

**RAJYA SABHA**

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**\*SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE**

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**(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)**

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**Thursday, August 3, 2017/ Shravana 12, 1939 (Saka)**

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**MATTERS RAISED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE  
CHAIR**

**1. Reduction in Rate of Interest of Savings Bank Deposits**

**SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN:** SBI has reduced rates of interest on savings in bank accounts holding a balance of less than one crore of rupees by 0.5 per cent. More than 90 per cent of the bank accounts in India are of people who have less than one crore of rupees. The interest rate for senior citizens was 10 percent in 2014 which has now been reduced to 6 percent. Its first obvious impact will be on small depositors especially on senior citizens and pensioners. It will also encourage chit fund companies. Commercial banks are also going to be affected. Everyone talks of Chit Funds but no one talks about Pearl Chit Fund Pvt. Ltd. It should be investigated. Post-demonetisation, 1.5 million jobs have been lost. All these issues should be discussed but the Government is running away from discussion.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

**THE MINISTER OF FINANCE, THE MINISTER OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY), responding to the matter, said:** As for the last point of Mr. Derek O'Brien, there is an amendment to the Banking Regulations Act regarding the NPA issue, which is currently being discussed in the Lok Sabha and is likely to be completed today. Any day, it will be before the Rajya Sabha. To keep the fixed deposits at the same rate which affects the retired people and the pensioners the most, Government, for the first time, has brought in a Scheme of eight per cent guaranteed, which will not change. As far as the senior citizens' pension is concerned, the cumulative effect of that interest is actually 8.3 per cent. I have already launched that Scheme. The Prime Minister had announced on the 31st of December that if any person is affected, he can take the benefit of that eight per cent scheme.

**2. Need to give Compensation and Rehabilitating Villagers Affected due to Land Acquisition by Army**

**DR. CHANDRAPAL SINGH YADAV:** The lands and homes of villagers of Ghamkan village situated inside Babina Cantt. in Jhansi district in Uttar Pradesh, have been acquired by the Army. Consequently, the villagers have become homeless and unemployed. The compensation for their homes has yet not been paid to them since 1991 which has rendered their lives upset. I urge upon the Government to provide them fair compensation for their homes and make necessary arrangements for their rehabilitation and livelihood.

**SHRI SHARAD YADAV:** I associate myself with the issue raised by the Hon'ble Member. It is a very important issue. Jabalpur is the largest camp area and the villagers thereof are badly affected there. I request the Government to pay attention to the people residing there for thousands of years, whose lands have been acquired.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

### **3. Management of Silt in Ganga**

**SHRIMATI KAHKASHAN PERWEEN:** Presently, entire Bihar State is ruined by annual floods in the river Ganga. Its main reason is the deposit of silt therein which causes soil erosion in the nearby regions. Many blocks in Bhagalpur district are facing severe soil erosion. Several villages have become deserted. This problem is rampant in almost entire Diyara region. If it is not suitably managed, the engineering college in Bhagalpur would also fall into its grip within a year or two. Bolder pitching done every year for anti-erosion, gets washed away into Ganga owing to this erosion. It results in the wastage of public money and increase in silt in Ganga. Several organizations are blaming the construction of Farakka barrage for this. Actually Farakka barrage has failed completely in achieving its objects. Many variety of fishes are no longer available therein. Consequently, lakhs of fishermen have become unemployed and are starving. I urge upon the Government to address this problem immediately.

