to this extreme result could conceivably be defended with very sophisticated arguments of different kinds.

This distinction is also closely linked with the debate between Arjuna and Krishna in Mahabharata. It is on the grounds of the *nyaya* of the world that would emerge from the epic battle that Arjuna voiced his profound doubts about fighting in Kurukshetra. Arjuna does not doubt that theirs is the right cause, and that this is a just war, and also that his side will definitely win the battle given its strength – not least because of Arjuna's own remarkable skills as a warrior and as an extraordinary general. But so many people, Arjuna observes, will die in this battle. Arjuna also recognizes that he himself will have to kill a great many people, and further, many of the people who will be killed, on both sides, are persons for whom he has affection.

As the account goes, Krishna argues against Arjuna and convinces him that he must do his duty, no matter what the consequence of that might be. When that specific section of Mahabharata is separated out as a religious document, as it has increasingly been, in the form of Bhagavadgita, or Gita for short, Krishna's teachings are seen as the end of the argument (Arjuna, in this understanding, had doubts, but Krishna dispelled them). But as I have discussed elsewhere, in my book *The Argumentative Indian*, looking only at the end point of a debate is not an ideal way of understanding discussions in general, and it is particularly misleading in appreciating the rich Indian argumentative tradition.



I have pursued this interpretational issue further in my “Foreword” to the new 7-volume translation of Valmiki’s Ramayana, in the Clay Sanskrit Library, which will be published shortly. I have discussed there why the social and moral contents of the epics cannot be understood adequately merely by noting who is supposed to have ended up prevailing in a particular argument – the intellectual content of the epics is much richer than that. Mahabharata gives both Krishna and Arjuna room to develop their respective arguments. Indeed, the tragic desolation, described towards the end of Mahabharata, that the post-combat and post-carnage land faces following the epic battle (with funeral pyres burning in massive unison and women weeping about the death of their loved ones), can even be seen as something of a vindication of Arjuna’s profound doubts.

The point here is not so much to argue that Arjuna would have been definitely right to refuse to fight (there were many arguments against Arjuna’s withdrawal from battle even other than the ones on which Krishna concentrated), but that there is much to weigh and balance here and that Arjuna’s human-life-centred perspective is not dismissable by the mere invoking of some apparent duty to fight, irrespective of consequences. Indeed, this is a dichotomy with two substantial positions each of which can be defended in different ways. If my own understanding of the decisional problem is strongly influenced by the *nyaya* of the realized world and the importance of human lives (and in that, I am sympathetic to Arjuna’s focus on what actually happens to the people and the world), this does not indicate that I do not see the argument on the other side.

Let me now come back to the formulation of theories of justice. The subject of social justice has been discussed over the ages across the world, but the discipline received a powerful boost during the European Enlightenment, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, particularly in the rebellious thoughts closely aligned in many ways to the intellectual background of the French Revolution as well as the American Revolution.

“How does democracy bring about this result? In terms of votes and



elections there may be an apparent puzzle here, since the proportion of the population affected, or even threatened, by any famine tends to be very small – typically less than ten percent (often far less than that). So if it were true that only disaffected famine victims vote against a ruling government when a famine rages or threatens, then the government could still be quite secure and rather unthreatened. What makes a famine such a political disaster for a ruling government is the reach of public reasoning and the role of the media, which move and energize a very large proportion of the general public to protest and shout about the “uncaring” government when famines actually happen – or come close to happening. The achievement in preventing famines is a tribute not just to the institution of democracy, but also to the way this institution is used and made to function”.

II





BARACK OBAMA

'BOUND BY OUR SHARED INTERESTS AND VALUES'

(US President Barack Obama's address to joint Parliament session on November 8, 2010...as Prepared for Delivery)

Mr. Vice President, Madame Speaker, Mr. Prime Minister, Members of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, and most of all, the people of India.

I thank you for the great honor of addressing the representatives of more than one billion Indians and the world's largest democracy. I bring the greetings and friendship of the world's oldest democracy the U.S.A, including nearly three million proud and patriotic Indian Americans.

Over the past three days, my wife Michelle and I have experienced the beauty and dynamism of India and its people. From the majesty of Humayun's Tomb to the advanced technologies that are empowering farmers and women who are the backbone of Indian society. From a Diwali celebration with schoolchildren to the innovators who are fueling India's economic rise. From the university students who will chart India's future, to you leaders who helped to bring India to this moment of promise.

At every stop, we have been welcomed with the hospitality for which Indians have always been known. So to you and the people of India, on behalf of me, Michelle and the American people, please accept our deepest thanks. Bahoot dhanyavad.

I am not the first American president to visit India. Nor will I be the last. But I am proud to visit India so early in my presidency. It is no coincidence that India is my first stop on a visit to Asia, or that this has been my longest visit to another country since becoming President.

For in Asia and around the world, India is not simply emerging; India has already emerged. And it is my firm belief that the relationship



between the United States and India bound by our shared interests and values will be one of the defining partnerships of the 21st century. This is the partnership I have come here to build. This is the vision that our nations can realize together.

My confidence in our shared future is grounded in my respect for India's treasured past a civilization that has been shaping the world for thousands of years. Indians unlocked the intricacies of the human body and the vastness of our universe. And it is no exaggeration to say that our information age is rooted in Indian innovations including the number zero.

India not only opened our minds, she expanded our moral imagination. With religious texts that still summon the faithful to lives of dignity and discipline. With poets who imagined a future "where the mind is without fear and the head is held high." And with a man whose message of love and justice endures the Father of your Nation, Mahatma Gandhi.

For me and Michelle, this visit has therefore held special meaning. Throughout my life, including my work as a young man on behalf of the urban poor, I have always found inspiration in the life of Gandhiji and in his simple and profound lesson to be the change we seek in the world. And just as he summoned Indians to seek their destiny, he influenced champions of equality in my own country, including a young Martin Luther King. After making his pilgrimage to India a half century ago, Dr. King called Gandhi's philosophy of non-violent resistance "the only logical and moral approach" in the struggle for justice and progress.

