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दूरेण ह्यवरं कर्म बुद्धियोगाद्धनंजय ।  
बुद्धौ शरणमन्विच्छ कृपणाः फलहेतवः ॥

Action (with a selfish motive) is far inferior to this Yoga in the form of equanimity. Do seek refuge in this equipoise of mind. Arjuna; for poor and wretched are those who are instrumental in making their actions bear fruit. *Bhagavadgita, Ch. 2, Text 49*

**Editorial**

## Country let down by UPA on all fronts

In the last five years the Congress led UPA government has pushed the country to such a pass that a comeback appears very difficult. Therefore the sooner people make up their mind to write obituary to this government greater service would be done to the country. For the last five years the UPA government has failed on all fronts. The only success that can be attributed to it is its capability to cling to power in protecting the government that was formed by default. Even converting democracy into "note-crazy" was acceptable to it. It removed the tainted minister Shibu Soren (Guruji) after his being convicted in a murder case but again made him the Chief Minister of Jharkhand to secure its government at the centre. The most staunch supporter of UPA, the Communists dissociated themselves from it, TRS left it, BSP and Vaiko withdrew their supports. It stooped before Samajwadi Party (SP) it has been opposing so bitterly. Congress led UPA is an alliance bereft of principles and policies and based on weak foundation. If we look back at the last five years, we find that the prestige that was earned by the NDA government for the nation was completely undermined during the UPA regime. The sense of pride and self respect that every Indian felt in the time of NDA now stands lost under the UPA rule.

Whatever has been presented by the UPA government in the Presidential Address, Rail Budget and Interim Budget point towards further deepening of recession and its lack of capability to handle the situation. The era of shortage of ideas is continuing till now. NDA constituted three states so that these hitherto neglected regions may move towards a golden future. While Uttarakhand and Chhattisgarh are fast moving on the path of progress, the situation in Jharkhand is unfortunate. The manner in which democracy was attacked and undermined in Jharkhand by the UPA government which is continuing with its conspiratorial tactics, the two crore people of Jharkhand are feeling cheated and deprived. They are eagerly waiting for the day elections take place in the state so that they are able to get rid off the UPA.

UPA government has violated the sanctity of the democratic institutions. It has embarked upon such an agenda which may be categorized under anti-national acts. Budget was communalized, scholarships were linked to religion, banks were asked to disburse loans on the basis of religion, the list of 90 districts was prepared for development on religious grounds etc. The politics of appeasement was practiced in the guise of Sachar Committee. There are numerous incidents which prove that for UPA

government the Constitution or law were secondary and to remain in power was supreme in its agenda. For our Rashtrapita Mahatma Gandhi the country was uppermost in the agenda but for the present Congress President Smt. Sonia Gandhi there is nothing but Shri Rahul Gandhi who is foremost. The manner in which the centres of faith belonging to the majority community, their cultural symbols, *Aacharyas*, *Dharmacharyas* and *Shankaracharya* were insulted and humiliated and in doing so the kind of conspiracies that were hatched are not only deplorable but shameful.

The life of a person, a family, a society, a state or a nation does not operate on guile and craftiness. The Communists particularly the CPI-CPM cannot absolve themselves of whatever the country is facing today. The history will not forgive the Communists for supporting the UPA which had a fractured mandate after the elections.

If we look at the dilapidated, helpless and shrinking Congress standing on the verge of being broken down, we can feel that it is now not the party of the country but of a family. SP is also facing the same situation. While in BSP the writ of "Supremo" runs large, RJD and LJP have also become personality centric parties. In such a situation, the political parties whose influence are limited to two to four constituencies become indispensable after the elections and from here starts the game of political blackmailing. People should try to vote for the kind of government in which the smaller parties fail to indulge in politically blackmailing the principle partners.

The upcoming general election will be fought on mainly two issues - firstly on the successful NDA and

failed UPA experience and secondly on whether the country wants a personality like Shri Lal Krishna Advani who understands the essential nature and character of the country or the one who works on the directives of others like a "night watchman." One has to decide as to whether the country should be placed at the altar of vote bank politics without caring about the dangers of its further division or those working with the motto of "one people, one culture and one nation" are elected. It has also to be decided whether we want UPA government which gave deaths

through terrorism and price rise or NDA government which brought prestige to the country through Pokhran nuclear test and refused to yield under the pressures of powerful countries of the world. We have full confidence that whenever people will decide on the basis of these four points, they will press the button on "Kamal" in the EVM to help form a BJP led NDA government. When our government is formed Shri Lal Krishna Advani with his sixty years of experience and immense administrative capabilities will become our Prime Minister. ■

## Terrorists can have no rights : Arun Shourie

Civil liberties of terrorist or people who take to guns in order to harm the sovereignty of country need to be separated from that of ordinary citizens. Former Union Minister and an eminent author Shri Arun Shourie, Rajya Sabha MP said this in Ahmedabad on February 14.

"Our Constitution strikes a balance between the liberties of the individual and what the State must do for its preservation and orderly life," Shri Shourie said while delivering the 4th Justice P D Desai memorial lecture in Ahmedabad.

"While the Constitution has balanced our rights and liberties, it has subjected it to reasonable restrictions," he added. He said that while balancing individual liberty and national security priority should be given on the latter, which is an issue of prime concern today. "Those who take to guns need to be tried under extraordinary laws. Issue of liberty of terrorists who are out to break India should be separated from the liberties granted by our Constitution to an ordinary Indian citizen," he said.

Shri Shourie was of the opinion

that perpetrators of terror be it from outside India or from within, should not be guaranteed any rights under the Constitution. He pointed out that all rights, freedom, and liberties can be restricted in the interest of sovereignty and integrity of the country.

Describing the present situation in context of terrorism, Shri Shourie asserted that a war has been thrust upon the county and it is different kind of undeclared war. "Terrorists and Naxalites are waging this war, propelled by countries like Pakistan, in order to overturn the Constitutional order in India," he said. In his lecture he also narrated the history of preventive detention in the country and explained the need that brought it in force to deal with communist in India in early fifties.

Explaining the reasons justifying the preventive detention given by the first Home Minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Shri Shourie said that perspective of the Iron Man of India sixty-years ago is more apt in the present situation prevailing in the country. ■ (FOC)

## Discussion on the Motion of Thanks to the Presidential Address

**When the Motion of Thanks to the Presidential Address came up for discussion in both Houses of the Parliament, BJP members took the Congress led UPA government to task. Initiating the debate in the Lok Sabha the Leader of Opposition in the House, Shri Lal Krishna Advani led the attack on the UPA.**

*For the information of our readers we publish below the synopsis of the speeches made by BJP Members of Parliament in both the Houses. The full text of the speeches is being published in a booklet form separately.*



## UPA Govt. has comprehensively failed in all fronts : L K Advani

**D**uring the last session entire discussion was centered around Mumbai incident initially because that incident took place at that time and after Mumbai incident the Government has promised to the country that it will bring a special law to fight against the terrorism. But why all this after Mumbai incident? Such incidents were there in the past 4-5 years also. When we demanded that at least there should be such a legal framework under which terrorists can be punished, the response of the Government was, “the present laws that are there are adequate.” The Government had not enacted such a law but repeat the law enacted by the NDA Government and said with pride that we have repealed the POTA. When the Government brought anti-terror law, the NDA has supported it but under this law even confession of Kasab cannot be used because this law does not permit for it, therefore, he has been arrested under MACOCA and is being prosecuted under this law because MACOCA make confession admissible evidence. If that is so, it is all the more glaring how inadequate is the amendment that we have brought in the Prevention of Unlawful Activities Act, so why should not frankly say that in case of terrorism, this particular amendment is a must and we will incorporate it. At that time, when we demanded that this law should be referred to the Standing Committee, the Minister of Home Affairs assured that necessary corrections and amendments will be carried out. But they have not brought any amendment till date. 26/11 incidents should be thoroughly investigated and its connection with the attack on the CRPF camp, Rampur, its associates, accomplices and local supporters etc. should also be

covered under this investigation. If the Supreme Court has given any verdict about Afzal Guru and Bangladeshi infiltration there is no reason the Government should not respect it. About infiltration and illegal immigration from Bangladesh, the Supreme Court has said that this is nothing short of external aggression. The Government is colluding with it. It is serious indictment of the UPA Government and it is surprising that after that instead of taking that indictment in earnest and trying to apply correctives they have amended the Foreigners Act and the Supreme Court struck down that amendment also.

Political considerations in the matter of national security is highly detrimental to the country. We took the Kashmir issue to the UN and consequently we have had been suffering for the last 60 years. I want to assert that infiltration and illegal immigration going on in Assam and Eastern India are creating a potential danger of another partition of the country. Kashmir problem, if at all, basically is one of aggression in 1947. We had unanimously passed a Resolution in this House, which happens to be the total stand of India on Kashmir. We should not ever forget it. It means that the part, which has been occupied by the other country, belongs to India and is an integral part of India. A lot of self-praise is manifest in the President’s Address. The sordid fact is that we are still going through a serious economic crisis. This cannot be denied. We have been elected for the cause of common man.

The Leader of the House, while presenting the Budget yesterday, had said that they would work in the interest of the common man. It is said that inflation is no more, or at best, controlled. However, whatever decrease is there in the inflation, is because of the

reduction in the prices of oil and some essential commodities. Prices of daily use items, particularly edible items, meant for the common men have been constantly rising. We have another crisis and that is, loss of employment of the employed people and in this scenario, loss of employment to already employed people is really a serious issue. So far as the farmers are concerned, the Government failed even to save their lives. Thousands of farmers committed suicides. Certainly this did not happen in any other country of the world. It can be appreciated if the price rise benefits the farmers. But this never happens in our country because the economy and management of our country is such that it provides some profit to the trader and not to the farmer. Those who committed suicides were not those who had taken loans from the banks. The condition of their families remained as it was.

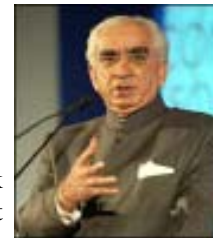
The monumental National Highway Project was made during the NDA Government for the development

of infrastructure in free India. This project had two parts; one was Golden Quadrilateral and the other was North-South and East-West Corridors. Work on the Golden Quadrilateral did some progress but no progress was made in the other two corridors. The situation is deplorable. My charge against this Government is that there is rampant corruption and huge sums of money are siphoned off from major schemes. This is the main cause of pending of these schemes. Development of villages was mentioned, but then no progress is visible in the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna. It is a matter of happiness that our Armed Forces are non political. However, institutions are being weakened. The makers of the Constitution had visualized a real autonomous Election Commission and no other Government ever tried to undermine its authority. I would like to request the Leader of the House that we should not interfere in the functioning of institutions like CBI and Election Commission.

## RAJYA SABHA

*In the Rajya Sabha the Leader of Opposition of the House Shri Jaswant Singh launched a scathing attack on the Congress led UPA government and categorically pointed out the all-round failures of the government in all fronts during its five years rule. The following is the synopsis of speeches made by the members of the Upper House. The full text of the speeches is being published in a booklet form separately.*

## Democracy under threat during UPA rule : Jaswant Singh



I was fortunate to hear President Address over thirty times. I did not speak on every address but I got an opportunity to speak on almost every address. This speech of President was very long. Perhaps I have not heard such long address before. It is itself indeed a second record of this speech.

The Address of President was very long and there are a number of sentences and words in English version, which are not understood. It is inappropriate to say 'Diaspora' for expatriate Indian. I felt after reading and hearing the Address that the Address was in itself a boring formality. It pains me that why has the Address of President remained a formality! I will speak on three or four points. We divide the security as internal and external security, this is not divisible. It cannot be divided, but we keep on dividing it. This is an exhaustive question, which needs to be resolved with mutual

consultations. I would like to speak about the tragic incidence that took place in Mumbai in November.

