

LOK SABHA
SYNOPSIS OF DEBATES
(Proceedings other than Questions & Answers)

Wednesday, March 26, 2025 /5 Chaitra, 1947 (Saka)

OBITUARY REFERENCES

HON. SPEAKER: Hon'ble Members, I have to inform the House about the sad demise of one of our former Members Dr. Devendra Pradhan Ji. Dr. Pradhan Ji was a Member of the 12th and 13th Lok Sabha from Deogarh Parliamentary Constituency of Odisha. Dr. Pradhan served as a Minister of State for the Ministry of Surface Transport and the Ministry of Agriculture. Dr. Devendra Pradhan passed away on 17th March, 2025 in Delhi at the age of 83 years. We deeply mourn the demise of Dr. Devendra Pradhan. The House expresses its condolences to the bereaved family.

The Members then, stood in silence for a short while.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

HON. SPEAKER: Hon'ble Members, Zero Hour is usually termed as 'Matters of Urgent Public Importance'. I am hereby modifying it by renaming it to 'Matters of Public Importance', thereby removing the term 'Urgent' because some matters, while important, may not necessarily be of urgent nature.

OBSERVATION BY THE SPEAKER

HON. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, all of you are expected to uphold the high standards of decorum and decency in the House. A number of such

instances have been brought to my notice in the house where the conduct of honourable Members has not been in consonance with the high traditions and standards of the House. Father-daughter, mother-son and husband-wife have been Members synchronously in this House. In this context, I expect the Leader of the Opposition to conduct himself in accordance with the provisions of the House as laid down in Rule 349 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, which should be in line with the dignity and prestige of the House.

***MATTERS UNDER RULE 377**

- (1) **SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY** laid a statement regarding the need to take comprehensive measures to control unregulated online trading platforms in the country.
- (2) **SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB** laid a statement regarding the need to develop 'Bhubaneswar New' Railway Station at Barang in Odisha as a smart railway station.
- (3) **SHRI ASHOK KUMAR RAWAT** laid a statement regarding the need to set up a Software Technology Park of India at Sandila in Misrikh Parliamentary Constituency, Uttar Pradesh.
- (4) **SHRI DILIP SAIKIA** laid a statement regarding the need to restore train stoppages at railway stations in Darrang-Udalguri Parliamentary Constituency, Assam.
- (5) **SHRI JANARDAN SINGH SIGRIWAL** laid a statement regarding introduction of new trains for Maharajganj Parliamentary Constituency, Bihar.
- (6) **SHRI GANESH SINGH** laid a statement regarding the need to establish a Navodaya Vidyalaya, Krishi Vigyan Kendra and a Food Processing Park in Maihar district, Madhya Pradesh.

* Laid on the Table as directed by the Chair.

- (7) **SHRI MUKESH RAJPUT** laid a statement regarding the need to establish a Potato Development Board.
- (8) **SHRI PRADEEP PUROHIT** laid a statement regarding the need to control the spread of spurious liquor in Odisha and other parts of the country.
- (9) **SHRI SURESH KUMAR KASHYAP** laid a statement regarding the need to restore provision of night stay at Sainik Rest House at Paonta Sahib, Sirmaur district, Himachal Pradesh.
- (10) **SHRI BIDYUT BARAN MAHATO** laid a statement regarding the need to construct a railway line between Jhargram and Purulia in West Bengal.
- (11) **SHRI DARSHAN SINGH CHOUDHARY** laid a statement regarding the need to include basic legal education in school curriculum.
- (12) **SHRI HIBI EDEN** laid a statement regarding the situation arising out of offshore mining activities along Kerala coast.
- (13) **DR. SHIVAJI BANDAPPA KALGE** laid a statement regarding the need to declare Latur, Maharashtra a Special Economic Zone.
- (14) **DR. SHASHI THAROOR** laid a statement regarding the need for GST exemption on all products of Khadi & Village Industries.
- (15) **SHRI K. SUDHAKARAN** laid a statement regarding the need for an underpass at OKUP school along National Highway No. 66 in Kannur, Kerala.
- (16) **SHRI PRADYUT BORDOLOI** laid a statement regarding the need to conduct Elephant Specific Environment Impact Assessments (EIs) in different areas of Assam to address human-elephant conflicts in the State.
- (17) **SHRI DAROGA PRASAD SAROJ** laid a statement regarding issues pertaining to power sector in Azamgarh district, Uttar Pradesh.
- (18) **SHRI VIRENDRA SINGH** laid a statement regarding alleged irregularities in utilization of CSR funds.

- (19) **SHRI KHALILUR RAHAMAN** laid a statement regarding erosion caused by the Ganga River in Murshidabad, West Bengal.
- (20) **SHRIMATI PRATIMA MONDAL** laid a statement regarding the need for implementation of a 5-day work week in Banks of the country.
- (21) **DR. T. SUMATHY ALIAS THAMIZHACHI THANGAPANDIAN** laid a statement regarding the need to declare heat waves, a natural disaster.
- (22) **SHRI SRIBHARAT MATHUKUMILLI** laid a statement regarding the need to take steps to address the problem of Corneal blindness in the country.
- (23) **SHRIMATI LOVELY ANAND** laid a statement regarding construction of a road in Sheohar Parliamentary Constituency, Bihar.
- (24) **SHRI K. RADHAKRISHNAN** laid a statement regarding exemption of toll tax for persons residing near the Panniankara toll plaza on National Highway No. 544 in Kerala.
- (25) **SHRI TANGELLA UDAY SRINIVAS** laid a statement regarding the need to include Government General Hospital, Kakinada under Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana.
- (26) **SHRI CHANDRA PRAKASH CHOUDHARY** laid a statement regarding pollution caused by factories in Giridih district, Jharkhand.

