

INDIAN CITIZENS ABROAD (VOTING
RIGHT AT ELECTIONS) BILL*

[English]

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA (Ponnani) : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide the Indian citizens living abroad with the right to vote in elections to the House of the People and the Legislative Assemblies of States.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

* That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide the Indian citizens living abroad with the right to vote in elections to the House of the People and the Legislative Assemblies of States."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA : I introduce the Bill.

RESOLUTION RE : MEASURES TO
ERADICATE POVERTY—*Contd.*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House will now take up further discussion of the following Resolution moved by Prof. Madhu Dandavate on the 18th January, 1985 :—

"This House expresses its concern over the failure of the Government to lift vast sections of the masses above the poverty line and demands concrete measures to eradicate poverty from the country."

Shri Harish. Rawat to continue his speech. He has already taken 8 minutes.

[Translation]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT (Almora) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have already said so many things about it. Our hon. Minister, Shri Chandrakar is an 'experienced leader. He has been close to the masses and I feel he will agree with me that there are several bottlenecks in the implementation of our programmes like NREP and IRDP due to which the needy people are not being benefited by them. Government is spending huge amount of money on these programmes but the middlemen of Bank and Block agencies associated with the programmes demand their share. A major portion of the money is pocketed by these middlemen and the persons whom the money should reach or the areas on which the money should be spent are not really benefited to the desired extent. Our Development Ministry should, therefore, not only work as funding agency or reply to questions in Parliament but it should also ensure that there is proper monitoring of implementation of the programmes. The Ministry of Development should also see that State Government agencies responsible for spending the funds spent the funds properly and the genuine beneficiaries are really benefited.

The people of U.P., to which state I belong, have several complaints to make about the programme. Earlier, Food-for-Work Programme had been introduced. The people had grudge against that programme also. They did not get good quality wheat, they were not paid their wages in time. The position in regard to NREP is also not different. Vested interests have found place in Blocks and they are corrupting social and political workers in the rural areas.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, previously favour was shown in every Development Block due to political reasons but now the Area Development Officers and others appoint certain persons as *Gram Pradhans* and utilise them as their tools for accomplishing their self-interests. *Gram Pradhans*

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are the backbone of our rural leadership. They have to shoulder a big responsibility. To enable them to properly discharge their responsibility, it is essential that the persons appointed as Block Development Officers and District Level Officers are committed to this programme, which is unfortunately lacking. The persons who apply for loans from the bank under IRDP are not provided the loan in time and they have to knock at the doors of the bank 7 to 8 times. Thereafter, when they get a positive response from the bank, they have to knock at the doors of the Block office. After they get positive response from both these places and they manage to get loan some how they purchase animals and other goods with that money.

It may be pointed out that their problems do not end here. Suppose a person purchases a buffalo and it dies, then he has to bribe the authority responsible for issuing death certificate as he had to bribe the concerned authorities for getting the loan. Without the death certificate, he could not get exemption, but the authority competent to issue such certificates charges money for issuing them. I feel Government should take steps to make the scheme fool-proof.

Loans are not made available to the people even 6 months or a year after completing the training under TRYSEM on which huge amount is being spent. As a result the trainees forget whatever they had learned during the training. The hon. Minister is, therefore, requested to fix a deadline within which loan should be made available to the persons undergoing training under TRYSEM so that the unemployed youth are actually benefited by the scheme.

Similarly, several irregularities are being committed under Loan Guarantee Scheme for Educated Unemployed. Under the scheme, only relatives or wards of shopkeepers, contractors or vehicle owners who have the capacity to produce guarantee are able to get loans because the

banks can recover the amount from them. This way banks make available more and more loans to those falling in the 'Haves' category. The poor unemployed youth belonging to 'have-not' category is deprived of the facility and he is not in a position to find job. The D.I.C. and district level agencies entrusted with the job do recommend the names of such persons but such a recommendation is not binding on the banks. Moreover, the banks have adopted different criteria in this regard. For example, if loan is made available by the State Bank of India, it is not necessary that loan will also be made available by the banks like the Central Bank in a similar case.

Certain banks in my constituency have not so far achieved even 5 per cent of the target fixed under the scheme. When an M.P. like me asks them to improve their performance, they do not pay any heed to him. An MP cannot do anything more than this. Even an influential Member of Parliament can only make a complaint. It is very rarely that such complaints are heeded. I think they are very fortunate on whose complaints action is taken. Most of the MPs belong to my category. No action is taken on their complaints.

I do not agree with those hon. Members of the Opposition who say that the Government has no will. We do have the will and we want to give it a practical shape. The biggest drawback is our inability to educate the people. We are unable to create a mass movement. The people active in the social and political fields should take a lead in this regard. We will have to launch a mass movement. If we fail in our endeavour to create public opinion, it will not be possible to benefit the deserving people to the desired extent.

Sir, the report brought out by the Reserve Bank of India highlighted that only 0.1 per cent of our entire national wealth was in the possession of 10 per cent of our rural population. A programme should be chalked out for the

benefit of this section of the population. The people belonging to this category of our rural population are the worst sufferers today. There is not even a single earning member in several rural families. There are old men and women who have no means of livelihood. Old age pension etc. is indeed paid but it is very meagre because the resources of State Governments are limited. Limited funds are made available for the welfare schemes like housing for weaker sections due to which the weaker sections are only partially benefited. Targets are fixed by the Central Government and information is received from the State Governments that 80 to 90 per cent targets have been fulfilled. The same information is passed on to this House. It may be pointed out that wherever houses have been constructed for the weaker sections, most of the houses are not worth living for even those persons who belong to the lowest ladder. These houses are not worth living for human beings. There is no use of spending money on houses like this. Some effective steps should be taken to remedy this situation.

Government have taken several steps to improve the condition of marginal farmers and rural landless farmers. These efforts are welcome. But until and unless land reforms are vigorously implemented and marginal and landless farmers are given ownership rights, tangible benefits are not likely to accrue to them. The condition of this section of the population can be ameliorated if land holdings are consolidated in the areas where it has not already been done. The Government and the hon. Prime Minister have announced the creation of Waste Land Development Board. It is a welcome step. A large acreage of our waste land in rural areas is not utilised. This land mostly belongs to that section of our rural population which has no resources. Some steps should be taken to provide resources to this section. The Board should provide resources to these people so that this waste land can be cultivated. Some monetary assistance should be provided to this section until the land becomes worth cultivating.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the number of unemployed youth has not come down in spite of various programmes started during the past years to create avenues of employment. It is a matter of gratitude that Government have reiterated its resolve in this regard first under the leadership of Shrimati Indira Gandhi and now under the leadership of Shri Rajiv Gandhi. However, keeping in view the huge backlog of unemployed youth, until and unless steps are taken to rapidly clear this backlog, I feel the problem will aggravate further and the number of unemployed youth will go on increasing. The condition of unemployed youth is deplorable at present. A graduate after getting his degree has to face a dilemma. On the one hand his family members have high hopes on him and on the other hand he has to go from pillar to post in search of job and ultimately gives up hope. If our young man-power feels despondent like this, our resolve to build a new India in the 20th Century will not materialise. It is, therefore, requested that unemployment allowance should immediately be paid to unemployed youth particularly to those who have completed their studies upto Intermediate. Government can also impose the condition that only those students will be allowed to pursue studies for degree classes who pass their intermediate examination with good marks. Government are talking of new education policy and want to bring about revolutionary changes in the education policy. If a new direction is given to our education policy, it will be a welcome step. However, until a new direction is given, the unemployed youth should be paid unemployment allowance.

It is our national resolve to eradicate poverty and we all wish that it should succeed. Today, the entire intelligentsia supports the efforts of Government. We understand their difficulties. We do criticise the Government but this criticism is not aimed at censuring Government. If we highlight any fault that does not mean that we are bent upon making allegations against Government. It is our duty as public representatives to draw the attention of Government

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towards such deficiencies. Prof. Madhu Dandavate has brought forward this resolution and offered us an opportunity to review different programmes taken in hand by Government to eradicate poverty and to draw the attention of Government towards the drawbacks in programmes.

I have raised certain points. I hope the hon. Minister will look into the points relating to his Ministry and forward the other points to the concerned Ministries and draw their attention towards them.

DR. DUTTA SAMANT (Bombay South Central): Prof. Dandavate has moved a Resolution that Government has failed in eradicating poverty. There is no need to debate the point whether the present Government is good or bad but it will be a good thing if it comes with a good programme. I extend my thanks to Prof. Dandavate for having brought this Resolution. According to the figures given by the Planning Commission Task Force, the people with income of Rs. 70 per month in a city and Rs. 75 per month in a village were living below poverty line. This figure was Rs. 100 in a village and Rs. 110 in a city in 1979-80 and today this figure stands at Rs. 400-450 per month in a village and Rs. 500 per month in a city. How many people with this much income are living in villages and cities today? We do not get correct figures about poverty, black-money and rising prices. About 70 to 80 per cent of the people are living below the poverty-line at present. Even in a city like Bombay where Rs. 1,200 crores are realised as income-tax and Rs. 1,200 crores are realised as sales-tax, we find 20 per cent people with income between Rs. 500 and Rs. 550 only.