*(Shri Ali Anwar Ansari associated.)*

### **4. Need to encourage Women in Sports**

**SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:** Women are doing well in the sports today. Women Indian cricket team has just played in the final of the world cup. Keeping in view the performance showed by women in the sports, the Sports Ministry should formulate a special policy to encourage them. A number of women players such as Sania Mirza, Saina Nehwal, Saba Anjum, Mithali Raj and Mary Kom have done marvellous job in their respective fields. SAI has not done anything in this regard. Now women must be given a chance. I believe they will surely succeed.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

## **5. Concern over the Dangerous Consequences of Internet Game, 'Blue Whale'**

**SHRI AMAR SHANKAR SABLE:** A boy named Manpreet had committed suicide due to a game Blue Whale. As many as 130 children have committed suicide due to this game in Russia, America, England and Italy. Children are coaxed to unlawful activities and at the end, they are asked to commit suicide. This was also discussed in the Maharashtra Assembly. I, therefore request you to take proper action to save our children from Blue Whale game.

**DR. VIKAS MAHATME:** Not only Blue Whale game, but also other audio-video games are there. They coax the children to get injured.

**SHRI SANJAY SETH:** This Blue Whale game is affecting children and it should be stopped.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

## **6. Concern over Non-Availability of Generic Medicines to the Common People**

**SHRI NARESH AGRAWAL:** There is a big difference in the prices of generic and non-generic medicines in the country. Common people are facing problem. Doctors and chemists together are fleecing common people. A number of tests are carried out by the hospitals in the name of investigation and costly medicines are being prescribed. 127 generic drugs are converted into non-generic under the US pressure. Generic drugs are not being manufactured. This is just a loot. Only 2 per cent of the budget is being spent on the health. Please give some directions in this regard.

**SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN:** The production of medicine comes under the Ministry of Fertilizers and Chemicals. It is they who declare the list of essential medicines.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

**THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI), responding to the matter, said:** We do agree that cheap medicines should be provided to the needy and poor people. Thousands of Jan Aushadhi Centres have been opened.

**7. Alleged Prohibition of Free Speech and Writing in the Indian Institute of Mass Communication**

**SHRI ALI ANWAR ANSARI:** It is a matter of concern that IIMC, Delhi is working in an arbitrary manner. Employees and students are being threatened. Students have been warned for expressing themselves on social media. Will they not get freedom of expression in a journalism institute? Boys' hostels have been closed without any discussion. Apart from this, installation of mobile tower has been permitted in the premises without any discussion, which is adversely affecting the students, teachers and employees. Academic council has still not been constituted. The Director General of the institute is reluctant to meet the members. Several members have shown their disinterest in working in such an atmosphere.

**8. Need to extend Registration Date for Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana**

**SHRI DILIP KUMAR TIRKEY:** Odisha has a large coastal line which is often prone to natural calamities. That is why Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana is very important for us. The Government of Odisha has started a massive campaign under this scheme. But a number of farmers could not register themselves due to link failure. I urge upon the government to extend the registration date upto 16th August, 2017.

**9. Need to reduce GST from 28 Per cent to 5 per cent to save Beedi Industry**

**SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH:** A massive demonstration was made by a large number of beedi workers in Tamil Nadu. They were demanding that 28 per cent GST tax levied on beedi

industry should be reduced. Most of them come mainly from the drought-hit areas and their income is very meagre. Apart from this, beedi industry is severely being affected due to many restrictions and laws. Sir, beedi workers get only four to five days of work in a week. The job of beedi rolling is mostly done by women. I want to know whether the GST levied on this industry will be reduced to 17 per cent.

*(Shri Ali Anwar Ansari and Shri Oscar Fernandes associated.)*

#### **10. Concern over Encroachment by the Kamarajar Ports Ltd. on 1000 Acres of Wetlands in Ennore Creek, Chennai**

**SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI:** Thousands of fishermen families depend on the Ennore Creek in Chennai. It was once a lush mangrove forest. In 1996 this area was declared as No Development Zone. But a number of industries have encroached this area. North Chennai Thermal Power Station has been dumping fly ash in the Ennore Creek. Apart from this Kamaraja Port is now trying to build car parking, coal yards and warehouse facilities in the Creek by filling it. So, I urge the government to ensure protection of the Creek and Port's expansion may be carried out on dry land.