THE “TRIBHUVAN” SAHKARI UNIVERSITY BILL, 2025.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS; AND THE MINISTER OF COOPERATION (SHRI AMIT SHAH) *moved that* the Bill to establish the Institute of Rural Management Anand, as a University to be known as the “Tribhuvan” Sahkari University and to declare the same as an institution of national importance; to impart technical and management education and training in the co-operative sector; to promote co-operative research and development and to attain standards of global excellence therein in order to realise the vision of “Sahkar Se

Samridhhi” and to strengthen the co-operative movement in the country through a network of institutions, and also to declare the Institute as one of the Schools of the University and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, be taken into consideration.

***SHRIMATI GENIBEN NAGAJI THAKOR:**

SHRI MITESH PATEL: I express my heartfelt gratitude to the Hon. Prime Minister of India and the Hon. Home and Cooperative Minister for introducing a Bill to establish the country's first cooperative university and naming it after the hero of the cooperative sector, late Shri Tribhuvandas Patel ji. I am confident that in future this university will play an important role in achieving the goal of the Hon. Prime Minister of *Aatmanirbhar* and *Viksit Bharat* and in the prosperity of villages and farmers. This university aims to become an institution of national importance with a focus on cooperative education and training which will promote technical and management education in the cooperative sector, provide specialized training, promote research and development, meet the need for qualified professionals in the cooperative sector and the university will strive to achieve global standards in cooperative education. When we are celebrating the *Amritkaal* of Independence in the country, we are going to open the first such institute, which will be dedicated to the concept of "Prosperity through Cooperation" and will help women, villagers and farmers in training, technology, research to become self-reliant and prosperous through cooperation. This initiative is definitely going to strengthen the cooperative movement of India in the country. Tribhuvan Cooperative University will be the first university of its kind in India. It will focus exclusively on cooperative education. The university plans to set up sector-specific schools covering dairy, fisheries, Banking and other sectors. These schools will also cater to the needs of various cooperative sectors across India. The establishment of Tribhuvan Cooperative University is expected to create a strong framework for cooperative education. It aims to ensure a steady supply of qualified professionals for various roles within cooperative societies. This initiative is in line with the Government's broader vision to strengthen the cooperative movement in India.

SHRI VIRENDRA SINGH: I am against this Bill because for the first time, the cooperative movement is being linked to education and this raises several

* Please see Supplement

questions which should be addressed in the House as to what will be the form of that university. What will be the role of the board constituted for its management? What will be the position of farmers in the appointment of board members? What will be the position of people associated with cooperatives in the same? Will people working in sectors like agricultural research, agricultural scientists, agricultural producers and milk producers also be selected as board members or not? When the university will be set up, what will be its syllabus? Will that syllabus be in accordance with the rules of UGC? What will be the future of the students who will pass out of that university with degrees? Will their syllabus be such that they can establish themselves in any competition at home and abroad or will they be made technical enough to be self-employed? This needs to be crystal clear. Will this institution be autonomous or will it function under the Government? There is no clear direction as to how the Vice Chancellor will be appointed. This Bill has brought about the issue of weakening the control of the democratic members and the collegiality. There is a risk of the Government superseding the board or restricting the reduction of the Government's shareholding. Giving the central and State governments the right to veto the reduction of their shareholding will violate the principle of control and autonomy of the democratic members. We have all these doubts, which need to be clarified in this House. I would like to request the Hon. Minister to address our doubts.

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: It is a good thing that the Home Minister paid attention to the University. Tribhuvan Das Patel ji had established the cooperative movement in Gujarat. It was Verghese Kurien who gave shape to Amul. He was a dairy technologist, educated abroad. Dr. Kurien along with Ananda Dairy set up an Institute of Rural Management. Till date, that is the only institute imparting training to managers working for cooperatives and such organisations. Now that is being wholesale converted into a university. It is becoming a university, but there is nothing new. The structure is already there. The Institute of Rural Management Anand is the only institute producing technical people for managing the rural problems, including unemployment. The objectives of the University have been defined. The appointment of the Chancellor has been defined. How the Vice-Chancellor will be appointed is defined. There is an appointment of a Director. I do not know why they need a Vice-Chancellor and a Director at the same time. But they are doing it. It will create two centres of power and thus lead to conflicts in future. The appointment of Dean will again create another centre of power because

the Dean will look after all academic matters. Then, there is the appointment of the Controller of Examinations, Librarian, etc. This is the case in every university. Where is this very special? There is the Capacity Building Council; there is Assessment and Improvement Council; there is Research and Development Council, and then there is a Board for Affiliation. This is because the extra in this Bill is that you have an Institute of Rural Management in Anand. That will act as the vertex. From this vertex, we will spin out further institutes which will promote cooperative education and cooperative management. This is a good idea. The main thing of a university is autonomy. It should have academic autonomy. It should have administrative autonomy. It should have managerial autonomy. The Central Government should not interfere in the affairs of the universities. If they promise that they will not do so, I will support the Bill.