So we were honored to visit the residence where Gandhi and King both stayed, Mani Bhavan. We were humbled to pay our respects at Raj Ghat. And I am mindful that I might not be standing before you today, as President of the United States, had it not been for Gandhi and the message he shared with America and the world.

An ancient civilization of science and innovation. A fundamental faith in human progress. This is the sturdy foundation upon which you have built ever since that stroke of midnight when the tricolor was raised over a free and independent India. And despite the skeptics who said



that this country was simply too poor, too vast, too diverse to succeed, you surmounted overwhelming odds and became a model to the world.

Instead of slipping into starvation, you launched a Green Revolution that fed millions. Instead of becoming dependent on commodities and exports, you invested in science and technology and in your greatest resource the Indian people. And the world sees the results, from the supercomputers you build to the Indian flag that you put on the moon.

Instead of resisting the global economy, you became one of its engines reforming the licensing raj and unleashing an economic marvel that has lifted tens of millions from poverty and created one of the world's largest middle classes.

Instead of succumbing to division, you have shown that the strength of India the very idea of India is its embrace of all colors, castes and creeds. It's the diversity represented in this chamber today. It's the richness of faiths celebrated by a visitor to my hometown of Chicago more than a century ago the renowned Swami Vivekananda. He said that, "holiness, purity and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character."

And instead of being lured by the false notion that progress must come at the expense of freedom, you built the institutions upon which true democracy depends free and fair elections, which enable citizens to choose their own leaders without recourse to arms; an independent judiciary and the rule of law, which allows people to address their grievances; and a thriving free press and vibrant civil society which allows every voice to be heard. And this year, as India marks 60 years with a strong and democratic constitution, the lesson is clear: India has succeeded, not in spite of democracy; India has succeeded because of democracy.

Just as India has changed, so too has the relationship between our two nations. In the decades after independence, India advanced its interests as a proud leader of the nonaligned movement. Yet too often,



the United States and India found ourselves on opposite sides of a North-South divide and estranged by a long Cold War. Those days are over.

Here in India, two successive governments led by different parties have recognized that deeper partnership with America is both natural and necessary. In the United States, both of my predecessors one Democrat, one Republican worked to bring us closer, leading to increased trade and a landmark civil nuclear agreement.

Since then, people in both our countries have asked: what next? How can we build on this progress and realize the full potential of our partnership? That is what I want to address today the future that the United States seeks in an interconnected world; why I believe that India is indispensable to this vision; and how we can forge a truly global partnership not in just one or two areas, but across many; not just for our mutual benefit, but for the world's.

Of course, only Indians can determine India's national interests and how to advance them on the world stage. But I stand before you today because I am convinced that the interests of the United States and the interests we share with India are best advanced in partnership.

The United States seeks security, the security of our country, allies and partners. We seek prosperity a strong and growing economy in an open international economic system. We seek respect for universal values. And we seek a just and sustainable international order that promotes peace and security by meeting global challenges through stronger global cooperation.

To advance these interests, I have committed the United States to comprehensive engagement with the world, based on mutual interest and mutual respect. And a central pillar of this engagement is forging deeper cooperation with 21st century centers of influence and that includes India. This is why I believe that India and America are indispensable partners in meeting the challenges of our time.

Since taking office, I've therefore made our relationship a priority. I was



proud to welcome Prime Minister Singh for the first official state visit of my presidency. For the first time ever, our governments are working together across the whole range of common challenges we face. And let me say it as clearly as I can: the United States not only welcomes India as a rising global power, we fervently support it, and we have worked to help make it a reality.

Together with our partners, we have made the G20 the premier forum for international economic cooperation, bringing more voices to the table of global economic decision-making, including India. We have increased the role of emerging economies like India at international financial institutions. We valued India's important role at Copenhagen, where, for the first time, all major economies committed to take action to confront climate change and to stand by those actions. We salute India's long history as a leading contributor to United Nations peacekeeping missions. And we welcome India as it prepares to take its seat on the United Nations Security Council.

In short, with India assuming its rightful place in the world, we have an historic opportunity to make the relationship between our two countries a defining partnership of the century ahead. And I believe we can do so by working together in three important areas.

First, as global partners we can promote prosperity in both our countries. Together, we can create the high-tech, high-wage jobs of the future. With my visit, we are now ready to begin implementing our civil nuclear agreement. This will help meet India's growing energy needs and create thousands of jobs in both our countries.

We need to forge partnerships in high-tech sectors like defense and civil space. So we have removed Indian organizations from our so-called "entity list." And we'll work to reform our controls on exports. Both of these steps will ensure that Indian companies seeking high-tech trade and technologies from America are treated the same as our closest allies and partners.

We can pursue joint research and development to create green jobs; give Indians more access to cleaner, affordable energy; meet the



commitments we made at Copenhagen; and show the possibilities of low-carbon growth.

Together, we can resist the protectionism that stifles growth and innovation. The United States remains and will continue to remain one of the most open economies in the world. And by opening markets and reducing barriers to foreign investment, India can realize its full economic potential as well. As G20 partners, we can make sure the global economic recovery is strong and durable. And we can keep striving for a Doha Round that is ambitious and balanced with the courage to make the compromises that are necessary so global trade works for all economies.

Together, we can strengthen agriculture. Cooperation between Indian and American researchers and scientists sparked the Green Revolution. Today, India is a leader in using technology to empower farmers, like those I met yesterday who get free updates on market and weather conditions on their cell phones. And the United States is a leader in agricultural productivity and research. Now, as farmers and rural areas face the effects of climate change and drought, we'll work together to spark a second, more sustainable Evergreen Revolution.

Together, we're going to improve Indian weather forecasting systems before the next monsoon season. We aim to help millions of Indian farming households save water and increase productivity; improve food processing so crops don't spoil on the way to market; and enhance climate and crop forecasting to avoid losses that cripple communities and drive up food prices.

Because the wealth of a nation also depends on the health of its people, we'll continue to support India's efforts against diseases like tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, and as global partners, we'll work to improve global health by preventing the spread of pandemic flu. And because knowledge is the currency of the 21st century, we'll increase exchanges between our students, colleges and universities, which are among the best in the world.