*(Shri D. Raja, Shri T.K. Rangarajan, Shri Jairam Ramesh and Shri R.S. Bharathi associated)*

#### **11. Alleged Violation of Land and Forest Rights due to Implementation of Compensatory Afforestation Projects**

**SHRI A.V. SWAMY:** The perception of tribal people of our country was different. They joined the freedom struggle. They were worried for their rights and land. The Tribal Land Act was for the tribal people which was followed by the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act and the Forest Rights Act. This Fund has been widely opposed by forest-dwelling communities and civil society organisations, as it does not comply with the Forest Rights Act.

*(Shri D. Raja associated.)*

## **12. Concern over Incidents of Violent Attacks and Murder of Social Workers Including *Dalits* in the Country**

**DR. VINAY P. SAHASRABUDDHE:** Not only dalits but ideologically different people are being attacked in the country. Dalit workers of BJP and RSS were brutally murdered. This is a heinous crime.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

**THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI), responding to the matter, said:** This is a serious matter and the State Government should take stringent and necessary action.

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### **SHORT DURATION DISCUSSION**

#### **India's Foreign Policy and Engagement with Strategic Partners**

**SHRI ANAND SHARMA, initiating the discussion, said:** This is the first time, after the NDA Government assumed office, that the Government has agreed to discuss this important matter. I would like to thank the hon. External Affairs Minister, Shrimati Sushma Swaraj. We are going to discuss this subject when the world is going through a major transformation in international relations. There is turbulence in major countries and conflict in different regions of the world. What we are witnessing is a reshaping of the world order and that is a challenge before India's Foreign Policy. We do recognize that it is for the Government of the day to respond and to take major Foreign Policy initiatives. There cannot be a Foreign Policy where we do not protect and we do not promote India's economic interest, trade, security, and defence.

What is important for any foreign policy is the neighbourhood policy. Management of the periphery comes first, the rest comes later. Unless we manage our neighbourhood correctly, it will be difficult to play any meaningful role, regionally or globally. I come to our western neighbour, Pakistan. I would like to ask from our Minister what the road map is? There has been an increase in cross-border attacks, attacks on our Army establishments, strategic defence establishments and killing of soldiers. We have to remember that they stand up and give their sacrifice to protect us, our borders and our people. Nobody, therefore, wishes that this threat should continue. Pakistan, like India, is a nuclear power State. We have made it clear throughout that when it comes to the State of Jammu and Kashmir, it is an integral part of India. But China has made a statement. Turkey has made a statement. This is a matter of concern to us. India and Pakistan are neighbours. We have to remain meaningfully engaged and that is important.

I was surprised when we made claims at the highest level that we have isolated Pakistan. I would urge the Government to refrain from making such statements. It is irresponsible and factually incorrect. Russia has entered into a Defence MoU with Pakistan for the first time in our history. Should it be a matter of concern to us or not? There are joint military exercises of Pakistani Army with China, with Russia and with Turkey. So, we should avoid making this boastful claim. There is a lack of stability in your policy. That keeps on changing. In the beginning you say that you will have dialogues and then abruptly you discontinue the dialogue which escalates tension. People of Hindustan must know that what assurance was given during the meeting between NSA of India and NSA of Pakistan in December, 2015 at Bangkok which impressed the Prime Minister so much that while on a visit to Afghanistan he landed at Lahore suddenly.



