**DEBATE (FOR)**

**The Universal Basic Income Should Be Everyone’s Right**

* Quote
* Benefits of UBI:
  + Reduce rate of poverty
  + Dignity/Essentials of life, basic human ethics and morals
  + Automation
* Work incentives to UBI along with cash – Nixon/MIT and Harvard study of unaffected employment rates, (Eliminate 1 major possible argument of against speakers)
* UBI in India
* Stats/examples showing successful instances of UBI (Brazil, India)
* Conclusion

Good Morning to everyone present!

Today, I as a part of affirmation team for the topic Universal Basic Income should be everyone’s right would like to convince you all for the same with my arguments.

Poverty is not unknown to us in India. In fact, one of the major challenges India has been facing since independence is the eradication of poverty. Many welfare and social protection schemes have been introduced by the government such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), the Public Distribution Systems (PDS) and other Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS).

But such schemes need validation and proofing of beneficiaries and involve complex bureaucracy and expenditure. Therefore, these suffer from an array of difficulties such as – rigidity, non-adaptability to local conditions, late distribution of funds and the most disturbing – Middle men and Corruption. In many cases, the proportion of funds reaching the intended beneficiaries is well under 50%.

A Universal basic income program or UBI where each and every citizen receives a flat monthly payment regardless of their socio-economic status eliminate benefit fraud as a UBI is granted automatically. As of 2017-18, 27% of poorest fifth are denied their due of welfare. But, in UBI as all individuals will be the beneficiaries, this exclusion error will be zero.

Another major factor is rapidly increasing automation. According to a World Bank Research, automation threatens 69% of the jobs in India. To adapt with this automation all workers need to enhance their skills in automation. This requires higher education. As of now almost 25% of the population still does not receive basic primary education let alone advanced education.

On a moral front, welfare’s current design undermines recipients' dignity. Means-testing is often invasive. Beneficiaries may feel ashamed of their conditions. An equal basic income to all promotes equality and maintains the dignity and privacy of underprivileged citizens. It also affects mental health of citizens adversely.

Universal Basic Income helps solve all these issues and improves the lifestyle of underprivileged considerably. Let me demonstrate this with a case study. In 2011, SEWA, funded by UNICEF, conducted a pilot study of Universal Basic Income in 8 villages of Madhya Pradesh for 18 months. The outcome was extremely positive.

Many people used the money to maintain a hygienic environment which indirectly reduced their expenditure on healthcare. Nutrition level and health improved due to quality food which was now affordable. Better medical facilities were availed and enhanced health increased school attendance. The overall amount of debt drastically fell. The level of frustration decreased leading to efficiency in work and improvement in mental health. Women control over their own life and were less willing to accept the dominant behaviour of men in the society. The extra income also generated entrepreneurial activities in the villages, subsequently supplementing their household income.

As opposed to worries expressed by opponents of UBI, the grants led to more work and spending on temptation goods was not witnessed in these villages. This effect has been witnessed by many other studies as well such as the Manitoba “Mincome” Experiment, Brazil's Bolsa Família and a research analysis on “Cash Transfer” by MIT and Harvard.

I would like to conclude by quoting Guy Standing who conducted this experiment, “With the basic income, people are able to meet their basic needs and try to achieve further goals based on safety, love, esteem and so on. They try to invest into new skills, infrastructure, that helps in associating a value to them, increases their respect and social stature.” UBI enhances the dignity and lifestyle of the downtrodden without any hassle.