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Chaitra 16, 1944 (Saka)

LOK SABHA DEBATES
(English Version)

Eighth Session
(Seventeenth Lok Sabha)



(Vol. XVIII contains Nos. 21 to 27)

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No. 26, Wednesday, April 06, 2022/Chaitra 16,1944 (Saka)**

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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Wednesday, April 06, 2022/Chaitra 16,1944 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock.

[HON. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Question Hour, Question No. 481, Shri Dulal Chandra Goswami.

(Q. 481)

SHRI VINAYAK BHAURAO RAUT: Sir, I have a Point of Order.

HON. SPEAKER: There is no Point of Order in the Question Hour.

SHRI DULAL CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Hon. Speaker, the Hon. Minister has given reply to this question elaborately but I want to say to the Hon. Minister that this work cannot be done only with these guidelines. Hon. Minister Sir with respect to the RUB(Road under bridge), especially at the high rainfall area or the area which gets inundated during the rains, the water overflows to reach above the height of RUB and below the track of railway line and the method devised to resolve this problem is that the water is drained out using the pump set. I would like to say that when there is a drain nearby, only then water can be pumped out from there...

(Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: What is your Question?

SHRI DULAL CHANDRA GOSWAMI: I would like to tell the Hon. Minister that some alternative solution should be thought of and proper drainage system should be made, because this ROB remains closed not only during the rainy season but also remains closed for four months after that.

SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW: Hon. Speaker, Sir, with respect to the matter of water logging in RUB, which has been placed here by the Hon. Member, that is in reality the matter concerning all the Hon. Members. Recently, Railways had organized detailed workshop of Chief Engineers from all over the country under the supervision of Secretary, Railway Board regarding how to use all the options available to us for resolving the said matter.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, four options are being used in this. First option is pumping. Last year also, pumping was done extensively. This year, we will do it even more extensively. Secondly, we are bringing change in design. Our Hon. Member of Parliament from Karnataka Bhagwant Khuba Ji, who is an MoS, gave a very good suggestion in the meeting that even if the level is lower at one kilometer distance and we make a one kilometer long pipeline, then it will be good. We are also implementing that suggestion. Thirdly, by widening the RUB slightly at many places, for example suppose if the level of the rest of the RUB is down, then we are trying to elevate some part of one meter of part to the upside. Along with this, we will now make an effort to make maximum ROBs and over bridges and not underpasses because howsoever effort is made in constructing underpasses, there is still water-logging in the remote areas.

SHRI DULAL CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Hon. Minister, thank you. Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to make a request to the Hon. Minister. The Hon. Minister has also said in his reply that he receives the question of all the Hon. Members regarding rain and flood affected areas that RUB is not effective in such areas, so I would like to request

the Hon. Minister that in case of all RUBs having an issue of water logging, does he think of clubbing all the projects related to them and marking them as national projects and making ROBs there?

SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW: Hon. Speaker, Sir, I welcome the proposal of the Hon. Member of Parliament. Efforts are on going to convert as many RUBs to ROBs as possible. Hon. Speaker Sir, there is a huge difference in the cost of both. While RUB is made in two to three crore rupees, the ROB costs 50 to 60 crore rupees. At the same time, a very good effort has been made to make ROB as soon as possible. As of now, around 218 standard designs have been made, so that there will be no hassle of approval anywhere.

The design has already been approved and sent to the field, so that there is no hassle of approval, the approval is made swiftly and the work can move forward.

SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Hon. Speaker Sir, Hon. Minister has replied in great detail. I want to know that where there is no water logging, no pumping required, passage is available and there the railway only makes a box and slips it inside and that underpass becomes operational. In my constituency, Vankhedi, Bagratwa, Sontalai and Barapura are places where water-logging does not take place, roads are available and underpasses can be built there. Through you, I want to know that where there is no water logging, will the Hon. Minister provide this facility there?

SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW: Hon. Speaker Sir, wherever the height of the embankment is more than three meters, there is no problem in constructing RUB.

Wherever from such proposals will come, a proper decision will be taken after considering them.

[English]

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: Sir, instead of expeditious execution of railway projects, a number of railway projects have been suffering from procrastination. *[Translation]* Sir, I want your little indulgence and want to raise another issue, which is related to my constituency. For the last eight-nine years, one ROB – 131, Chuapur-Berahampur and another ROB – 132, Panchanantala-Berampur, RUB number-111 *[English]* in all these projects everything was sanctioned, tenders were done, and contracts were awarded. But no progress has so far been achieved, barring 60 per cent job at Chuapur ROB. Not only that, in so far as low-cost RUB is concerned, there is no visibility in the Salat to Azimganj project under Howrah Division. *[Translation]* I know that this connection may or may not be made, but what to do out of desperation. It is highlighted that this is the condition of ROB, this is the condition of RUB and here you say that water should be pumped out, but who will pump out? The State Government should be approached but they say that our irrigation department cannot contribute to this. In this situation, what should we do and where should we go? Do you have any capacity to pump out? You will have to depend on the State Government.

SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW: Hon. Speaker, Sir, if any RUB or ROB is constructed, it covers the land of the railway, the part above the railway track and the part below it and some road of the State Government is connected with it. It is a matter of great

regret that there are some regions including the region of Hon. Leader of Opposition, where permissions are not given at all. If you want to take permission even for the smallest work, then one has to face problems many a times. After taking information about the specific LC, ROB and RUB for which information has been sought by Hon. LOP, I will provide it to the Hon. Leader of Opposition... *(Interruptions)*.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri S.S. Palanimanickam.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI NAMA NAGESWARA RAO: Sir, we had given notice... *(Interruptions)*. We are not getting time to raise this issue, so we are walking out.

11.08 hrs

At this stage, Shri Nama Nageswara Rao and some other hon. Members left the House.

[English]

SHRI S. S. PALANIMANICKAM: Thank you, Sir. As per the answer given by the hon. Minister about RUBs, all the RUBs are under the RDSO. But, all of a sudden, the Railway Board and the Railway Ministry have decided to convert all the manned and unmanned crossings into RUBs. Indian Railways covers the longest coastal area in the country. During monsoon season, all the coastal areas in the country get submerged into water, and at present, the Railway Department is not able to drain that water into the nearby areas. So, the Railway Ministry should reconsider its decision of converting

all manned and unmanned crossings into RUBs. There must be some new proposal in this regard or the Railways may continue manned and unmanned crossings.

SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW: Hon. Speaker, Sir, the point raised by the hon. Member is a very valid point. But the decision to eliminate unmanned crossings and the decision to close down manned crossings was taken purely after many years of discussion in which every LC used to have the danger of accidents. There were very unfortunate incidents in the past. So, I think, this is a very good decision taken by the Railways. I would request the hon. Member to support this decision. This has reduced so many grave accidents. On the contrary, we must try and find more technical solutions or engineering solutions rather than taking a decision to reverse the closure of LCs.

HON. SPEAKER: Q. No. 482, Shri Sanjay Kaka Patil.

... (*Interruptions*)

(Q. 482)

KUMARI GODDETI MADHAVI: Thank you, Speaker, Sir. The liberalization of regulations of geospatial mapping was meant to boost planning for infrastructure, development and businesses which are data-based. Since de-regulation, what improvements have been seen in these sectors and how does the Government plan to consolidate these gains?

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: Hon. Speaker, Sir, I am glad that the hon. Member has asked this question. As she is rightly mentioning, liberalisation in the geospatial policy and the new guidelines were brought in to enable ease of working, ease of science and also ease of mapping. Now that the Government has undertaken several flagship programmes like the SVAMITVA programme where it is intended to map the habitat areas of all the villages across the country, the role of this organization, the Surveyor General of India office also has enhanced. You would also appreciate that this is in keeping with the policy of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to reduce the compliances and reduce the regulations where not required. Earlier, there was unlocking of space technology. Now, this is followed by liberalisation of the geospatial policy so that it is accessible to all except for the security concerns wherever they are applicable. Several safeguards have been put in place. Now, also there is some liberalization in the drone

guidelines. So, this is all in keeping with the new context and the new agenda of the Government for the coming years.