The Prime Minister has not divulged to the country as to what kind of talks took place. The Hon'ble Prime Minister has visited 65 countries so far. This has happened for the first time that Prime Minister didn't brief to Parliament even once. Recently, when the Prime Minister visited USA, he made a boastful statement which he should not have made. Our army went to help the people of Bangladesh and thereafter Bangladesh got freedom. But even then Indira Gandhi didn't make any such statement. She sacrificed for the sake of the country and you don't even remember with respect Smt. Indira Gandhi and her martyrdom. It is very sad. It is not a question who is sitting in the Government today. Those who did something for the country must be remembered and respected. We have concerns because China's profile in Pakistan is increasing. And Pakistan is getting emboldened because of the support it gets from China. That is our concern. I have to say one thing that our relationship with China is complex and uneasy. I want to make one thing absolutely clear that when it comes to India's national interests, we stand together as one. That is the position of the Indian National Congress. That is the position of the entire Opposition and we want to make it clear. China is being unusually aggressive. In two days, the Chinese President has spoken twice. They are closing the door of diplomacy. We would like to know, when the External Affairs Minister replies, about India's assessment and our response to the latest Chinese statement. But, when it comes to our country, there will be one voice, one view because we all are Indians first and it is India first for us; nobody else. Still, I would say to Sushmaji that diplomacy must be given a chance.

Our National Security Advisor had been to China recently and held a meeting. Therefore, we, at least, be informed by when this standoff can be resolved. Jawaharlal Nehru convened the Indian Parliament in 1962 at the time of conflict, but now all this has happened and the Prime Minister has not uttered a word. We are with the Government on our sovereignty issues, particularly on the China-Pakistan economic corridor. But, at the same time, we have to be mindful how the rest of the world has looked at it. China was able to get our strategic partners, like, Japan, Korea, Russia and America for the conference. Despite understanding India's concerns all of them

went there, because they all considered it purely as 'economic' and 'connectivity'. Nobody can force India to support a project which is against India's sovereignty. Our relationship with Nepal is equally critical and sensitive. We know that China has a strong presence and strong interest there, so we must not do something which fuels anti-India sentiments in that country. We had undertaken a number of projects in Sri Lanka which this Government is taking forward for the rehabilitation of the Tamil people and to re-build the infrastructure. But we have to handle this relationship again with care and tact to also secure India's interest. China has taken the Gwadar Port in Pakistan, Colombo Port and Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka, which has security and economic implications for us. I am sure that the Government will ensure that India's interest are neither compromised nor threatened. We must fulfil various commitments made to Bangladesh regarding projects and assistance. We must ensure that all the projects with Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Bhutan, must be taken to completion. We have made commitments to Africa too and it is equally important.

I think there should be country-wise evaluation so that our partner countries, our neighbours in particular, are fully assured that India means what it commits itself to. We can play a meaningful regional and global role only if we manage our neighbourhood correctly. The defence cooperation with Russia has always been important, but undervaluing India-Russia relationship, is not a healthy development. We cannot ignore major powers of the world, hence UPA Government saw that the partnership between the two biggest democracies of the world is important and we were able to take this forward, despite all challenges, but this Government has mishandled the NSG issue and India's membership. India would buy weapons, change its trade policy to facilitate entry of American goods and agricultural commodities into the Indian market. But, we want India's interest first and want our IT industry to be protected. I want to know why did the Prime Minister not get an assurance on the issue of H-1B visas. We want India's long-term strategic interests to be fully secured. We are concerned about the global warming and climate change. We have made many concessions because both India and China were persuaded by the U.S. Now, the U.S. has walked out of

the Paris Accord. May I know from the minister whether the Prime Minister persuaded them on this issue.

India has economic and strategic interests in the Gulf and the Middle-East. The Prime Minister visited these countries and came with many assurances of investments. It is the duty of the Government to inform the House about the projects that came in and the jobs created in our country by these countries. If engagement with Israel is important, equally important is our commitment with the people of Palestine. The Non-Aligned Movement was not aligned, but aligned with India's supreme national interest. It is sad that the Heads of States of other states of Africa reminded that they were free countries today because of India, because of Nehru and because of the Congress. As we engage with our partner countries, please ensure that there is a strategic balance. I am sure that as we engage, we will not dilute or deviate from a Foreign Policy and the Government will genuinely address our concerns and keep the country informed.