A provision of Rs. 4,500 crores was made in the 6th Five Year Plan for improving the standard of living of the people living below the poverty line. There was a subsidy of Rs. 1,500 crores out of it and Rs. 3,000 crores were spent

on development. In the sub-plans, money was given for 4.7 million backward people and 7.9 million people of economically weaker sections, i.e., an amount of Rs. 4,500 crores has been spent for 14.5 million or 7 crore people. It means that Rs. 500 or Rs. 600 were spent after every person in 1,500 days which comes to about 8 *annas* per day. If an inquiry is conducted by a committee you will find that even half of the allocated money does not reach the beneficiaries. I do not hold any person responsible for this. Under the Employment Guarantee Scheme, you provide jobs to workers or they are given 1 Kg. grains for the work done by them. Will it remove poverty? If you construct a road or a hospital, it is not going to remove poverty. Have you been able to bring the 14.5 million people above poverty line? It is said that cloth etc. are provided to them. If inquiries are made, then only the real picture will come before us. Correct figures in this respect are seldom given. In my opinion, poverty is increasing day-by-day. As regards unemployment in the country, according to a report entitled 'Estimate of Employment and Unemployment' about 2½ crore people are registered with the employment exchanges. The number of unregistered unemployed people is much more than that.

[English]

Planning Commission's broad conclusion, however, seems to be clear: the level of unemployment is very high, and the public sector based strategy of economic development has failed to check an alarming further rise.

[Translation]

It is said that Rs. 2,000 crores were allocated for industries but I see that industries do not provide employment to the people in proportion to the money invested in them. According to the Plan Survey 1983-84, 2-2½ thousand crore rupees were invested in industries but the employment potential had not increased proportionately. I do not know the way

in which Government is going to remove poverty. I am giving you the figures from Government sources. The index was 126 in 1961, which rose to 267 in 1972 and 716 in 1983. Now it is much more than this. There has been 6 to 7 times increase in prices during the last 20 years. If you are not able to control the trend of rising prices, the price index will go on increasing day by day. I do not want to take much time by giving figures in this regard. The hon. Minister should tell us as to how much black money is in circulation at present. In this very House, Shrimati Ratan Kumari had asked a question and Shri S.M. Krishna while replying said that Government had no reliable source. Government should try to find out how much black-money is in circulation in the country. According to their assessment, the black money to the tune of Rs. 600 crores was in circulation in 1953-54. Thereafter, Wanchoo Committee Report indicated that there was black-money to the tune of Rs. 1,400 crores in 1968-69. Thereafter, no figures about black-money were given. Probably Government had asked all concerned not to give the figures in respect of black-money. According to an expert on financial matters, black-money amounting to Rs. 50,000 crores is in circulation in the country. One Union Minister has also written a book and, according to that book, black-money to the tune of Rs. 60,000 crores was in circulation in the country in December, 1983. I am saying nothing about white money. I think the magnitude of black-money in circulation is much more than what is revealed from time to time. If black money goes on increasing like this, if hoarding goes on increasing like this, I doubt whether you will be able to control the same. How will you bring such an inflation under control? You should adopt some definite measures to check it. No doubt, you spend money on planning but you have no machinery with you to see as to how far that money has been utilised. This is a serious situation and we must take steps to remedy it. Beside this, funds are allocated for industries, but there is no machinery to keep an eye on the utilisation of these funds. Half of such units later on become

sick. I would like to give you an example.

16 00 hrs.

In our country an amount of about Rs. 113 crores has been invested in textile mills by the mill-owners. These people reap the maximum benefit from these textile mills and after running them for 50 to 100 years they declare them sick and hand them over to Government. Then you say here in the House that such and such mills are running in loss. If this kind of economy is allowed to continue in our country, I do not understand in what way you will be able to eradicate poverty from the country, and how far you will be able to succeed in your mission of eradicating poverty. Now you have formed a stable Government at the Centre. If you will bring this kind of legislation in the House, if you will allow this kind of economy to continue, if you will give protection to those who indulge in unfair trade practices, then you will not succeed in any field. So, you should put a stop to such activities. Hon. Members should know that people of the country want it and that is why they have given you a massive mandate. So you should work for their welfare. I want that Government should pay attention to the suggestions given by us in the House and act accordingly.

Besides this, Shri Madhu Dandavate has given certain suggestions about land distribution, etc. I do not want to give statistics in this regard. But it is a fact that land reforms have not been implemented properly. Here I want to give a very important suggestion. In our country, crores of workers are there who should come under the Minimum Wages Act and the Factory Act. Minimum Wages Act does not apply to five to six crores of farm-workers. I want to say about Sangli area of Maharashtra. I personally went to Satara and saw the situation prevailing there. In Maharashtra about four lakh labourers, work on sugarcane farms. They are very poor people and are living below the poverty line. Can you not ensure payment to these workers under

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the Minimum wages Act ? What difficulty you are facing in doing so. You have got power but you are not implementing that Act. I do not know the reasons why Government is hesitating in doing such things. If you bring these poor workers under the Minimum Wages Act you can improve the living standard of these people.

Now I come to construction of roads and buildings. There are about one crore workers who are engaged in construction work. Nobody bothers about them, because they are very poor. They are not in a position to organise themselves and put their case properly. There are powerloom workers also. There are sugarcane farm workers, and there are workers who work at shops and other establishments or work in other small industries. The number of these workers runs into crores. They all are very poor and they are not organised. No trade union speaks for them, because they are poor. Thus, trade unions also ignore them. Trade Unions must not do like this. These people also voted for you, but here I am not talking about their votes. Here I want you to implement the Minimum Wages Act and the Factory Act in case of these workers also. If Government will take such steps, thousands of people who are living below the poverty line, would be benefited, you should make some concrete programme in order to improve their economic condition.

As regards textile mills, Shri Rajiv Gandhi declared at Ahmedabad that we would modernise all textile mills. I am also of this opinion that all textile mills should be modernised. The mill owners have reaped the maximum benefit from these mills for 50 to 100 years and thereafter they have left these mills sick. I have detailed statistics about these sick mills and if you want I can give them here. If you invest such a big amount for modernising these mills it will remain blocked for a long time.

There are about 62,000 workers in

Ahmedabad, about one lakh workers in Bombay, 10 to 15 thousand workers in Kanpur and sixty thousand workers in Delhi. The mill owners earned crores of rupees from the mills, which included black money also but Government has taken no notice of it. Whom should I hold responsible for it ? If due to modernisation, lakhs of workers are thrown out of employment, Government should take concrete steps for their rehabilitation. Mere discussion on this point will lead us nowhere. Now you are going to develop the economy.

Now people are talking much about modernisation, automation and scientific development. But at the same time, unemployment is increasing day by day in our country. Government should prepare some concrete programme to solve this problem. If you provide manual labour to a poor man or employ him for constructing a road, it will not remove his poverty. If you open a hospital at a particular place, the people living around that hospital will still remain poor. You should introduce such economic measures in which they can participate and can earn their livelihood. Otherwise your plan will prove a failure.

I extend my thanks to Shri Dandavate who has moved this Resolution and hope that the present Government, which is no doubt a stable one, will formulate concrete plans and programmes. I have spoken much about labour which is mostly organised but there is unorganised labour also. They should also be given employment. Their wages should also be protected.

[English]

SHRI RANJIT SINGH GAEKWAD (Baroda) : I just heard the hon. Members criticise the present and the past Government for not implementing programmes and not trying to eradicate poverty from this country I stand here to oppose this. As we all know, in the last election and in the election before the last the Government under the leader-

ship of Shrimati Indira Gandhi and the present Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi has had an overwhelming win, with the support of all the sections of our people. That only shows the confidence the public has in this Government for the work done during the last five years.

MR. CHAIRMAN : One minute. Practically time allotted has been completed. Now, I am putting it to the House to extend the time. Shall we extend it by one hour ?

SHRI G L. DOGRA (Udhampur) : We need two hours.

[*Translation*]

SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI (Begusarai) : Mr Chairman, Sir, this is a very important Bill. So I request you that the time allotted for it should be extended by two hours.

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN : It has already been extended by one hour. We can see later. For the present it is extended by one hour.

PROF MADHU DANDAVATE : It is like a railway line; construction is done section by section.