***SHRI K. E. PRAKASH:**

SHRI SRIBHARAT MATHUKUMILLI: India is home to over eight lakh cooperative societies across 298 sectors with about 29 crore members affiliated to them. The government took a historic step to start this Ministry of Cooperation recognizing cooperative societies at the national level and acknowledged that their contribution to the GDP is invaluable. 56 major initiatives have been taken to strengthen the sector since the formation of this Ministry. This Tribhuvan Sahkari University Bill is paving the way for the establishment of India's first-ever cooperative university and institute of national importance. This university will play a crucial role in addressing the shortage of skilled manpower in the cooperative sector. It aims to promote research and development, build the capacity of existing employees, and create a strong ecosystem for global excellence in cooperative education. The potential for this is that cooperatives could generate over 11 crore jobs in the next five years alone. Some of the objectives of the Bill are that it includes strengthening the cooperative sector, enhancing capacity and professionalism, addressing manpower shortages, bringing in standardisation and

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quality control, empowering IRMA to become an Institute of National Importance and creating sector-specific schools. There should be freedom for internal restructuring of office bearers in the University because the context and the challenges of the co-operative sector are different. All appointed elected leadership, and Directors of co-operatives are sent for short-term executive programmes to the Tribhuvan University to get trained for one week or a month or six months on how they rebuild or develop their cooperatives back home. I really hope that this becomes a shining model for success and that States in the future come forward to ask for such universities in their own States.

SHRI DILESHWAR KAMAIT: In the 76th year of the Republic of India, the government has brought in the Tribhuvan Cooperative University Bill, 2025. This Bill aims to establish Tribhuvan Cooperative University, known for the Institute of Rural Management, Anand, and to declare it an institution of national importance. The purpose of this university is to provide technical and management education and training in the cooperative sector, promote cooperative research and development, and embody the philosophy of Prosperity through Cooperation. The university will adhere to global excellence standards and strengthen the cooperative movement in the country through its institutional framework. The Bill also seeks to declare the institution as a school within the university, focusing on relevant subjects. This university will be the first of its kind in the cooperative sector, promoting education, training, research, and development, thereby strengthening the cooperative movement in India. To facilitate and strengthen the establishment of the Tribhuvan Cooperative University Bill, 2025, various departments, positions, and institutions have been set up, primarily focusing on administrative and academic areas. The university will be open to individuals of all genders, castes, races, ethnicities, or classes and will follow the policies set by the central government. The central government will periodically appoint one or more individuals to oversee and review the university's functions and progress. Based on these assessments, including its buildings, libraries, laboratories, infrastructure, distant campuses, exams, teaching, and other activities carried out by the university, the central government may take necessary actions or issue directives as deemed appropriate. The "Tribhuvan" Cooperative University Bill, 2025 is in the best

interest of the nation, the economy, students, cooperatives, the general public, and farmers.

***SHRI BHASKAR MURLIDHAR BHAGARE:**

SHRI ARVIND GANPAT SAWANT: This Bill is a very good piece of legislation. I would like to suggest that if the Government decides to establish a unit of this university in Maharashtra in the future, it should be named after Karmaveer Bhaurao Patil. This will become a globally recognized institution. However, the moot point is whether people would pursue their studies at this university, and after completing their studies, will they secure jobs? Currently, there are numerous cooperative societies in the country, and if there is one State that has contributed the most to the cooperative sector, it is Maharashtra. I wholeheartedly welcome this Bill and, at the same time, request the Government to implement it democratically and ensure that its benefits reach every individual in the country.

SHRI NARESH GANPAT MHASKE: Through this Bill, the foundation for historic reforms in the cooperative sector has been laid. The Tribhuwan Sahkari University Bill, 2025 aims to add a new dimension to the cooperative movement in the country and make it globally competitive. This Bill provides for transforming the Institute of Rural Management, Anand (IRMA), located in Gujarat, into a new central university. IRMA will be granted the status of a central university, where education, training, and research in the government sector will be promoted. The university will have the authority to offer degree courses, distance learning, and e-learning, and establish branches both within India and abroad. The Government has allocated ₹500 crores for the construction of its physical infrastructure. IRMA will have an executive board and a director. The existing academic programs at IRMA will be preserved, and any changes will only be made with the approval of the executive board. The Bill declares IRMA as a Centre of Excellence in Rural Management. The Vice-Chancellor will be appointed by the central government, and the VC will chair the university's executive council. The leadership will be provided by the Chancellor, whose appointment will be made by the Union Government. The Tribhuwan Cooperative University should collaborate with cooperative federations, private companies, and government institutions to run startup incubation, joint research projects, and exchange programs. PACS (Primary

* Please see Supplement.

Agricultural Credit Societies) should be fully computerized. Diploma and degree courses for rural industries should be introduced, including subjects like agricultural supply chain management and digital marketing. Industry opportunities should be increased by connecting with women's self-help groups and youth organizations. Cooperative values should be incorporated into school curricula, panchayats, and local bodies to foster a spirit of cooperation from a young age. The government has opened the door to prosperity in the country by bringing innovation and transparency to the cooperative sector.

SHRI M. K. RAGHAVAN: I have a difference of opinion on this "Tribhuvan" Sahkari University Bill, 2025 because of its current form. I would like to bring a few suggestions to the notice of the Government in this regard. India's cooperative movement has evolved into a powerful vehicle for inclusive growth, community empowerment, and rural development. As per the National Cooperative Database, there are over eight lakh registered cooperative societies having membership of more than 29 crores people at present. I really do not understand the Government's intention to bring this Bill, especially when IRMA, an autonomous institute, has existed for years. I feel that this Bill has been drafted in a haste to complete some annual targets of the Ministry. The present Bill brings down the status of Director of IRMA to that of Dean. This downgrades the position. This is why I feel that no thought has been applied during the drafting of this Bill. I have been associated with the cooperative movement in Kerala for a long time. Kerala is way ahead of the country in the cooperative sector and has 16,988 cooperatives catering to 27 sectors. This Bill intends to create four to five institutions or affiliated colleges in States with higher concentrations of cooperatives and 1-2 in States with lesser concentrations of cooperatives. I wish to state that the contents of this Bill clearly amount to eroding powers of the State. Many subjects listed under the current Bill such as fisheries, agriculture, education, and laws governing cooperatives, fall under the State list. Any decisions must be taken by respecting federal principles. There are many provisions under this Bill which violate federal principles. The Bill is highly critical due to its narrow focus, limited job prospects for graduates, and high potential for political interference. I would suggest that this Bill should be withdrawn, and a new Bill should be introduced.