This is not a criticism that I make against the Government, this is also not an observation or criticism that I make against the functioning of the system. It is a reality, which all-democratic Governments face. After the 9/11 incident United States of America began an inquiry but here the Government should reflect that why there was a paralysis of thought and action for nearly 70 hours?

Pakistan started playing a charade. We have the grounds for pointing out to Pakistan that this is what you have done wrong. But, Pakistan, like a charade, has converted it into a kind of question and answer session with us. The kind of question and answer lobbying that is taking place, firstly, I find it inappropriate; secondly, this is inadequate; and thirdly, it is certainly Impertinent

on their part, why is this happening? I would like to request one or two things. First, how many such incidents took place since 1993 and how many people have been punished so far? Second thing the Prime Minister has told that we will not tolerate, but it has not been resolved so far. I conclude this particular point by requesting; do order an inquiry into the failure of intelligence and local administration.

The next point is related to the Armed Forces. I would like to urge 2-3 basic things. This is very complex question that why does a citizen agree to die? There are several factors that go amongst various others are the factors of morale, or *izzat*, of *iqbal*, of standing and the prestige of our Armed Forces.

The Second question is of distinction, the distinctiveness of uniforms, the rights and the duties of the respective security organizations of the country. The prestige that the individual gets is on account of the uniform, which he wears; the uniform is of this Republic of India. Now-a-days, it is seen that the gatekeepers of corporate companies are copying the military uniform and wearing the Medals. There should be a law about this. Please do not permit any organization to wear the uniform like that of armed forces. This is totally unacceptable. Please address it. The next point is about the ex-servicemen. The ex-servicemen today number almost three million. They are stung by the various anomalies created by the Sixth Pay Commission and the confusion has been compounded by a variety of interpretation that have been put out in the successive letters of the Controller of Defence Accounts. I can't simply understand how the pensions of a Lt. General, a Major General and a Brigadier are going to be exactly the same as that a rank just half that service of a Lt. Colonel. If you expect Armed Forces to deliver the best, you will have to resolve their problems. The question of one rank one pension has been pending for a very long time. I am greatly troubled that the officers and men who are once in uniform are compelled to take action of the kind that has been either returning their medals or by sitting in protest. When we, as Members of Parliament, have given to ourselves what tantamount to one rank one pension, how can you deny it to the ex-servicemen? There is a full life ahead of him with no employment or limited employment opportunities available. I appeal to the Government to address the complex question of one rank one pension and see to it that the service men and the ex-service men don't suffer on account of pay, emoluments and pensions.

We have a nuclear know-how and we assert that we should continue to maintain our autonomy of

decision-making to do that. I we should take it into account that both the present US President and the Secretary of State have declared a commitment to pursue a nuclear free world that includes a review of the NPT in 2010 and a possible revival of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

We therefore need a sufficiently capable scientific infrastructure. There is need of a major adjustment in governance and budgetary sources to avoid any erosion of our national science and technology base and core nuclear weapons capabilities. We have never had as disturbed a neighbourhood as we currently have. The problem that we face in our immediate neighbourhoods is largely a consequence of the failed policies of the United States of America. We have the strongest possible relations with the USA and the challenge is to find the correct and equal balance. I have evolved a theory, of my own that there is a natural balance that this subcontinent has from the Himalayas to the Ocean and this natural balance get disturbed, the minute there is any foreign element in it. Today, we have two presences. One is the NATO-US presence and, along with it, on our eastern land, is the Peoples Republic of China. It was exactly the same when the Soviet Union moved into Afghanistan. I find it disturbing that our approach and attitude remains similarly subdued as it was, say, in 1979-80 when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan.

The Hon'ble Minister of Defence recently blamed the Government red tape for delays in modernizing. Allocation is not the problem and the issue has been of timely and judicious utilization. A sort of inertness has encompassed our foreign policy and we will have to face its outcome for many generations to come as we are facing the out come of wrong decisions of Pt. Nehru in case of Pakistan and China. The wrong made in the internal policies can be rectified but it is not easy to rectify mistake committed in the international arena.

What is happening in Nepal today a Madheshi Janadhi-Kar Morcha has been formed at Birganj of Nepal and in a conference of the Morcha first time a delegation of Communist Party of China was present. There is Maoist insurgencies in the Madheshi areas of Nepal.

Taliban, Hekmatyar and Haqqanin influence have steadily expanded in both Afghanistan, FATA and Baluchi areas of Pakistan. The United States of America might be 8,500 miles away. We are only eight and a half minute away. The Taliban revolt is not subsiding. It is spreading. The Defence white paper the People's Republic of China of says clearly that China's national

security is no longer limited to the defence of its borders but also to screening political, diplomatic, and economic interests over interests overseas. In a political sense it will also reflect influencing governments like what they are doing today in Nepal enthusiastically and Pakistan.

The Vice-Principal of the Nanjing Army Command College has stated that the policy of not to use nuclear weapons first is not unlimited. We have to take note of this as also of water question, because the Satluj is

vulnerable as is the Brahmaputra and the T-Sangpo. The Brahmaputra faces danger today. That gorge narrows down to almost just a 30 metres gorge and it descends to 1000 metres in 20 kms. That is where dam is being put and if Brahmaputra is trapped there, these reflect on what happens to our country. We are a water stressed country; we cannot afford to lose the water of Brahmaputra as it happened earlier in the East on the Satluj.

## Nation's security at stake under UPA : Arun Jaitley

**I**t is a draft which is prepared by the Government and the President, with utmost respect to the Constitutional Head, performs the function of reading the Government's draft. The net aggregate of all those programmes becomes the Presidential Address, and along with that, the Government indulges in an exercise of self-congratulations. We are passing through extraordinary times. The national economy is faced with a crisis, the India's security is faced with a crisis. We are today a nation greater in debt than we ever were and we are a nation, which is more insecure than we ever were. The entire direction and emphasis, which a Presidential Address must contain as to how to get out of this crisis, is completely absent. The UPA has functioned in a manner where the Hon. Prime Minister, may be the Head of the Executive, may be the person constitutionally accountable to the Parliament, failed to provide the leadership. A leader is expected to lead the nation; leadership is the art of taking decisions; leadership is not the art of survival that you abstain from taking decisions so that you don't antagonise groups or partners and, therefore, manage to survive.

The UPA, was a post-poll alliance and one of the reasons that the post-poll alliance had to function was that it had to keep the BJP and the NDA out of power. Therefore, various disparate groups got into Government and some supported the Government from outside. You had two phases of this Government. The first four-and-a-half-years was plagued by the Government, which was unable to take significant decisions because those supporting them from outside were not in agreement with those decisions. How can, in the world's largest democracy, functioning take place when the ruling party has decided that its eventual target, on the basis of its own political commitments in the party, is to put the heir apparent of the preferred family in power and that the



Prime Minister would only be a stopgap arrangement? The nature of the campaign indicates that. How can the Prime Minister, in that situation, then command the authority, the political authority, the moral authority, to provide the kind of leadership which is required in a democracy, to lead the country? In hours of crisis, we need a determined leadership. We need a decisive leadership. I am conscious of the limitations of a coalition Government. The coalition must take steps in order to get the country out of the crisis which it is facing. What is the situation as far as national security is concerned? The last five years have reinforced the idea of India being a soft state. We had terrorist strikes in the last two decades and the experience of the last two decades taught us that unlike the United States, where the battle against terror really commenced after 9/11, the Indian battle should have commenced much earlier and India had to be a hard state with hard measures as far as dealing with terror is concerned.

We carried out the campaign whether national security must be linked up only with security considerations and we go by the professional advice required or national security must now be linked to the vote-bank politics? When elections were there, we could sit Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand and do business with them. Recent reports indicated that the former Chief Minister of Jharkhand, who lost the bye-election, was hand-in-glove with the Maoists in order to win the bye-election. We diluted our battle against terror and we linked it to vote-bank politics. There are terrorist groups which are inspired by them and some are not inspired by them but what is common is that the effect of terrorism is eventually religion-neutral. Terrorism strikes at the very idea and the roots of India. Let us honestly analyse

what happened. Post-Mumbai 26/11, each intelligence agency was trying to pass the buck and the blame on the other. For months and years, the cases remained unresolved. People were killed and the terrorists fled away. They would keep bombs somewhere and Security responses were poor. Let us not forget Parliament. We were all safe because of the staff and police around Parliament and security forces were quick. In Akshardham, within a matter of hours they liquidated the terrorists. Our intelligence network had weakened. We gave a logic that no special laws are required to deal with terror. For four-and-half years, you misled the country and then said nothing special is required. Now you are saying that our foreign policy achievement after 26/11 has been great. Taliban is today at our doorstep.

We have been making all these distinctions and claiming a foreign policy success that in Pakistan Taliban, ISI and the military is different. Today, parts of Pakistani territory are coming under Taliban control. Taliban is no respecter of geographical boundaries. Let us remember, the whole idea of Taliban is repugnant to an Indian State. Taliban may be five hours away, but the ideas cross geographical boundaries very fast. Therefore, the UPA must realize that this idea is to be kept away because it is against the concept of India. When the Amarnathji Shrine Board land dispute was in place and the Snagharsh Samitee was saying why should yatris not get land for basic facilities, why should there be an idea that land should not be given. If you give you the land, the separatists will get very angry and start a counter-agitation.

The Government and Mr. Pranab Mukherjee in particular, saw sense in this proposal and therefore, accepted the solution. When you start depending on Pakistan saying you are not cooperating and admitting that this conspiracy was planned on your soil. Let us not forget that there are many powers in the world, which want to keep Pakistan in good humour because Pakistan provides a convenient base to them in the region.

The foreign policy initiative of the Government of India was that the internationalization of Kashmir should remove Kashmir from the international agenda and must bring back the cross-border terrorism to the international agenda.

The British Foreign Secretary comes to India and says, if you want to resolve the issue of cross-border terror and incidents like 26/11 then the root cause must be solved and the root cause is Kashmir. We have still not learnt the lessons. Andhra Government will have a

ceasefire with the Maoists on the eve of elections. Huji has made Bangladesh its base. It is an organization of ISI Al-Qaeda. We are not concerned with the 20 million infiltrators who have illegally come in. For us in parts of Bihar, Bengal and Assam these infiltrators may be a threat to India's security but they are convenient vote banks. The UPA Government inherited a booming economy with an 8.4 % growth rate and when its tenure is about to end it leaves behind the nation in debt.

Today, you had a boom harvest, 230 million tons. Global food prices have gone down. So logically food prices should have gone down. But food prices in India still have 11 per cent plus inflation. The indications started coming in 2007 in the United States that a global melt down may take place. The first indication of that melt down was that you had the sub prime crisis in the United States.

The second crisis indication was that you might have some financial institutions which were now going to collapse. You sucked the entire liquidity out of the market. The recession was at your doorstep. Prices would have come down and left the consumer with no money to buy. Your investments are being wiped out and your farmer is in a misery condition. Today farmers suicides still take place and you dress up a figure. When the NDA was in power, its flagship programme was National Highways. Contracts for Golden Quadrilateral were awarded by the NDA.

At that time General Khanduri was the Minister and 97.46 per cent work was complete. Take rural roads, you will find the same thing. In the NREGA 14 per cent people have got 100-day salary or stipend. When a former prime minister of Pakistan came to India, Mr. Advani asked her, 'What is the difference between Pakistan and India, that in the last 60 years, we flourished as a democracy and you collapsed as a democracy. She promptly replied that there are three mistakes which we made and which you did not make and those three mistakes are: You had a professional armed force but we had an armed force which had political ambition. Second your judges never followed the ballot box, they were independent.

Third your election commission never rigged elections. If any of these three institutions had not been safe in your country you perhaps would be like us. The UPA is at the fog end of its term with these serious challenges. We thought that an inspirational leadership would guide this country. But what we find today in the Presidential Address? Just a list of programmes done by each Ministry is not inspirational, it is not guidance to the country.