SHRI RANJIT SINGH GAEKWAD : Our Government has taken up the 20-Point Programme for the upliftment of the poor. That itself shows the concern of the Government to our people and the Government has been doing its best for the people all these years. Otherwise, how could all these programmes have come up ? To say that the Government is not trying to eradicate poverty is totally wrong. I am surprised that the respected, well-educated, well-knowledge senior Member of this House, Prof. Dandavate, should have said that the Government has failed to remove or has not tried to remove poverty from this country. I think that the hon. Member has kept his eyes

closed and he is only listening through his ears. I think the time has come for him now to open his eyes and see what the present Government and the past Government have been doing for the upliftment of the poor.

The late Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi, started the programme for the upliftment of the poor under the name of Minimum Needs Programme and to develop rural areas and bring up the rural dwellers of this country. So many factors have been taken into consideration like education, roads, water, housing and jobs for jobless youth and people. These are some of the things which are taken up in this programme. Even today we can see the result. At many places the people have benefited from these facilities created in the rural areas. Even travelling between Delhi and Bombay, along the railway line you can see new housing colonies built by the State Governments for the jobless and landless labour. The work is really going on speedily and is still being implemented thoroughly by the State Governments. Not only that, I have been personally involved in giving loans through our banks to youth, women and handicapped so that they may establish themselves and earn some money for their upkeep. No doubt, there are some discrepancies in the administration like certain sewing machines are given only through one agency when loans are given for cottage industries, while there are so many other competent companies which manufacture equally good machines. There are self-appointed dalals who are trying to show that they are helping the candidates. They take almost half the amount which is due to the applicant. The applicant does not know that he has to pay the entire amount and not the half amount which he pays to the dalal. This discrepancy should be looked into.

Again, if you look at the overall picture, work for constructing roads and educating the uneducated is going on in a very very systematic and fast manner. Mr. Datta Samant, my predecessor, said that the Government had not been able

[Shri Ranjit Singh Gaekwad]

to employ more youth and other people. But what can the Government do when on the other side he manages to close down all the textile mills? So, the figures do not increase. There are many factories in Bombay which are shifting from Bombay because of his doings. And here he says that the Government has failed to give jobs to people. In my hometown, Baroda, there are two sick mills. Though, they are sick, the workers and the managements are together in this difficulty and the workers are working at half the wages. The difficulty is being faced from the Government side because the payments are not being made regularly. But in spite of the half salary also not being paid on time, the workers are still working there. This could have been done in the textile mills in Bombay also but there is complete closure and people have been rendered jobless there. One knows the entire history as to what has been happening there.

As far as the slum clearance is concerned, there is a lot of mischief being played which should be rectified. People who are brought from the slums to occupy pucca buildings, usually rent them out and go and stay back in new hutments. So, this problem can never be solved unless more stricter measures are taken and rules are made to see that the people who are given pucca houses, really occupy those houses.

The Integrated Rural Development Programme, the National Rural Employment Programme and the Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme are all programmes which the late Prime Minister gave birth to, and these are being implemented everywhere in the country except may be where our governments are not in power.

For the poor to get grain at reasonable price, the Government has opened approximately over two lakh Fair Price Shops in the country. In addition to these, wherever there is a necessity, the State Governments come forward to open extra

shops from where people can get grain at reasonable price.

AN HON. MEMBER : Many more are needed.

SHRI RANJIT SINGH GAEKWAD : But the programme is still going on, Sir. That is what I have said that wherever there is a necessity, the State Government immediately sees to it, after inspection, that a Fair Price Shop is opened in that area so that the people do not face hardships...*(Interruption)*.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please sum up now because there are many Members in the list.

SHRI RANJIT SINGH GAEKWAD : I have just started, Sir. This was only introduction.

The findings of the Government agencies or the agencies who could work out the proportion of the people living below poverty line, are that almost 41 per cent of the population is below poverty line—about 316.4 million people. After that another half term survey was conducted and now a final survey is being carried out to find out the benefits derived from these programmes during the last five years. Our new Prime Minister has also made a very fair statement concerning the upliftment of the poor of the country as a whole and I am sure that in days to come, he will also try to keep up his promise which he had made to the people. I am very sorry that the hon. Senior Member has come up with this statement that the Government has not done its duty towards the poor people. It is completely false.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Say untrue, not false.

SHRI RANJIT SINGH GAEKWAD : All right, untrue. I think now he should review the whole situation again and come up with something more positive and more constructive so that the poor people of

this country can get benefit from his experience and from his statement.

SHRI G. G. SWELL (Shillong) : Mr Chairman I am sorry, I was not here when my good friend, Mr. Madhu Dandavate moved the resolution, I would have benefited by the points he made

I am happy to see that the interlocutor valuable on the Ministerial benches happens to be my another good friend, Mr. Chandulal Chandrakar. In happier times before he was saddled with the official responsibility, we shared numberless cups of tea at the Central Hall and many amusing stories about his travels. He is a much travelled man. He had been to many exotic places all over the world and in Africa in particular on one occasion he told me a story how he hitched a hike on a truck from Sudan right to what was known then as the Congo now zaire with Kinshasa the capital. So, he knows good deal of rural life not only in this country but also in other parts of the world where conditions are more difficult.

I am happy to see also on the Ministerial benches my other friend, Mr. Narayanan. I think, he is also involved in this being in-charge of Planning. I do not know, he may need a little more education of the problem because from the high world of diplomacy to the level of getting into the poverty of the people of India, is a great distance. He himself has known poverty. He came up in a hard way. But as he had spent the most productivity part of his life in the high diplomacy, he has perhaps to re-condition himself and re-educate himself.

Mr. Chairman, I wish Mr. Dandavate had worded his resolution in a little different way. I do not agree with him when he speaks of the failure on the part of the Government to uplift the masses above poverty line. I think, the Government has done a great deal. There are far more people in India today in absolute number, not in relative terms, who are above the poverty line. But the problem

is that of increasing population as well as the rising aspirations of the people. That is, whatever we have done by way of uplifting the people pales into insignificance when we consider the need of it. That keeps on escalating. It is not that the Government has failed. It has done its level best and it has also been able to do something. But the need is far greater than what has been done.

Mr Chairman, I am aware that my time limited. The question of poverty in India today is basically the poverty of our agriculturists, the poverty of the farmers. I am not disputing that there is also poverty among the industrial workers but basically India is an agricultural country.

If our farmers are affluent, I think, much of the problem of industrial workers also will be solved because the industries would then be more solvent and there will be more people to buy industrial products. Thus industries will prosper and to a great extent, the poverty in the country can be removed.

I would confine myself to my part of the country because I do not think that the problem of the people in the north-east, specially the problem of the people of the tribal areas of the north-east, has been focussed so much as the type of poverty in other parts of the country. Therefore, I will confine myself to this part of the country and made certain concrete suggestions to the hon Minister and, if necessary, later on I will follow up these things by way of a note so that certain concrete steps can be taken.

I would like to make another point before I come to that. There is a kind of feeling of national repentance for having neglected that part of our country, the north-east. It is not that this was done intentionally by anybody. It is more a legacy of geography and history. But the fact is that the north-east, a sizeable portion of our country, is the producer of 80 per cent of our tea and the vast source of hydro-electric energy and many

[Shri G.G. Swell]

other things. The entire area has been neglected and, specially after the Chinese aggression in 1962, there has been a kind of feeling of national repentance.

A good deal of money has been spent after that. But I would like to say, by way of record, that the money that has been spent there has not resulted in the objectives that we wanted to achieve. The people of that area have remained as poor as ever, if not poorer, because of inflation, because of rising prices and most of the money has been circulated, concentrated, in the hands of a new class of people that has developed there—the dishonest contractors, the bureaucrats and the corrupt politicians. Much of this money has gone into their pockets. A number of people have become rich overnight. I know of individual instances where a man had been working as a peon in some kind of an office but in four or five years' time this man could come to Delhi and go to Calcutta and buy a Mercedes car for Rs. 12 lakhs just like that, as if he was buying a match box. That is the kind of thing that goes on. This is a new class that is emerging there. The *nouveau-riche*, the people who became rich over-night by dishonest means, make outrageous display of their affluence whereas a large portion of the people remain as poverty-stricken as ever.

The result of this is that in that part of the country where we have taken pride of being a classless society—nobody is so big, nobody is so small—a new class is emerging, a kind of class struggle is emerging. Therefore, there is the need to re-orient our expenditure, the way we operate in the name of helping the poor people of that area to come up to a certain level of affluence.

Here, I would make a few concrete suggestions. I will confine myself to the constituency that I represent, I do hope, my hon. friend, Mr. Chandulal Chandrakar knows it. It is a part of the State of Meghalaya, the Khasi, Jaintia and Garo Hill areas. There are a number of

valuable cash crops that are grown by the people there. But the farmers live on a subsistence level and they practice subsistence level of cultivation just because they do not get a proper price for their produce.