SHRI HEMANT TUKARAM GODSE: Thank you hon. Speaker, Sir. During the Russia and Ukraine war, we have seen that all the geospatial, financial and health related data was shut down by the international companies because of their presence in Russia. Now, Russians cannot use their credit cards and debit cards. Neither is their data on foreign land accessible to them because it is with the international companies. So, through you, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether our country is dependent on foreign companies for our geospatial, banking, health, telecom, and e-governance data. Also, if our country faces such a warlike situation, is our data of Government health record and data of Indian enterprises safe on cloud controlled by foreign entities? Also, is the Government planning to transfer the entire technology of foreign entities to our Indian companies?

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: Hon. Speaker, Sir, the concern of the hon. Member is well taken. But there is no such reason to be worried as far as the safety of the data is concerned. Liberalization of the regulations was meant to make it more accessible.

Even otherwise, data was available through other sources. Now, it is accessible to the domestic users and the domestic agencies. However, if a foreign entity has to access our data, then there are already guidelines in place even in normal circumstances, even if it is not a warlike situation. There is a separate list of sensitive attributes which I can narrate, but it will take long. This is called negative list of sensitive attributes. These clauses have already been in place even for the peace times.

SHRI MANISH TEWARI: Thank you very much, hon. Speaker, Sir. I would like to thank the hon. Minister for a very detailed reply. But I would like to ask one question to the hon. Minister because there seems to be some kind of a confusion in the answer which he has given. He said that as per the guidelines for acquiring and producing geospatial data and geospatial data services including maps, which were issued by the Department of Science and Technology on 15th February, 2021, -- and the last three lines say -- terrestrial mobile mapping survey, street view survey, and surveying in Indian territorial waters shall be permitted only for Indian entities irrespective of accuracy. Hon. Speaker, Sir, my question is this. Today, all of us are using Google Maps, Google Earth, and various other kinds of applications where very detailed street views and also, the minutest details of all our cities, metropolises, and towns are available. So, under those circumstances, how are these guidelines really compatible with what is the existing situation? Is the Government going to bring out some additional guidelines which will validate the status quo which is already in play? Are you going to invalidate Google Maps and other Google applications, and all other global geospatial services which are being used by the citizenry, at large, across the world, including India?

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: I am glad that the hon. Member has asked this question. Of course, this was one of the considerations when the regulations were relaxed. As you have rightly mentioned, the data was available from other sources like Google. Now, as far as we are concerned, we have tried to restrict the use to the domestic users as much as possible and also, we have reduced the extent of scientific resolutions that will

be available to the non-Indian entities. But that is not the end of it. I agree with you. We are in the process of formulating a policy which would outline the approach and strategy for holistic development of geospatial ecosystem because the technology is moving very fast. I agree with you that this new policy will then, finally replace the existing National Mapping Policy, which was formulated way back in 2005. So, to that extent, of course, we need to update ourselves from time to time. We will also take all these concerns into consideration and will come out with a comprehensive policy. The work, in this regard, is already going on as a follow-up to the changed new guidelines.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Question number – 483, Shri Shankar Lalwani.

(Q. 483)

SHRI SHANKAR LALWANI: Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to thank the Hon. Minister for replying the question in great detail. Your department is working very fast under the leadership of Hon. Prime Minister, and is reaching the last person of the society. We have seen this during the Covid period also, I congratulate you for that.

My question to the Hon. Minister is that when will the 4G services start and when will the 4G services start in Indore?

SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW : Hon. Speaker, Sir, the supplementary question of the Hon. MP is unrelated to this, yet through you, I would like to inform the House with great satisfaction that what has been developed in India, by the Indian engineers

and the Indian scientists, and which is being watched by the whole world today is 4G complete core network and radio access network with a complete set-up of its telecom equipment which is ready and BSNL is placing the first order of more than 6000 towers. I will check and let you know whether Indore is included in it or not. Immediately after that another 6000 towers and after that the order for one lakh towers will be placed. Along with this, the development of 5G is going on in-parallel.

Hon. Speaker Sir, Hon. Prime Minister has resolved to be self-reliant in this *Amrit kaal*, a very good example of which is that 4G and 5G technology is being developed and prepared in the country.

SHRI SHANKAR LALWANI: My supplementary question is that you are the Minister of Communications and also the Minister of Railways. Whether there is a possibility of starting Internet in railways in future or demand from the public comes off and on?

SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW: Hon. Speaker Sir, the question of the Hon. Member is far from fiberization. Nevertheless, I would like to tell the Hon. Member that minimum 5G is required to go above the speed of 100 kms and the disruption starts occurring in the speed of 4G. This is an evolutionary time for technology. The more 5G technology develops and proliferates in the country, the more it will be available in the railways.

DR. BHARTI D. SHYAL: Hon. Speaker Sir, although the hon. Minister has given a deep and detailed reply. Yet when I was going through the reply, I was surprised to know that under the guidance of the hon. Prime Minister, concern ministry has set

up more BTS in the last eight years than that of in the last 50 to 60 years. I would like to give data which says that a total of 23,07,068 BTS have been set up so far. Commendable works are being done towards 'Digital India'.

I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister. A total of 1,40,066 BTS have been set up in Gujarat. Despite that, some problems are being faced in rural areas. So, I would like to know whether any target has been fixed or not to connect the rest of the towers with optical fiber in Gujarat?

SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW: Hon. Speaker, Sir, I am happy that hon. Member has shared my burden.

Sir, the hon. Prime Minister has just resolved that the saturation level has to be reached during the 'Amrit Kal'. Without any discrimination, optical fiber will be taken to all the uncovered areas or villages, be in Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, North-east, Jammu and Kashmir, Tamil Nadu, Kerala or any other places; and services from the tower will be made available. In this regard, a detailed survey is being carried out. It will be assessed after the study of proper radio signal strength. The survey is still going on. As soon as the survey gets completed, all the villages which are left will be given connectivity with optical fiber.

[English]

SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN: Thank you, Speaker Sir.

Sir, the hon. Minister has given a very good answer to the question that the major hurdle in having fiber connectivity or laying fiber is the Right of Way.

Sir, this answer is not the first time being given in the Parliament by our Minister. Previous Telecom Ministers have also expressed their inability to make sure to by-pass State laws and give Right of Way to all telecom providers.

Sir, Today when fiber to home has reached its peak and people are demanding high speeds, the Union Government should come forward to make a policy and make it more viable and uniform throughout the country so that laying of fiber lines by telecom operators and cable tv operators are made easy and it is a one-stop shop and they do not have to run from pillar to post.

You have BharatNet by which the Union Government is trying to make the internet available to villages. All this could be made easier if the policy is done properly. You have the TRAI on your side. Why is it that you are not putting your effort and heart and soul so that Right of Way is ensured for the telecom providers and cable TV operators?

SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW: I welcome the hon. Member's suggestion and in fact, he knows a lot about telecom. So, it is a very wise suggestion.

Sir, I would like to place on record our appreciation for BSNL which has done an excellent experiment over the last almost one year.

On what exactly the hon. Member has said, the cable operators, the local entrepreneurs, somebody in the village, are willing to take that risk and put that effort to take the fiber to the home and today, almost on an average, one lakh connections are given every month. So, that is exactly what you said and now, we want to scale it up that experiment up to a larger level.