As we work to advance our shared prosperity, we can partner to



address a second priority our shared security. In Mumbai, I met with the courageous families and survivors of that barbaric attack. And here in this Parliament, which was itself targeted because of the democracy it represents, we honor the memory of all those who have been taken from us, including American citizens on 26/11 and Indian citizens on 9/11.

This is the bond we share. It's why we insist that nothing ever justifies the slaughter of innocent men, women and children. It's why we're working together, more closely than ever, to prevent terrorist attacks and to deepen our cooperation even further. And it's why, as strong and resilient societies, we refuse to live in fear, we will not sacrifice the values and rule of law that defines us, and we will never waver in the defense of our people.

America's fight against al Qaeda and its terrorist affiliates is why we persevere in Afghanistan, where major development assistance from India has improved the lives of the Afghan people. We're making progress in our mission to break the Taliban's momentum and to train Afghan forces so they can take the lead for their security. And while I have made it clear that American forces will begin the transition to Afghan responsibility next summer, I have also made it clear that America's commitment to the Afghan people will endure. The United States will not abandon the people of Afghanistan or the region to the violent extremists who threaten us all.

Our strategy to disrupt, dismantle and defeat al Qaeda and its affiliates has to succeed on both sides of the border. That is why we have worked with the Pakistani government to address the threat of terrorist networks in the border region. The Pakistani government increasingly recognizes that these networks are not just a threat outside of Pakistan they are a threat to the Pakistani people, who have suffered greatly at the hands of violent extremists.

And we will continue to insist to Pakistan's leaders that terrorist safe-havens within their borders are unacceptable, and that the terrorists behind the Mumbai attacks be brought to justice. We must also



recognize that all of us have and interest in both an Afghanistan and a Pakistan that is stable, prosperous and democratic and none more so than India.

More broadly, India and the United States can partner in Asia. Today, the United States is once again playing a leadership role in Asia strengthening old alliances; deepening relationships, as we are doing with China; and we're reengaging with regional organizations like ASEAN and joining the East Asia summit organizations in which India is also a partner. Like your neighbors in Southeast Asia, we want India to not only "look East," we want India to "engage East" because it will increase the security and prosperity of all our nations.

And as two global leaders, the United States and India can partner for global security especially as India serves on the Security Council over the next two years. Indeed, the just and sustainable international order that America seeks includes a United Nations that is efficient, effective, credible and legitimate. That is why I can say today in the years ahead, I look forward to a reformed U.N. Security Council that includes India as a permanent member.

Now, let me suggest that with increased power comes increased responsibility. The United Nations exists to fulfill its founding ideals of preserving peace and security, promoting global cooperation, and advancing human rights. These are the responsibilities of all nations, but especially those that seek to lead in the 21st century. And so we look forward to working with India and other nations that aspire to Security Council membership to ensure that the Security Council is effective; that resolutions are implemented and sanctions enforced; and that we strengthen the international norms which recognize the rights and responsibilities of all nations and individuals.

This includes our responsibility to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. Since I took office, the United States has reduced the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy, and agreed with Russia to reduce our arsenals. We have put preventing nuclear proliferation and nuclear terrorism at the top of our nuclear agenda,



and strengthened the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Together, the United States and India can pursue our goal of securing the world's vulnerable nuclear materials. We can make it clear that even as every nation has the right to peaceful nuclear energy, every nation must also meet its international obligations and that includes the Islamic Republic of Iran. And together, we can pursue a vision that Indian leaders have espoused since independence a world without nuclear weapons.

This leads me to the final area where our countries can partner strengthening the foundations of democratic governance, not only at home but abroad.

Now, in a new collaboration on open government, our two countries are going to share our experience, identify what works, and develop the next-generation of tools to empower citizens. And in another example of how American and Indian partnership can address global challenges, we're going to share these innovations with civil society groups and countries around the world. We're going to show that democracy, more than any other form of government, delivers for the common man and woman.

As the world's two largest democracies, we must also never forget that the price of our own freedom is standing up for the freedom of others. Indians know this, for it is the story of your nation. Before he ever began his struggle for Indian independence, Gandhi stood up for the rights of Indians in South Africa. Just as others, including the United States, supported Indian independence, India championed the self-determination of peoples from Africa to Asia as they too broke free from colonialism. And along with the United States, you've been a leader in supporting democratic development and civil society groups around the world. This, too, is part of India's greatness.

Every country will follow its own path. No one nation has a monopoly on wisdom, and no nation should ever try to impose its values on another. But when peaceful democratic movements are suppressed as



in Burma then the democracies of the world cannot remain silent. For it is unacceptable to gun down peaceful protestors and incarcerate political prisoners decade after decade. It is unacceptable to hold the aspirations of an entire people hostage to the greed and paranoia of a bankrupt regime. It is unacceptable to steal an election, as the regime in Burma has done again for all the world to see.

Faced with such gross violations of human rights, it is the responsibility of the international community especially leaders like the United States and India to condemn it. If I can be frank, in international fora, India has often avoided these issues. But speaking up for those who cannot do so for themselves is not interfering in the affairs of other countries. It's not violating the rights of sovereign nations. It's staying true to our democratic principles. It's giving meaning to the human rights that we say are universal. And it sustains the progress that in Asia and around the world has helped turn dictatorships into democracies and ultimately increased our security in the world.

Promoting shared prosperity. Preserving peace and security. Strengthening democratic governance and human rights. These are the responsibilities of leadership. And, as global partners, this is the leadership that the United States and India can offer in the 21st century. Ultimately, however, this cannot be a relationship only between presidents and prime ministers, or in the halls of this parliament. Ultimately, this must be a partnership between our peoples. So I want to conclude by speaking directly to the people of India watching today.

In your lives, you have overcome odds that might have overwhelmed a lesser country. In just decades, you have achieved progress and development that took other nations centuries. And now you are assuming your rightful place as a leader among nations. Your parents and grandparents imagined this. Your children and grandchildren will look back on this. But only you this generation of Indians can seize the possibility of this moment.