Take for example turmeric. I am told that the turmeric that is grown in that part of my Constituency is the best turmeric in the world and turmeric is a good export item. I have made a few enquiries. I have come back to the Parliament just to serve the farmers in that area and that is why I have taken special interest in this. In the last few days that I have been here, I have made enquiries about this. I am told there are countries like Iran and a few other countries that are very much interested in the purchase of turmeric. Special teams from Iran and Tehran come to Delhi to negotiate for the purchase of this item. I am told that the price of turmeric in Tehran is about Rs 140 a KG whereas the farmers there sell their turmeric for only Rs. 3 or Rs 4 per KG to the middlemen who try to squeeze them and try to get as much profit as possible and because they cannot get the proper price, they live in that subsistence level. They do not increase the acreage of the plantation. It could be increased by many times more. I have been holding discussions with the Ministry of Commerce to try to help us and the farmers in that area through some means of a cooperative endeavour so that they are able to export these things directly and get proper price. They should be able to get a much higher price if price in Tehran is Rs. 140. There is no reason why we cannot do that. If you do that, you put money directly into the hands of the farmers rather than into the hands of this middle coterie of corrupt bureaucrats, the contractors and the corrupt politicians.

Another item which grows and which is of the best variety is ginger. There are different kinds of spices too and I am told today that there is a great demand for another item which is called the bird-eye chilly. It is a small chilly, very pungent and it has very good flavour. I am sure the

Minister, Mr. Narayanan, having been an ambassador knows it very well that there is no table anywhere, any ambassadorial table, or any kind of private dinner without the tabasco sauce. I think Mr. Narayanan will agree with me. Won't you? You have given many dinners. Yes, Tabasco sauce. I am told that the best ingredient for the tabasco sauce is the 'bird's eye' chilly. My part of the country, half of it, has been impoverished because of the partition. The entire Southern part borders on the former East Pakistan, now Bangladesh. The natural trade goes there. But the whole thing has been stopped. Further there is a kind of blight for the orange orchards and other things. A change in the pattern of cultivation of the people would be necessary. These other types of crops are the crops which the people in those areas should be encouraged to grow. But we have to organise the market for them.

Potato is another item. There is the inbuilt problem of transporting potatoes in that area. They have got to compete with potatoes that come from other areas in this part of the country. But you have to find some ways. Potato chips is an item which is sold all over the world. There is also the possibility of making industrial alcohol from dehydrated potatoes. I am told that you can even make the best of Vodka out of potatoes for the purpose of export. I am not a drinker. I am a teetotaler but this is an item by which you can use this product and give the people a proper price.

My idea of removing poverty is not to spoonfeed the people with cash help. It is the involvement of the people, the involvement of the farmers. Let the farmers get the proper price. Let us give them the market and the farmers would take care of themselves.

I would suggest to the Minister to think on those lines and as far as possi-

ble, he can count on me. I have spoken to Mr. Narayanan also privately.

I will write a note on this, on how to develop this part of the country where a large number of the people, and farmers in particular, are involved.

***SHRI R ANNA NAMBI (Pollachi) :**
Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me this opportunity to say a few words on behalf of my party the All India Anna D M K on the resolution of the senior member of this House, Shri Madhu Dandavate, whose commitment to the national cause of eliminating poverty is second to none in the country. During the past 37 years the Centre and the State Governments have ceaselessly endeavoured to eliminate poverty from this country. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of free India, had initiated many steps to achieve this laudable objective. Mrs. Indira Gandhi, to whom the upliftment of the poor was the soul-breath, did undertake numerous schemes for wiping out poverty. Similarly, the State Governments in the country had also been implementing several anti-poverty schemes. In spite of all this, the poverty in this country is getting perpetuated. According to the Central Planning Commission, even today the per capita average daily income of about 40 crores of our people is below 75 paise. This candid admission of the central planning body can be vouchsafed by the existence of ugly slums next to sky-high buildings in many metropolitan cities of our country. It is really unfortunate that the largest slum in the whole of Asia is in Bombay. The Government cannot also controvert the fact that in rural areas of our country, millions of our people are open to sun and showers throughout the year. They have no hearth and home; they have no clothes to hide their shame; they have no food to appease their hunger.

Our inimitable leader Dr. M.G.R., who lives for the eradication of poverty

* The Speech was originally delivered in Tamil.

[Shri R. Anna Nambi]

from Tamil Nadu, has been implementing several schemes effectively. He is attacking at the roots of poverty in the State. The efforts of the Slum Clearance Board of the State of Tamil Nadu in providing proper homes for the poor have been unreservedly applauded by the experts from World Bank. Our revered Chief Minister's Nutritious Meals Scheme, which provides food for the poor children of the State, has received encomiums from UNESCO experts. This has ensured continuous education for these hapless children. The drop-out from the school has declined because the food problem has been solved. We have universal free education in the State. Our Chief Minister, who can be called the Redeemer, has also introduced the scheme of old-age pension to the old people who have no support from any source. The State Government is also implementing vigorously the Adult Education Programme. Our leader, Dr. M.G.R. is convinced that when ignorance and hunger are removed, the roots of poverty are cut as under. That is why he is taking effective steps in this direction.

I take this opportunity to demand that the Nutritious Meals scheme should be declared as a Plan scheme and funds should be provided from Five Year Plan allocations. I would also suggest that this scheme should be implemented throughout the country as a Plan scheme, in the interest of blossoming buds of humanity.

Sir, poverty in India cannot be eradicated till the plight of agricultural labour in the country is improved. 70% of rural population is agricultural labour. It has been acknowledged that they are not getting wages as stipulated in Minimum Wages Act. There is no legal protection for them in this matter. They are landless agricultural labour. In spite of Zamindari Abolition Act and Land Ceiling Act, they have not been given land to till. Their sweat and blood sustain the nation. Yet they live in perennial penury. There is no question in blaming the State or the Central Government for non-imple-

mentation of this law or that law. The prevailing position among the landless tillers has to be changed without any delay. Unless you improve their lot, you cannot eradicate poverty from the country. We will not be able to solve their problems by slogan-mongering about eradication of poverty in season and out of season.

I demand that the land ceiling laws should be implemented vigorously and the surplus lands should be acquired and distributed among the tillers of the soil, who are the backbone of our society. Besides, *pattas* for such lands should also be given to the agricultural labour. There should be no attempt to shuttle the land ceiling laws sent by the States for Centre's approval. For example, the land ceiling (amendment) Bill, which had been unanimously passed by the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, is hanging fire for so many months now. I would say that it is difficult to have a uniform approach to land ceiling throughout the country. After all the State Governments are also duly elected Governments committed to the welfare of the people. The Centre should ensure expeditious consent from the President for such laws. Then only the rural poverty can be effectively tackled. With these words I conclude my speech.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI (Begusarai) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I share the spirit with which Prof. Madhu Dandavate has removed this Resolution. But I do not agree with the views which he expressed while moving it. He said that our Government had failed in raising the living standard of the people living below the poverty line or that the programmes meant for eradicating poverty had failed. I do not agree with such views. Our Congress Government has been able to successfully implement the programmes meant for raising the living standard of the people living below the poverty line. It is the policy of Congress Government and in accordance with that policy, Government want that social justice should be given to the people in the

country. They should enjoy social equality also, so that they may improve their economic condition.

It was our first Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who introduced the concept of Five Year Plans in the country. He brought revolution in the industrial sector in the country. He used to call the factories and industries as temples. He wanted that economic justice and social justice should be provided to all in the country. After him, our late Prime Minister Shrimati Indira Gandhi, who was our beloved leader, introduced 20-Point Programme with the object that the people living below the poverty line are lifted above the poverty line. The nationalisation of banks and the abolition of Privy Purses were revolutionary steps in this direction. *Zamindari* system had been abolished much earlier. All these steps were taken by our Congress Government. In spite of all these revolutionary steps, if Shri Dandavate brings such a resolution nobody will agree with him. But it is also a fact that we have not achieved as much as we should have in lifting the masses above the poverty line, in spite of our best efforts. In this background we shall have to find out as is coming in the way. I think unless the increase in population is controlled, we shall not be in a position to achieve the desired progress in this direction, even if big investments are made for the purpose. Rapid increase in our population is a big hurdle. If we cannot control the increase in population then our programmes for providing drinking water to the people or for making arrangements for education of children or for increasing agricultural production will not prove to be successful. So, I want to suggest that a commission should be appointed at the national level for population control and that commission should be headed by our Prime Minister. In order to give maximum benefits of our progress and development to the maximum number of people in the country, population control is essential.