In the federal structure, can the Central Government enforce something which is purely the mandate of the State and the local Governments? That is the question on which already a lot of discussions have happened in the past. Hopefully, almost 12 States have aligned with the Central Government's policy. I would like to request the hon. Members of Parliament to please request their State Governments to reduce the cost of RoW. In some of the States, the cost of RoW is as high as Rs. 25 lakh per kilo metre. How would fibrisation happen? That is the kind of big burden that some of the States are putting. I will request all the hon. Members please work with their respective State Governments and make sure that the cost is reduced.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI: Hon. Speaker, Sir, It is a very ambitious programme of the government of India and of the Hon. Prime Minister which will really change the face of India when last mile connectivity in six lakh villages will be ensured

through optical fiber. We already had BSNL, and BBNL was set up later. The erstwhile government suddenly curtailed BSNL and BBNL at some point of time.

An institution proposed to set up CSC by making a special purpose vehicle which will ensure last mile connectivity. The private institute made a special purpose vehicle that has to take optical fiber to the last house. This responsibility was entrusted to the CSC which has been discussed.

Sir, if there is water in a tank, but water does not come out from a tank, then the water of the tank is useless for me. So, through you, I would like to request the hon. Minister, I have requested personally also, that CSC is a private institution which is out of the purview of the Hon. Members who neither participate in its meeting nor they have any information regarding its functioning, so the work should be taken back from this institution and handed over to BBNL and BSNL which will help us to percolate the benefits of the ambitious scheme of the Prime Minister to each and every village of the country.

The CSC, particularly in Bihar, is always a news topic. The scheme will not be called success till we made optical fiber operational for ensuring last mile connectivity in each village.

Through you, I will urge if the government takes any policy decision, it will be a win-win situation for both BSNL and BBNL and we will get rid of this private institution and the participation of hon. Member will increase.

This is my request to you. Thank you.

SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW: Hon. Speaker, Sir, the Hon. Member has expressed his anguish. He met me personally also.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, when BharatNet was rolled out, several challenges were faced from time to time. This was a huge roll out for laying optical fiber, which had many challenges as it involves high complexity, particularly of a federal structure in which one has to take state governments and local governments together. Many challenges were cropped up, sometimes, innovative experiments were done to deal with these challenges. I believe that incorporation of CSCs at that time and making efforts through it was a good experiment so that last mile connectivity can reach everywhere. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI: The officers of the CSC do not meet with any Member of Parliament. Its officers do not attend DISHA meetings. ...*(Interruptions)* It is a private institution. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW: Hon. Speaker, Sir, every project has some positive and negative points. ...*(Interruptions)* Certainly, there might be some shortcomings. But, now, BharatNet is being taken in a very clear direction and the middle mile connectivity which is the most critical requirement is being addressed through optical fiber by engaging best professional agencies. They are doing network studies. As has been said, if a tank has water, but the water does not reach the tap, then what

is its use? Now efforts are being made to change the whole topology and to replace liner topology with ring topology. It will give a fast result.

I hope, the hon. Member will agree with me.

SHRI GOPAL SHETTY: Thank you, Hon. Speaker, Sir. I am a bit confused about asking my question, because some of the replies given address it. The digging done for laying optical fiber in urban areas causes serious inconvenience. There are a large number of vehicles in urban areas, so the digging done from time to time causes many difficulties. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the government has any technology for laying optical fiber without digging? It is the time of technology. Hon. Minister himself said that the introduction of 5G will solve the problem. I would like to know from the minister how this network can be reached to more and more people without resorting to digging? Sir, I would like to thank the government of Maharashtra. The network was laid on a large scale under the leadership of Ex-Chief Minister, Shri Devendra Fadanvis and a total of 2,40,000 BTS have been set up alone in Maharashtra which is highest in any state.

SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW: Sir, hon. Member has asked about laying fiber without digging. It is not possible. One alternative is to run it across an electric pole. But the problem is that it may either break down or start sagging. This was done on an experimental basis at many places, but the results were not very encouraging. So, digging and drilling have to be done. If horizontal drilling is done, maybe it will cause little disruption, but it is a necessary step.

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN': Sir, I would like to say to hon. Minister that it is a very good step that towers are being connected with optical fibers. Earlier, the speed was very slow, which now has improved to some extent. Maximum benefits are being reaped only by the private operators. BSNL is now called " BHAI SAHIB NAHI LENGE " in rural areas. This is the new full form of BSNL. BSNL services are gradually deteriorating. BSNL has not been able to start 4G till date and you have switched over to 5G. Sir, I would like to know from the Minister as to what planning the government has for the better performance of the BSNL, because the subscribers of the BSNL are shifting to private operators.

SHRI ASHWINI VAISHNAW: Hon. Speaker, Sir, if the Hon. Minister had paid attention then he would have found that I have already said in a supplementary reply that the BSNL is going to roll out India made 4G. As soon as the 4G will be rolled out, the services of the BSNL will definitely improve.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Question No. 484 ,Dr. Shrikant Eknath Shinde.

(Q. 484)

DR. SHRIKANT EKNATH SHINDE: Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to thank the Hon. Minister for replying the original question in a very detailed manner. Regarding my sub-question NMICPS also, the Hon. Minister has given details in the reply. Artificial intelligence is a huge area in which we need to invest and Government is working on National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber Physical System through NMICPS Development and translation of futuristic technologies specially in the areas of Artificial Intelligence but physical targets are under the NMICPS. They are very few. For instance, the Job creation under the Mission was set as 2,54,000 against which the Department could only achieve 1,157 which is 0.46 per cent. The target for technology products was 607, out of which only 45 have been completed and that is only seven per cent. Start-up and spin-off companies, of which the target was 1170, only 54 have been completed, which is equivalent to five percent.

Hon. Speaker Sir, through you, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister that whether the Government has reviewed the reasons for the non- performance of the scheme being implemented for an important area like Artificial Intelligence and what is the plan made by the Government in the future to improve it?

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: Hon. Speaker, Sir, hon. members are aware about this subject, that's why they have asked this question in two-three parts. As far as startups and new dimensions of artificial intelligence are concerned, it is certainly one of the priorities of the Government and you may remember that on the occasion of Independence Day in 2015 the Prime Minister launched Start-up India, Stand-up India from the premises of Red Fort, and after that a policy was formulated from the

year 2016, under which it was given a fast pace. Although this is on the assent, the hon. Members are saying it right that it has to go ahead, but if we look at the situation before this and the time period of the previous eight years from 2006 to 2014, at that time the number of start-ups funded by the Government was only 1650, because at that time this much priority was not accorded. As the new technology came into prominence, artificial intelligence was discussed, drones were discussed and many dimensions like heli war technology was brought up and many other areas came up. After the clarion call of the Hon. Prime Minister the total number of start-ups has increased to 10,600 from 2014 to 2022 in the last eight years, That is, the number of start-ups has increased tenfold as compared to eight years ago.

These are those startups which are funded by the Government, be it from the Department of Science and Technology or from other departments. If you just take the number of registered startups, which are funded or non funded in DPII, then their number is 67 thousand since the year 2016, i.e. since the time it was given priority *[English]* We are now a part of the global world and we have to live up to the global benchmark.

[Translation]

Artificial Intelligence is being utilized not in one area, but in many areas. It is also being used in drones. You will be perhaps surprised that it is also being used in prevention of corruption in the Ministry of Personnel.

If a petition comes, artificial intelligence can be used to read 'between the lines' that there is more to it than what it has said. The Government is committed, if you would like to, I can even give you the number of all the Institutions, although it is not required. It is a matter of satisfaction that *[English]* we are now in the third position in the world after USA and China as far as unicorns are concerned. We already have 99 unicorns *[Translation]* the number might have increased to 100 while I am talking. I am giving the figure for tomorrow morning. What I intend to imply is that this is happening at a very fast pace and there is enthusiasm in the general public as well. *[English]* We are aware of it and we will cooperate with the startup movements and encourage them.