SHRI ARUN GOVIL: 6th July, 2021 should be written in golden letters in the history of the cooperative movement of India. On this day, the Government of India had decided to establish the Ministry of Cooperation. Earlier, the cooperative movement in the country was burdened with corruption, inefficiency, nepotism and illiteracy. Due to the neglect of cooperatives by the previous governments, 101 sugar mills were closed in Maharashtra alone. To meet the need of a large number of technically competent and skilled professionals and trained youth in this sector, the first cooperative university in the country, “Tribhuvan” Cooperative University is likely to start functioning from this year on the campus of the Institute of Rural Management, Anand (IRMA) located in Gujarat and will impart education on subjects like accounting, administration, technology, cooperative movement, computer etc. in the cooperative sector. The youth of the cooperative sector will be imparted management education and marketing training here and cooperative research will also be promoted. The participation of women in the cooperative sector is more than 60 percent. Considering 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas' as the backbone of cooperation, this Government has made significant progress in including marginalized communities, especially Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Classes, in the cooperative sector. In fact, there is no organized form of training in the cooperative sector at present and there is a lack of uniformity in it. This university will make cooperative education systematic by offering diploma, degree and certificate courses in various subjects like dairy, fisheries, agriculture, banking, marketing, and accounting in the cooperative sector. When trained students will come out of this university, they will also train farmers to sell their produce. This institute will take the cooperative movement to new heights. I request to open the first college affiliated with this university in my Lok Sabha constituency Meerut-Hapur in Uttar Pradesh.

SHRI ABHAY KUMAR SINHA: There are 8,493 Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) in Bihar, which are supporting lakhs of farmers. Around 7,386 milk cooperatives are making rural families financially strong there. But Bihar does not have a single major government institution related to education, research or skill development. IRMA in Gujarat is already considered a prestigious institute and now it is being accorded the status of a university. If such an institution had been opened in a backward state like Bihar, the rural economy there could have changed positively. Sudha Dairy under Bihar State Milk Cooperative Federation Limited is an example of the hard work and success of our farmers. I would like to

request that the “Tribhuvan” Cooperative University Bill, 2025 should be amended to establish its regional campus in Gaya, Bihar and a provision should be made for granting special scholarships to the students belonging to Bihar.

SHRI ADITYA YADAV: Institutions like NDRI and IRMA have been continuously contributing to strengthening the cooperative movement. Gujarat has done very good work in the cooperative sector. However, opening this university in Gujarat seems to bring centralization of power to Gujarat. It would have been better if we had brought this university to Uttar Pradesh. An investment of Rs. 500 crore is being made in this university. But there is no mention anywhere about the criteria for the posts of Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Dean and Professor of this university. The main objective of the cooperative movement was to contribute to the prosperity of farmers. If we want to do that, then this university should be established in Uttar Pradesh.

DR. KADIYAM KAVYA: I approach this Bill with both hope and caution. The creation of the “Tribhuvan” Sahkari University in Anand, Gujarat inspires optimism. The promise of technical training, management skills and cutting-edge research could modernize these institutions, making them engines of prosperity. But, will this University truly serve the farmers, students, artisans and unemployed youth of Telangana, or will it remain a distant dream, confined to Gujarat's borders? How will it adapt to the realities of rural India, where illiteracy, poor infrastructure and financial fragility define the cooperative landscape? Our cooperatives are not just economic units, they are lifelines for Scheduled Castes families. These people need more than a University in Gujarat. They need accessible education, affordable programs and training that reaches their doorstep. Why should a farmer's son from Telangana travel hundreds of miles for skills he could learn closer to home? The Bill's focus on capacity building for cooperative employees is a step forward. In Telangana, cooperatives are crumbling under outdated practices and inadequate funding. I urge for an amendment to include a five-year action plan with clear targets. Please train 50 per cent of rural cooperative workers, establish 10 regional hubs and measure the impact on production and incomes. I support the Bill's intent, but I cannot ignore its gaps. The Government must ensure it does not favour corporate giants over small farmers or urban centres over rural hamlets.

SHRI GANESH SINGH: The objective of this Bill is to establish a national-level university in the cooperative sector by converting the Institute of Rural