The object of Sixth Five Year Plan was

to lift the poor people above the poverty line, but it could not be achieved due to lack of coordination so far as the target, policy and its implementation was concerned. They were therefore again defined. In 1982 Shrimati Indira Gandhi introduced the revised 20-Point Programme. Huge amount of money was invested. But, the return therefrom was not adequate enough. The process of thinking is a continuous one and the Government are formulating their plans accordingly. It is hoped that we shall be able to eradicate poverty by 2000 A.D. But it will be possible only if we are successful in controlling our population.

Now I come to the Planning Commission. There had been mid-term review. It stated that 52 lakh people were lifted above the poverty line. We all agree on this point that the benefits of our development do not reach the poorer sections of the society. The reason for it is that our Secretarial machinery is not development-oriented. Our Administration and top brass should be made development-oriented. Our Administration from Block Level to the Secretariat Level should adopt a practical approach and should formulate the plans keeping in view the geographical situation and the available local resources. Programmes like IRDP, NREP, RLGP, should be implemented as time-bound programmes. It is often seen that programmes are not implemented in time and their implementation is delayed abnormally resulting in escalation of their costs.

Today during Question Hour a suggestion was made that our Financial Year should be changed. Now this point is being debated to see how the change in the financial year will help in the developmental work. Now the funds are allocated in March and the works, whether they relate to irrigation or agricultural sector, are stopped in the month of June and during two-three months of the monsoon season crores of rupees remain particularly unutilized. So, it is neces-

[Shrimati Krishna Sahi]

sary to have a change in the financial year. Another important point which is being debated these days is about old age pension. Our Government have introduced a very good scheme. Under this scheme provision has been made to give economic aid to thousands of handicapped people for their sustenance... (Interruptions). I want to say that our Administration should be streamlined and once it is streamlined, we shall be able to proceed further towards development.

SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI (Simla) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to oppose the Resolution moved by Shri Madhu Dandavate. Seeing the progress made after independence for lifting the people above the poverty line, nobody can say that people had not been lifted above the poverty line. I would like to draw your attention to my constituency. There were above 35 small Princely States in Himachal Pradesh. They all were abolished and ownership rights were given to the poor people. A great deal of work has been done for eradicating poverty after nationalisation of banks. More banks were opened in the rural areas of India. All these steps were taken to benefit the poor people. Shri Chandulal Chandrakar also moved a resolution wherein he said that at least one man from each family should be given employment so that all people might think that they had also their contribution in running the Government. Our present system of education is not uniform. Some students study in the public schools while some study in the rural schools. We should do something to raise the standard of the rural people in the real sense. We should bring about improvement in education. Potatoes and apples are grown on a large scale in my State. It is the poor people who work hard but benefit of their toil goes to others who transport these commodities from one place to another. A resolution was passed in the Legislative Assembly of our State suggesting that insecticides should be sprayed on more area in order to increase agricultural production. This will help in lifting the poor people above the

poverty line. Opium cultivation should be started in areas of Himachal Pradesh where there is more snowfall. If opium cultivation is started there, it will be remunerative for even those holding small holdings. Opium can be utilized for medicines also. Proper marketing arrangements should also be made there so that poor people of Himachal Pradesh who have small holdings could get some benefit.

We suffer a great deal on account of soil erosion and floods also. Soil erosion takes place on the upper ridges in the State and the eroded soil flows down to the plains of Haryana, Punjab and U.P. I shall take two minutes more to conclude. There are a number of rivers and rivulets. Though small dams have been constructed on them yet erosion takes place there. The eroded soil continuously flows down and our land is becoming more and more unproductive. Not only Himachal Pradesh but the States of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab also suffer on this account. The loss amounts to crores of rupees. So through you, I request the Government that more funds should be allocated for flood control measures because there are a number of rivers and rivulets in the hilly areas of Himachal Pradesh. A survey should be conducted and more money should be spent for taming these rivers. Sir, you are reminding me of the time by ringing the bell again and again, so with these words, I conclude my speech.

SHRI RAMASHRAY PRASAD SINGH (Jahanabad) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you that you have given me a chance to speak. We all have come to Lok Sabha after being elected by the people, irrespective of the fact whether we belong to the ruling party or to the Opposition. So, we should be vigilant enough to give expression to the hopes and aspirations of the people who have elected us. We should put pressure on the Government also. I have no doubt about their good intention. Government have prepared several schemes for lifting the people above the poverty line, but they are not yielding the desired

results. If the Opposition members give some good suggestions Government should accept them. In this respect I want to say that a big part of the amount being spent on these schemes is going into the pockets of a few persons. The members of the ruling party cannot deny this fact. Our Minister also cannot deny this thing and should take steps to remove the lacunae which are experienced in the implementation of these schemes. I know what is happening in villages because I come from there and I started my political career from village level. There is no doubt that a number of schemes have been prepared for lifting the people above the poverty line in rural areas. Under these programmes, buffaloes and other milch cattle are being given to the rural people. Besides this, other facilities also are being given to them. But it is also a fact that a major part of the grants you give for this purpose goes into the pockets of a few people. These people include block level employees or banks employees and some corrupt politicians. And in this way the object of lifting the people above poverty line is defeated. I want to give some instances. There is a Branch of Allahabad Bank at Ghosi in my Constituency. Through this Branch 12 buffaloes were distributed to the poor people in the month of October, but from each poor man they took Rs. 300/- as bribe. When I came to know of this I took up this matter and gheraoed the Bank. Then the Bank employees returned Rs. 3600/- which had been taken by them as bribe to these poor people. Such things are happening. On account of such happenings your schemes are proving a failure,

I want to give you a concrete suggestion and if it appeals you, you should accept it. If you want to properly implement the programmes and want to achieve the targets fixed therein, you should constitute a Committee consisting of these poor people at Panchayat level, at block level and at District level. Sufficient powers should be given to such committees. All things should be procured and distributed through such committees. In our area subsidy is being given to marginal and small farmers for

purchasing diesel pumps, but big farmers in collusion with the concerned officers declare themselves as marginal and small farmers and corner the facilities really meant for the poor people. The small farmers are suffering on this account. Such incidents are taking place all over the country and this is the reason that the money being spent by you on these schemes is going waste, and your mission of lifting the people above the poverty line has become a laughing stock. I do not say that your programmes are not right but there is something wrong in their implementation. Your programmes are commendable but they are not being implemented properly. I want that you should pay more attention to this aspect.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : If the House agrees, we may extend the time allotted to this Resolution by half an hour.

HON. MEMBERS : Yes, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The time for this Resolution is extended by half an hour.

[Translation]

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY (Hanamkonda) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, we should support the Resolution moved by Shri Dandavate. During Janata Party regime also steps were taken to lift the people above the poverty line, Particularly, in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh 'Antyodaya Programme' was started. In 1977, Janata Government strengthened Panchayati Raj system and formed Block Councils and District Councils. A Village Development Officer was appointed for looking after the development in 5 or 6 villages. That officer used to identify the poorest five families in each village. It was the duty of the officer to find out what these families wanted, what kind of assistance or bank loan they required and what kind of industry they wanted to run. Thus the work was started to improve the lot of 25 families, five from each village in a

[Shri C. Janga Reddy]

year and steps were taken to increase their income. After one year survey was conducted and the 'Antyodaya programme' was further extended. The path of 'Antyodaya programme' was shown by Gandhiji. This work was done during the Janata regime.

During 2-3 years the Congress Government started a Cluster Scheme under which they divided a Block into four divisions and some scheme was introduced for the development of 600 people in a Block. But the success of the scheme depended on loans from banks. If loan was not advanced by banks the scheme could not succeed. Mostly poor people belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes were covered under this Scheme and assistance was given to these people.

Prior to this, small farmers were given assistance under S.F.D. A small farmer was given 5 acres of dry land and 2½ acres of irrigated land, thus about 8 acres of land was given. He was given 25 to 30 percent subsidy for installing a pump set, for purchasing an oil engine or for digging a well. Under this scheme people were being benefited. But in 1980, the Congress Government introduced a new scheme, namely, the Cluster Scheme, under which it was proposed that 600 families should be given land in a year. But when we go to these people they tell us that Government officials do not give us what we want, but they provide us the things which they want to provide. The banks advance loans only to those who own land in their names. When these people request that they should be advanced loans for purchasing bullock carts they are not given loans. This was the way you were removing the poverty of 600 people in a year!

The subsidy meant for distribution amongst the poor people lapses. The works which are being taken in hand are not being completed. The poverty is not being eradicated. Banks are making their transactions on paper only.

The amount earmarked for distribution as loans to poor people must be distributed to them in reality. Only then, we shall be able to lift the poor people above the poverty line. You should visit the blocks personally and see how things are taking place there.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL VYAS (Bhilwara): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the first part of the Resolution moved by Prof. Dandavate says :

[English]

"This House expresses its concern over the failure of the Government to lift vast sections of the masses above the poverty line..."