As you carry on with the hard work ahead, I want every Indian citizen to know: the United States of America will not simply be cheering you on



from the sidelines. We will be right there with you, shoulder to shoulder. Because we believe in the promise of India. And we believe that the future is what we make it.

We believe that no matter who you are or where you come from, every person can fulfill their God-given potential, just as a Dalit like Dr. Ambedkar could lift himself up and pen the words of the Constitution that protects the rights of all Indians.

We believe that no matter where you live whether a village in Punjab or the bylanes of Chandni Chowk...an old section of Kolkata or a new high-rise in Bangalore every person deserves the same chance to live in security and dignity, to get an education, to find work, and to give their children a better future.

And we believe that when countries and cultures put aside old habits and attitudes that keep people apart, when we recognize our common humanity, then we can begin to fulfill the aspirations we share. It's a simple lesson contained in that collection of stories which has guided Indians for centuries the Panchtantra. And it's the spirit of the inscription seen by all who enter this great hall: 'That one is mine and the other a stranger is the concept of little minds. But to the large-hearted, the world itself is their family.'

This is the story of India; it's the story of America that despite their differences, people can see themselves in one another, and work together and succeed together as one proud nation. And it can be the spirit of the partnership between our nations that even as we honor the histories which in different times kept us apart, even as we preserve what makes us unique in a globalized world, we can recognize how much we can achieve together.

Thank you, Jai Hind!, and long live the partnership between India and the United States



BILL CLINTON

'INDIA TEACHES US SOME VERY BASIC LESSONS'

(US President Bill Clinton's address to Parliament on March 22, 2000)



Mr. Vice President, Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker, members of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, I am privileged to speak to you and, through you, to the people of India. I am honored to be joined today by members of my Cabinet and staff at the White House, and a very large representation of members of our United States Congress from both political parties. We're all honored to be here and we thank you for your warm welcome.

I would also like to thank the people of India for their kindness to my daughter and my mother-in-law and, on their previous trip, to my wife and my daughter.

I have looked forward to this day with great anticipation. This whole trip has meant a great deal to me, especially to this point, the opportunity I had to visit the Gandhi memorial, to express on behalf of all the people of the United States our gratitude for the life, the work, the thought of Gandhi, without which the great civil rights revolution in the United States would never have succeeded on a peaceful plane.

As Prime Minister Vajpayee has said, India and America are natural allies, two nations conceived in liberty, each finding strength in its diversity, each seeing in the other a reflection of its own aspiration for a more humane and just world.

A poet once said the world's inhabitants can be divided into "those that have seen the Taj Mahal and those that have not." (Laughter.) Well, in a few hours I will have a chance to cross over to the happier side of that divide. But I hope, in a larger sense, that my visit will help the American people to see the new India and to understand you better. And I hope that the visit will help India to understand America better. And that by



listening to each other we can build a true partnership of mutual respect and common endeavor.

From a distance, India often appears as a kaleidoscope of competing, perhaps superficial, images. Is it atomic weapons, or ahimsa? A land struggling against poverty and inequality, or the world's largest middle-class society? Is it still simmering with communal tensions, or history's most successful melting pot? Is it Bollywood or Satyajit Ray? Swetta Chetty or Alla Rakha? Is it the handloom or the hyperlink?

The truth is, no single image can possibly do justice to your great nation. But beyond the complexities and the apparent contradictions, I believe India teaches us some very basic lessons.

The first is about democracy. There are still those who deny that democracy is a universal aspiration; who say it works only for people of a certain culture, or a certain degree of economic development. India has been proving them wrong for 52 years now. Here is a country where more than 2 million people hold elected office in local government; a country that shows at every election that those who possess the least cherish their vote the most. Far from washing away the uniqueness of your culture, your democracy has brought out the richness of its tapestry, and given you the knot that holds it together.

A second lesson India teaches is about diversity. But around the world there is a chorus of voices who say ethnic and religious diversity is a threat; who argue that the only way to keep different people from killing one another is to keep them as far apart as possible. But India has shown us a better way. For all the troubles you have seen, surely the subcontinent has seen more innocence hurt in the efforts to divide people by ethnicity and faith than by the efforts to bring them together in peace and harmony.

Under trying circumstances, you have shown the world how to live with difference. You have shown that tolerance and mutual respect are in many ways the keys to our common survival. That is something the whole world needs to learn.



A third lesson India teaches is about globalization and what may be the central debate of our time. Many people believe the forces of globalization are inherently divisive; that they can only widen the gap between rich and poor. That is a valid fear, but I believe wrong.

As the distance between producers large and small, and customers near and far becomes less relevant, developing countries will have opportunities not only to succeed, but to lead in lifting more people out of poverty more quickly than at any time in human history. In the old economy, location was everything. In the new economy, information, education and motivation are everything -- and India is proving it.

You liberated your markets and now you have one of the 10 fastest growing economies in the world. At the rate of growth within your grasp, India's standard of living could rise by 500 percent in just 20 years. You embraced information technology and now, when Americans and other big software companies call for consumer and customer support, they're just as likely to find themselves talking to an expert in Bangalore as one in Seattle.

You decentralized authority, giving more individuals and communities the freedom to succeed. In that way, you affirmed what every successful country is finding in its own way: globalization does not favor nations with a licensing raj, it does favor nations with a panchayat raj. And the world has been beating a path to your door.

In the new millennium, every great country must answer one overarching question: how shall we define our greatness? Every country -- America included -- is tempted to cling to yesterday's definition of economic and military might. But true leadership for the United States and India derives more from the power of our example and the potential of our people.

I believe that the greatest of India's many gifts to the world is the example its people have set "from Midnight to Millennium." Think of it: virtually every challenge humanity knows can be found here in India. And every solution to every challenge can be found here as well:



confidence in democracy; tolerance for diversity; a willingness to embrace social change. That is why Americans admire India; why we welcome India's leadership in the region and the world; and why we want to take our partnership to a new level, to advance our common values and interests, and to resolve the differences that still remain.