[Translation]

DR. SHRIKANT EKNATH SHINDE: Sir, my second question is related to Biotechnology. Biotechnology is a very comprehensive medium to solve problems like pollution. Today, a large number of startups are being formed in the country, which is a good thing, but there is still a lack of startups in waste management techniques. My question to the hon. Minister is that whether the Government has any proposal to bring a dedicated scheme for start-ups working in the field of waste management and Bio- remediation technology just like the NIDHI4COVID 2.0 was started at the time of corona pandemic by the Government?

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: Hon. Speaker, Sir, what hon. Member has said is definitely in sync with the modern parameters. What has happened is that there is a lack of information. Through biotechnology, I am proud to share with the House that the trials of the vaccine developed by India have been carried out in our own department.

We have an institute in Faridabad, which was later developed by Bharat Biotech there. Apart from this, the nasal vaccine that is being developed is also due to biotechnology. Biotechnology has become very active in the last few years and to promote startups there is an organization named BIRAC, Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council. It has become quite popular in recent times.

As far as specifically waste management is concerned, about which I said that there is a lack of information. Moti Bagh Colony is near our location here, where Government officials reside. A 'Plant' has also been set up there through CSIR in a building of the society. The water that comes out from there is being cleaned and used again. But I agree with you that we should create more awareness. so that more number of startups come into existence and these technologies can be used further more

[English]

SHRIMATI APARUPA PODDAR: Sir, the hon. Minister has given a very detailed answer. I want to know about the Technology Development Board which comes under this Ministry. It provides financial assistance to the startups. In your reply, you have mentioned that hon. Prime Minister also wants the startups to be promoted. A sum of Rs.75 crore had been allocated in 2021-22. But we have seen that only 30 per cent of it has been utilized till 30th January, 2022.

I want to know from the hon. Minister about the reason for this low utilization. I would also like to know whether the Ministry is planning to build a partnership with

venture capital firms and investment network across the country for reaching out to a wider group of investors.

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to share with the hon. Member that the Technology Development Board was constituted about 25 years ago and it has got some good success stories as far as the startups are concerned. One of them is Bharat Biotech which started its career from the Technology Development Board (TDP).

From the Technology Development Board (TDB), one of the first fundings was done to him and today they have built up an empire. Then, Biocon Limited also shares a similar story. I agree with the hon. Member that now I try to go one step further. I have decided to go in for a start-up hunt. What was happening earlier was, the start-ups used to come to us and we would fund them. But if we have a mechanism to reach out to the most deserving companies who already have the capacity but require resources, then, actually, we will not only be able to support start-ups, but also ensure sustainable start-ups for a sustainable future economy. The recent Beating the Retreat Show, which you saw, was also funded by the Technology Development Board. You saw those 1,000 drones which were put up and which lighted up the entire sky over the Vijay Chowk. That was the most watched Beating the Retreat Show ever since Independence and that had happened on the 29th January, 2022. There were three youngsters who were funded through the same Technology Development Board and within six months, they have done that show which has created a record, because the world record is 5,000 drones; they have already reached 1,000.

So, we are trying to activate it. But I agree with you that we need to activate it further and we should also reach out to those who are actually looking up for such support.

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Minister has not replied to the question about low utilization of fund.

SHRI JITENDRA SINGH: Sir, actually, it is not low utilization of fund; it is only the optic of the figures, because there is a mechanism of funding. We do not straightway give the amount. For example, for the Beating the Retreat Show, initially they were given Rs. 50 lakh, then they came out with something, and then further funding was done. But the process is continuous. I would also like to call upon all the Members that we should also try to help in searching out the right kind of people so that the funding goes to those who may not have reached us, but we have reached out to them.

SHRI LAVU SRIKRISHNA DEVARAYALU: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Minister has given a very detailed reply. In his reply, he has mentioned about the various schemes that are available for start-ups as well as for research and development. But unfortunately, I could not find any mention about the National Research Foundation in the reply. This had been announced by the Finance Minister in her Budget Speech of 2021-22 and she had allocated Rs. 50,000 crore for this. The idea was to spend Rs. 10,000 crore per year. But unfortunately, there is no mention about this. So, I would like to know from the Minister whether any proposal has been mooted to form the board to run the National Research Foundation. If it has been formed, I would like to know whether the money has been spent in the last one year. Can the Minister elaborate on that?

SHRI JITENDRA SINGH: Sir, I appreciate the memory of the hon. Member. It was, indeed, announced in the Budget of 2021-22. But we are still working on it. That is why, it has not been included, because it has not yet been finalized. The National Research Foundation (NRF) concept was mooted. What has happened was, there was some mismatch between the funding and the research. In certain cases, a lot of funding went through the universities, whereas the research was happening in scientific institutes. So, we have tried to bring some kind of uniformity so that there could be a channel which could be uniform for funding and now we are also trying to evolve a single portal to avoid overlapping. For example, JRS examination is conducted by different agencies and this examination is held three or four times in a year. We are trying to streamline it. We are working on the concept of the National Research Foundation. The process is going on. It is not yet finalized. That is why, it was not included.

The reason is, it requires a very exhaustive exercise, because we are going to overhaul the entire process and if any loophole is left, then again, we will be on the backfoot. But we are working on it. The Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government is also actively involved in it.

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has mentioned Bharat Biotech company as an example of a successful start-up. The people from Andhra Pradesh are saying that they are all proud of Bharat Biotech. The founders of Bharat Biotech, Shri Krishna Ella and Shrimati Ella have also been awarded Padma Bhushan by the Government of India. Bharat Biotech was producing Covaxin. But I saw in

newspapers that the manufacture of Covaxin has been stopped, because the WHO has said that the manufacturing quality is not up to the mark.

They should stop producing the vaccine, and they should do up their manufacturing facility.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: What is your question?

[English]

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: Since it concerns COVID vaccination, would the Minister kindly tell us, what is the position with regard to Bharat Biotech, which he mentioned earlier, which is a manufacturer of Covaxin?

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: Hon. Speaker, Sir, there is a famous proverb in the English language: ‘Success has many fathers.’ So, responding to the first part of the hon. Member’s supplementary, yes, it is right. Now, Bharat Biotech is being owned by more than one State because the person whom he named – Krishna Ella -- is a very successful entrepreneur. He was born in Chengalpattu District of Tamil Nadu. Then, he got himself trained in Bengaluru, Karnataka; and has some roots in Andhra; and then he got funded from this Department.

So, now that he is successful, everybody would own him, and there is no harm in doing so.

Now, as far as the second part of his Supplementary is concerned, of course, the nasal vaccine is now under trial; and we have not yet put it for manufacturing purposes.

As far as the credibility of Covaxin is concerned, I leave that to the Health Ministry to respond to because we are directly not engaged in that policy ... (*Interruptions*)

As far as we are concerned, we conducted the trials which were successful, and then only it was developed and used for vaccination.

[*Translation*]

HON. SPEAKER: Question No. – 485, Shrimati Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo.

(Q. 485)

[*English*]

SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO: Sir, India has played a leading role in launching the 'Mission Innovation', a global initiative during the COP-21 in 2015; and it continues to play a pivotal role in the 'Mission Innovation' programme by participating in various areas of Clean Energy Innovation Challenges through collaborative projects and also supporting start-ups at their early stage of innovation.

In fact, under the leadership of our hon. Prime Minister, India has climbed 35 spots on the Global Innovation Index from being ranked 81st in 2014 to 46th in 2021. So, now, we are in the second phase of the Mission Innovation for five years from 2021 to 2025.