Management (IRMA) into "Tribhuvan" Cooperative University (TSU). It will be the first university in the country which will impart cooperative education and training and will also promote research and development in this sector. Around 70 percent of the population of our country lives in villages. No other institution can contribute more than cooperatives in increasing the income of the people living in villages. However, these cooperative societies lack technical know-how. There are about 8 lakh societies across the country having more than 30 crore people as their members. But, due to a lack of technical know-how, the cooperative sector is getting weaker. After the establishment of this university, a lot of work is likely to be completed in the cooperative sector. The main objective of this University will be to impart education, train and build capacity at all levels for the staff and board members of the cooperative societies to meet the present and future requirements. There is a provision in this Bill that its Vidyapeeths can also be opened in other states of the country. The institutions running there can be associated with it. Sanchi in my state of Madhya Pradesh is a major centre of milk production. I want that also to be associated with it. I also demand that a Vidyapeeth should be opened in Satna, my constituency in the State of Madhya Pradesh. In order to promote the cooperative-based economic model in the country, there is a need to transform cooperatives into vibrant, transparent and responsible economic units, which has been felt for a long time. There are many states where very good work is being done through cooperatives. The economy of rural areas has been strengthened. The per-capita income of the people there has also increased. Today, technical knowledge is needed somewhere in these committees. Cooperatives are becoming a people's movement. For its promotion and development, new technology has also been proposed through this Bill. That is really a welcome step. I believe that through the Cooperative University, the rural economy of our country will improve in a big way. It is such a big sector and it would create new employment opportunities. Today a lot of construction and development work is going on, the country is changing and the country is moving forward. If cooperatives lag behind, I think justice will not be done to the country. Therefore, this university should be established.

SHRI SACHITHANANTHAM R.: The cooperative sector is in the State Schedule, but Cooperative federalism is not followed by this Government. The NITI Aayog's Report on expanding the quality of higher education through States

and through States' public universities is timely. Against the NITI Aayog's Report, our Union Government develops only the Central Universities and not the State Universities. The Cooperative movement in India plays a crucial role in the sectors like agriculture, banking, and housing. The first cooperative society was formed in Karnataka. The birthplace of the Cooperative Movement was also South India. So, our Union Government should choose a place for the Central University in South India. Kerala is the best model for the Cooperative Movement. Kerala has been leading in the cooperative sector by introducing reforms and new things. Kerala Bank has become the first Bank in the cooperative sector to use the latest version of the banking software of Finacle. The Cooperative Department has launched a new investment scheme called 'One Deposit Fund for a Family' as a useful scheme to help families in times of crisis. In Tamil Nadu, we have a Cooperative Department-owned college in Dindigul. Gandhigram Rural University of Higher Education was started in 1956 to bring higher education closer to the villagers. This institute specializes in rural development and special research on Panchayat Raj is also conducted by the Political Science Department. Therefore, the Government of India should announce the Gandhigram Rural Institute as the Central University of Rural Studies.

DR. GUMMA THANUJA RANI: The Tribhuwan Sahkari University Bill, 2025 is a landmark piece of legislation that promises to revolutionize cooperative education and research in our nation. It aims to provide education, training, and capacity building in the cooperative sector and undertakes research and development of degree programs and e-learning courses. Such initiatives are crucial for maintaining our competitive edge in the international arena. Some of the problems in the State of Andhra Pradesh for the higher education sector include the dilution of the Nadu-Nedu scheme. I will talk about the removal of English as a medium of instruction in Andhra Pradesh schools. To make our children globally

competitive, our YSR Government has introduced English medium education in all Government schools. I request the hon. Minister to kindly intervene in this matter and direct the State Government not to remove such an innovative thought.

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN: The cooperative movement had its genesis in Bihar. The formation of cooperatives was meant for the small, cottage industries, small farmers, middle-class farmers and marginal farmers so that we can arrange such farming together which will put more emphasis on profits. The Government is not paying attention to all the small institutions under cooperatives and all the institutions existing earlier including even the banking sector. The Government is not giving funds to the institutions which have pushed the cooperative sector. The Government is not paying attention to the quality, the maintenance, the Vice-Chancellor and the Principal of those institutions. All the cooperatives in this country have almost become dens of loot, they have become a part of politicization. After Denmark, Kosi, Seemanchal and Mithilanchal produce the highest quantity of milk. This region has the highest fish production but till date, fish cooperatives have not been taken care of. The cooperative bank is not in a good position anywhere.

DR. M. P. ABDUSSAMAD SAMADANI: This University is named after one of the pioneers of our co-operative movement. I am very sorry to state here that the Government fails to see the hall as a complex. The prejudiced sectarian agenda of the Government will not be able to help our campuses and will not be helpful in creating and erecting a healthy campus and a healthy university. The basic issue no doubt is the autonomy of our educational institutes. One after the other, the Government's policies are becoming responsible for the destruction of the autonomous nature of our educational institutions. Even in this present Bill, there are many provisions and clauses that affect federalism, which is a very important aspect of our Constitution. As we all know, education comes under the State List.

This prejudiced sectarian agenda has to be kept aside. Cooperatives were once envisioned and envisaged as instruments of economic democracy. But these cooperatives have nowadays become mere vote banks, controlled by local elites sidelining the very farmers and labourers. So, a very important aim should be the empowerment of the rural population. What step is the Government going to introduce to ensure the pluralistic and inclusive nature of the educational institutions and universities? The financial management is another problem. Governance has to be reformed. The aim of a university should not be just to provide jobs. But there must be higher ends in the changing scenario of the world. I request the Government to bring changes and take urgent steps to ensure the autonomous nature of our universities and the inclusive and pluralistic natures of the system of education.