[Translation]

But later, he says :

[English]

"... and demands concrete measures to eradicate poverty from the country."

[Translation]

I agree with this part and I want that poverty should be eradicated from the country as soon as possible. Prof. Dandavate is well aware of the fact that main stress has been laid on food, unemployment and production in the Seventh Five Year Plan. These three things have been given special attention and through it efforts are being made to eradicate poverty. During the past big tasks have been taken in hand. The programmes which have been taken up during the past by our Government to eradicate poverty, were such that very few countries of the world had followed this path. But it is also a fact that there are problems which are yet to be solved. No doubt our Government have sincere intention to remove poverty but Government have not resources adequate to achieve its objective within the shortest possible time. Whenever we try to lift the people above the poverty line many problems come in the way.

(Interruptions)

I was saying that this is a very big problem and we shall have to make sincere efforts to solve it. Government have taken up several schemes under the 20—Point Programme. Government have allotted sufficient funds also to implement them. Government have laid down a condition with it that 50 per cent of the total expenditure will have to be incurred by the concerned State Government. But you are well aware of the economic condition of the State Governments. Most of the States have resorted to overdrafts. In all the programmes like IRDP, NREP, Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme State Governments are expected to make 50 per cent matching contribution and 50 per cent expenditure is born by the Central Government. This is the reason that such schemes are not implemented properly because State Governments have no funds to contribute their share. Thus, the fixed targets are not achieved in the States. Last year also, while discussion was going on the Budget, we said that State Governments were not in a position to contribute their matching share for implementation of these programmes and so the Central Government should finance such programmes cent per cent and State Governments should not be asked to contribute their matching share. If we want to solve unemployment problem we shall have to accept this suggestion. There are certain other programmes like Khadi and Gramodyog programme, handloom programme, the programme of establishing small industrial units or the programme of putting up small scale industries which have great potential for employment and crores of people have got employment in them. These programmes have solved the employment problem to a great extent but still there are many fields where new programmes should be started. The issue of land distribution has been discussed several times. Our Government sincerely want that surplus land should be distributed properly but unless you provide inputs and other necessary facilities to those who have been allotted surplus land, they will not get any benefit out of it. So, inputs and other facilities should be provided to them. Now, little money is given to them. My friends have spoken about certain banks which are advancing loans to poor people. The

whole amount meant for the poor people does not reach them. A poor man should be provided inputs in kind by the Government or its agencies so that he can develop the land allotted to him and can thus remove his poverty. If you will make such arrangement it will definitely help in solving the unemployment problem.

As regards urban unemployment I want to say that sick industries have aggravated this problem. You should therefore, pay special attention to sick industries. Every year thousands of new industrial units are set up. Unscrupulous people take loan from Government in the name of such units and utilise that money for other purposes. Some years after, the owners of such industrial units declare them sick and thus take undue advantage. In this way adequate employment potential is not being created. So I request the Government that stern action should be taken against the persons found responsible for making these industrial units sick. If this tendency is checked it will help in solving the unemployment problem to a great extent. With these words, I conclude my speech.

[English]

SHRI MALLAREDDY RAGUMA REDDY (Nalgonda) : Mr. Chairman, I support the resolution moved by Prof. Madhu Dandavate. Even after 37 years of our independence the number of people living below the poverty line in rural area is 50 per cent and in urban area is 40 per cent. Even in the richest State like Punjab, today, it is 38 per cent in rural area and 12 per cent in urban area. The absolute number has increased from 150 million to 325 million. The per capita income, after 37 years of our independence, has increased only by 1 per cent whereas in other small countries like Malaysia, Indonesia, Japan and Thailand, it has increased by 6 per cent. Government might have evolved many schemes as hon. members have suggested.

All the schemes like the National Rural Employment Programme, the Rural Land-

[Shri Mallareddy Raguma Reddy]

less Employment Guarantee Programme the Integrated Rural Development Programme etc, all these schemes have only made the rich people richer and the poor people have become poorer. In the rural areas small farmers are not able to cultivate their land. The banks, after nationalisation are not giving loans to the farmers, especially the small and medium farmers. I request the Government, the hon. Minister for Banking, to liberalise the rules so that small farmers in the villages can get loans easily, without many formalities. And so, the Government of India, should consider this that even after 37 years of independence the situation is like this, and they still expect that at the end of the next five years 20 per cent of the people will cross the poverty line. How can they come above the poverty line within five years ?

The Government of Andhra Pradesh under the leadership of our Chief Minister, has started many schemes for the many people, like the Rs. 2 per kg. rice scheme, big housing scheme and the mid-day meals scheme and so on. The Government of India is only hindering those schemes and they are not supporting those schemes. They are putting all sorts of obstructions. I request the Central Government to liberally release funds to the State Governments and also to adopt the schemes started by Shri N.T. Rama Rao which will benefit the farmers and the minimum needs of common people like clothing, food and housing. These schemes if implemented, will meet the minimum needs of the poor people.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. Minister.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank Prof. Madhu Dandavate and other hon. Members who have expressed their views on different aspects of this Resolution. There is no doubt that Prof.

Dandavate has raised a very vital issue. When Smt. Indira Gandhi took charge of the office of Prime Minister, first of all she took the step to nationalise banks, because she felt that unless banks spent their money in the villages, poverty from the rural areas of the country would not be removed. So, in 1969 banks were nationalised. Prior to nationalisation of banks one or 1½ or hardly 2 per cent of the bank money reached the rural areas. But after nationalisation, about 40 per cent of their total deposits have been utilised for rural development, whether in the form of loans or in the form of expenditure on developmental works. Thereafter, many schemes one after the other were implemented. In 1980, when Sixth Five Year Plan was formulated, the main thrust of that was on removing poverty. An outlay of about Rs. 40,090 crores out of the total outlay of Rs. 97,500 crores was earmarked for development of rural areas. From this you can imagine how much attention she paid towards removing poverty from the rural areas.

In addition to this, some years ago a programme, namely, the Minimum Needs Programme was introduced, under which it was proposed to meet at least the basic needs of the people. Under this scheme different types of works, namely, construction of roads in rural areas, provision of drinking water in villages, making arrangements for education and providing nutritious food to landless labourers, were started.

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY : How will the Minimum Needs Programme help in eradicating poverty ?

SHRI CHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR : It means that you have no faith at all in meeting the minimum needs... (Interruptions). If in your opinion providing drinking water or providing roads or providing employment to the poor people does not amount to eradication of poverty then there is basic difference between your and our approach... (Interruptions).

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please do not interrupt him. Let him have his say.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR : I think Shri Reddy feels that the 'Antyodaya programme' started by the Janata Party was the only programme for the welfare of the poor people. Under that programme only five poor people in a village were to be given assistance and that programme was not started even in all the States.

17.21 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

In place of this programme, an Integrated Rural Development Programme was started in 1980. There are 5011 blocks in our country. Under this programme provision was made to give assistance to 600 people in a Block to make them self-dependent, to enable them to earn their livelihood and to lift them above the poverty line. In the Sixth Five Year Plan the target was to give such assistance to about 1½ crore people, but financial assistance could be given to lift one crore and forty-two thousand people above the poverty line during this Plan period. There is no doubt that all the poor people have not been lifted above the poverty line. We feel that there are some loopholes in our programmes and we are trying to plug them. Arrangements have been made to give loans or subsidy to the poor people. In some States only 20 per cent people in some other States 40 per cent people and in certain others 50 per cent people have been lifted above the poverty line. Thus on an average 30 to 40 per cent people have been lifted above the poverty line.

On the basis of certain reports, Prof. Dandavate has stated that there has been increase in the number of people living below the poverty line. He has also mentioned about a Report published from

Madras. According to the reports from the Reserve Bank and the State Governments before Sixth Five Year Plan the number of people living below the poverty line was 31.68 crores in 1979-80. When in 1981-82, mid-term appraisal of the Sixth Five Year Plan was undertaken the number of people living below the poverty line was found to be 28.20 crores. The figure given in 1979-80 was based on 1971 Census, while the figure given in 1981-82 was based on 1980-81 Census. Thus it is not correct to say that the number of people living below the poverty line is increasing. Prof. Dandavate has himself said that the survey conducted by the National Sample Survey in 1983 has not yet been published in the form of Report. The data is being collected. I hope that its Report will be out within 2—2½ months and only then we shall be able to know the correct figures.