**DR. VINAY P. SAHASRABUDDHE:** The Prime Minister decided to invite all the heads of the neighbouring countries as special guests to his swearing-in-ceremony which was a very important gesture. People are able to understand our Foreign Policy. They are welcoming the changes that we are introducing. Every step was taken with a particular objective. Prime Minister Modi has taken India's diplomatic ties far ahead of exchange of pleasantries and sharing of good will. In every visit either he further fortified the foundation of bilateral ties or built a strong edifice of mutuality. We have introduced our Foreign Policy regime in a more serious manner. International relationship is a matter of cultivation. Prime Minister Modi has very successfully achieved the change in perception about India. The world does not look at India the way it was looking at India a couple of years before. Prime Minister Modi has redoubled investment in protecting Indian interests in the larger Indian Ocean region. He intensified the emerging partnership with Japan. He preserved balanced ties with both China and Russia, nurtured important partners in Western Europe, Central and South East Asia and in the Persian Gulf which is unusual in Indian Foreign Policy. He has built personal ties with the

heads of various countries. Wherever he went, he engaged with the Indian diaspora in a very systematic and very powerful manner. The Government has evolved ties with Bangladesh, Nepal and even with Pakistan. We want harmonious ties with everybody including all neighbours, but on our terms. This has restored a sense of authenticity. We have linked very successfully India's Foreign Policy to our domestic transformation. The Prime Minister has insisted upon the use of Indian languages, Hindi particularly, while dealing with foreign diplomats. When you develop a sense of ownership towards the jobs that our diplomats are doing, things will definitely happen in a different way. We give complete credit to the Prime Minister for having established the International Yoga Day on the 21st of June. With a reference to the Surgical Strikes, India retaliated and it has certainly made Pakistan learn beyond doubt, a few lessons. We have handled our issues at several international fora, remarkably. Indian leadership played an important role in making Paris Accord happen. We have invested our strengths and made efforts for various establishments in outstanding way. India took the lead in establishing the International Solar Alliance successfully. The bilateral discussions that had happened are very important in cultivation of foreign policy and external relations. All the countries with whom we had discussions are looking forward to India for providing relationship and India is doing the same. Respect, security, dialogue, prosperity and civilization are the important cornerstones of our foreign policy regime. During the last three years, the efforts we have put in are visible and important. The Indian Foreign Policy has become far more serious than the mere talk of universal peace and co-existence. India has become one of the best attractive destinations for investors world over. As far as the India's Foreign Policy is concerned, it is a civilizational journey.

**PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV:** The foreign policy means the kind of relations we will have with other countries. There should be an increase in the number of friendly countries and reduction in number of our opponent countries. Only then the foreign policy can be termed as successful. It is the criterion of successful foreign policy. Even before independence, Pt. Nehru said that we

would remain non-aligned country. One thing should be kept in mind, that there was a time when the third world was ruled by the Indian Prime Minister. Nehru, Nasser and Tito, this trio exerted pressure on the two world powers. Once our country faced a major crises. In spite of a non-aligned country at that time, a country stood by us at the time of crises as s strong friend, but that situation is not prevailing as of now. Foreign visits are not a bad thing. These are necessary to improve the relationship. Before the 1971 war, Indira Ji visited several countries and she created the public opinion at world level. The world favoured India at that time. We had a friend in the world, who extended its support to us at that time, and as a result the on-going war came to an end within few days. The circumstances change with the passage of time. The friends and enemies also change according to the circumstances. Therefore, we cannot remain static. A small mistake can cause a massive harm. Here, it is not a question of business or other relations. If the country is safe, then everything is safe. The efforts are being made to siege India from all the direction. Our relations with neighbouring countries are not up to the mark. The science has made this world so small that chaos at one place, leaves its impact on all the countries. The Pakistan is handing over our land to the China. A nexus has been created between China and Pakistan. The Russia, which had an inclination towards India in the past, is now drifting away. A quadrangle of the China, Pakistan, North Korea and Russia is being developed, and in this regard we have to reconsider our policy. Who can be our most reliable friend in such a situation? We accorded recognition to the Israel after a long-time. In this regard, the example of friendship between Israel and United States of America is noticeable. We must learn from the diplomacy of the Israel. Our situation in this area is becoming the situation like Israel. Like Israel, we also don't have a supportive countries around us. Therefore, we have to strengthened ourselves and we have to strengthened ourselves in military terms. Till India is not militarily strong, the neighbouring countries continue to move away from us. The defence should be given top priority. Sri Lanka has given one of its ports to the China. India could have got that port. Before the current Government came into power, our inclination started tilting

