

demand but should also cater to the communication needs of the common man at affordable rates. Consequently rigid norms of commercial viability have not been followed and the department is incurring heavy loss in as many as 18 out of 23 services that it provides on a highly subsidised basis. The amount of subsidy provided for 18 losing postal services range from 2 per cent to 93 per cent of the cost of operating these services. On the basis of projection for 1996-97, among the heavy subsidised services are the post card with subsidy amounting to 93 per cent of its cost of operation, printed post card with 60 per cent letter card 67 per cent, registered newspaper about 90 per cent, printed books 64 per cent, book pattern and sample packets 42 per cent periodicals 70 per cent, value payable post 70 per cent, registration 40 per cent and Indian Postal Order with 86 per cent. In 1995-96, the department incurred a deficit of Rs. 643.61 crores, the establishment expenses having accounted for approximately 80 per cent of the total expenditure of the department and consequently the amount of deficit is likely to increase further.

Redeployment and rationalisation of manpower along with other conventional measures for economy have been undertaken to contain establishment expenses. However the overwhelming dependence on manual operations and mounting cost of manpower have steadily contributed towards increasing the deficit of the department. Hence there is an imperative need to rationalise the postal tariff on a selective basis to partially offset the growing deficit without undermining the principle of universal service in any manner. My hon'ble colleague, the Finance Minister will announce the specific revision in postal tariff while presenting the Union Budget.

15.54 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE : ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS —  
Contd.

[English]

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA (Andaman and Nicobar Islands) : Mr. Chairman, I rise to participate in the discussion on the resolution moved by Shri Jagat Vir Singh Drona on 13th December, 1996.

If we go through this resolution, we will find that principally there should not be any objection for moving such a resolution.

The question that arises here is that it is not only the question of identifying the foreign nationals who have come to this country illegally and deportation but also there are some other intentions behind it and that

point has to be discussed. Here, the question is about the illegal immigrants. This is a global problem. This problem is not only in India but there are many countries where the Indian people have entered illegally who are also expressing the same type of concern as our Members are doing here. At the same time, one point has to be understood in the correct perspective that once Bangladesh, India and Pakistan were all one country. The India was comprised of Bangladesh, India and Pakistan and it was one country. It was one India at that time. But due to political division, that one India has become three countries now. That is why, ethnically and culturally, where the same type of people are there, and here are naturally a trend of movement to each part relations here and there. So, we shall have to discuss this point taking into account all these perspectives. Otherwise, simply taking out one question of illegal immigrants and discussing here cannot help. This question cannot be resolved.

I know what had happened in the past. I am also a refugee settled down in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. There are many other friends of mine who have settled down in India. They migrated to this country after partition. We were all one country men. We had one citizenship. But due to the partition of the country, we become the foreigners. All of a sudden, a section of the population of this country become foreigners after the partition of the country.

Sir, at that time, there was a commitment made by the Government of India saying the Government would take care of the life and property of those people who were minorities, who would come to this part of the country. What should have been done was, unfortunately, not done. Even today, lakhs and lakhs of people who migrated to this part of the country are roaming round here and there without any kind of facilities provided by the Government. I have seen what is happening in Pilibhit, Nainital and Bijnore. There are people coming to me and telling about the problems. Those people are staying here for the last 20 years, 25 years and 35 years. Yet, those people are being termed as foreigners. This Resolution mentions about the period as "since 1975". I would like to know whether this is practised. Whenever anything is done is politically motivated whenever it goes on a linguistic basis, somebody, for example, speaking in Bengali is immediately termed as a foreigner. Whether it is Mumbai, whether it is Pilibhi or whether it is Nainital, such a person speaking the language is termed as a foreigner. So, our apprehension is this. Principally, there cannot be any two opinions that those who are foreigners, they are to be detected and taken out of the country. There cannot be any two opinions about that. But while doing so, there are some political motivations. At that time, it is misused. Previously also, it was misused.

[Shri Manoranjan Bhakta]

Time and again, this question was raised in this House saying how the figures are given. The Member who has spoken just now has rightly said that there are lakhs and lakhs of figures given here and, in reality, you will not find those figures. But those figures are floated. The reason is only one. The reason is just to mislead this country to show how grave it is and how the Government is not concerned about it. That is, perhaps, the intention behind it.

Another important point that I would like to mention here is about the citizenship.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Manoranjan Bhakta, you mention it next time. You can continue next time.

*The House stands adjourned to meet at 5 p.m. today.*

16.00 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha adjourned till Seventeen of the Clock.*

17.01 hrs.

[English]

*The Lok Sabha re-assembled at one minute past Seventeen of the Clock.*

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

## GENERAL BUDGET

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Finance Minister.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : Sir,

I rise to present the Budget for the year 1997-98.

The Government headed by Prime Minister Shri Deve Gowda completes 9 months today. When I stood before this House on July 22, 1996, this House received my proposals with a mixture of wonder, curiosity and scepticism. I was, after all, the Finance Minister of the first genuine coalition Government at the Centre. I was also the first Finance Minister who belonged to an avowed regional part, albeit with a national outlook.

Hon'ble Members will indulge me for a few minutes while I reflect on those eventful days in May 1996. One national party acknowledged that it had lost its claim to form the Government. Another tried, but failed. It is in that situation that regional parties, and certain parties with a larger national presence, came together to form the United Front Government. These parties — long regarded as children of a lesser God — have demonstrated that, given the opportunity, they can form

a Government not only at the State level but also at the Centre. Inspired by the idea of a truly cooperative federal polity, Chief Ministers have assembled, more often than ever before, at the Inter-State Council, the National Development Council and at Special Conferences to formulate national policies. The formation of the Government by the United Front and our efforts to take decisions by a national consensus, in the fiftieth year of India's independence, have deepened and broadened Indian democracy.

Hon'ble Members will find that there is a strong continuity between my first Budget and the present one. The foundation of the Budget remains the Common Minimum Programme. The experience of the last eight months has demonstrated the enormous strengths of the programme. Drawing on the CMP, my first Budget articulated seven broad objectives. These objectives embraced vital elements such as growth, basic minimum services, employment, macro-economic stability, investment (particularly in infrastructure), human development and a viable balance of payments. I believe these objectives remain as valid today as they were eight months ago.

On the last occasion, I had made over forty specific promises on policies and programmes. I have carefully taken stock of the situation, and Hon'ble members will be pleased to know that I have fulfilled all these promises, save one, to which I shall refer presently. To recall the more important ones, I am happy to state that we have

- \* Provided an additional sum of Rs. 2466 crore to the States for seven Basic Minimum Services;
- \* Funded the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF)-II with Rs. 2500 crore;
- \* Expanded the list of industries eligible for automatic approval for foreign equity investment;
- \* Set up the Disinvestment Commission and the Tariff Commission;
- \* Introduced the Jeevan Suraksha and the Jan Arogya insurance schemes; and
- \* Launched the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme.

The one commitment that I have been unable to keep is to set up an Expenditure Management and Reforms Commission. I failed because I wanted an A team and I was not content with a B team. Key members of the A team are in this House and in the Rajya Sabha, and they still elude me. I shall keep trying. Meanwhile, I have not let up on my resolve to keep expenditure within the Budget, and I have achieved a fair measure of success.