ADV. FRANCIS GEORGE: I rise today as a representative from Kerala to address pressing concerns regarding the recent legislative and regulatory developments impacting our nation's cooperative sector and higher education system. These initiatives, while ostensibly aimed at enhancing our cooperative movement and educational standards, raise significant questions about federalism, state autonomy, and the future of cooperative education in states like Kerala. While the intent of this Bill to bolster cooperative education is commendable, the centralization inherent in this move is concerning. Kerala has a robust cooperative sector with well-established institutions. By establishing a centralized university in Gujarat, there is a risk of marginalizing these State-level institutions and undermining the cooperative movement's grassroots nature. Cooperative education thrives when it is closely linked to local communities and their specific needs. A one-size-fits-all approach may not effectively address the diverse challenges faced by cooperatives in different states. Kerala's cooperative movement is a testament to the success of decentralized, community-driven initiatives. Institutions like the

Co-operative Academy of Professional Education and the Kerala State Co-operative Union have been at the forefront of providing professional education and training in the cooperative sector. These institutions have tailored their programs to meet the specific needs of Kerala's cooperative societies, contributing significantly to the State's socio-economic development. A concern has been raised about the introduction of multi-state cooperative societies because they offer high interest rates on deposits and thereby effectively blocking the fund flow to local cooperatives without any commitment to the area of their operation. They can deploy these funds anywhere. So, I request the Government to have very strict and effective control over these institutions. By way of amendment in the GST Act by inserting Section 7(1) (aa), a heavy, unforeseen burden is cast on the Co-operative Societies as if the cooperatives are only to collect tax from their members. I would request the Government to revisit this amendment, cancel it, reamend the law, and exempt the cooperative banks and societies from taxing their members. It is imperative that we uphold the principle of federalism and respect the autonomy of the State Governments in managing their cooperative sectors and educational institutions. I urge the Central Government to reconsider the Tribhuvan Sahakari University Bill, 2025 to ensure that it does not undermine the State-level cooperative institutions and allows for a more decentralized approach that respects the unique contributions of each State to the cooperative movement. I call for the withdrawal or amendment of the UGC's regulations on appointments of Vice Chancellors and reinstating the crucial role of State Governments in these processes to maintain the autonomy and integrity of state universities. Engaging in meaningful dialogue with State Governments and stakeholders is essential to develop policies that strengthen the cooperative sector and higher education system without encroaching upon the rights and responsibilities of the States.

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN: This is a good initiative on the part of the Government in bringing such a Bill. But I have strong reservations in some respects. I must highlight that India's cooperative movement is a powerful engine for inclusive growth, transforming the lives of millions and establishing India as a global leader in cooperatives. I would like to flag the problems and challenges faced by the cooperative sector: first, the lack of professional management leading to operational inefficiency and inadequate corporate governance; second, the lower capital and resource base; third, the lack of democratic control; fourth, the lack of transparency and accountability. Nowadays, there are numerous corruption allegations, including those in my State of Kerala. There is excess political influence and bureaucratic control in cooperative societies, and there is a lack of awareness also. These are the main challenges confronting the cooperative sector. I hope that this Bill will address some of these issues, particularly the lack of awareness and professional management. If the staff, employees, Directors, and Board members of the cooperative sector are not competent to address the challenges, it will pose significant problems. Therefore, high-tech skilled professionals are required to manage cooperatives, which play a vital role in India's economic development. Hence, this Bill is of utmost importance. I demand from the Government that if you are not ready to change the name of IRMA to the name of Dr. Varghese Kurien, then start a school in the state of Kerala in the name of Mr. Kurien. Clause 9 of the Bill provides excess powers to the Central Government to control the University. I request the Government to review Clause 9 to bring back the autonomous character of the University. According to the Clause 10 of the Bill, the Central Government may appoint a person of eminence as the chancellor of the university but the Bill is silent on the rule or provision relating to the appointment of the Chancellor. There is no participation or representation of the Members of Parliament in this University. Moreover, there is no clarity over as to why the Vice-

chancellor has been given excessive powers. The Government should look into all these aspects.

DR. PRASHANT YADAORAO PADOLE: I request the government to provide financial assistance to the crisis-stricken dairy union in Bhandara-Gondia. Currently, the lowest rate for rice transportation is offered in my state. There are approximately 5 lakh cooperative societies active across the country, employing millions of people. This Bill clearly violates Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution of India. It is contrary to the provisions of the Constitution and the Directive Principles of State Policy. Every provision of this bill is an attempt to strip IRMA of its autonomy. The intention behind this bill, under the guise of cooperation, is to benefit corporates and capitalists. The government should clarify that this university will work for the benefit of farmers and cooperative institutions and will make the local cooperative movement self-reliant.

SHRI JANARDAN MISHRA: The 'Tribhuvan' Cooperative University Bill, 2025 has been introduced to strengthen the poor and farmers through cooperation. By 2030, the cooperative sector is expected to generate around 5.5 crore jobs and 5.6 crore self-employment opportunities. The government has allocated Rs 1,183.39 crore under the Ministry of Cooperation, which is 9.7 times more than before. Cooperation, education, and prosperity will be the three pillars of this university. It will become a training center for the youth. Through technical, AI, and digital platforms, the modernization of cooperation will be carried out. There will be research and policy formulation, including research on national policies. This university will take India's cooperative model to a global level.

SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI: The Cooperative Department has been strengthened, modernised and computerised with the effort of this Government. As a result of this Tribhuvan Cooperative University is being

established to develop skilled professionals for managerial, technical, and administrative roles in cooperative services. I request the Government to establish a proper protocol for this University with regard to courses, syllabus, conducting the examinations, and awarding certificates to the participants. I would like to request that a Southern Centre of the University may be set up at Amravati in the State of Andhra Pradesh which should be an independent institute rather than affiliated.

SHRI GURMEET SINGH MEET HAYER: The Cooperative sector is the backbone of the farmers and dairy industry of rural India. I want to ask the Government that how will you strengthen the entire country's cooperative system by setting up a university in one place. Punjab has done very good work in the Cooperative sector. Such universities should be opened in all states. Collaboration with Markfed should be encouraged as it is doing good work. Experts from Punjab should also be recruited at this university.