## Presidential Address heavy on text but silent on facts : Prabhat Jha

Thank you Mr. Chairman for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Motion of Thanks to the Presidential Address. The Presidential Address was very lengthy and unrealistic. Last time the Presidential Address had 20 pages and 65 lines. But this Presidential Address has 31 pages, 765 lines and 12,997 words. Though it was lengthy but far from reality. First part of the Address includes wish for Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh's good health which was worth mentioning. But the same kind of wish was not expressed for former Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee who is also ill and undergoing treatment. He is not a Member of this House but a Member of Lok-Sabha. The wish for good health to Shri Vajpayee would have definitely restored the political ethics which today stand so much degraded with deterioration of our political culture. Second line of the Address includes thanking the Security forces. The government has lost its moral position to thank the security forces. It is because twice under the rule of the Congress led UPA, the relatives of security forces and security forces themselves have returned their medals in protest against the government. The government should think about this matter. This is a serious development for the country.



It has been said that this government is the result of sacrifice and Samarpan. But what kind of sacrifice? In reality, the common men has been sacrificed. Your samarpan is that you have surrendered and failed in all fronts. I would like to draw your attention only on two issues- education and health. Your Government has failed to recruit requisite number of teachers. Each and every village is short of schools and teachers. These days burden of debt forces farmers to commit suicides. In the coming days suicides will take place due to indebtedness owing to expenses incurred on health treatments. In the 22 states where elections have taken place in the last five years you have lost in 17. These defeats show that your government has failed on all fronts. ■

### Railway Budget

## Disappointing, Directionless and Populist

The BJP has termed the railway budget as “disappointing, directionless and populist” and criticised the Railway Minister, Shri Lalu Prasad of claiming credit for projects like extending the railways to Kashmir which was initiated by the NDA government. BJP Parliamentary Party spokesperson, Shri Shahnawaz

Hussain said 2% Price cut on most Long-Distance tickets is just a peck on the cheek for the travelers. Demanding that Shri Lalu Prasad come out with a “performance budget” for each of the five years of his tenure, he said, “This budget is directionless and nothing but jugglery of words.”

### Railway Budget Disappointing : Shivraj Singh Chouhan

The railway budget is disappointing for Madhya Pradesh, Chief Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan said. “The proposals like plying a daily Habibganj-Kurla train, running daily train between Bhopal and Lucknow, making the Puri-Jaipur Express bi-weekly, extending the Shatabdi to Indore, starting a third Bina-Itarsi line and adding a coach from Bhopal to the Jabalpur Mumbai-Garib Rath have not been implemented,” he said in a statement. Shri Chouhan said all projects Railway Minister Shri Lalu Prasad had announced earlier have remained incomplete. He termed it a populist budget presented with an eye on the ensuing Lok Sabha elections.

### Railway Budget has let down Chhattisgarh : Raman Singh

The railway budget has let down expectations of Chhattisgarh despite the fact that the state generates high revenue for the railways, Chief Minister Dr. Raman Singh said. “The interim rail budget is disappointing, it has let down expectations of millions of people of Chhattisgarh,” said Dr. Singh in his reaction to the interim budget. “Though the South East Central Railway (SECR) - which has its headquarters in the state’s Bilaspur - generates highest revenue for the railways, Chhattisgarh has been totally ignored,” remarked Singh, who heads Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in the state. Dr. Singh was critical of the Rowghat railway line project being ignored in the interim budget. The line is considered the future lifeline for the state-based Bhilai Steel Plant (BSP), the flagship unit of the public sector Steel Authority of India Ltd (SAIL). He said that surprisingly the interim budget did not have any provision for the long-pending project that would give the BSP access to Rowghat areas in the state’s Bastar region to use its vast stocks of iron ore. ■



MOCKING at *aam aadmi*

## Interim Budget set to deepen Economic crisis further

The Interim Budget presented by External Affairs Minister Shri Pranab Mukherjee (who holds additional charge of the Finance Ministry) in Parliament on February 16 disappointed the *aam aadmi*, traders and industrialist as it hardly contained any stimulus package to spur demand in the economy, currently hit by the slowdown. Both direct and indirect tax rates have been left unchanged. The Interim Budget failed to deliver on investors' expectations which was immediately reflected at the bourses, with the Sensex posting a fall. While Indian Industrialists described the budget as "lackluster and directionless," the Opposition parties dubbed it as directionless, disappointing, election-oriented offering "poll lollipops."

Economy in mess for next Govt.

The Finance Ministry proposes to finance the unprecedented fiscal deficit (6 per cent of the GDP) through huge borrowings, which could lead the country into a debt trap. This huge gap is proposed to be financed through borrowings whose interest payment would again be huge. According to experts, it would be a huge burden on the exchequer. With the Government borrowings now at Rs 3,30,000 crore, the investment would be a major deterrent to economic growth and will have an impact in the value of rupee and inflation.

This will pose the biggest challenge to the incumbent Government in May 2009, which will have to deal with the unprecedented borrowings by the Government and servicing of the loans. If the economy fails to respond in the next 12 months, the servicing of huge borrowings would be the single biggest challenge and the Government may have to borrow more to pay interests, leading itself into a debt trap.

Shri Mukherjee, in his budget did not propose any tax changes but made a valiant attempt to hide the dire straits the nation's economy is in. His 90-minute speech mainly focused on popular schemes the UPA Government had introduced in the last four years. His last 10 minutes of the "Election Speech" disappointed everyone when he failed to give any policy outlines for the revival of the economy. Interestingly, the spending plans as proposed in the Interim Budget virtually reflect the political manifesto of the government at the Centre. Despite a fall in revenue collection to the tune of nearly Rs 60,000 crore in the current fiscal, the Budget has made a massive allocation of Rs 1,31,317 crore for the *aam admi*-linked flagship programmes. Thus the total expenditure will come to Rs 953,231 crore comprising Rs 285,149 crore in Plan and Rs 668,082 crore in non-Plan expenditure. The gross tax revenue receipts at the existing rates of taxation are estimated at Rs 6,71,293 crore and the Centre's net tax revenue at Rs 5,00,096 crore. As a result, the sensex plunged by 329 points and closed at 9,305, down by more than 3 per cent. With tax collections falling and expenditure going through the roof, it is a perfect economic mess the Congress led UPA Government leaves behind for its successor. The current state of the nation's economic health is nightmarish and it may take several years to get the economy back on track.

### Comments on Interim Budget 2009-10

## Farewell Budget provides ample justification to say "Farewell" to Congress : Advani

The Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Shri LK Advani on February 16 said the common man had been let down at the end of UPA Government's five year tenure. The Interim Budget was a "farewell budget", adding the people should also bid farewell to the Congress and the UPA Government. "At the end of this Government's five-year tenure there may be people in the top financial brackets who may be happy that they have become multi-millionaires or billionaires, but the *aam aadmi* feels badly let down," he said.

He referred to the household budget going haywire following soaring prices of food articles and said since last year an even more agonizing problem has been the

problem of rapidly mounting unemployment, initially because of "our own mismanagement of the economy, and later because of the global meltdown".

Shri Advani said it was a cruel irony that, while the Government hailed farmers for providing food security to the country, in these very years several kisans had committed suicide. "Farmers provided the nation with food security, and the Government has miserably failed to provide even security of life to these real heroes," he said. This is the last budget of UPA's 5-year term. This is indeed a farewell budget, and it does provide ample justification why the people also should bid farewell to the Congress and this government, Shri Advani said.

## Fiscal deficit figures are unrealistic It looks like Satyam's balance sheet : Jaitley

The UPA Government's interim budget for 2009-10 invited scathing criticism from the Opposition, which questioned the fiscal deficit projection and slammed the absence of stimulus to revive several sinking sectors of the economy. After Shri Pranab Mukherjee presented the interim budget in Parliament, BJP National General Secretary Shri Arun Jaitley told reporters, "The Government's calculations on fiscal deficit were wide of the mark. It is like Satyam's balance sheet."

BJP contested the Government's claim that fiscal deficit would be close to 6 per cent of the GDP, saying that the Prime Minister's economic advisory council had predicted it would be close to the double-digit mark. Accusing the Government of "living in denial mood" and "indulging in self-congratulation," Shri Jaitley said it was a poll budget. "We are living in a period of grave worldwide economic crisis, but the Government did not try to address the issue of unemployment," Shri Jaitley alleged. ■

### GUJARAT

#### Narendra Modi terms Interim Budget as depressing



The Gujarat Chief Minister Shri Narendra Modi has dubbed the Union Interim Budget as depressing for the common man and farmers. He also charged the UPA government with failing to announce a "stimulus package" for industries, particularly the export-oriented ones, which are feeling the heat of the economic meltdown. He said "There is only a populist talk in the entire Interim Budget (in view of the impending Lok Sabha elections), without any mention of the future economic plan of action. The UPA regime has lost control over its revenue expenditure and has failed to check the growing non-plan expenditure".

### BIHAR

#### UPA did gross injustice with the *aam aadmi* : Nitish Kumar



The Chief Minister of Bihar Shri Nitish Kumar called the Budget directionless and disappointing. Shri Kumar said the Centre failed to address the concerns of Bihar. "The Budget did not provide for any economic package for Bihar nor did it allow special concessions on the lines of northeastern states or Uttarakhand. Lashing out at the Centre, Shri Kumar said it had the resources to bail out big companies but has no money for Bihar".

### ORISSA

#### Budget a major disappointment : Naveen Patnaik

Orissa Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik described the budget as a major disappointment and said it has no special provision to address needs of the

common people. "I do not think this budget will benefit Orissa. On the face of it, the budget is election-oriented," Shri Patnaik said reporters. The interim budget is just like the empty vessel," he said, adding that there were no schemes to benefit the poor and disadvantaged sections of society.



### MADHYA PRADESH

#### No relief for commonman : Shivraj Singh Chouhan



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan expressed his disappointment that there was no relief for the common man in the interim budget presented in Parliament. Shri Chouhan said no concrete steps had been taken to strengthen the economy at a time when there was a slowdown worldwide. "The budget is without any direction and solid base. No fresh announcement has been made," he said. Shri Chouhan further said the economy had been derailed during the, UPA Government's rule and described the budget as disappointing.

### PUNJAB

#### Budget directionless : Parkash Singh Badal



The Interim Budget for 2009-10 was criticised by Punjab Chief Minister Shri Parkash Singh Badal on February 16 as "totally directionless and disappointing without giving any relief" to any section of the society even while State Deputy CM Shri Sukhbir Singh Badal termed the Budget of the Congress-led UPA Government as "anti-poor". Shri Badal said the budgetary proposals were empty of substance and lacked the fiscal daring required to tackle the problems being faced by the poor in the country. The *aam aadmi* will be the biggest loser," he said. ■

# *Aam aadmi* suffered the most during UPA regime

The Interim Budget documents confirm that the UPA Government has grossly failed to live up to the promises it had made in the Common Minimum Programme; that its claims in successive budgets have been, as we have been warning all along, wholly fabricated; and that it is guilty of grossly mismanaging both the economy and governmental finances. Shri Pranab Mukherji has listed the seven objectives that Shri P.Chidambaram had spelled out in his first budget, and claimed that the Government has fulfilled.

In fact,

1. Far from placing the economy on a path of sustained growth of 7% to 8%, it is leaving the economy with a significant slowdown – a slowdown that started as soon as the momentum created by the NDA ran

out; a slowdown that has been caused by its mismanagement, a mismanagement it is trying to cover up by invoking the international economic crisis;

2. As far as “education and health” is concerned, the UPA had promised to spend at least 6% of GDP on education and 3% of the GDP on health. It even imposed a cess of 2% on all taxes to collect revenue for education. In fact, the outlays are nowhere near the promised levels. Moreover, the manner in which this money has been spent has remained opaque and apart from continuing with the Sarva Shikshan Abiyan initiated by the NDA Government, this Government has done nothing further in this field.