My supplementary to the hon. Minister is, what goals/targets have been set under the 'Mission Innovation-2', and what are the initiatives taken by India so far?

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: Sir, I thank the hon. Member for asking this question. You would also be glad to know that the 'Mission Innovation' was born somewhere in 2015, and it was a follow up of the COP-21 meeting which was attended by our hon. Prime Minister. It is a matter of pride for us that the nomenclature 'Mission Innovation' was also suggested by Shri Narendra Modi. Then, it was adopted. Now, we have 22 countries, which are the Members of this Mission. Broadly speaking, in a single sentence, the objective is: research and development of clean energy, which is attractive, which is affordable, and which is accessible to all. In that direction only, the Mission-2 has also been taken up as a follow up. Also, we have engaged in wider synergism. Only two days back, we had bio-refineries understanding under the Mission Innovation in which we are engaged in a 'private-public alliance', which they call in their parlance; and here we call it 'participation' with other countries like Netherlands etc. So, we are trying to integrate not only the public sector but also the private sector, not only domestically, even across. It is because the stakeholders are widespread. There has to be a synergism between the academia, between the industry, between the start-ups and also among the researchers because otherwise it is not possible to have sustainable start-ups as I said.

But I am glad that now 'Mission Innovation' in the second phase has categorised itself in different sections, and we are now catering separately for rural areas, for farmers, for young start-ups, and for women. So, I can give her the details if she wants.

I still have it also. If she is interested, I can read out also, but I do not think the hon. Speaker will allow that kind of time.

SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO: Thank you hon. Minister. My second supplementary is very small.

In your reply, it is mentioned that 36 Biotech-KISAN Hubs have been established in collaboration with ICAR in a number of districts including the Aspirational Districts.

Sir, mine is an Aspirational District. I would not be restricted to that. I would like to know how many Biotech-KISAN Hubs have been set up in Odisha, especially, in Bolangir District. If not, is it likely to be established in the near future?

DR. JITENDRA SINGH: You are right, I have mentioned it there. We have set up a programme called Biotech-KISAN as a part of our mission 'innovation'. It is meant for enhancing and coordinating various Central and State Departments for biotechnological interventions in the farming sector to help both, the women as well as farmers. There are 15 agro-climatic zones in the country which have also been taken into consideration. We have 25,000 households across the country. I am not carrying specifically the Odisha part. I have a State-wise long list but it will take much time. I will separately provide you the Odisha list.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Dr. Jayant Kumar Rai- not present

Question No. 486 – Shri Chandra Shekhar Sahu.

(Q. 486)

[English]

***SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU:** Sir, I have taken your permission to speak in Odia. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, my question relates to the Handloom sector. I have received the reply but I am not satisfied. The reply clearly mentions that Covid pandemic has adversely affected the Handloom sector in the last two years. No survey has been conducted to assess the impact on the weaver's community. In Odisha also no survey has taken place. In fact there is no specific announcement regarding any special package for the weaving community.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: What is your original question?

SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU: Sir, I coming to it.

*Sir, in my constituency, there are a sizeable number of weavers. In Odisha, Berhampur, Bargarh and Sambalpur are places where most of the weavers reside. That is why I expected a specific financial package from you. As we all knew in the last 2 years the pandemic has completely destroyed their livelihoods. They had to work, nor was there any demand for this craft or produce. So their economic condition is in shambles.

SHRIMATI DARSHNA VIKARAM JARDOS: Hon. Speaker, Sir, as he expressed his concerned, not only weavers but whole world was also affected during the Covid

pandemic, and all the sectors had to face the challenge. Under the leadership of hon. Prime Minister, package of worth Rs. 20,000 crore was given and after which, the foundation of 'self reliant' India was laid. Masks were not being manufactured in India during covid period.

* English translation of the Speech originally delivered in Odia

But, we started to manufacture masks through livelihood companies and other institutions. The Chief Minister of all the states and all the central ministers created awareness through social media in their own way by hastaging 'Vocal For Handmade' in 2020 and later, 'Vocal for My Handloom, My Pride' in 2021 and tried to.

Efforts were made for purchasing and promoting handloom things. Online marketing skills have been given more emphasis since the starting of the Covid. A special campaign was launched during the Covid period. Before the Covid period, only 6 thousand people were registered on the GeM portal, but since the Covid, 1.5 lakh weavers and their organization have been helped by registering on the portal and their sales have touched Rs. 1,35,000. These data are upto 28.02.2022. A lot of efforts have been made to improve the economic condition and marketing skills of the weavers. All the states also gave a lot of support. All the Chief Ministers were asked to support weavers. The most of the state government, particularly of Kerala,

Manipur, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh procured items from small companies like APEX of Tamil Nadu as well Bionica, KOPTEx and TANTUJA and lot of efforts were made to improve the condition of weavers.

[English]

***SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU:** Is the Central government planning to launch any special scheme for their betterment? Hon'ble Minister referred to Self Help Groups. Let me tell you that in Odisha maximum number of people are engaged in Self Help Groups. There are many SHGs which have been established by Shri Naveen Patnaik. The Chief Minister has announced a package for waver community as well as ancillary supporting workers. But the Central government is yet to announce any such special package. So far as I know SHGs have no connection with the Handloom sector. HSGs are mostly doing tailoring jobs. Like stitching of masks. They are not weavers. My second supplementary question is regarding the Central Silk Board team who were invited by Berhampur Municipal Corporation to do a local survey. I want to know what is the status of that survey report and what are the recommendations?

[Translation]

SHRIMATI DARSHNA VIKARAM JARDOS: Hon. Speaker, Sir, Member's concern is justified, but the highest number of weavers are also in Odisha. We have provided assistance to 5,297 weavers. Their skills have been upgraded and 82 weavers have been given work shed assistance.

SHRI RAHUL RAMESH SHEWALE: Hon. Speaker, Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity to ask a supplementary question. Sir, the hon. Minister has given detailed reply about handloom sector. Hon. Minister comes from Surat, so he knows the problems of the textile sector very well. His performance as a textile minister has been excellent.

I want to draw the attention of the Minister towards miserable condition of thousands of labourers working in textile mills of Mumbai under the National Textile corporation. The NTC's 04 textile mills were shut down during the Covid-19 pandemic. These labourers are being paid only 50% of their salaries since then. Even this salary is paid after two or three months. So, they find it difficult to support their families. ...*(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, if you keep speaking, then there will no time for reply.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAHUL RAMESH SHEWALE: Hon. Speaker Sir, I am just concluding....*(Interruptions)*. The economic condition of those mill workers is getting worse day by day. Through you, I would like to tell the Hon. Minister that after starting those textile mills, 100% wages should be paid to the mill workers. The houses in which those mill workers live are not in habitable condition. These houses can collapse in the rain. So, is there any scheme to provide pucca houses to them through the Ministry?
... *(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI DARSHANA VIKRAM JARDOSH: Hon. Speaker Sir, wherever NTC mills are located in any corner of Mumbai, MPs belonging to those constituencies have expressed this concern. This is not a question related to handloom. Nevertheless, they will be informed about the decision taken regarding NTC Mill in future.

12.00 hrs

SHRI RAMSHIROMANI VERMA: Hon. Speaker, Sir, thank you for giving me the opportunity to ask oral questions.

HON. SPEAKER: Please ask your question within a minute.

SHRI RAMSHIROMANI VERMA: Sir, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether the business and income of handloom weavers in the handloom sector across the country have been severely affected due to Corona pandemic ... (Interruptions)

SHRIMATI DARSHANA VIKRAM JARDOSH: A producer company has been formed for the weavers. He has asked about U.P. in particular. Let me tell you that what was onboarded from there, these artisan have also got orders worth Rs 22 crore from seven producer companies. All the states have formed their own producer companies, through which assistance is being provided to the weavers.

2* WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**(Starred Question Nos. 487 to 500****Unstarred Question Nos. 5521 to 5750)**

* For Questions, please refer to Master copy of English version, placed in Library.

You can also visit <https://sansad.in/ls/questions/questions-and-answers> for more information.

[English]

12.01 hrs

(Shri Rajendra Agrawal *in the Chair*)

... (*Interruptions*)

12.01 ½ hrs

At this stage, Shri B. Manickam Tagore, Dr. Kalanidhi Veeraswamy, Prof. Sougata Ray, Shri Vinayak Bhaurao Raut and some other hon. Members came and stood on the floor near the Table.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Members, Hon. Speaker has not admitted any notice on adjournment motion.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

12.02 hrs

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

[Translation]

HON .CHAIRPERSON: Now, the papers will be laid on the table of the House.

Item No. 2 – Dr. Jitendra Singh.

... (Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY; MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES; MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE; MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS; MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SPACE (DR. JITENDRA SINGH): Sir, I beg to lay the following papers on the table:-

- (1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section 1(b) of Section 394 of the Companies Act, 2013:-
 - (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited, Mumbai, for the year 2020-2021.
 - (ii) Annual Report of the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited, Mumbai, for the year 2020-2021, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7001/17/22]

- (2) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Lokpal of India, New Delhi, for the year 2020-2021 under Section 48 of the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013.
- (3) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (2) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7002/17/22]

(4) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (2) of Section 3 of the All India Services Act, 1951:-

- (i) The All India Services (Death-Cum-Retirement Benefits) Amendment Rules, 2022 published in Notification No. G.S.R.177(E) in Gazette of India dated 9th March, 2022.
- (ii) The Indian Administrative Service (Fixation of Cadre Strength) Amendment Regulations, 2022 published in Notification No. G.S.R.178(E) in Gazette of India dated 9th March, 2022.
- (iii) The Indian Administrative Service (Recruitment) Amendment Rules, 2022 published in Notification No. G.S.R.179(E) in Gazette of India dated 9th March, 2022.
- (iv) The Indian Administrative Service (Appointment by Promotion) Amendment Rules, 2022 published in Notification No. G.S.R.180(E) in Gazette of India dated 9th March, 2022.
- (v) The Indian Administrative Service (Probationers' Final

Examination) Amendment Regulations, 2022 published in Notification No. G.S.R.181(E) in Gazette of India dated 9th March, 2022.

- (vi) The Indian Administrative Service (Pay) Amendment Rules, 2022 published in Notification No. G.S.R.182(E) in Gazette of India dated 9th March, 2022.
- (vii) The Indian Police Service (Fixation of cadre Strength) Amendment Regulations, 2022 published in Notification No. G.S.R.183(E) in Gazette of India dated 9th March, 2022.
- (viii) The Indian Police Service (Recruitment) Amendment Rules, 2022 published in Notification No. G.S.R.184(E) in Gazette of India dated 9th March, 2022.
- (ix) The Indian Police Service (Appointment by Promotion) Amendment Regulations, 2022 published in Notification No. G.S.R.185(E) in Gazette of India dated 9th March, 2022.
- (x) The Indian Police Service (Pay) Amendment Rules, 2022 published in Notification No. G.S.R.186(E) in Gazette of India dated 9th March, 2022.
- (xi) The Indian Police Service (Special Allowance) Amendment Rules, 2022 published in Notification No. G.S.R.187(E) in Gazette of India dated 9th March, 2022.
- (xii) The Indian Forest Service (Fixation of Cadre Strength) Amendment Regulations, 2022 published in Notification No.

G.S.R.188(E) in Gazette of India dated 9th March, 2022.

(xiii) The Indian Forest Service (Recruitment) Amendment Rules, 2022 published in Notification No. G.S.R.189(E) in Gazette of India dated 9th March, 2022.

(xiv) The Indian Forest Service (Pay) Amendment Rules, 2022 published in Notification No. G.S.R.190(E) in Gazette of India dated 9th March, 2022.

(xv) The Indian Forest Service (Probationers Final Examination) Amendment Regulations, 2022 published in Notification No. G.S.R.191(E) in Gazette of India dated 9th March, 2022.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7003/17/22]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL): On behalf of Shri Faggansingh Kulaste, I beg to lay a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English versions) between the MECON Limited and the Ministry of Steel for the year 2021-2022.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7004/17/22]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Bureau of Indian Standards

(Conformity Assessment) Amendment Regulations, 2022 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. F. No. BS/11/11/2021 in Gazette of India dated 16th March, 2022 under Section 40 of the Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 2016.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7005/17/22]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS; MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI DANVE RAOSAHEB DADARAO): Respected Sir, I beg to lay the following papers on the table:-

- (1)(i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Centre for Railway Information Systems, New Delhi, for the year 2020-2021, alongwith Audited Accounts.
 - (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Centre for Railway Information Systems, New Delhi, for the year 2020-2021.
- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7006/17/22]

(3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Rail Land Development Authority, New Delhi, for the year 2020-2021, alongwith Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Rail Land Development Authority, New Delhi, for the year 2020-2021.

(4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7007/17/22]

(5) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section 1(b) of Section 394 of the Companies Act, 2013:-

(i) Review by the Government of the working of the Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited, Nagpur, for the year 2020-2021.

(ii) Annual Report of the Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited, Nagpur, for the year 2020-2021, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7008/17/22]

(6) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the NRTU Foundation, New Delhi, for the years 2018-2019 to 2020-2021, alongwith Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the NRTU Foundation, New Delhi, for the years 2018-2019 to 2020-2021.

(7) Three statements (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (6) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7009/17/22]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE

(SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL): Sir, On behalf of Shri Pankaj Chaudhary, I beg to lay the following papers on the Table:-

(1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under Article 151(1) of the Constitution:-

(i) Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India-Union Government (Defence Services) (Report No. 25 of 2021)- Ordnance Factories and Defence Public Sector Undertakings for the year ended March, 2019.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7010/17/22]

(ii) Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India-State Finances Audit Report (Government of Jammu and Kashmir)

(Report No. 3 of the year 2021) for the year 2019-2020 (01.04.2019 to 30.10.2019).

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7011/17/22]

- (iii) Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India-Government of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir (Report No.4 of the year 2021) on Compliance Audit of Social, General, Economic and Revenue Sectors for the year ended 31 March 2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7012/17/22]

- (iv) Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India- Union Territory Finances Audit Report (Government of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and Administration of Union Territory of Ladakh) (Report No. 1 of the year 2022) for the period 31 October 2019 to 31 March 2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7013/17/22]

- (2) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions):-

- (i) Government of Jammu and Kashmir-Finance Accounts Volume-I for the year 2019-2020 (1 April 2019 to 30 October 2019).

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7014/17/22]

- (ii) Government of Jammu and Kashmir-Finance Accounts Volume-II for the year 2019-2020 (1 April 2019 to 30 October 2019).

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7015/17/22]

- (iii) Government of Jammu and Kashmir-Appropriation Accounts for

the year 2019-2020 (1 April 2019 to 30 October 2019).

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7016/17/22]

- (iv) Government of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir and Administration of Union Territory of Ladakh-Finance Accounts Volume-I for the year 2019-2020 (31 October 2019 to 31 March 2020).

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7017/17/22]

- (v) Government of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir and Administration of Union Territory of Ladakh-Finance Accounts Volume-II for the year 2019-2020 (31 October 2019 to 31 March 2020).

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7018/17/22]

- (vi) Government of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir and Administration of Union Territory of Ladakh-Appropriation Accounts for the year 2019-2020 (31 October 2019 to 31 March 2020).