towards the United States. When the nuclear deal was signed, Russia became suspicious at that time. We should have taken Russia into confidence, as Russia was our reliable friend. The seeds of doubt cause gradual deterioration in the outcomes. In such a situation have friendship with United States so that it continues to remain our all time friend. I would like to congratulate General V. K. Singh and Sushma Ji for the steps they took in evacuating the Indians stuck up at various other places including Yemen. Whole world appreciated it.

The foreign visits of the Prime Minister are welcome steps; however a tradition is there, that whenever the Prime Minister of a country visits any country, and session is going on, then a statement should be given about the visit. It must be done. The humane behaviour of Sushma Ji has won the hearts of the people all over the world. To be ready for war is the best way to protect the peace and if this is done, then no one can challenge our foreign policy.

**SHRI SHARAD YADAV:** The world has become a unipolar, whereas the actual situation is not like that. In the current scenario, China has become a superpower. We are not having cordial relations with our neighbouring countries. We should have friendly relations with our neighbouring countries. The statements issued by the China currently are very painful. When the Indian masses will become empowered, only then the military will become powerful. If we consider the economic condition of the whole of the Indians, and if this kind of disparity continues in the country, then our army cannot be strengthened ever. We did not improve the condition of the common men in the last 70 years in the country. The speeches being given here, do not commensurate with the condition of the masses. We have the largest number of poverty stricken population, the largest number of illiterate persons and we have the largest number of economically weaker section in our country. During the 1971 war, Indira Ji took over the state of Sikkim very intelligently. At that time Russia extended its full support. It should be considered that until masses are empowered, the economic condition can not be improved? Financial constraint is there, even corruption is there in the procurement system, then how the military will become powerful?

When I listen China's Statement, I do not become angry with them. But, I feel anger on myself and on this House. I agree that we got an able and efficient External Minister, but I feel that her abilities not being properly utilised. The way China is threatening us, It is a matter of concern. We have become weak, because this country is divided economically and socially. Please stop it and let us strengthen our country. If the people of the country are economically powerful then the country too becomes economically powerful. Let us bring farmers and labour together, leave the internal feud aside and make the country harmonious and powerful.

**SHRI A. NAVANEETHAKRISHNAN:** I would like to draw the kind attention of the House that the entire world has become a global village because of technology and commerce. We are seeking protection from invasion by other countries in all aspects like geographical, commercial and other aspects. I would like to draw the kind attention of this House to the trade deficit. Import from China is more; export from India to China is less. The trade deficit must be taken care of by the Central Government. With regard to Sri Lanka I beg the Central Government to take appropriate steps to retrieve the Katchatheevu. The traditional rights of our fishermen are being taken away in the name of international maritime boundary line. I very humbly beg the Central Government to re-fix the international maritime boundary line. Regarding the ports of Sri Lanka, China virtually invaded all the ports of Sri Lanka only to threaten India. Our Indian Government is taking a very soft stand towards Sri Lanka because if any hard stand is taken, Sri Lanka may join with China and that is not for betterment of India. But the trade unions of Sri Lanka opposed the Chinese invasion. While the Sri Lankan labour unions can oppose China, why not our Central Government? Please do not take a soft stand towards Sri Lanka because Sri Lanka is opposing India.