3. Far from “generating gainful employment and promoting investment”, it is leaving behind an economy in which at least a crore of persons who till recently had jobs are now without work; and investment is collapsing all across the economy.

4. While the Government had promised to assure “hundred days of employment to the breadwinner in each family at the minimum wage”, its own report and those of the CAG show that in fact it is only in 14% of

the cases that the promised days of employment have been provided; moreover, there have been widespread corruption and defalcation.

5. As for “focusing on agriculture, rural development and infrastructure” agricultural growth remained respectable only in the years in which there were good monsoons – far from ensuring the interests of the farmers, its policies have driven the farmers to suicide; in the 47 days of 2009 alone, there have been



*Press release on the Interim Budget issued by Shri Jaswant Singh, Shri Yashwant Sinha and Shri Arun Shourie on February 16 in New Delhi.*

in Vidarbha alone 112 suicides by farmers - these are the very farmers whom the Finance Minister has described as “the real heroes of India’s success story”. Similarly, far from ensuring a focus on infrastructure, in fact the pace of infrastructure has been brought to a grinding slowdown – a fact which is exemplified by the

pathetic condition to which the National Highway Programme has been reduced: the project completion rate of this programme has fallen from 81% in 2004-05 to just around 50% now.

6. The claim about “accelerating fiscal consolidation and reform”, is by now known by all to be farcical: in the Common Minimum Programme the UPA had pledged to eliminating the revenue deficit of the centre by 2009, so as to release more resources for investments in social and physical infrastructure”; in fact, even the Finance Minister is admitting that the revenue deficit this year will be 4.4% of the GDP and fiscal deficit will be 6% of GDP. The Finance Minister however is not telling the truth even in the interim budget. The Prime Minister’s Economic Advisory Council, in a report published in January 2009, has estimated that the fiscal deficit will be at least 8% of the GDP. According to us, even this is an under-estimation. Given the massive shortfall in revenues, Government of India’s fiscal deficit will exceed 10% of GDP. Once the deficits of the states are added, the UPA period would have plunged the country into unprecedented fiscal crisis. ■

## Pro poor and investment friendly Budget

**B**JP Government in Chhattisgarh on February 10 announced many schemes for the poor, farmers as well as business community in line with the government's efforts to implement BJP election manifesto for the recently concluded Assembly poll in the State.

Presenting the budget estimate for Rs 22,211 crore for the fiscal year 2009-10, Chief Minister Dr. Raman Singh, who also holds the Finance portfolio, reiterated his Government's commitment for the welfare of the poor, farmers, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and achieving the key Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) like reduction of poverty, malnutrition, infant and maternal mortality.

**The major highlights of the Budget are:** Distribution of rice at Re 1 per kg to seven lakh *Antyodaya* families, and at Rs 2 per kg to the rest 30 lakh poor families; free iodized salt to BPL families (at a cost of Rs 1,458 crore under food security scheme); bonus of Rs 270 per quintal



and above to paddy farmers costing Rs 840 crore; short term agricultural credit at 3 per cent interest rate, free electricity for agricultural pumps up to 5 HP. There has been a quantum jump in allocation for food security by 29 per cent, nutrition by 59 per cent, and education by 43 per cent.

Implementation of the Sixth Pay Commission recommendations will cost the State exchequer Rs 1,000 crore.

The budget exempted the small traders having an annual turnover of less than Rs 10 lakh from professional tax. Bio-fuel has been made tax-free and VAT on laminated and steel fabricated items has been reduced from 12.5 to 4 per cent. With an estimated growth of 11 per cent in tax and 36 per cent in non-tax

revenues, it became the fourth consecutive revenue surplus budget. The budget estimate of Rs 22,211 crore is 12.5 per cent higher than the current estimates of Rs 19,746 crore. The net budget deficit stands at Rs 287 crore and taking into account the cumulative deficit, the budget deficit is estimated at Rs 1,185 crore. Gross fiscal deficit is estimated at Rs 2,564 crore which is 3 per cent of the GDP. There is a 13 per cent increase in plan outlay.

In social sector, the outlay has been increased by 19 per cent. There has been a whopping increase in school education allocation by 43 per cent. The outlay for the agriculture and allied sectors has been increased by 13 per cent. The Chief Minister renewed his pledge to combat Maoist menace. The police budget for 2009-10 has been increased by 22 per cent to Rs 941 crore with a special focus on security related infrastructure needs. We are confident of achieving the budgetary target despite economic recession, claimed the Chief Minister Dr. Raman Singh. ■ (FOC)

### *In the infamous Nithari carnage case*

## Pandher, Koli get death sentence

A special CBI court in Ghaziabad on February 13, according to Zeenews, awarded death sentence to Moninder Singh Pandher and Surinder Koli in the Rimpa Haldar murder case. Shri Khalid Khan the counsel of victim's parents has expressed deep satisfaction over the special court's verdict.

"It's a landmark judgement and a slap on the face of CBI, which needs to change its strategy," said Shri Khan. During the argument the CBI sought a death penalty for Nithari serial killings case convict Surinder Koli while leaving it to the court to decide the quantum of punishment for Pandher in the rape and murder of a 14-year-old girl Rimpa Haldar. Pandher was found

guilty under IPC sections 302, 376, 201 and 120B, whereas Koli was convicted under sections 302, 376, 364 and 511. Pandher was charged with causing disappearance of evidence of offence and giving false information (section 201) and hatching criminal conspiracy (section 120B). The judgement brings an end to a 25-month marathon probe and trial in the case which also saw the investigating agency giving clean chit to Pandher. Rimpa Haldar was one of the 19 victims who was sexually exploited and brutally murdered at Pandher's house at Nithari in Noida. This is the first verdict in the 19 cases related to mysterious killings in Nithari village near Noida. ■

## A Budget for the common man : Dhumal

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Prof. Prem Kumar Dhumal, who also holds the Finance portfolio, presented a tax-free budget in the State Assembly at Shimla on February 16, calling it a "budget of the common man and made keeping in view the interests of all categories".



Prof. Dhumal announced insurance schemes for agricultural cash crops like apple, tomato, potato and mango. He also launched the Rs.353-crore "Pandit Deendayal Kisan Bagwan Samridhi Yojna" and allocated Rs.267 crore for irrigation. He also announced reduction in bus fares by 10 per cent and exempted the buses in rural areas of road tax. The tax rate on CFLs, soaps and butter oil has been reduced from 12.5 per cent to 4 per cent.

Shri Dhumal announced schemes worth more than Rs.2,000 crore to State government employees and pensioners. The promotion quota for Class IV employees has been raised from 10 per cent to 30 per cent and the honorariums of Gram Rozgar Sewaks and Panchayat Chowkidars have been substantially increased. Also, the minimum daily wage in the State will now be Rs.110.

The home guards will take home Rs.170 every day instead of Rs.150 so far. Giving the macro-budget estimates, Prof. Dhumal said the financial year 2009-10 is expected to open with a surplus of Rs.867.41 crore and total revenue receipts are estimated at Rs.10478.33 crore. Keeping in view the current year deficit of Rs.158.36 crore, the year is likely to close with a surplus of Rs.718.05 crore, excluding the impact

of coming pay and pension revisions. The salaries and pensions still amount to be the maximum portion (39 per cent) of the total expenditure.

Talking to media persons later, the Chief Minister said the revenue collections would be reduced due

to economic slowdown and the deficit and loan repayments would be met after 2017 when the State would earn Rs.7000 crore as revenue from various hydel projects.

The government employees, farmers and common people appreciated the budget. The Confederation of Indian Industry-Himachal Chapter hailed the VAT relaxations and called it very "investor-friendly". ■ (FOC)

### Rajnath's promise to ex-servicemen

## BJP to include "One rank, one pension" demand in manifesto

The Bharatiya Janata Party has expressed grave concern over the UPA Government's gross neglect of the ex-servicemen's (ESM) demand of one rank one pension.

In a statement issued at New Delhi on February 15, BJP National President Shri Rajnath Singh said the ex-servicemen have been vehemently opposing the recommendations of the Sixth Pay Commission ever since it was implemented by the present Government and even launched a nationwide agitation in protest against the move.

With the Sixth Pay Commission recommendation of increasing the salaries of the armed forces every 10 years, Shri Rajnath Singh said, the gap between the pensions received by those who retired before the implementation of the respective commissions has widened and it will further complicate the situation in the future.

He said it is the prime responsibility and duty of the

government in power to sincerely consider the problems faced by the ex-servicemen as every serving soldier today is an ESM tomorrow.

He said that the BJP firmly believes that the issues pertaining to the ESM like one rank one pension, resettlement of veterans, formation of a separate commission for the ESM, compensation for war-disabled and early retirement need to be addressed on a priority basis.

Unfortunately the present dispensation did not feel the pain of the ESM when they were forced to return their most precious possession, their medals, which they had earned while serving the country. The BJP extends its full support to the ex-servicemen of the country and assures them that the party will consider the issue seriously by including their demand of one rank one pension in the NDA manifesto and ensure that a satisfactory solution is found at the earliest after coming to power at the Centre. ■ (FOC)

## Complete debt waiver for farmers if NDA voted to power at Centre: Rajnath

From Our Correspondent

Addressing a huge gathering at Chandigarh on February 12 on the last day of NDA’s 30-day “Jan Aakrosh Padyatra” in Haryana, BJP National President Shri Rajnath Singh promised a complete debt waiver for farmers if BJP-led NDA came to power at the Centre. Farmers would also have to pay less than 4 per cent interest on loans and get relief in surety for purchase of tractors from loans.

He said, “We will not keep your tractor and landholdings as surety. Instead, only the tractor or the land size worth the cost of the tractor will be kept as guarantee. Any subsidy on fertilizer or seeds will directly go into the accounts of farmers rather than being passed on to the industrialists,” he said in an interactive speech during which he sought response from the public repeatedly.

Launching a scathing attack on the Congress-led UPA at the Centre, its Chairperson Smt Sonia Gandhi and on Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, BJP President said a few terrorists had turned the country upside-down. “It is a cowardly government being headed by an even cowardly leadership. Pakistan should have been taken to task but the Congress has a weak heart. We have the courage to send out a strong message saying Pakistan-aided terrorism will not be tolerated. The fact that we have won four wars against Pakistan should not be forgotten,” he emphasized.

After releasing a book containing questions by Shri Ajay Chautala, the architect of the

*Padyatra*, on questions posed to the Congress, Punjab Chief Minister Shri Parkash Singh Badal said unemployment, illiteracy, poverty were a legacy of the Congress. “Chaudhary Devi Lal waged a battle against the British. We have an equally big



challenge before us and you have the right to vote out the party not serving your interest. The Shiromani Akali Dal, the BJP and the INLD are one force in the region and we will not allow the Congress policy of divide and rule to succeed,” he said.

The Janata Dal (U) President, Shri Sharad Yadav, said the Congress leadership and the party never had anything to do with the common man and his dreams. This is the worst government ever the country has seen in its democratic history. So the people must vote it out as quickly as possible and this is better for the health of the country.

Indian National Lok Dal Supremo Shri Om Prakash Chautala said the *Padyatra*, which concluded today by way of the rally, had given the Congress some uncomfortable moments in Haryana.

He said, “Chief Minister Shri Bhupinder Singh Hooda was a property dealer and he has looted the farmers of their land in the name of Special Economic Zones,” he

maintained.

Shri Chautala alleged that the State Government was using the Land Acquisition Act as a tool to “pressurize the farmers into selling their priceless lands at throw away rates”.

While speakers from the INLD and the BJP complimented Shri Ajay Chautala for his successful 30-day *Padyatra*, which stirred the public

to raise its voice against the “injustice from the Congress rule”, they also repeatedly said that for the welfare of the country Shri LK Advani must be made the next Prime Minister.