There were long periods when that would not have been possible. Though our democratic ideals gave us a starting point in common, and our dreams of peace and prosperity gave us a common destination, there was for too long too little common ground between East and West, North and South. Now, thankfully, the old barriers between nations and people, economies and cultures, are being replaced by vast networks of cooperation and commerce. With our open, entrepreneurial societies, India and America are at the center of those networks. We must expand them, and defeat the forces that threaten them.

To succeed, I believe there are four large challenges India and the United States must meet together – challenges that should define our partnership in the years ahead.

The first of these challenges is to get our own economic relationship right. Americans have applauded your efforts to open your economy, your commitment to a new wave of economic reform; your determination to bring the fruits of growth to all your people. We are proud to support India's growth as your largest partner in trade and investment. And we want to see more Indians and more Americans benefit from our economic ties, especially in the cutting edge fields of information technology, biotechnology and clean energy.

The private sector will drive this progress, but our job as governments is to create the conditions that will allow them to succeed in doing so, and to reduce the remaining impediments to trade and investment between us.

Our second challenge is to sustain global economic growth in a way that lifts the lives of rich and poor alike, both across and within national



borders. Part of the world today lives at the cutting edge of change, while a big part still exists at the bare edge of survival. Part of the world lives in the information age. Part of the world does not even reach the clean water age. And often the two live side by side. It is unacceptable, it is intolerable; thankfully, it is unnecessary and it is far more than a regional crisis. Whether around the corner or around the world, abject poverty in this new economy is an affront to our common humanity and a threat to our common prosperity.

The problem is truly immense, as you know far better than I. But perhaps for the first time in all history, few would dispute that we know the solutions. We know we need to invest in education and literacy, so that children can have soaring dreams and the tools to realize them. We know we need to make a special commitment in developing nations to the education of young girls, as well as young boys. Everything we have learned about development tells us that when women have access to knowledge, to health, to economic opportunity and to civil rights, children thrive, families succeed and countries prosper.

Here again, we see how a problem and its answers can be found side by side in India. For every economist who preaches the virtues of women's empowerment points at first to the achievements of India's state of Kerala - I knew there would be somebody here from Kerala.

To promote development, we know we must conquer the diseases that kill people and progress. Last December, India immunized 140 million children against polio, the biggest public health effort in human history. I congratulate you on that.

I have launched an initiative in the United States to speed the development of vaccines for malaria, tuberculosis and AIDS -- the biggest infectious killers of our time. This July, when our partners in the G-8 meet in Japan, I will urge them to join us.

But that is not enough, for at best, effective vaccines are years away. Especially for AIDS, we need a commitment today to prevention, and that means straight talk and an end to stigmatizing. As Prime Minister



Vajpayee said, no one should ever speak of AIDS as someone else's problem. This has long been a big problem for the United States. It is now a big problem for you. I promise you America's partnership in the continued struggle.

To promote development, we know we must also stand with those struggling for human rights and freedom around the world and in the region. For as the economist Amartya Sen has said, no system of government has done a better job in easing human want, in averting human catastrophes, than democracy. I am proud America and India will stand together on the right side of history when we launch the Community of Democracies in Warsaw this summer.

All of these steps are essential to lifting people's lives. But there is yet another. With greater trade and the growth it brings, we can multiply the gains of education, better health and democratic empowerment. That is why I hope we will work together to launch a new global trade round that will promote economic development for all.

One of the benefits of the World Trade Organization is that it has given developing countries a bigger voice in global trade policy. Developing countries have used that voice to urge richer nations to open their markets further so that all can have a chance to grow. That is something the opponents of the WTO don't fully appreciate yet.

We need to remind them that when Indians and Brazilians and Indonesians speak up for open trade, they are not speaking for some narrow corporate interest, but for a huge part of humanity that has no interest in being saved from development. Of course, trade should not be a race to the bottom in environmental and labor standards, but neither should fears about trade keep part of our global community forever at the bottom.

Yet we must also remember that those who are concerned about the impact of globalization in terms of inequality, in environmental degradation do speak for a large part of humanity. Those who believe that trade should contribute not just to the wealth, but also to the



fairness of societies; those who share Nehru's dream of a structure for living that fulfills our material needs, and at the same time sustains our mind and spirit.

We can advance these values without engaging in rich-country protectionism. Indeed, to sustain a consensus for open trade, we must find a way to advance these values as well. That is my motivation, and my only motivation, in seeking a dialogue about the connections between labor, the environment, and trade and development.

I would remind you - and I want to emphasize this -- the United States has the most open markets of any wealthy country in the world. We have the largest trade deficit. We also have had a strong economy, because we have welcomed the products and the services from the labor of people throughout the world. I am for an open global trading system. But we must do it in a way that advances the cause of social justice around the world.

The third challenge we face is to see that the prosperity and growth of the information age require us to abandon some of the outdated truths of the Industrial Age. As the economy grows faster today, for example, when children are kept in school, not put to work. Think about the industries that are driving our growth today in India and in America. Just as oil enriched the nations who had it in the 20th century, clearly knowledge is doing the same for the nations who have it in the 21st century. The difference is, knowledge can be tapped by all people everywhere, and it will never run out.

We must also find ways to achieve robust growth while protecting the environment and reversing climate change. I'm convinced we can do that as well. We will see in the next few years, for example, automobiles that are three, four, perhaps five times as efficient as those being driven today. Soon scientists will make alternative sources of energy more widely available and more affordable. Just for example, before long chemists almost certainly will unlock the block that will allow us to produce eight or nine gallons of fuel from bio-fuels, farm fuels, using



only one gallon of gasoline.

Indian scientists are at the forefront of this kind of research -- pioneering the use of solar energy to power rural communities; developing electric cars for use in crowded cities; converting agricultural waste into electricity. If we can deepen our cooperation for clean energy, we will strengthen our economies, improve our people's health and fight global warming. This should be a vital element of our new partnership.

A fourth challenge we face is to protect the gains of democracy and development from the forces, which threaten to undermine them. There is the danger of organized crime and drugs. There is the evil of trafficking in human beings, a modern form of slavery. And of course, there is the threat of terrorism. Both our nations know it all too well.