SHRI EATALA RAJENDER: This Bill is going to prove a revolutionary step, under which a large university will be established at Rs. 500 crores, which will also be a center of excellence. There are 8 lakh different societies in the country, with 30 crore members. This university is being established to transform agriculture, dairy, poultry, and fisheries into value-added products and to finance them. Excellence centers will be created in different states under this initiative, which will further strengthen our cooperative system in the coming years. If we want to elevate the economy from the fifth position to the third, the cooperative system must progress.

SHRI VISHALDADA PRAKASHBAPU PATIL: This Bill is a step in the right direction. Currently, there is a great need for a good university in the cooperative sector. Educating children from rural areas at this university is an

excellent decision. My request to the government is that institutions like the Vaikunthbhai Mehta Institute, Vasantdada Sugar Institute, and Deccan Sugar Institute in Maharashtra should also be granted university status.

SHRI CHHOTELAL: I urge upon the Government to consider whether the system of establishing a large university in the form of Tribhuvan Cooperative University and declaring it an institution of national importance should be implemented throughout the entire state. If this system were to be applied in Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Bihar, and several other states, it would provide substantial benefits. Our region has established specialized schools in areas such as dairy milk production, fisheries, sugar, banking, rural credit, cooperative finance, cooperative marketing, legal auditing, and multi-state cooperative societies. However, people from the Bind, Mallah, and Kevad communities, who should receive fifty percent subsidies for fish farming, are not receiving the support they are entitled to. Along with farmers, every poor, Dalit, Adivasi, and backward person, including in Uttar Pradesh, is denied justice. They deserve to receive the justice they are entitled to.

DR. JAYANTA KUMAR ROY: The “Tribhuvan” Sahkari University Bill, 2025 is not just about setting up another university. It is a national mission to revive, professionalise and modernise India’s cooperative sector, which is the very backbone of our rural economy and social structure. India’s cooperative movement is one of the largest in the world, with over 8.5 lakh cooperatives and nearly 29 crore members. These cooperatives serve the poorest and the most marginalised -- our farmers, women, artisans, fishermen, and workers. The cooperative movement in West Bengal once had a glorious past. But today, rampant politicisation and corruption have crippled these institutions. State-controlled interferences have eroded trust, turning cooperatives into political tools rather than engines of social and economic empowerment. This university will have multiple crucial roles. It will

impart modern, technical, and professional education in cooperative management. It will promote research and innovation in the cooperative sector so that we bring Artificial Intelligence, digital finance, and blockchain to agriculture, dairy, fisheries, and rural enterprises. It will also help in creating market linkages, promoting exports, and building global standards for Indian cooperative products from handicrafts to organic food. The vision of a Sahakari Bill is not a dream, it is necessary for an inclusive self-reliant India and I believe this university will serve as the IIM, the IIT and the AIIMS of the cooperative sector giving it professional strength, academic rigour and technological edge. Let this University be the lighthouse of a new cooperative revolution, transparent, professional and people-driven.

SHRI AMIT SHAH *replying said:* Cooperatives is a sector that touches every family in the country in some way or another. There exists a unit in every village which is engaged in agricultural development, rural development and self-employment through cooperatives and contributes to the development of the country. After the passage of this Bill, it will empower the rural economy, promote self-employment and develop small entrepreneurship. There shall be an elbow room for social inclusion other than an avalanche of opportunities paving a pathway to create many new standards in innovation and research. The name 'Tribhuvan Cooperative University' is a model of cooperation that has taken the entire world by surprise and happens to be the marker of a personality who led his entire life largely driven by the principles of cooperatives following the principles espoused by Gandhiji. Tribhuvan Bhai Patel is the same person that laid the foundation of Amul Dairy. The Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF) better known as Amul, is the brainchild of Tribhuvan ji. Today Amul's sales have crossed Rs 60,000 crore. It is five times higher than Hindustan Unilever, eight times higher than Nestle India and today I would like to divulge the truth before you that in such

a big movement, no one's share capital share is exceeding a hundred rupees. Small poor peasant women have collected a hundred rupees to build it. In these 10 years, 25 crore people have come out of poverty. But now they have to contribute to the development of the country, but they do not have the capital, so how can they take up the enterprise? The only way out is to connect a person without capital with entrepreneurship, and that is the cooperative sector, through which crores of people come together with a capital of 100 rupees each and undertake their enterprises and lead a decent life. Whereas they are getting self-employment on one hand, they are also contributing to the country through Swarozgari on the other. From the standpoint of the economists, one of the parameters of the country's economy is 'GDP'. GDP is a very big parameter to indicate the health of the country's economy, but in a country like India, that is home to 130 crores, along with GDP, occupation is also a big medium and the cooperative sector is the only sector that encompasses 130 crore in its fold and thanks to large scale avenues of engaging oneself in such enterprises people would be enabled to make their contribution in the development of the nation and can uphold its honour as well. For 75 years, the farmers, rural people and cooperative leaders of the country had been making a demand for Ministry of Cooperation under the aegis of the Union Government in the country and after it came into existence, there are eight lakh cooperatives societies in the country, 30 crore people have become its members and in a way, one person from every family is connected and every fifth person in the country is associated with cooperatives. There was a movement of unequal co-operatives across the country and if it has to be developed, first of all, we have to spot the gaps. The first thing we did was to prepare a database of cooperatives in tandem with the State governments in two and a half year span of time. A complete database of cooperatives was developed. Today, on the site of our database, one can find detailed information about dairy cooperatives, packs, marketing, fisheries, housing, etc. Then it was decided that two lakh new primary cooperative societies