Earlier the National Democratic Alliance’s 30-day 662-kilometre *padyatra* across Haryana culminated at the Haryana Raj Bhawan in Chandigarh on February 12 and a delegation of BJP and INLD led by INLD Rajya Sabha MP Shri Ajay Singh Chautala, submitted a memorandum to Haryana Governor Shri A.R. Kidwai demanding dismissal of the Bhupinder Singh Hooda-led Congress regime. Shri Chautala, accompanied by senior INLD and BJP State leaders, marched from Panchkula to Raj Bhawan on the last leg of the “Jan Aakrosh *Padyatra*.” In the memorandum, the NDA has also demanded a high level enquiry against the State Government’s role in land release scandal, financial scams and several other grave irregularities. ■

# Brutal lathi-charge on BJP protesters in Ranchi

*Yashwant Sinha, Arjun Munda among the hurt*

From Our Correspondent

Police brutal attack on BJP demonstrators demanding dissolution of the State Assembly and holding of fresh elections left BJP National Vice President Shri Yashwant Sinha injured. He sustained injuries on the head, shoulder and leg while other party leaders, including former Chief Minister Shri Arjun Munda and Shri Sarju Rai also got hurt.

The brutal police action which did not make any attempt to warn or arrest the demonstrators took the BJP leaders by surprise. Shri Sinha said “Two of my security commandos were hurt, I fell to the ground but the assault did not stop. Even afterwards no attempt was made to provide medical aid. My security had to direct a jeep given to us to head for a private hospital.” Shri Sinha bled from his ears and now has his arm in a sling.

Shri Munda was struck on the head as was Shri Sarju Rai. BJP had announced that it would gherao Raj Bhawan on February 12 and when the barricades erected fell, the police resorted to a lathi-charge. “If we were told we would be arrested, we would have offered ourselves to be taken to a police station,” said Shri Sinha.

## Opposition protests in Parliament

The main Opposition BJP on February 13 staged a walkout from Parliament over the issue of police lathi-charge on its senior Rajya Sabha member Shri Yashwant Sinha and others in Jharkhand.

Later, the Rajya Sabha had to be adjourned for half-an-hour over the issue. Strongly condemning the



lathi-charge on its senior leader and former Jharkhand Chief Minister Shri Arjun Munda, the BJP and NDA members sought dismissal of the guilty police officials while expressing concern over the “mindless lawlessness that has seized Jharkhand”.

Raising the matter during Zero Hour in the Rajya Sabha, Leader of the Opposition in the House, Shri Jaswant Singh said he was pained at the manner in which the injured Rajya Sabha member was “dumped” in a truck and taken around in Ranchi for more than an hour.

Shri Jaswant Singh described the incident as not only disturbing but “perilous for democracy”. He was supported by other party leaders who wanted to know what the Centre has done in the matter since the State was under President’s rule.

The BJP members said that Shri Sinha suffered ligament injury when he was hit by policemen while

staging a demonstration in front of Raj Bhavan to demand dissolution of the state Assembly and holding of fresh elections.

Responding to the members’ concerns, Home Minister Shri P. Chidambaram said he was second to none in upholding the privilege and prestige of any member. Sharing the serious concern of the Opposition parties, he said the report was being collected and “if it warrants an action to be taken, certainly action will be taken”.

However, Deputy Leader of BJP Parliamentary Party in Rajya Sabha, Smt. Sushma Swaraj lambasted the Home Minister for taking the matter lightly and soon after the Opposition members staged a walkout.

Raising concern, the JD(U)’s Shri Digvijay Singh said there was complete lawlessness while his party chief Shri Sharad Yadav demanded immediate action against those involved.

## 'Bhajapa Jitega to Bharat Jitega' : Advani

From our Correspondent

Addressing a massive Rashtra Raksha Vijay Sankalp rally at Maharan Inter-College grounds in Gorakhpur (Uttar Pradesh) on February 15 Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Shri L K Advani said if the BJP came to power the party would get rid of two things jihadi terrorism and rampant corruption. He said if BJP wins in the Lok Sabha elections then it will be the win for the entire country, which is reeling under Jihadi terrorism and rampant corruption.

Taking a dig at the Congress led UPA Government, he said had it been some Anand Mohan or Anand Singh in place of Afzal Guru as the main accused in the Parliament attack, he would have been hanged by now. "Our Constitution talks about secularism — this means people of all religions are equal in the eyes of the law. But the UPA Government looks at issues through religious prism and is selective in taking action against terrorists," he said and added that the present Government was soft on terrorists because its decisions were driven by vote-bank politics." It is a fact that more people have died in terrorist attacks in the last five years than the soldiers who died fighting Pakistan in four wars," he said.

Spelling out the priorities of the NDA Government, Shri Advani said he would not tolerate terrorism and

would take all steps to ensure peace and prosperity in this country.

Hitting out at his political detractors who had dubbed the BJP as anti-Muslim, he said in Gujarat where Shri Narendra Modi, who is the favourite whipping boy of the so-called secular parties, the per capita income of Muslims is the highest in the country. "It is not all. The *aam admi* is facing the brunt of bad governance of the Congress led Union Government. Of late, prices of essential commodities have come down but recession has left youth unemployed forcing many of them



to commit suicide," he said.

"In Congress-ruled States, be it Andhra Pradesh or Maharashtra, farmers had committed suicide due to the anti-farmer policies of the Union Government," he said. "Compare it with the BJP-ruled States like Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh or Uttarakhand where the farmers have prospered in our regime," he said. With a clarion call to ensure prosperity of the country Shri Advani asked the people to bring the BJP back to power. "*Bhajapa Jitega to Bharat Jitega*," he said as masses again responded with a shout of Jai Sri Ram.

Shri Advani has asked the UPA Government not to get "swayed" by the claims of Pakistan of arresting some Mumbai terror accused, as it has not come clean of ISI role in these attacks. "The Pakistan Government has recently claimed that a few arrests have been made in Mumbai terror attack. The basic question is whether the role of ISI has been probed in this attack." Unless the ISI role has been put under scanner, this probe has no meaning," he said. He said the Pakistani Government had so far not probed the assassination of Benazir

Bhutto and is also silent on ISI role in this murder. "The Government should not take the words of Pakistani administration at its face value. The biggest terror attack in India was carried out in 1993 in Mumbai and the main culprit of these blasts Dawood

Ibrahim is being given patronage by Pakistan. How can India value the so-called probe carried out in Pakistan," he asked and demanded that Dawood should be handed over to India.

While responding to the repeated chanting of "Jai Sri Ram" by lakhs of people Shri Advani said, "This slogan will bear a true meaning only when a Ram Temple will be constructed at the disputed site in Ayodhya." People - male and female, young and old - responded to Shri Advani's this claim with another full throated "Jai Sri Ram".

Addressing the rally BJP



National President Shri Rajnath Singh said farmers are the backbone of the country so adequate attention should be given for their development.

Shri Rajnath Singh further said, if BJP returns to power it would waive off farmers' loan and would also ensure that the bank interest rates are halved. "We will not keep your tractor and landholding as surety. Instead, only the tractor or the land size worth the cost of the tractor will be kept as guarantee. Any subsidy on fertilizer or seeds will directly go into the accounts of farmers rather than being passed on to the industrialists," he said.

Launching a scathing attack on the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance at the Centre, Shri Singh said a few terrorists had turned the country upside-down. "It is a cowardly government being headed by an even cowardly leadership. "The present political dispensation at the Centre does not have the political will to fight the terror and is soft on terrorists".

BJP National General Secretary Shri Arun Jaitley, Gorakhpur MP Shri Yogi Adityanath Former Union Minister Shri Chinmaya Nand, State Election In-Charge Shri Kalraj Mishra, Shri Dharmendra Kumar Singh other senior leaders of state unit of BJP and lakhs of *karyakartas* of the party were present on the rally. ■

## Missing Delhi children : Another Nithari in the making Issue grave, government silent

Children are the future of the nation. In the last 13 months and 17 days (January 01, 2008 - February 17, 2009) over 2,503 children have gone missing from the National Capital. It clearly demonstrates that the law and order situation of the National Capital is now completely out of the hands of the Congress led UPA government.

Raising the issue forcefully during Zero Hour of the Upper House of the Parliament, Rajya Sabha Member Shri Prabhat Jha citing the example of the infamous shocking incident of Nithari said the nation is neither learning from the incidents like Nithari nor giving exemplary punishments to the culprits. So, the morale of the culprits is growing stronger by the day. Shri Prabhat Jha said, the number of missing cases reveal that "Another Nithari is in making, this time in the national capital".

The shocking incident in Nithari in Noida, in which 19 children were brutally killed allegedly by a businessman and his servant shook the nation. Remembering that incident Shri Jha apprehended that the disappearance of the children could be for clandestine organ sale.

He said the central government has made several regulations to check illegal organ transplant activities. In spite of

this eyes, kidneys, bones of small children are removed and even the blood is being sold in the open market and by removing the eyes, the culprits are making them blind beggars for their monetary benefits. Describing this tear-jerking incident he further added that the children who have gone missing are between the age group of the 12-14. Shri Jha said missing children included 550 from the North East district, over 350 from West district and about 300 from the Outer district of Delhi.

Taking the statement of the Delhi Police Commissioner seriously, Shri Jha further said that the police Commissioner was describing their disappearance as case of "love affair", which was shocking. He said that the children between the age group of 6-7 only could love their mother. If they don't, then whom they love he questioned? Shri Jha said that with Nithari incident still fresh in the mind, the disappearance of so many children was a grave matter and the government should take it very seriously.

The police inaction was disturbing in view of the fact that the case of Nithari was still alive and everyone know how the organs of children were traded, he added. All Members of the House said they shared Shri Prabhat Jha's concern. ■ (FOC)

## People will recognize 'hand' behind price rise

Finance Minister Shri Pranab Mukherjee had in his budget speech on February 16 spoke of the 'hand' that can help the nation, in an obvious reference to the election symbol of Congress ahead of the Lok Sabha polls.

Participating in the discussion on the Motion of Thanks to the President for her address, the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Shri L K Advani said that people would also recognize the "hand" responsible for price rise, farmer suicides, economic crisis and Satyam fraud. "The time is coming when people will recognize the hand that made price rise possible, the hand that made farmers commit suicides, the hand that made the economy as bad as it is now, the hand that made the Satyam-Maytas scandal possible," Shri Advani said. ■ (FOC)

*Indian economy in worse shape than govt admits, worst is yet to come*

# Advani pledges more and more employment with Good Governance

From Our Correspondent

The state of the economy is worse than what is being made out by the UPA Government, and the worst is yet to come. This was the consensus at a roundtable with economists convened by the NDA Prime Ministerial candidate Shri L.K. Advani at his residence in New Delhi on February 14.

Several economists noted with disappointment that the authorities in India are still in denial mode with regard to the state of the economy.

also created a severe credit crunch that hit all sectors of the economy.

As a result, jobs are being slashed everywhere. While the number of job losses varies from 50 lakh to one crore, the participants said that accurate quantification is difficult since 90% of them are taking place in the informal and unorganized sectors of the economy.

Responding to this point, Shri Advani stated that, in the event of NDA winning the mandate in the

ineffective in protecting jobs and, therefore, needed a re-look.

The participants cautioned that unless concerted action is taken on fiscal, monetary and public investment fronts, the economic decline in the country could acquire serious proportions. They laid great stress on the need for good governance translating itself as a thorough reform in the government's delivery mechanisms, so that corruption is checked and schemes are implemented

effectively. They also emphasized the need for judicial reforms in cases relating to the economy, administrative reforms to remove bureaucratic hurdles and drastic improvement in the case of doing business in



India. They pointed out that the overall national fiscal deficit has reached 13% of the GDP, which is an all-time high. They also opined that the Indian economy had entered into a crisis phase well before the meltdown in the global economy.