Americans understood the pain and agony you went through during the Indian Airlines hijacking. And I saw that pain firsthand when I met with the parents and the widow of the young man who was killed on that airplane. We grieve with you for the Sikhs who were killed in Kashmir and our heart goes out to their families. We will work with you to build a system of justice, to strengthen our cooperation against terror. We must never relax our vigilance or allow the perpetrators to intimidate us into retreating from our democratic ideals.

Another danger we face is the spread of weapons of mass destruction to those who might have no reservations about using them. I still believe this is the greatest potential threat to the security we all face in the 21st century. It is why we must be vigilant in fighting the spread of chemical and biological weapons. And it is why we must both keep working closely to resolve our remaining differences on nuclear proliferation.

I am aware that I speak to you on behalf of a nation that has possessed nuclear weapons for 55 years and more. But since 1988, the United States has dismantled more than 13,000 nuclear weapons. We have helped Russia to dismantle their nuclear weapons and to safeguard the



material that remains. We have agreed to an outline of a treaty with Russia that will reduce our remaining nuclear arsenal by more than half. We are producing no more fissile material, developing no new land- or submarine-based missiles, engaging in no new nuclear testing.

From South America to South Africa, nations are foreswearing these weapons, realizing that a nuclear future is not a more secure future. Most of the world is moving toward the elimination of nuclear weapons. That goal is not advanced if any country, in any region, it moves in the other direction.

I say this with great respect. Only India can determine its own interests. Only India can know if it truly is safer today than before the tests. Only India can determine if it will benefit from expanding its nuclear and missile capabilities, if its neighbors respond by doing the same thing. Only India knows if it can afford a sustained investment in both conventional and nuclear forces while meeting its goals for human development. These are questions others may ask, but only you can answer.

I can only speak to you as a friend about America's own experience during the Cold War. We were geographically distant from the Soviet Union. We were not engaged in direct armed combat. Through years of direct dialogue with our adversary, we each had a very good idea of the other's capabilities, doctrines, and intentions. We each spent billions of dollars on elaborate command and control systems, for nuclear weapons are not cheap.

And yet, in spite of all of this - and as I sometimes say jokingly, in spite of the fact that both sides had very good spies, and that was a good thing in spite of all of this, we came far too close to nuclear war. We learned that deterrence alone cannot be relied on to prevent accident or miscalculation. And in a nuclear standoff, there is nothing more dangerous than believing there is no danger.

I can also repeat what I said at the outset. India is a leader, a great nation, which by virtue of its size, its achievements, and its example, has



the ability to shape the character of our time. For any of us, to claim that mantle and assert that status is to accept first and foremost that our actions have consequences for others beyond our borders. Great nations with broad horizons must consider whether actions advance or hinder what Nehru called the larger cause of humanity.

So India's nuclear policies, inevitably, have consequences beyond your borders: eroding the barriers against the spread of nuclear weapons, discouraging nations that have chosen to foreswear these weapons, encouraging others to keep their options open. But if India's nuclear test shook the world, India's leadership for nonproliferation can certainly move the world.

India and the United States have reaffirmed our commitment to forego nuclear testing. And for that I thank the Prime Minister, the government and the people of India. But in our own self-interest - and I say this again - in our own self-interest we can do more. I believe both nations should join the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty; work to launch negotiations on a treaty to end the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons; strengthen export controls. And India can pursue defense policies in keeping with its commitment not to seek a nuclear or missile arms race, which the Prime Minister has forcefully reaffirmed just in these last couple of days.

Again, I do not presume to speak for you or to tell you what to decide. It is not my place. You are a great nation and you must decide. But I ask you to continue our dialogue on these issues. And let us turn our dialogue into a genuine partnership against proliferation. If we make progress in narrowing our differences, we will be both more secure, and our relationship can reach its full potential.

I hope progress can also be made in overcoming a source of tension in this region, including the tensions between India and Pakistan. I share many of your government's concerns about the course Pakistan is taking; your disappointment that past overtures have not always met with success; your outrage over recent violence. I know it is difficult to



be a democracy bordered by nations whose governments reject democracy.

But I also believe - I also believe India has a special opportunity, as a democracy, to show its neighbors that democracy is about dialogue. It does not have to be about friendship, but it is about building working relationships among people who differ.

One of the wisest things anyone ever said to me is that you don't make peace with your friends. That is what the late Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin told me before he signed the Oslo Accords with the Palestinians, with whom he had been fighting for decades. It is well to remember - I remind myself of it all the time, even when I have arguments with members of the other party in my Congress you don't make peace with your friends.

Engagement with adversaries is not the same thing as endorsement. It does not require setting aside legitimate grievances. Indeed, I strongly believe that what has happened since your Prime Minister made his courageous journey to Lahore only reinforces the need for dialogue.

I can think of no enduring solution to this problem that can be achieved in any other way. In the end, for the sake of the innocents who always suffer the most, someone must end the contest of inflicting and absorbing pain.

Let me also make clear, as I have repeatedly, I have certainly not come to South Asia to mediate the dispute over Kashmir. Only India and Pakistan can work out the problems between them. And I will say the same thing to General Musharraf in Islamabad. But if outsiders cannot resolve this problem, I hope you will create the opportunity to do it yourselves, calling on the support of others who can help where possible, as American diplomacy did in urging the Pakistanis to go back behind the line of control in the Kargil crisis.

In the meantime, I will continue to stress that this should be a time for restraint, for respect for the line of control, for renewed lines of communication.



Addressing this challenge and all the others I mentioned will require us to be closer partners and better friends, and to remember that good friends, out of respect, are honest with one another. And even when they do not agree, they always try to find common ground.

I have read that one of the unique qualities of Indian classical music is its elasticity. The composer lays down a foundation, a structure of melodic and rhythmic arrangements, but the player has to improvise within that structure to bring the raga* to life.

Our relationship is like that. The composers of our past have given us a foundation of shared democratic ideals. It is up to us to give life to those ideals in this time. The melodies do not have to be the same to be beautiful to both of us. But if we listen to each other, and we strive to realize our vision together, we will write a symphony far greater than the sum of our individual notes.