packs would be created. It has also been studied that packs had been formed earlier, but I fail to see the reason why they ceased to stay functional. So we embarked on a decision to change its bylaws with PACS and from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and from North East to Dwarka, the entire country evinced massive subscription to the bylaws and all the bylaws were subjected to change. Today, more than 25 economic activities are aligned with PACS. PACS provides short, medium and long-term agricultural credit and it will now be able to distribute improved seeds, produce fruit and vegetables and will undertake apiculture. Today, around 43,000 tax PACS have started functioning as CSCs in the country, through which more than 300 schemes of the Union Government and the State Governments are being run. Apart from this, services of Jan Aushadhi Kendra, petrol and diesel outlets, LPG distribution, grain storage etc. are being extended through PACS. The Government of India has computerized 67,000 PACS in the country with an outlay of Rs. 2516 crore. The services of about two-thirds of the PACS are available online. NDDB, NFDB and States have been entrusted with the responsibility of setting up 2 lakh new multipurpose PACS. The expansion of PACS to every Panchayat will lead to the creation of a pathway for a cooperative movement to take place in the country in a systematic manner. The Income Tax Cess on cooperatives has been reduced from 12 per cent to 7 per cent. Aside from this, many other kinds of financial relief have been provided to them. We have formed three new cooperative committees, which would work as backwards and forward linkages. A national cooperative organization called National Cooperative Export Limited has been formed, under which about 8 thousand PACS have been covered so far. The produce of the farmers of the country is being exported through it. Through Bhartiya Jaivik Sahakari Beej Limited, the organic products produced by the farmers are procured, tested, packaged and sold in the market today in the name of the trusted brand viz Bharat Brand. Along with this, through the Bhartiya Jaivik Sahakari Beej Limited, we have preserved non-hybrid seeds after collecting and harvesting them. We have

formed an organic cooperative for the Bharat Organic brand through which people can buy trusted organic products. The NCDC has given loans worth Rs 1,28,000 crore to cooperative institutions since 2024-25. The net profit of NCDC has also gone up and its net NPA is zero percent. Every cooperative institution will have an account in a cooperative bank. The member of the cooperative society will also have an account in the co-operative Bank. Cooperative Banks have been allowed to open new branches up to 10 percent. Now Urban Co-operative Bank can deliver services through doorstep banking. Now a nodal officer has been appointed in the RBI to address the problems of cooperative Banks. The National Cooperative Finance Development Corporation has formed an umbrella organization, and in case any cooperative bank runs into losses, it will finance the Bank concerned and thus insulate it from being closed down. Our Government has also increased the insurance coverage of depositors from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 5 lakh. If I refer to the cooperative sugar mills, the problem of their assessment has been eliminated once and for all. We have sanctioned loans worth Rs 10,000 crore to 84 mills. Our Government has gone for the reduction of the GST rate on molasses from 28 per cent to 5 per cent. We have computerized the entire office of the CRCS and the State Registrar as well as all the branches of Rural Development Banks. We hope to increase milk procurement from 660 lakh litres to 1,000 lakh litres by the year 2028-29. For the last 3 years, India has already been the largest milk producer in the world. There are 23 State-level associations, 240 district-level associations and 28 marketing dairies. Primary milk producer committees have also been formed in as many as 2.30 lakh villages. In the field of dairy, we have made arrangements to ensure that all the profits, ranging from animal dung to animal bones and skin, visit the poor farmers engaged in animal husbandry. When there will be such a huge economic benefit within the dairy industry, women will also be empowered. The Union Government will procure 100 per cent of the three pulses at the MSP. We have created the Cooperative Ranking Framework in Cooperatives for the first time.

Now excellence awards will also be given at the district level, state level and national level and based on their ranking, they will also get loans from cooperative banks. In a few months, a very big cooperative taxi like Ola and Uber is going to be launched on a cooperative basis. Within a very short time, a cooperative insurance company is also going to be formed, which will provide insurance coverage to all cooperative systems across the country. Although the university is located in Gujarat, the university covers the whole of India. As so many cooperatives are developing, there is a need for trained human resources and trained people everywhere and we will have them through this university. After setting up a Sahkari university, only those having diplomas and degrees will get jobs on a merit basis. Poor children will get jobs. A new age cooperative culture will also start from this university. Thousands of Cooperative Education Training Institutes are being run across the country, no common course is offered by them. For example, there is no course available for the Secretary of PACS. Today, all the needs related to co-operatives will be satisfied by this university. We have started the work of designing its courses even before the university was established. This university will offer degree as well as diploma courses. The Ph.D. will also be awarded and a one-week certificate course will also offered to the existing employees. Through this Bill, cooperative principles will be expanded. Cooperative activities will expand. Co-operatives will reap the benefits yielded by new technology. Research and innovation will also receive a wide fillip. This will also strengthen the rural economy. This Bill provides for its registration under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. This university will run on a hub and spoke model. There will also be courses for 10th and 12th passed individuals. We will move forward on a large scale through 'e-learning' and 'SWAYAM', which is an initiative of the Prime Minister. In line with the National Education Policy, a flexible entry and exit system will also be available alongwith a multidisciplinary curriculum. When eight lakh people pass out every year either armed with a certificate or a diploma or a degree, I am

confident that a new energy will be infused into the cooperative movement leading to the creation of a symmetrical cooperative structure.

The Bill was passed.

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UTPAL KUMAR SINGH
Secretary General

**Supplement covering the rest of the proceedings is being issued separately.

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NOTE: It is the verbatim Debate of the Lok Sabha and not the Synopsis that should be considered authoritative.

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