Many participants stated that the government did nothing when a speculative bubble was being formed in the stock market towards the end of 2007. Volatile short-term capital flows were not regulated, as they ought to have been. Later, the draining out of liquidity from the system, and simultaneous raising of interest rates, not only did not succeed in checking inflation but

2009 parliamentary elections, its highest priority in the field of economy would be "to create employment, more employment, and still more employment." Indicating a radical shift in India's development model, he said, "We shall ensure that agriculture, rural economy, small and medium enterprises, and the informal and unorganized sectors of the economy get their rightful place in the future strategy of India's economic growth, whose central goal would be – *Har haath ko kaam, Har khet ko paani* (employment to every hand and water to every farm land)." Shri Advani felt that labour laws have proved to be totally

India.

Several participants lamented that major infrastructure development projects, such as the National Highway Development Project, the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, the Delhi-Mumbai rail freight corridor project, etc, had been stalled during the UPA rule. All these, and several other critical urban and rural infrastructure development projects, would need to be vigorously accelerated by the next government, they advised.

Many of them supported the BJP's longstanding demand for a unique National Identity Card, which could be used effectively to reach

the benefits of welfare schemes without leakages.

Several economists warned about the negative consequences of lack of reforms in education, which remains the most tightly regulated sector. They emphasized the need for a massive initiative on skill development to respond to changing needs of the economy. They proposed setting up of a large national fund for dissemination of new technologies into agriculture and SMEs.

All the participants were unanimous in stressing that the greatest crisis in the country was the crisis of confidence. The first task of any new government, they urged, would be to restore confidence by taking bold and quick decisions to revive the economy both in the immediate and long term.

This roundtable was in continuation of a series of consultations with experts in various aspects of governance and development initiated by Shri LK Advani in recent months. Senior BJP leaders Shri Jaswant Singh, Shri Yashwant Sinha, Smt. Sushma Swaraj and Shri Arun Jaitley also attended the meeting.

Eminent economists like Shri T.N. Ninan (Chief Editor, Business Standard), Dr. Subir Gokarn (Chief Editor, CRISIL The Mira), Prof. Bibek Debroy (Centre for Policy Research), Prof. D.B. Gupta (National Council of Applied Economic Research), Prof. S.L. Rao (Institute for Social & Economic Change), Dr. Amit Mitra (Secretary General, FICCI), Dr. Bimal Jalan (Member of Parliament), Shri S. Narayan, Shri Vinayak Chatterjee, Shri Pratap Bhanu Mehta (Centre for Policy Research), Shri Bakul Dholekia and Shri Sanjeev Sanyal among others participated in the round table. ■

## Sri Lankan Tamils issue

### Advani calls for political settlement

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Shri L. K. Advani has called for a political settlement to the Sri Lankan Tamils issue and said there could not be a military solution.

He was addressing the Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK) members from Tamil Nadu, who observed a day-long fast near Jantar Mantar, New Delhi on February 13, in support of the Sri Lankan cause against the killing of Tamils by the Sri Lankan Army.

Shri Advani said, "It is an issue, which is of concern not only for Tamils in Tamil Nadu, but for every single Indian. I urge upon all citizens of the country to be associated with the cause of Sri Lankan Tamils."

He accused the Congress-led UPA government of being insensitive to the Sri Lankan Tamils' problem and asked the Sri Lankan government to resolve the ethnic conflict by "devolving powers" to areas where Tamils constituted a

majority. The Bharatiya Janata Party wanted the issue to be resolved through negotiated political settlement and not by brutal force Shri Advani said.

The MDMK supremo Shri Vaiko, who spoke at the end of the fast, described the Sri Lankan Tamils issue as a basic human problem and



said that India should not hesitate to intervene to put an end to the hostilities in the island nation and protect innocent Tamils.

Speaking on behalf of the party, Prof. Ramadoss said that India should call upon Sri Lanka to unilaterally call for a ceasefire and work for a negotiated settlement. Food, clothing and medicines must be distributed to the affected people through a United Nations agency, he demanded. ■ (FOC)

## US Universities offer Hindi, Sanskrit courses

Some University in America, according to the *TOI*, are offering courses in Indian languages and culture. One such is University at Buffalo (UB), the State University of New York, which offers courses in South Asian languages. This apart, it offers a course in Indian music. Shri Satish K Tripathi, provost and executive vice-president for academic affairs at UB, said students who opt for Hindi courses are mostly Indian-Americans and Americans. "Those interested in pursuing higher education in India prefer to learn Hindi," he said. Sanskrit, too, has been introduced at the University as an under-graduate course. ■

## India Needs Neither a Free-For-All Capitalism Nor a Freedom-Killing Communism but a Swadeshi Model

# Only Swadeshi can reboot economy : Advani

From Our Correspondent

**A**s “economic nationalism” — the urge to keep jobs and capital at home — gains currency the world over, the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Shri L. K. Advani said that there was a need to creatively re-interpret Swadeshi. India needs neither a free-for-all Capitalism nor a freedom killing Communism, but a Swadeshi model of democratic and integral human development,” Shri Advani said while addressing the 81st Annual General Meeting of FICCI in New Delhi on February 12.

He said the concept of Swadeshi should neither be discredited as archaic or outdated, nor interpreted by its proponents in a narrow sense. “Just as the centre of gravity of the world economy has shifted from the West to Asia, the centre of gravity of our national economy must shift from India to Bharat — to agriculture, revitalization of villages, small and medium enterprises and unorganized and informal sectors of the economy”. He said Bharat not only includes the rural population but also the urban poor and middle classes. “Swadeshi does not believe in an antagonistic relationship between ‘India’ and ‘Bharat’. The two are interdependent and integral parts of our nation,” he said.

In his address, Shri Advani also said there was a need to strengthen the public and the private sector. “There is no place for dogmatism in favour of or against either, since both have to be strengthened”.

Elaborating BJP’s concept of

Swadeshi, Shri Advani further said it was not an exclusivist idea. He said it was all about a sense of belief in India’s enterprise and genius. “India’s problems need Indian solutions. In a way, the rest of the world is also turning *Swadeshi*. Clearly, there is an urgent need in India to do course-correction. My party, if elected to office, will do it with the cooperation of the business community and all other sections of society,” Shri Advani said.

Attacking the Congress led UPA government’s handling of the crisis; he said millions of ordinary Indians have lost their jobs. “The people have had to suffer mainly due to the government’s lack of proactive planning, close monitoring of shortages, and efficient public distribution. The situation got worse because of the knee-jerk and shortsighted inflation-control measures. Interest rates were raised. Liquidity was sucked out of the system. All this throttled business and industry,” he said.

Members of FICCI know very well how each and every sector of the economy has been badly affected by the crisis - construction, automobiles, capital goods, textiles, gems and jewellery, tourism and, of course, IT and IT-enabled services. Confidence has plummeted. Both the corporate sector and the common man are equally worried about the uncertain future. I have never seen

this kind of loss of confidence in my many years of political life.

He said here is a piece of statistics to show the contrast between the mood of optimism in the country when the NDA left office in 2004 and the mood of insecurity when the UPA is about to complete its term in 2009. The NDA government started with 5% growth in 1998 and left an economy



with 8.5% growth in 2004. The UPA started with 8.5% and will leave it at 6.5%, or even lower. The Vajpayee government ushered in confidence and hope about future. Today there is only uncertainty and despair.

What is worse, the government is in denial mode. Its leaders are shirking their responsibility for the current economic crisis by saying that it is due to “external factors”. When the prices of essential commodities needed by the aam aadmi were rising alarmingly last year, we had heard a similar alibi from senior representatives of the Government: it is due to “external factors”.

Shri Advani, who maintained that the crisis in crucial sectors cannot be blamed on the

international situation, said much of the problem was on account of a lack of leadership. "Is the global economic crisis to blame for the fact that the National Highway Development Project launched by the Vajpayee government, which is the most ambitious infrastructure project since Independence, has been moving at a snail's pace? Are any external factors to blame for the fact that only 7,000 MW of installed power generation capacity was added last year, whereas China added 100,000 MW in the same year? Even today, for every \$1 that India spends on infrastructure, China spends \$7," he said.

Shri Advani also said there was a need for some honest introspection. "Strangely, the Congress response to the crisis is self-congratulation. According to recent newspaper reports, its president has stated, "India has been saved" because of the policies of Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi. The same party also claims that India was earlier saved because of the policy of economic liberalization initiated by Dr Manmohan Singh when he was the Finance Minister in PV Narasimha Rao's government. His reforms in effect dismantled the pseudo-socialist regimes constructed by the Nehru dynasty. Obviously, both propositions cannot be true," he said.

Who's in charge of the Finance Ministry?

At a time when the country is facing one of the worst economic crises in recent decades, the finance ministry has remained headless for the past two-and-a-half months. With Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh convalescing — I wish him speedy recovery — India now has a second part-time Finance Minister in Shri Pranab Mukherjee. He is

## Gandhian, Deendayal path should be followed : Chouhan

The path shown by Mahatma Gandhi and Deendayal Upadhyay should be followed at a time when the capitalist model is engulfed in recession and communism has collapsed. This is what Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan said on February 12 at the 81st Annual General Meeting of FICCI in New Delhi.

Shri Chouhan said building a new Madhya Pradesh remains his priority. Outlining the points for the development, he said "I will make sure that my State is not listed under BIMARU States". He added that people need to "get into the spirit of governance "for the betterment of development and democracy". Shri Chouhan added his government has outlined seven points, including infrastructure, agriculture and law and order, for the State. "Also, I will make sure that the State becomes investment friendly. Our health and education sector is ideal for such purposes," he said. After winning the elections on the plank of development, he said "emotional matters no longer remain an issue in politics." He said law and order was not a problem in the State as dacoits in the Chambal valley no longer remain a threat. (PTI)

someone for whom I have a lot of admiration. But when the same person also heads the largest number of GoMs that any Prime Minister has created since Independence, one can only conclude that here is a government that is incapable of taking firm and timely decisions. Surely, India deserves better.

He said India deserves better on yet another count. Whenever I meet representatives of the business community, I hear almost unbelievable stories of corruption. The instances of political corruption and corporate corruption that hit the headlines in recent times have besmirched the image of both India's democracy and India's business. The "Cash for Votes" scandal in July 2008 was the most shameful episode in the history of Indian Parliament. The ugly role that money power played in subverting the verdict of elected representatives has sounded a note of warning that all is not well with our democracy. That all is not well

with our corporate sector has been brought home with dramatic effect by the Satyam/Maytas scandal. But this is not simply a corporate scandal. It is also a governmental scandal, since it is impossible for such a huge fraud, involving allotment of lucrative land and plum infrastructure contracts, without the involvement of those in power in Andhra Pradesh. Then there is the huge scandal in the telecom, in the purchase of Scorpene submarines...the list goes on.

Shri Advani said, "My colleagues in the party and the NDA are currently engaged in preparing our Agenda of Governance. The three pillars of this agenda are Good Governance, Development and Security.

It will be our endeavor to replace the pervasive mood of despair with a strong sense of optimism. For this, we shall do so by doing what a government ought to do:

GOVERN. AND GOVERN WELL.





## Nation is facing unprecedented agricultural crises : Gopinath Munde

*The resolution on agriculture was presented by BJP National General Secretary Shri Gopinath Munde on February 08, 2009 pointing out the pathetic condition of the farmers and farming sector of the country under the Congress led UPA government. It was seconded by Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Karnataka Chief Minister Dr. B.S. Yeddyurappa. The resolution was adopted unanimously.*



The Congress-led UPA Government is to be squarely blamed for the present sorry state of the country's agriculture sector. The Government does not have either an agricultural policy or a long-term strategy, neither has it taken any concrete step to reform the sector. Successive Congress party Governments which ruled the country for over 50 years since independence never accorded any priority to the agricultural sector. This has resulted in an unprecedented agricultural crisis in the country. Neither there has been any increase in private or public investment in the agricultural sector nor has the lot of the farmer improved. The hands that feed the nation are today forced to take their own lives in large numbers. This is not a natural calamity but government created crisis.