The key is to genuinely and respectfully listen to each other. If we do, Americans will better understand the scope of India's achievements, and the dangers India still faces in this troubled part of the world. We will understand that India will not choose a particular course simply because others wish it to do so. It will choose only what it believes its interests clearly demand and what its people democratically embrace.

If we listen to each other, I also believe Indians will understand better that America very much wants you to succeed. Time and again in my time as President, America has found that it is the weakness of great nations, not their strength, that threatens our vision for tomorrow.

So we want India to be strong; to be secure; to be united; to be a force for a safer, more prosperous, more democratic world. Whatever we ask of you, we ask in that spirit alone. After too long a period of estrangement, India and the United States have learned that being natural allies is a wonderful thing, but it is not enough. Our task is to turn a common vision into common achievements so that partners in spirit can be partners in fact. We have already come a long way to this day of new beginnings, but we still have promises to keep, challenges



to meet and hopes to redeem.

So let us seize this moment with humility in the fragile and fleeting nature of this life, but absolute confidence in the power of the human spirit. Let us seize it for India, for America, for all those with whom we share this small planet, and for all the children that together we can give such bright tomorrows.

Thank you very much.



MEMORABLE MOMENTS



▲ Member of Rajya Sabha, chairman & editor-in-chief of Lokmat Media Pvt. Ltd. Vijay Darda with President Pranab Mukherjee.



▲ Vijay Darda with vice-president and chairman of Rajya Sabha Hamid Ansari.





▲ Vijay Darda and Lokmat Sakhi Manch president Late Jyotsna Darda with Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh.



▲ Vijay Darda and Late Jyotsna Darda with former President Pratibha Patil.



- ▲ Veteran freedom fighter and founder of Lokmat group Jawaharlal Darda and Vijay Darda with the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in Lokmat Bhavan.



- ▲ The then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi receiving Lokmat's Congress Centenary issue from Vijay Darda.





- ▲ Vijay Darda with the then Vice-President Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, the then speaker of Lok Sabha Somnath Chatterji, the then information & technology minister Dayanidhi Maran, senior BJP leader L K Advani and senior Congress leader Late Vilasrao Deshmukh during the release of special postage stamp in memory of veteran freedom fighter & statesman Jawaharlal Darda.



- ▲ Vijay Darda with the then Prime Minister I K Gujral and another dignitary.



▲ Vijay Darda and Late Jyotsna Darda with UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi.



▲ Former Union minister Late Vilasrao Deshmukh, former President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and Vijay Darda.





▲ Vijay Darda with former Prime Minister of India Atal Behari Vajpayee.



▲ Vijay Darda with former deputy prime minister of India and senior BJP leader L. K. Advani.



▲ Vijay Darda with Union agriculture minister and NCP chief Sharad Pawar.



▲ Union home minister Sushilkumar Shinde and Vijay Darda.





▲ Former Union minister and veteran Congress leader Late Vasant Sathe and Vijay Darda.



▲ Vijay Darda with former President of India, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma.



- ▲ Vijay Darda with Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, former deputy chairman of Rajya Sabha and Union minister K. Rahman Khan and former Union minister Satish Sharma.



- ▲ Vijay Darda with former Union minister Shatrughan Sinha, Union minister Farooq Abdullah, Maharashtra minister Rajendra Darda, former Union minister Late Vilasrao Deshmukh & Union minister Praful Patel.





▲ Vijay Darda with Union finance minister P. Chidambaram.



▲ Vijay Darda with Union minister for new and renewable energy, Farooq Abdullah.



▲ Vijay Darda with former president of India Dr A P J Abdul Kalam.



▲ Vijay Darda with former member of Parliament, Bharat Ratna Lata Mangeshkar.





▲ Vijay Dara with former Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao.



▲ Vijay Darda and well-known Gandian, Sarvodaya leader and former member of Rajya Sabha Late Nirmala Deshpande with Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh.



▲ Vijay Darda discussing a point with Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh.



▲ Vijay Darda with eminent jurist and member of Rajya Sabha Ram Jethmalani.





▲ Vijay Darda with former Union minister, well-known parliamentarian and veteran Congress leader Late NKP Salve.



▲ Vijay Darda with former Union minister and Governor of Punjab Shivraj Patil.



▲ Vijay Darda with Bollywood superstar and former member of Parliament Amitabh Bachchan.



▲ Vijay Darda with veteran actor and former member of Parliament Dilip Kumar in Parliament premises.





▲ Vijay Darda with actress and former member of Parliament Vyjayanthimala.



▲ Former Union minister for human resources development Murli Manohar Joshi and Vijay Darda.



▲ Vijay Darda with treasurer of Congress party and Member of Parliament Motilal Vora and Union minister Mukul Wasnik.



▲ Vijay Darda with RJD president and former Union railway minister Lalu Prasad Yadav.





▲ Vijay Darda with senior Shiv Sena leader and former speaker of Lok Sabha Manohar Joshi.



▲ Vijay Darda with senior CPI(M) leader and member of Parliament Sitaram Yechury and RJD president and former Union railway minister Lalu Prasad Yadav.



▲ Vijay Darda with former Lok Sabha Speaker Somnath Chatterjee.



▲ Vijay Darda with veteran CPI leader A B Bardhan and Union agriculture minister Sharad Pawar .





- ▲ Vijay Darda with well-known producer, director and Rajya Sabha member Shyam Benegal and veteran Congress leader, party treasurer and the member of parliament Motilal Vora in Parliament premises.



- ▲ Vijay Darda with Union information technology and communications minister Kapil Sibal and veteran Congress leader, party treasurer and the member of parliament Motilal Vora in Parliament premises.



- ▲ (L) Vijay Darda greeting US First Lady Michelle Obama while US President Barack Obama looks on during a banquet at Rashtrapati Bhavan. (R) Vijay Darda explaining to Obama about noted Gandhian Gautam Bajaj's book on Vinoba Bhave (which was published by Lokmat Media Pvt. Ltd.). Vijay Darda presented a copy of the book to Obama.