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7019/17/22]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRIMATI DARSHANA VIKRAM

JARDOSH): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:-

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Textiles Committee, Mumbai, for the year 2018-2019, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Textiles Committee, Mumbai, for the year 2018-2019.
- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7020/17/22]

- (3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Ahmedabad Textile Industry's Research Association, Ahmedabad, for the year 2020-2021, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Ahmedabad Textile Industry's Research Association, Ahmedabad, for the year 2020-2021.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7021/17/22]

- (4) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under sub-Section 13B of the Central Silk Board Act, 1948:-

- (i) S.O.610(E) published in Gazette of India dated 11th February, 2022 notifying the nomination of following Officers, mentioned therein, to serve as Member of the Central Silk Board for a period of three years from the date of this Notification.
- (ii) S.O.611(E) published in Gazette of India dated 11th February, 2022 notifying the nomination of the Joint Secretary (Silk), Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, New Delhi to serve as a member of the Central Silk Board for a period of three years with effect from 26.02.2022, subject to the provisions of this Act.
- (iii) S.O.293(E) published in Gazette of India dated 21st January, 2022 notifying the nomination of the members of Rajya Sabha having been duly elected to be Member of the Central Silk Board for a period of three years w.e.f. 22.12.2021 or till completion of their term in Rajya Sabha, whichever is earlier, subject to other provisions of the Act.
- (iv) S.O.5158(E) published in Gazette of India dated 13th December, 2021 making certain amendment in Notification No. S.O.4589(E) dated 20th December, 2019.
- (v) S.O.2984(E) published in Gazette of India dated 28th July, 2021 notifying the nomination of the persons, mentioned therein, to serve as Member of the Central Silk Board for a period of three years from the date of this notification subject to the provisions of the Act.
- (vi) S.O.4990(E) published in Gazette of India dated 6th December, 2021 notifying the nomination of the persons, mentioned therein, to serve as Member of the Central Silk Board for a period of three years from the date of this notification subject to the provisions of the Act.

- (vii) The Central Silk Board Silk-worm Seed (Amendment) Regulations, 2021 published in Notification No. G.S.R.861(E) in Gazette of India dated 16th December, 2021.
- (5) Four statements (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at item No. (iv) to (vii) of (4) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7022/17/22]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

(SHRI SOM PRAKASH): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:-

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Footwear Design and Development Institute, Noida, for the year 2020-2021, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Footwear Design and Development Institute, Noida, for the year 2020-2021.
- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7023/17/22]

- (3) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (2) of Section 394 of the Companies Act, 2013:-

- (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Jammu and Kashmir Development Finance Corporation Limited, Jammu, for the year 2019-2020.
 - (ii) Annual Report of the Jammu and Kashmir Development Finance Corporation Limited, Jammu, for the year 2019-2020, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.
- (4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7024/17/22]

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS

(SHRI DEVUSINH CHAUHAN): I propose to lay the following papers on the table:-

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the India Post Payments Bank, New Delhi, for the years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the India Post Payments Bank, New Delhi, for the years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021.

- (2) Two statements (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7025/17/22]

[English]

12.03 hrs

MESSAGES FROM RAJYA SABHA

SECRETARY GENERAL: Sir, I have to report the following messages received from the Secretary General of Rajya Sabha:-

1. "In accordance with the provisions of rule 127 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to inform the Lok Sabha that the Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 5th April, 2022 agreed without any amendment to the Chartered Accountants, the Cost and Works Accountants and the Company Secretaries (Amendment) Bill, 2022 which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 30th March, 2022."
 2. "In accordance with the provisions of rule 127 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to inform the Lok Sabha that the Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 5th April, 2022 agreed without any amendment to the Delhi Municipal Corporation (Amendment) Bill, 2022 which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 30th March, 2022."
-

12.03 ½ hrs

LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM THE SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

[Translation]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Members, the Committee on Absence of Members from the Sittings of the House in its 7th report presented to the House on 5th April, 2022 has recommended that the leave may be granted for the following Members against the period mentioned against their name:-

1.	Shri Sanjay Shamrao Dhotre	31.01.2022 to 11.02.2022 14.03.2022 to 08.04.2022
2.	Shri Choudhury MohanJatua	06.12.2021 to 21.12.2021 31.01.2022 to 11.02.2022
3.	Shri Atul Kumar Singh alias Atul Rai	31.01.2022 to 11.02.2022 14.03.2022 to 08.04.2022
4.	Shri ShriMohammad Azam Khan (since resigned)	30.11.2021 to 22.12.2021 31.01.2022 to 11.02.2022 14.03.2022 to 22.03.2022
5.	Shrimati Harsimrat Kaur Badal	13.12.2021 to 22.12.2021 31.01.2022 to 11.02.2022 14.03.2022 to 25.03.2022
6.	Shri Sukhbir Singh Badal	13.12.2021 to 22.12.2021 31.01.2022 to 11.02.2022 14.03.2022 to 27.03.2022
7.	Shri Girish Bhalchandra Bapat	14.03.2022 to 29.03.2022

Is the House agree that the leaves as recommended be granted?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes, Sir.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Leave is granted. The Members will be informed accordingly.

12.04 hrs

COMMITTEE ON WELFARE OF OTHER BACKWARD CLASSES

Statement

SHRI RAMESH BIDHURI (SOUTH DELHI): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table the Statement (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Welfare of Other Backward Classes showing further action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in Chapter I and final replies in respect of recommendations included in Chapter V of the Fourteenth Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Welfare of Other Backward Classes regarding action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Sixth Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on 'Measures undertaken to secure representation of OBCs in admissions in Ph.D and appointment of teachers in Delhi University' pertaining to the Ministry of Education

12.04 ½ hrs

[English]

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS
AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

Statements

DR. SHASHI THAROOR (THIRUVANANTHAPURAM): Sir, while expressing solidarity with my Party, I beg to lay the Statements (Hindi and English versions) showing further Action Taken by the Government on the following Reports of the Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology (2021-22):-

- (1) Twenty-eighth Action Taken Report (17th Lok Sabha) on the recommendations of the Committee contained in their Twenty-second Report (17th Lok Sabha) on 'Demands for Grants (2021-22)' of the Ministry of Communications (Department of Posts).
 - (2) Twenty-ninth Action Taken Report (17th Lok Sabha) on the recommendations of the Committee contained in their Twenty-third Report (17th Lok Sabha) on 'Demands for Grants (2021-22)' of the Ministry of Communications (Department of Telecommunications).
 - (3) Thirty-first Action Taken Report (17th Lok Sabha) on the recommendations of the Committee contained in their Twenty-fifth Report (17th Lok Sabha) on 'Demands for Grants (2021-22)' of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
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[Translation]

12.04 ³/₄ hrs

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS

13th Report

SHRI RAMESH BIDHURI (SOUTH DELHI): I beg to lay the Thirteenth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Petroleum and Natural Gas on the subject 'Safety and Security of Oil Installations of Public Sector Oil Companies - with specific reference to Western Offshore Mishap during Cyclone Tauktae'.

[English]

12.05 hrs

STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

169th Report

SHRIMATI MANJULATA MANDAL (BHADRAK): I beg to lay the 169th Report (Hindi and English versions) on Action Taken by Government on the Recommendations/ Observations of the Committee contained in its One Hundred and Sixty-first Report on 'Review of the Intellectual Property Rights Regime in India' of the Standing Committee on Commerce.

12.05 ½ hrs

BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

33rd Report

**THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, MINISTER OF COAL AND
MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI):** Sir, I beg to present the Thirty-third Report of the Business Advisory Committee.