Last year the Government had announced with great aplomb loan waiver scheme aimed at giving the farmers freedom from debt. But this scheme did not provide any benefit to farmers owning more than five acres of land. Generally dry land farmers own land more than 5 acres. Millions of farmers who have honestly repaid even a single installment of their debt, were also denied this facility. A scheme which penalizes honest and credible farmers is bad in principle. This scheme has proved to be the worst gimmick played on the poor farmers of this country in post-independent India. A whopping eighty per cent of the farmers have not gained any benefit from this scheme. The BJP had demanded that a loan of upto Rs 50,000/- should be waived off in the case of each and every farmer. We firmly believe that all farmers are equal and there should be equal justice for all. The BJP had also demanded that the loan taken by farmers from money lenders should allowed to be taken over by banks. But the Congress Government did not pay any heed to all these demands.

The result of this betrayal is before all of us. The suicides continue unabated. In the Vidarbha region, where this session is taking place, more than 1200 farmers have committed suicide since April 2008, when the

implementation of the scheme began. What's more, 92 farmers have lost their lives in the first 37 days of 2009 itself. This is the disastrous result of the anti farmer policies of the Congress regime. Suicides are taking place not only in Vidarbha, but also in Andhra Pradesh, Bundelkhand and other parts of the country. The situation has come to such a sorry state, that one farmer commits suicide in the country every eight hours. Can there be a greater evidence of the total failure of the scheme?

The Agriculture Commission, constituted by the NDA Government and headed by renowned scientist Dr M S Swaminathan, had cautioned that if urgent reforms were not carried out the agrarian crisis in the country would worsen. The agrarian crisis would lead to agrarian collapse. Thanks to short-sighted policies of the Congress Government, this prediction appears to be coming true. The BJP strongly condemns anti-farmer policies of the Congress-led UPA Government.

The BJP is of the firm belief that agriculture constitutes the backbone of Indian economy. India cannot become happy and prosperous till there is a change in the fortunes of the poor, the village and the farmers. Therefore, village, farmers and the poor should be the pivot of our economy.

Successive Congress Governments have not done justice to the farmers. They never provided remunerative prices for their produce. Even today, 60 per cent of the farmers do not get access to the institutional credit and are forced to take loans from money lenders. 85 per cent of the farmers do not get proper insurance cover. They lose their crops to natural calamities such as floods or famine or to some disease. BJP promises to provide justice to the farmers by extricating them from this miserable condition.

Yet another facet of the Congress betrayal has come to the fore. Farmers who benefited from the loan waiver are not being provided with new loans. It has been established that 60 per cent of such farmers are being kept at an arm's distance by banks and financial

institutions. They have been left with no option but to knock at the doors of the money lenders. The Congress Government had rendered a body blow to rural economy.

The Minimum Support Price (MSP) was fixed with a view to provide a minimum value based on cost of production to the farmers. However, this concept has been given a silent burial as a result of the destructive economic policy being pursued by the Congress party. An MSP of Rs 3000/- per quintal was announced for cotton but neither the Cotton Federation of India nor NAFED came to procure it. Today's harsh truth is that the poor farmer is forced to sell his cotton for Rs 2400/- per quintal. The Government did not provide enough funds to procure cotton and other crops. BJP is of the view that procurement of crops below the MSP should be made a penal offence.

The worst sin committed by the Congress-led UPA Government is playing havoc with the nation's food security. The godowns which were filled to the brim during the NDA regime are lying empty due to the policies pursued by the Congress Government. Not only that the Congress-led Government did not provide remunerative prices to the farmers, but it also allowed private sector multinational companies to procure them directly from the farmers. By providing meager Rs 25-50 Rs extra, private companies have bought the farmers' produce in large quantity leaving little for the Government to distribute among the poor or even adequate enough to cater to the public distribution system. Thus, the private companies are indulging in hoarding, have hiked prices through commodity exchange and looted the people of the country. The era of inflation is a fatal outcome of this failed policy of the Congress party. The country which used to export food grains after meeting its own requirement under the NDA rule, has now become a net food grains importing country. Despite a good wheat production, millions of tonnes of substandard wheat was imported into the country. Congress led UPA government paid Rs 800 per quintal to Indian farmers and offered Rs 1600 to American and Australian farmers.

BJP accords top most priority to food security. We have total faith in the Indian peasantry. With sheer hard work, it has the capacity to turn the country into a granary of food grain. The need of the hour is far sightedness, farmer-friendly policies and a commitment to food security. BJP believes that two policies are essential to ensure food security – a long-term focused agricultural policy aimed at enhancing production by encouraging productivity and providing remunerative prices to the farmers. BJP reiterates its commitment towards implementation of both these policies.

Unfortunately, the Congress-led Government fiddled with even the Minimum Support Price mechanism. The Central Government deliberately weakened the price fixation mechanism. The value of the land rental, the regularity of natural calamities, the uncertainty in agriculture and factors such as risk are not factored while formulating the Minimum Support Price. Instead of bringing about this much-needed reform, the Congress Government has changed it for the worse into a tool for perpetrating injustice on the farmers. The Government threw into the dustbin the recommendations of the Agricultural Prices Commission to increase the prices of crops including food grains. While government granted Rs 1080 per quintal for wheat, it refused to grant parity for paddy. Consequently, today the nation is faced with shortage of rice.

The BJP is of the firm view that the support price mechanism requires a complete overhaul and the recommendation of the Agricultural Commission for fixing the support price adding 50 per cent over the production cost, should be accepted.

Shortage and black marketing of fertilizers is the creation of Congress rule. There is a shortage of fertilizers across the country due to the lack of coordination between the Ministries of Food, Agriculture and Railways and the failure of the Government to correctly assess the demand-supply situation. In the absence of adequate supply of Government subsidized fertilizer, the prices of alternative fertilizer have skyrocketed. There has been mass bungling and discrimination in the distribution of fertilizers by the Central Government. Step motherly treatment has been meted out to states ruled by opposition parties. Never in the past have farmers been subjected to such injustice on political grounds. Country has witnessed shortages, agitations and firing due to delay in announcing the fertilizer policy.

The farmers also find themselves in dire straits over pesticides. In the absence of any Government control, pesticides are being sold at very high prices. Foreign companies are going for the kill. This is the only agriculture-related product on which the Centre has imposed 16 per cent excise duties. These pesticides are being marketed aggressively but there is no quality control mechanism. Spurious pesticides are available in plenty and lakhs of farmers are facing problems on account of this. The regulatory mechanism evolved during the tenure of the NDA Government has been disbanded by this Government.

The Congress Government has destroyed the nation's self-reliance in seed production. The development of new seeds is dependent on research,

but the UPA Government did not allocate adequate funds for research. As a result, Agricultural Universities have been reduced to colleges distributing degrees. There is no research work being carried out in these institutions. Today, most of the seed corporations have become import agents. There is an increasing use of BT genes in newer crops. The Government has not taken into account its consequences in the long run. India, which was self-reliant in seed, has today become import dependent.

The Congress Government is wholly responsible for this seed-fertilizer-pesticide crisis which has resulted in an uncontrolled increase in production costs. The farmer is facing a twin crisis – on the one hand, he is not getting remunerative prices and on the other hand input costs are rising by leaps and bounds. His agricultural calculations have gone awry. This Government has failed to devise a mechanism to control input costs.

BJP believes that agriculture can be profitable only when input costs do not increase disproportionate and remunerative prices are assured.

This Government made a lot of promises but all of them proved to be hollow. Whether it be the Rs 25,000 crore special package or the National Food Security Mission or National Agriculture Development Programme, they have proved non starters. All have been reduced to mere slogans. Nowhere do we see their implementation. The government has totally neglected cattle development programme and has no long term policy to achieve this. Country is loosing valuable cattle population every year. Even the fishery remains a non-priority item for the government. This year potato growing farmers are facing the music because of non remunerative prices prevailing in the market. They could not even pay the rents of the cold storage. Government remained mute spectator. The government could have played a pivotal role by granting good package to revamp ailing a agriculture sector in this era of economic slow down, but did nothing about it.

The Congress Government has even manipulated the exim policy for Agriculture sector. When the farmer starts getting good prices in the market, the Government starts exporting the item, when the farmer starts getting remunerative prices, the Government immediately stops imports, thereby closing all avenues for farmers to make some profit occasionally.

The farmers have received a setback due to the uncertain export-import policies of the Government with regard to Basmati rice, sugar, soya and cotton. This Government has entered into a agriculture research related agreement (Knowledge Initiative in Agriculture)

with the United States. Till today, nobody in the Parliament or outside are aware of what this initiative is all about. Is it harmful to the nation's bio diversity or is it toeing the agenda of the multinational companies? All aspects of this Agreement should come before the nation.

The principal crime committed by this Government is putting into cold storage all the good initiatives taken by the NDA Government in the agricultural sector, whether it be the river inter-linking programme or the farm income guarantee insurance scheme. The Government lauded these programmes in its Budget speeches but did not implement them. The farmers' channel was shut down and the budget for agricultural research was scrapped. Government go downs were emptied and farmers were deprived of remunerative prices. The NDA Government had taken the historic decision to mix ethanol with petrol, which would have directly benefited the farmers. But the UPA Government decided not to implement the blending. The NDA Government had strongly advocated the case of the farmers in the WTO talks but today the nation is unaware of the negotiations carried out by Government. The development of agriculture is directly linked to public investment and especially in irrigation. The NDA Government had allocated fund for both these tasks in a big way but this Government changed its priorities. We had ensured cheaper loans for the farmers but now they have become dearer. The NDA Government had distributed crores of Kisan Credit Cards but in the absence of loans, they have been reduced to just cards. The NDA strengthened food security and this Government destroyed it.

The country will have elections soon. The UPA will be voted out of power and we do not wish to demand anything from an outgoing Government. However, the Bharatiya Janata Party wishes to declare a Charter of Rights for the farmers:-

**Charter of Rights for the farmers:-**

1. Loans of all farmers to be waived off under the principle of equality.
2. Agricultural loans to be provided at the rate of four per cent Interest.
3. Provision of subsidy directly to farmers
4. Adequate power supply for agriculture
5. Water for every field and work for every hand
6. Farm income guarantee insurance scheme for small farmers
7. Pension for old age farmers
8. Minimum Support Price for all crops
9. Minimum Support Price to be fixed after adding 50 per cent over production cost.■



## BJP leaders pledge to Change the Government at Center

**B**JP president Rajnath Singh on February 10 lauded the statement of Islamic seminary Darul Uloom. "I want to express my gratitude to Darul Uloom which has condemned terrorism and said that Islam does not permit anyone to indulge in terrorism," he said in Rampur at Vijay Sankalp Samagam a public meeting of booth level office bearers of the party. He alleged that Congress has failed to combat terrorism. "They do not want to execute the death sentence on Parliament attack case convict Afzal Guru as they fear that Indian Muslims will be antagonized if he is hanged," Shri Singh said.

Shri Singh further said "During the previous BJP-led NDA government's rule also there were acts of terrorism. But the government accepted it as a challenge and passed stringent anti-terror laws. When the UPA government was formed, that law was scrapped and now a light, inefficient anti-terror law has been passed."

He said the SP and BSP wrongly accuse BJP of being a "communal" party and of "fanning hatred between Hindus and Muslims."

"I have full confidence in Kalyan Singh. I want to remind him of his pledge that even if he had to sacrifice his life, a magnificent Ram temple would be built at Ayodhya. He had made his promise to the people of the state and the country ... I have full faith that he will fulfil it whether he is with SP or BSP," Shri Rajnath Singh added.