At present a person living below the poverty line has been defined as one who gets 2400 calories in rural areas and 2100 calories in urban areas. Keeping this thing in mind several special programmes were introduced during the Sixth Five Year Plan, namely, IRDP, NREP, RLEGP, Special, Component Plan for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Drought Prone Area Development Programme and Desert Development Programme. These programmes have brought about a big change. I do not want to mention here the figures of 1981, 1982, 1983 and 1984 because it will take a long time. But I want to say that under IRDP, which was introduced during the Sixth Five Year Plan, the target was fixed to provide employment to 15 million families and employment was given to 14.43 million families.

Similarly, under NREP the target was to provide 1500 million mandays of work to the people during the Sixth Five Year Plan. But 1625 million mandays of work was provided to them. In the same way the works under RLEGP was started on 15th August, 1983. But much work could not be done under this programme during 1983-84. Smt. Indira Gandhi made a declaration about, this programme

[Shri Chandulal Chandrakar]

on 15th April and after that the work continued for about $1\frac{1}{2}$ years. Then it was estimated that 360 million mandays of work will be given to the people, but only 119.72 million mandays work could be given to them as per the reports received from the State Governments upto November.

Many M.Ps. have expressed their concern over the fact that either the entire surplus land could not be acquired or surplus land which was acquired under the land Ceiling Act could not be properly distributed. Though there may be difference of opinion on this point yet it is not correct to say that so far nothing has been done in this direction. We acquired about 42.82 lakh acres of surplus land from the Zamindars under the Land Ceiling Act and out of that 21.22 lakh acres of land has already been distributed. Out of this about 8.8 lakh acres of surplus land was distributed among the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe people. About 6 to 7 lakh acres of land out of it is involved in cases pending in the Supreme Court. Similarly, some of this land has been earmarked for forest development and social forestry. We could not get as much surplus land under the land-reforms legislation as was expected. The area of the land, which was declared surplus according to the National Guidelines in 1972, was only 42.82 lakh acres.

About the implementation of IRDP or other Special Development Programmes I want to say one thing that the money allocated for these programmes either by the State Government or the Central Government should be spent properly. About 50 per cent of the total expenditure on these programmes is incurred by State Governments. Some hon. Members have said that the funds meant for these programmes are not being utilised properly. For this we shall have to streamline at least two things; one is infrastructure. Our engineers and overseers, whether they are supervising the work of construction of roads or the construction of school buildings or construction of canals,

should work efficiently and honestly. The estimates of these works should be prepared correctly. The amount earmarked for them should be utilised properly and for this we shall have to streamline our administrative machinery. Besides this, our monitoring system would have to be strengthened and intensified. I think there are loopholes in the implementation, which need to be removed. We are allocating more funds in Seventh Five Year Plan for eradicating poverty and during the Seventh Plan period more money will be distributed to landless people and to the unemployed people in the rural areas. We shall streamline our monitoring system in order to see that such funds are properly utilised. I do not claim that the monitoring system will be made foolproof but we shall try to plug the loopholes as much as possible.

During the Sixth Five Year Plan we have given financial assistance, both as subsidy and loan to about 1 crore 42 lakh people. We have to collect the figures as to how many people really benefited from these facilities. By using modern equipment we can collect the figures in this respect quickly and can give such information at the time we discuss this issue in the House. It will be better if upto date figures about the number of the people who have been lifted above the poverty line can be made available to us. When figures are to be collected about 15 crores people we cannot get accurate figures without the use of modern equipment. Some people criticise the use of modern equipment in every case but when figures are to be collected on large scale, there is no alternative but to use modern equipment. Everybody knows that Smt. Indira Gandhi introduced the 20-Point Programme to eradicate poverty and every scheme covered under this programme was meant for eradicating poverty. 20-Point Programme was prepared for the benefit of the people in the rural areas. Whether it is the question of irrigation or providing employment to unemployed people or supplying drinking water or making arrangements for providing education, all these are designed to benefit the rural people. The 20-Point Programme is being

implemented in all the States. There was one State which was at one time hesitating to implement this programme but now all the States have adopted it.

We are glad that 20-Point Programme is being implemented in all the States ; in some States it is being implemented effectively, in some States it is being implemented very effectively and in some other States it is being implemented in an ordinary way. We have to lift the people above the poverty line through this 20-Point Programme. Though this programme is being implemented properly yet there is scope for further improvement in its implementation.

Several hon. Members have raised issues and given many suggestions in this regard. I cannot go into those suggestions one by one because of lack of time. Though I want to discuss them yet it will not be possible for me to do so because I do not have enough time at my disposal. We shall take in consideration the suggestions made by the hon. Members while implementing the 7th Plan. The very object of 6th Five Year Plan was to eradicate poverty. In the 7th Plan about half of the total outlay will be earmarked for eradicating poverty.

I will therefore request Prof. Madhu Dandavate to withdraw his Resolution keeping this thing in mind that the Government themselves have been endeavouring their utmost to remove poverty. We did work in this direction during the 6th Five Year Plan. We are going to tackle this problem on a big scale in the 7th Five Year Plan. I agree with the spirit behind this Resolution.

[English]

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur): Mr Deputy-Speaker, Sir. I am conscious of the fact that my hon. friend, Shri Viridhi Chander Jain, would like to take an opportunity of at least moving his Resolution and keeping it in absence for the next session. I will see to it that he will not be put in any embarrassing position.

In the course of my initial speech, when I initiated the discussion on this Resolution, I had put for specific questions. But very often the Minister is defined as one who take up the marginal questions and tries to keep in abeyance some of the specific queries and questions that are raised. Accordingly, he did not touch upon those specific questions on which sharp replies were expected. But any way I do not blame him.

In the course of the discussion, a number of members, whether they belong to the ruling party or the Opposition parties, welcomed the sentiment behind the Resolution. They were critical of the critical part of the Resolution and they were supporting the second part of the Resolution where I have demanded concrete steps and measures to eradicate poverty in the country. At the conclusion of my initial speech—I repeat that observation—I said, I am afraid the present new administration is likely to be elitist, sophisticated and computerised administration which will cater to the developmental needs of the top affluent class and allow the gains of development to percolate down to the grass-roots so that the grass-root gains will be only what will be percolated from the top. This is total reversal of old Gandhi to new Gandhi. I would not like that to happen. I am prepared to wait and watch. I will be the happiest person if under new Gandhi old Gandhi is not reversed. And I will welcome him. I will wait and watch. That will be premature comments. But I will sound a note of warning and I am sure the hon. Minister will take note of that warning. When I said that and when I talked about sophisticated computerised administration, my friend Mr. Das Munshi tried to probe deep into the problem and he read in my observation, my total rejection of science and technology. I cannot reject science and technology. My entire discipline of life is science and technology. I accept that. But I also accept the Gandhian connotation and perspective. Gandhi said:

“I want machine but, I do not want the dignity of machine and the

[Prof. Madhu Dandavate]

glory of the machine to be built upon the debris of the dignity of man."

And, therefore, I am not at all against science. I am not against technology. I only wanted some sort of a balance to be maintained between human being and the machine in this country, particularly when it happens to be the land of Mahatma Gandhi. And I admit that some times rationalisation is necessary. Modern technology is to be utilised. But while you utilise that, you must make up your mind to which sector to apply the modern science and technology, and to what degree and stage you rationalise machinery. How do you ensure that there will not be large-scale unemployment in the country? In that context, I would like the hon. Minister, if not in this debate, at some later time, to try to analyse the problem of reservations for various sectors. In this country, we will have certain industries which will inevitably to large-scale industries. For instance, manufacture of cement and steel and various wagons in the country required by railways. These cannot be small-scale sector. It may not be a large-scale industry. There also will co-exist, a small scale sector, a middle sector and the cottage industry in the country. But if you allow free competition between all the three sectors, then the cottage industry will be killed by the small scale sector and the small scale industry will be killed by the large-scale sector. And, therefore, I would like some sort of a policy of reservation to be applied and implemented in a phased manner. I am not one among those who say "Close down the textile mills." Only a retrograde person puts forward that point of view. I do not take that approach at all. But I would like a balance between the three, the competition to be avoided and, at least, accept this policy formulation that those commodities which can be manufactured in the cottage industry sector, do not allow the small-scale sector to manufacture them. Those commodities that can be manufactured in the small-scale sector, do not allow to be manufactured in the large-scale sector and

if you avoid competition between the three sectors, I think, this particular policy of protection will be able to ensure the stability of all the three sectors and the large-scale industries throughout the country will not cater to the unemployment problem of the rural population.

As one of the Finance Ministers of this country who was in the Congress Ministry Shri C.D. Deshmukh said :

"When the statisticians and experts in the country offer the unemployment figure, concealed unemployment in the rural sector is very often not brought to light at all and, therefore, that permanently remains concealed."