- ▲ Vijay Darda with former US President Bill Clinton, Samajwadi Party president Mulayam Singh Yadav and Lok Janshakti Party president Amar Singh.





- ▲ Vijay Darda with former Union minister and member of Rajya Sabha Ambika Soni, the then secretary of information and broadcasting ministry Raghu Menon and chairman of Jagran Group and member of Parliament Mahendra Mohan Gupta.



- ▲ Vijay Darda with member of Rajya Sabha Rajkumar Dhoot and Union minister for heavy industries Praful Patel in Parliament premises.



▲ Vijay Darda with senior BJP leader and leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Sushma Swaraj, Congress leader and former Union minister Vilas Muttemwar and former Union minister Subodh Mohite.



▲ Former Union minister of information and broadcasting Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi and Vijay Darda.





▲ RPI leader Ramdas Athawale, LJP president Ram Vilas Paswan and Vijay Darda in Parliament premises.



▲ Vijay Darda with senior CPI leader D. Raja, Union defence Minister A. K. Antony, Rajya Sabha deputy chairman P.J. Kurien, member of Rajya Sabha P. Kannan and former Union minister and member of Rajya Sabha Dr. T. Subbirami Reddy.



▲ Vijay Darda with former BJP president Nitin Gadkari.



▲ Former Union Minister for labour Oscar Fernandes and Vijay Darda.





▲ Vijay Darda with Congress president Sonia Gandhi's political advisor and Rajya Sabha member Ahmed Patel.



▲ Former Union minister for communications and information technology Dayanidhi Maran and Vijay Darda.



▲ Vijay Darda with veteran actress and member of Rajya Sabha Jaya Bachchan.



▲ Vijay Darda with former chief minister of Rajasthan and ex-Union minister Vasundhara Raje Scindia.





▲ Vijay Darda and Rajya Sabha member Avinash Pande.



▲ Member of Parliament Sanjay Raut and Vijay Darda.



- ▲ Vijay Darda with Union rural development minister Jairam Ramesh, members of Parliament Prakash Javadekar and Balbir Punj, senior BJP leader and former MP Balasaheb Apte and others in Parliament premises.



- ▲ Union health minister Ghulam Nabi Azad, Maharashtra school education minister Rajendra Darda and Vijay Darda.





- ▲ Vijay Darda with the then former Union Minister, late Vilasrao Deshmukh, Maharashtra home minister R R Patil and senior BJP leader Gopinath Munde and Maharashtra minister Patangrao Kadam.



- ▲ Vijay Darda with Union cabinet minister for mines Dinsha Patel in Parliament premises.



▲ Vijay Darda with former Union Minister late Madhavrao Scindia.



▲ Union foreign minister Salman Khurshid and Vijay Darda.





▲ Vijay Darda with Union defence minister A K Antony, senior Congress leader Digvijay Singh, MPCC president Manikrao Thakre and others.



▲ Members of Parliament Rahul Bajaj, Brinda Karat, Jesudasu Seelam and Vijay Darda with Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh.



▲ Former Union defence minister late George Fernandes and Vijay Darda.



▲ Union minister of state for sports and youth affairs Ajay Maken and Vijay Darda.





▲ Vijay Darda and leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Arun Jaitley.



▲ Vijay Darda with minister of Overseas Indian Affairs Vyalar Ravi.



▲ Union coal minister Sriprakash Jaiswal and Vijay Darda.



▲ Vijay Darda with Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, former Member of Parliament B C Khanduri, former Union minister Prof. Saifuddin Soz and others.





▲ Vijay Darda with Rajya Sabha member Smriti Irani in Parliament premises.



▲ Vijay Darda with former Union Minister in PMO and Maharashtra chief minister Prithviraj Chavan.



▲ Veteran film star and former Union minister for sports and youth affairs late Sunil Dutt and Vijay Darda.



▲ Vijay Darda with Union heavy industries minister Praful Patel.





▲ Vijay Darda with Rajya Sabha member Balbir Punj in Parliament premises.



▲ Vijay Darda with renowned industrialist and Rajya Sabha member Vijay Mallya.



VIJAY DARDA



Vijay Darda, a three-time member of the Rajya Sabha, is one of the pioneering journalists of India. He is the recipient of the prestigious Feroze Gandhi Memorial Award (1990-91) for excellence in journalism. The award was handed over to him by the then prime minister of India P V Narasimha Rao. In his over 30 years stint in the profession, Darda has contributed substantially to journalism in particular and the growth of newspaper industry in general. As the editor-in-chief of Lokmat Media Pvt. Ltd., chairman of IBN-Lokmat news channel and a people's representative, he has been the voice of the people through his parliamentary work and writings. He also served as a member of the Press Council of India and contributed to the formation of media rules and regulations in India.

Son of the veteran freedom fighter and former Maharashtra minister, Mr Jawaharlal Darda, Vijay Darda has carried forward the legacy of his illustrious father. Social work and service to people have been his motto in life. Modernisation is another area that Darda always espouses vigorously. Widely travelled, he has attended several national and international seminars and conferences and has also successfully headed media institutions like Indian Newspaper Society (INS), South Asian Editors Forum and Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC).

Darda attended the World Economic Forum meeting at Davos in Switzerland, United Nations Security Council meeting and Non-Aligned summit and extensively reported the deliberations. Darda was conferred the International Jurists Award-2011 for his 'seminal role' in the field of legal education in India's rural areas. President of the Supreme Court of the UK, Rt. Hon. Lord Philips, handed over the award to Darda at a function held in London.

Member of various government committees including finance, IT (telecom), petroleum, aviation, railways, labour, Organising Committee of Commonwealth Games etc, Darda's contribution has been remarkable. Coming to the aid of people in distress, particularly during natural calamities, has been his prime concern. A true nature lover, Darda always strives for conservation of wildlife and nature. A promoter of vocational and technical education, Darda has been energising all his efforts to enhance the standard of both elementary and higher education with special focus on backward regions.

A connoisseur of art and sports, he is instrumental in setting up of several art and sports organisations. A prolific writer, thinker and political commentator, Darda has several books to his credit.