Our Hon'ble Prime Minister knows the problems of tea plantation workers. He has analyzed their problems and exhibited his real concern towards the welfare of the Tamil tea plantation workers. I thank him for this. Our Tamil fishermen are languishing in Sri Lankan jails without committing any offence. They did not violate any international law or the local law. It is their traditional right to fish in that area but because of our artificial boundary lines, their livelihood is affected. Our Union Government must take appropriate steps and see that the traditional rights of the Tamil fishermen are restored as early as possible. We are having a very nice, efficient and wonderful External Affairs Minister. We are having an able and efficient Prime Minister.

**SHRI MANISH GUPTA:** In a democracy like ours, there should be free flow of information. While our neighbourhood remains an important target, yet, India's priority should also ensure regional security, stability and peace. As far as Foreign Policy is concerned, our party - All India Trinamool Congress has always supported the Government of India's Foreign Policy initiatives starting from 1998 to the present day. Due to the sensitivity of certain border areas, especially in the eastern sector, today, the way things are being handled, we are compelled to express our dissatisfaction. West Bengal is our border sensitive State. Here, I am talking about the Chicken's Neck Corridor or the Siliguri Corridor, which is a gateway to Sikkim, Assam and Bihar. Military intelligence has repeatedly reflected to the Government of India that due importance has not been given to the security and safety of Chicken's Neck Corridor. This is very vital for the eastern sector and for the development and protection of the people in the border areas. The Government of West Bengal under the leadership of Mamata Banerjee, in the recent past, has repeatedly urged upon the Central Government to secure proper interest and to provide men and material that is required to obviate free movement across the border. The Government of West Bengal had asked for extra CRPF personnel to be posted to Darjeeling but, unfortunately, for some unknown reasons, this police force was not provided.



The Government of India's policy of neighbours first has not borne any fruition. If you look at Nepal and Bhutan, today one matter of great concern to Nepal and Bhutan is the huge currency of Rs.3,000 crores that they are holding in the old Indian rupee notes. After demonetization, the Government of India have not clearly stated their position, and this is causing a lot of heart burning in these two countries. There is a deep resentment and relations are being soured. We should ensure that these neighbours do not take an inimical view towards us. China's military aggression in the mountains is very well known. Yet, we have not learnt our lessons. The Chinese are very active in Sri Lanka. Chinese made this possible because of the fact that the Sri Lankan Government owes a large amount of money to the Chinese. We need to make our presence felt in the neighbouring countries, especially in Sri Lanka. India needs to simultaneously work towards strengthening its frontier region, develop military modernization and regional economic integration to face future challenges.

**SHRI SITARAM YECHURY:** We are discussing India's foreign policy at a very crucial time. Our pursuit should be of an independent foreign policy. India's security, international borders' security and the defence can't be compromised. The Indo-US Nuclear Deal has turned India into a subordinate partner of the US foreign policy in the world. Privatisation of sectors like defence procurement, Railways and Air India will not be in our interest. There should be statements in this House regarding agreements entered into with other countries. Economic policies, demonetisation and GST are meant to profit multinationals. Government needs to seriously ponder over the issue of a stand off with China. Good neighbourly relations should be the bedrock of our Foreign Policy. I appeal to the Government not to cement any US-Israel-India axis in world affairs as it would not be in our country's interest.

**SHRI DILIP KUMAR TIRKEY:** Today we are having a discussion on a very important subject. I would like to congratulate the Government for taking steps for safe return of people stranded in other countries. Today world has turned into a global village and at

such times progress of any country largely depends on its foreign policy and its relations with other countries. Engagement of India and China in the Doklam area is a matter of serious concern. I hope that the Government would keep the fact of historical relationship with Israel in mind. I would request the Government to take steps to strengthen armed forces. Maintaining alertness on the bordering areas of the country and a close monitoring of activities of neighbouring countries is the need of the hour.

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