I am more worried about this unrevealed and concealed unemployment in the rural sector and if the particular unemployment problem is to be solved, you will have to protect the cottage industry sector, the small-scale sector and the large-scale sector which is undoubtedly necessary and I would suggest that this type of a balanced policy of industrialisation will have to be pursued and a degree of reservation in a phased manner will have to be introduced. Capacity would have to be limited in a phased manner, gradually go on decreasing and limiting the capacity and then the production policy will be possible. This particular aspect will have to be born in mind. In that context, I sounded a note of warning.

I had made a number of suggestions with which the Members of the ruling party also have agreed. They might not have criticised but they also pointed out the loopholes. We have the NREP and we have RLEGP. All these tools will greatly help in the solution of the problem of poverty in the rural areas. But many experts have said that there is a lot of corruption even in this and even Members of the ruling party have pointed out in this House that there is large-scale corrupt activity in this machinery. That will have

to be eradicated. I posed specific questions. They remained unrealised. Any rural worker should be included in RLEGP, not necessarily the landless. Then, I further suggested, on the basis of the experience of those who are connected with rural economy, that NREP and RLEGP should be totally merged. It will benefit the Government ; they will be able to have better efficiency and a lot of problems will be solved. No restriction should be placed on the number of days for which they work. That is acting as a great constraint, and that should also be removed.

I suggested to them another thing, but there was no reference to that. In our time, during the Janata Government rule, for Food-for-Work Programme we had assigned and allotted five millions tonnes of foodgrains. Now it is only half a million tonnes of foodgrains. I congratulate the Government for having a buffer stock of 21 million tonnes. Therefore, it will be possible for them to allocate greater quantities of foodgrains for the Food-for-Work scheme. Only because the suggestion come from the Opposition, let them not rejecting straightway. If they implement this particular suggestion, instead of half a million tonnes of foodgrains to be given for the Food-for-Work scheme, if they assign five million tonnes, in that case it will go a long way in helping people.

Corruption should be eradicated. In all the rural schemes to which I have made a reference, experts have come to the conclusion that 60 per cent of the benefit does not go to the actual beneficiaries; only 40 per cent goes to them. Therefore, the degree of corruption has also to be eliminated.

Take the Antyodaya scheme. Forget as to who introduced it. I would like to repeat that argument which I made last time : forget whether this Government had brought the Food-for-Work scheme or that Government had brought the Antyodaya scheme. The Planning Commission, of which the Chairman happens

to be your Member, had appointed an Evaluation Committee on anti-poverty measures, and that Evaluation Committee has come to the conclusion that Antyodaya scheme and Food-for-Work scheme had actually helped the 'poorest among the poor'. This is what they have said. If that is so, if that is the inference of the Planning Commission, do not take a partisan attitude and do try to take up the schemes and try to implement them more effectively.

As far as the problems of agriculture are concerned, I would very briefly like to mention because that part was not covered by the hon. Minister. The problem of agriculturists is leading to poverty escalation in the country. We must try to make agriculture cheaper and we must be able to offer remunerative prices to the peasants and just wages to the agricultural labour. All these will be possible only if an integrated view regarding the entire rural economy concerning agriculture is taken. We must try to offer cheaper inputs ; the agriculturists want cheaper diesel, cheaper electricity, cheaper fertilisers and other inputs. If they are offered, probably even with the existing prices that are offered to the agricultural commodities, they may feel satisfied because with the reduction in the expenses of inputs, the existing prices that are offered might happen to be remunerative prices. Therefore, that constructive aspects will have to be borne in mind.

As far as land re-distribution is concerned, in a number of States the ceiling laws have remained only on paper, and the ceiling laws are flagrantly violated. In the Madhya Pradesh Assembly, it was admitted by the Minister that, when the ceiling laws were sought to be implemented and the land was supposed to be redistributed, lands were actually shown in the names of various persons and some of the names were cats and dogs ; when they were investigated it was found out that some pieces of lands were assigned to cats and dogs. This was actually accepted and admitted by the Minister on the floor of the House in Madhya Pradesh Assembly. It is happening because . . .

PROF. N.G. RANGA (Guntur) : That is a very rare thing. Why make it a ridiculous thing ?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : I am only saying whatever was stated by the Minister.

PROF. N.G. RANGA : The main objective of imposing ceiling laws is to prevent any more accretion of lands for those people who have already got lands.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Exactly. If he had felt the punch of my speech too much, I would withdraw that punch ; I am prepared to withdraw those 'cats and dogs'. But I must tell you that there are a number of loopholes in the ceiling laws, and unless the ceiling laws are properly tightened and effectively implemented, no surplus land will be available for redistribution at all, and when re-distribution takes place, Adivasis and Scheduled Castes must get priority. That is the national policy accepted with the sanction of Parliament, and that should be implemented effectively. I would warn that with all the effective schemes that we implement among the rural poor and the urban poor, there is one factor which will be a disturbing and destabilising factor of our economy and that is the growing black money economy in the country. No less a person than the former Finance Minister, Shri Y.B. Chavan has admitted while delivering the speech on the presentation of the Budget, that unfortunately in this country a parallel black money economy functions and unless that is eradicated, we will not be able to solve many problems of our economy. There are various estimates. One estimate that has been made by Mr. Rangnekar is that the black money accumulated in this country is of the order of Rs. 50,000 crores and if we have a parallel black money of that order, the official economy is totally disrupted and as a result of that, artificial inflation, artificial rise in the prices and artificial scarcity result in the country. And whenever there is an inflation and rise in prices, it is not the affluent sections that

are affected, it is always those who lie below the poverty line who are affected. Therefore, these precautions should be taken. I am glad that the Minister has admitted that the National Sample Survey to which I had made a reference, probably when that sample survey is available, may indicate the poverty in the country to be still graver. We would like that National Sample Survey figure to be placed on the Table of the House. Last time National Sample Survey documents were laid on the Table of the House. I would demand that as he has said, within 2-3 months during the Budget session, the National Sample Survey inferences should be laid on the Table of the House because that will be a correct indicator to find out whether the economy has been stabilised, whether poverty in the country has grown and whether the various measures that have been taken for the eradication of poverty have been successful or not. That can be judged effectively only then. These are the aspects that have to be taken note of and I am sure if he takes cognizance of the strong criticism that has been made by members on both sides, probably he will be able to strengthen the efforts to eradicate poverty in the country. Unless poverty is eradicated, no problems of development in the country will ever be solved. One way of lifting the people above the poverty line is by manipulation—by changing the definition of the term 'poverty line' instead of lifting the people above the poverty line, you depress the poverty line and you by one stroke can remove a large chunk of the people who are below the poverty line. But that type of manipulation will not do. We want the accepted norms of 'poverty line' to remain. As the Minister himself has admitted, 2100 calories in the urban areas and 2400 calories in the rural areas and the requisite income necessary to provide those calories in terms of the existing price structure should be the definition. If that is done, I am sure eradication of poverty will become easy to a great extent and that will only give a fillip to the development of the economy of the country.

I am sure the Government will take

all these necessary steps which were suggested. He requested that I may withdraw the resolution. I do not want moving a resolution to be just a ritual.

Though he has accepted the spirit, he has rejected the resolution. Very often you say, 'We accept the spirit but reject the bottle.' That is what he has said. I am not one of those who move resolutions just as a ritual. Therefore, I press my resolution—I may not ask for division. But let it be put to vote. After its fate is decided, there will still be 4 or 5 minutes and we can take up Shri Virdhi Chander Jain's resolution.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I will now put Mr. Daga's amendment to vote—Mr. Daga is not here. So I put it,

The question is :

'That in the resolution,—

after 'poverty line' insert—

"according to the scheduled programme because of increase in population." (1)

The motion was negatived.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI BUTA SINGH) : Before you put the resolution to the vote of the House, I may be permitted to say a few words.

The hon. Member has made very valuable points. Otherwise I have no objection to his Resolution. It is a very pious resolution. There is no question of rejecting it or accepting it. I agree with the spirit with which this Resolution has been brought. As he himself has said, why, should one divide the House on such a thing ?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : I am not dividing the House. I want only voice vote.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I will now put the Resolution moved by Prof. Madhu Dandavate to the vote of the House. The question is :

"This House expresses its concern over the failure of the Government to lift vast sections of the masses above the poverty line and demands, concrete measures to eradicate poverty from the country."

The motion was negatived.

17.56 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE : DESERT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Now the House will take up the Resolution on Desert Development Programme to be moved by Shri Virdhi Chander Jain. Before we take up the Resolution, we have to fix the time for it. Shall we fix 2 hours ?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : (Raipur) : Why not fix it in the next session ? He will still remain on his legs in the next session.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I think we can fix 2 hours for the present.

SOME HON. MEMBERS : Yes.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : We have fixed 2 hours for the present. Shri Virdhi Chander Jain.

[Translation]

SHRI VIRDHĪ CHANDER JAIN (Barmer) : Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move :