BJP former National President Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu addressing the Vijay Sankalp Samagam said that



for development of the country people should support the BJP and for destruction they could support the Congress. Since independence party of one family ruled the country and that party betrayed the people of India.

Speaking on growing activities of terrorism during UPA's tenure he said terrorist has no religion ,terrorist is only terrorist.

Uttar Pradesh BJP President Shri Ramapati Ram Tripathi ,Shri Kalraj Mishra MP(RS), Minister of Uttrakhand Government Shri Bisan

Singh Vishal ,former Minister Shri Shiv Bahadur Saxena ,Shri Rakesh Mishra ,Shri Surya Prakash Pal, Shri Pramod Ahuza , Shri Juges Arora, Shri Maha Singh Rajput ,Shri Pramod Jhouhari ,Virendra Goyal ,Phul Khan ,Gulpham Abbasi, Shri Kashiram Diwaker MLA,Former MLA Jwala Prasad Gangwar among others present in the Samagam.

The meeting was organised by BJP National Vice President Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, who is also the party's Lok Sabha candidate from Rampur constituency. ■ (FOC)

### I'm a servant of the people: Yeddyurappa

"Do I look like a Chief Minister? No, I'm not. I am Yeddyurappa, your servant. Your vote made me Chief Minister otherwise I wouldn't have become the one." These are the words Karnataka Chief Minister Dr. B S Yeddyurappa used while addressing a convention of *Sthree Shakthi Sanghas* in Mysore on February 13. Shri Yeddyurappa said: "I am no different from what I was during my long-spanning political career". He was responding to public queries. Dr. Yeddyurappa further added "I know your problems since I have myself experienced them," and asked the people to contact him for any grievances at any time and he will definitely help them. When one of the participants brought to his notice that there was sort of fear about Dr. B S Yeddyurappa among the errant officers in the district, he replied, "You wait and see, what change the State shall see in future." ■ (FOC)

## Andhra Pradesh neglected under UPA regime : Advani

Addressing a mammoth rally as part of his “Vijay Sankalp Yatra” in Vijaywada, the commercial capital of Andhra Pradesh on February 4, NDA’s Prime Ministerial candidate and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Shri LK Advani promised the people of the coastal region in Andhra Pradesh that BJP was committed to bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh and that creation of smaller States was in the interest of the people of the region.

He said that the Andhra State will be even more prosperous than it was today, as it will get all its revenue to be spent on itself. He pointed out that at present all the revenue of Andhra Pradesh was being spread over the entire State.” Otherwise this revenue would come only to your lot,” he said, stressing that the BJP was in favour of smaller States for the sake of good governance. The BJP has already announced its support to the demand for separate Telangana State, which will entail bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh into two units.

Lashing out at the UPA Government, Shri Advani described it as the “worst Government in India’s history. “Earlier, when they went to polls after completing their tenure, they would have at least one or two small or big things to their credit. This is one Government that cannot boast of anything,” he said. Shri Advani further said that the UPA Government can only boast of a record number of suicides by

farmers in the Congress States, inflation and record corruption levels. “The Government is supposed to be headed by Dr Manmohan Singh but actually run by Smt. Sonia Gandhi and no one else,” he said. Charging the UPA Government with completely mismanaging the economy during last four years, he said, “The country is facing not only insecurity of life but also insecurity of livelihood due to record job losses. It is the biggest danger which looms large over us,” he said.

He said there is a Congress-led government in New Delhi. And there



is a Congress government in Hyderabad. The people of Andhra Pradesh were very generous with their votes for the Congress in 2004. By electing 27 Congress MPs, Andhra Pradesh contributed significantly to the installation of the UPA government at the Centre. But has the Congress lived up to your expectations, either at the Centre or in your own state?

▶ Prices of all essential commodities and services have registered the steepest rise in the past five years?

- ▶ The highest number of job losses has taken place during the UPA rule, and the specter of job loss looms large for many more people.
- ▶ All infrastructure projects have slowed down.
- ▶ The highest number of suicides by farmers has taken place in the past five years. Many of them are in Andhra Pradesh.
- ▶ I have heard that there are many cases of suicides by handloom and power loom workers in Andhra Pradesh.

Shri Advani promised that if the people of the country give another chance to NDA to come to power in the next elections, it will complete the two biggest projects of Vajpayee Government, ignored by UPA, the Golden Quadrilateral highway project and the interlinking of rivers.

Shri Advani further demanded a judicial inquiry into the fraud in Satyam computers. “This is not a corporate fraud but a Congress fraud. This is not corporate corruption but Congress corruption,” he said. He also demanded a commission of enquiry into the terrorist attack in Mumbai to find out what went amiss and who was responsible for it.

Former BJP National President Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, former Union Minister and present AP State BJP President Shri Bandaru Dattatreya, all the senior leaders of the Andhra Pradesh State Unit of BJP and thousands of *karyakartas* were present in the rally. ■ (FOC)

**UTTARAKHAND**

**Crop losses estimated at nearly Rs.100 crore  
Khanduri wants Central team to  
assess damage**



Uttarakhand Chief Minister Shri B. C. Khanduri on February 13 urged Union Agriculture Minister Shri Sharad Pawar to immediately send a Central team to the State to assess large-scale crop damage caused by drought and recommend suitable relief measures. Shri Khanduri has also directed officials not to realize major dues from farmers in the 34 drought-hit tehsils and take steps to make life easier for farmers and livestock there.

According to the government report the worst hit are the un-irrigated areas of the higher hill districts that have received little or no rain since November and the crop losses are estimated at nearly Rs.100 crore spread over an area of nearly 2 lakh hectares.

The State Government, meanwhile, has approved establishment of a College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Kotdwar in Pauri Garhwal district. To be set up by the National Institute of Rural Development, this college will cater to local needs and problems facing agriculture and natural resources. "The college when functional will go a long way in addressing the problems at the micro level and help in rapid need-based development of the State besides producing professionals in farming systems."

**KARNATAKA**

**Congress politicizing  
law & order : Yeddyurappa**



Chief Minister Dr. B.S. Yeddyurappa has accused the Congress of politicizing the law and order situation in the State for political gains and rebuffed Central assistance of paramilitary forces offered by Union Home Minister Shri P. Chidambaram. Speaking to presspersons at Nanjangud on February 16, Dr. Yeddyurappa said the Congress, after having fared miserably in the recent by-elections, was trying to defame the BJP Government in the run up to the Lok Sabha elections and called it a conspiracy.

The Chief Minister was reacting to Shri Chidambaram's recent letter stating that the Centre was ready to send additional help, if required, by way of

paramilitary forces to maintain law and order in the State. Referring to the vandalism at the University of Mysore by Congress activists protesting against the anti-terrorism campaign on February 15, Dr. Yeddyurappa wondered if there was any difference between Congress and Pramod Muthalik. "Is this not Goondagiri?" questioned the Chief Minister who said provisions of the Anti-Goonda Act would be invoked against those violating the law and indulging in arson.

Later, at a function in Mysore, Dr. Yeddyurappa expressed disappointment at the allocations made to the State in the interim Railway Budget and said that the State would lodge a strong protest against it. "I strongly condemn this budget," he added. He accused the Centre of step-motherly attitude towards the State.

**DELHI**

**Malhotra wants longer  
Assembly session**

*To discuss school fee hike,  
traffic jams and Blue line buses*

The Delhi BJP Legislature Party has criticized the Sheila Dikshit Government for calling an Assembly session of just two days for introducing and passing the Vote on Account. Terming the move an act of "dictatorship", the BJP has termed it a misuse of the democratic and parliamentary system.



At the meeting, convened under the Chairmanship of Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra, it was stated that out of the two days of the session, on the first the House would be adjourned after paying condolences to Member Shri Ram Babu Sharma, who passed away recently, and therefore there would be no business on that day. The following day, Prof. Malhotra said the Vote on Account would be introduced and passed. Stating that this amounts to misuse of democratic and parliamentary system, he condemned the approach. "Such a situation never arose in any Assembly or Parliament. In this session there will be no provision of Question Hour, Call Attention, etc," he lamented.

It was stated that the parents are worried about the steep hike in school fees. They are already going through a tough time due to high inflation. After the implementation of the Sixth Pay Commission report, government-aided schools were not in a position to make payment of arrears to the teachers and if their aid

is not increased they will be forced to shut down. He said that in many States, the Government was giving 98 per cent to 100 per cent aid to the schools. They demanded that the Delhi Government should also increase the aid from 95 per cent to 98 per cent and bear the burden of the salary hike so that the fee does not go up.

At the meeting, it was also stated that before the Assembly elections the Delhi State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation had invited tenders worth Rs.700 crore for the development in unauthorized colonies but so far work worth only Rs. 249 crore has been completed while tenders amounting to Rs.450 crore were pending for award of work due to paucity of funds.

Prof. Malhotra said in addition to these issues that need urgent attention, members also want to raise the issues of acute traffic jams, menace of Blueline buses and delay in development works pertaining to the Commonwealth Games. Also, he said, while before the Assembly elections the Delhi Government had in haste cleared 70 schemes, only five had progressed. In this Legislature Party meeting several motions were also passed regarding the issues pertaining to Delhi in which the BJP members said they would like a discussion in the House.

## GUJARAT

### Centre indifferent to diamond industry : Modi

Gujarat Chief Minister Shri Narendra Modi on February 16 charged the Central government with remaining indifferent to his appeals to help the diamond industry in his State.

Shri Modi told *The Hindu* that he had written to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh three months ago, suggesting that Hindustan Diamond (a Central government enterprise) purchase rough diamonds from all over the world and assign the tasks of polishing and cutting to workers in Gujarat. But the Centre had not responded to this suggestion. In view of the present economic conditions, he said, rough diamonds could be purchased at a low cost. Also, the workers could be employed not necessarily for 10 hours but eight hours a day with a marginal reduction in wages. "You will get good, readymade diamond." Once the conditions improved, the processed diamond could be sold in the open market. This would fetch enormous amounts and



wastage would be avoided.

Shri Modi said that after he wrote to Dr. Singh, a delegation of MPs from Gujarat called on him. He himself met the Prime Minister. Over 15 lakh people were employed in the industry in Gujarat. It was a large foreign exchange earner, second only to information technology. (According to the Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council, Surat alone accounts for 5 lakh-6 lakh diamond cutters and polishers, representing 60% of the total workforce in the country. Of the total exports of \$21 billion achieved by the country's gem and jewellery industry in 2007-08, polished and cut diamonds accounted for \$14.2 billion.)

Shri Modi said his government had removed the VAT on diamonds, in order to help the industry. Though he urged the Centre to provide incentives to the jewellery trade, there was no response.

## BIHAR

### Govt provided more for development : Radha Mohan

Bihar State BJP President Shri Radha Mohan Singh has said that previous RJD Government had earmarked only Rs. 4200 crores for development, but the present JDU-BJP government led by Shri Nitish Kumar has increased it to Rs. 13,000 crores.



He was addressing a gathering at Subaiya village in Bihar after inaugurating the late Mohan Singh memorial community hall there.

He said the UPA government at the Centre is putting obstacle in development process initiated by the NDA Government in the State.

Speaking on the occasion, Public Works Minister Dr Prem Kumar dwelt at length on the fast growing network of roads in the State.

Bihar Cooperative Minister Shri Giriraj Singh said that the cooperative agencies which promoted development should be extended every assistance. He promised to build godowns in rice producing area.

The function was organized by Bihar BJP Industry Cell Co-Convenor Shri Mayankeswar Singh. Sarvshri Lal Babu Prasad MLA, Krisnanandan Paswan, Pramod Kumar MLA, District BJP President Shri Rajendra Prasad Gupta, Sarvshri Pramod Shankar Singh, Chuman Yadava, Satyandra Prasad Singh, Shyam Babu Yadva and Ratneswar Sharma also attended the function. ■