[Translation]

SHRI ASHOK KUMAR YADAV (MADHUBANI): Sir, Ahilya Sthan located in Jaale Block in Darbhanga district under the Madhubani Parliamentary Constituency is a historical heritage site. ...*(Interruptions)* as per the legend, Mata Ahilya was the daughter of lord Brahma and married to sage Gautama. ...*(Interruptions)* in Hindu tradition, she is considered one of the five chaste maidens (panchakanyas) whose names are chanted in the morning prayer every day. ...*(Interruptions)* As per the narrative, Lord Rama with the instruction of Sage Valmiki freed Mata Ahilya from the curse at this very place. Later, Rama went in North-east direction and reached to Videh Nagari, Janakpur with sage Viswamitra. ...*(Interruptions)* This mythological place has also been connected with the Ramayana Circuit. ...*(Interruptions)*. Even the Department of Archeology has acquired possession of this place in 2013. ...*(Interruptions)* Though ages old temples are located here and are in shabby condition. ...*(Interruptions)*

I request the minister of Culture that the historical temple which is in shabby condition should be renovated. ...*(Interruptions)* This is my only demand. Thank You. ...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS; THE MINISTER OF COAL AND THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI): I would like to say when the discussion on ongoing situation in Ukraine was sought by them, the detailed discussion took place. ...*(Interruptions)* Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, hon. Minister of Petroleum intervened and gave a detailed reply. ...*(Interruptions)* These people

themselves demanded a discussion on Ukraine. ...(*Interruptions*) hon. Minister of Petroleum while intervening gave a detailed reply; and now hon. Minister of External Affairs is going to give his reply. ...(*Interruptions*) do they not want a discussion? ...(*Interruptions*) what do they want? ...(*Interruptions*) [*English*] I appeal to them to kindly participate in the debate. The hon. External Affairs Minister would like to reply in detail. Kindly listen to the reply. This is my appeal. ... (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRIMATI GEETA KODA (SINGHBHOOMI): Hon. Chairperson, the operations of passenger trains, express trains, passenger local trains, DMU and EMU trains have been discontinued for the last two years in Chakradharpur Rail Division under Regional officer of the South–East railways in my Parliamentary Constituency. ...(*Interruptions*). Out of these trains, mainly the operations of Utkal Express, South Bihar, Ispat Express, Tata Ernakulam, Shalimar Express, LTT Press, Bhuvneshwar-Sambhalpur Express, Tata-Bilaspur EMU trains have been discontinued. ...(*Interruptions*) Railways is considered the life line of the common people, but the operation of these trains are discontinued....(*Interruptions*) Besides, the price of petrol has been increased. ...(*Interruptions*) When will they finally do justice to the common people? ...(*Interruptions*) the prices of petrol and diesel should be brought down. ...(*Interruptions*)

DR. RAMAPATI RAM TRIPATHI (DEORIA): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, through you, I would like to inform that the hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has made a provision to give 10% reservation for the economically weaker sections in

government services. ...(Interruptions) as we know that the candidates belonging to SC/ST and OBCs categories are given fee relaxations as well as age relaxations in competitive examinations. This facility still has not been given to the candidates of the EWS category.

Sir, most of the EWS category students and the youth belong to rural background. They have to devote more time to prepare themselves for the current tough competitions.

By the time the candidates are able to prepare themselves for the competitive exams, they become ineligible due to crossing the age limit. In view of these problems of the economically weaker section category candidates some states like Gujarat, Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir have given age relaxation of up to 5 years for the students of this category in competitive examinations meant for the state government services.

I request the hon. Minister that in view of these problems, Keeping in mind the sentiments of the youth, relaxation in age limit and exemption of fees for such candidates in the country and all the states should be provided. Thank you.

[English]

12.11 hrs

At this stage, S/Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, T.R. Baalu, Dr. Farooq Abdullah and some other hon. Members left the House.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Shri Ranjit Sinha Hindurao Naike Nimbalkar.

Shri Dinesh Chandra Yadav.

SHRI DINESH CHANDRA YADAV (MADHEPURA): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, a bridge across river Kosi having a length of. 13.3 km is being constructed in which, construction of 10.1 km long toward Bakaur in East and 2.1 Km towards Bheja in West and 1 km long approach road is included. A total of 14 Panchayats with a total population of 1,75,000 are in this bridge area. In between there are many routes. The distance between east and west embankment is 7 km, between which the Kosi river flows.

The facility to climb or get down from this long bridge has not been given at any place. The local people have even staged protests to link this bridge with the road made for the residential areas. On the same Kosi river, a 1.9 Km long bridge is made on the four lane road of East-west Corridor and railway line.

Minister Gadkari Saheb has said many times that development should reach the common people, in such a situation, leaving 1 lakh 75 thousand people of 14 panchayats in lurch is contrary to vikas yatra.

I request the government that the people of this backward area should get the movement facilities. In Public interest, the government should provide the movement facility at the Pillar No. 100 of this long bridge. This is my only request to the government.

DR. SHRIKANT EKNATH SHINDE (KALYAN): Hon. Chairperson, my question pertains to the internet facility. There are 1.5 lakh post offices in our country. Hon. Finance Minister made an announcement in the Budget of this year.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Your question was about Naval Ship trophy.

DR. SHRIKANT EKNATH SHINDE: Sir, the subject has been changed.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: It is expected to inform in advance, isn't it?

DR. SHRIKANT EKNATH SHINDE: Hon. Chairperson, there are 1.5 lakh post offices in our country. Hon. Finance Minister made an announcement in the Budget of this year that all the post offices should be linked with core banking facility so that all the account holders can access their accounts from anywhere and will be able to transfer funds from post office to any bank. The scheme of the government is commendable. But, all the post offices lack basic facilities like internet. Even if a post office has internet facility, then speed of internet is very slow. So, the customers which comprise of farmers, senior citizens, or the persons living in rural areas face serious inconvenience. Now, lot of transactions and functions are done online. Internet facility is required to avail the benefits of various schemes of the states' government and the Union government. There are two service providers – BSNL/MTNL and Sifi Department of Telecommunications - for giving internet connectivity to these post offices. As per the memorandum dated 12.10.2020, post offices can avail interne faculties by using networks of BSNL and MTNL. As per data made available by the Ministry, BSNL and MTNL had 64,700 link failures in the year

2020-21. Whereas, the Sifi had 15,134 link failures. BSNL and MTNL's 4G infrastructure is not fully operational.

I request the government that the lack of internet connectivity hampers execution of many works in post offices. The government should pay attention to this. The post offices should be given options by amending existing guideline to choose best service providers for availing the internet connectivity by adopting through transparent process. All the post offices across the country should be given internet connectivity in prescribed time schedule so that the announcement of core banking solution can be made in future.

[English]

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH (MAVELIKKARA): Thank you, Chairman Sir. I am very happy, hon. Railway Minister is here. I am raising a very important issue regarding the Silver Line project.

The Kerala Rail Development Corporation is a joint venture organization jointly established by the Government of Kerala and the Ministry of Railways, Government of India with 49 per cent equity. Am I correct, hon. Minister? Indian Railways has 49 per cent equity. I would urge the Ministry of Railways, Government of India, which holds 49 per cent equity, to withdraw and cancel its equity and stake from K-Rail, Kerala Rail Development Corporation on absolute ethical grounds as the Kerala Rail Development Corporation is nothing but an instrument of political agenda, a vehicle of vendetta against people, and a violator of the rights of people.

The K-Rail Limited unethically uproots people from their homes and properties in the name of establishing Silver Line. The Ministry of Railways must revoke and cancel all and any permissions sanctioned to the K-Rail including the Railway Board letter No. 2018, JV CELL/GEN/SPV-POLICY for land acquisition. The In-Principle Approval (IPA) that was granted by the Government of India for taking up pre-investment activities, including payment of land acquisition, detailed project report, construction of boundary wall, access roads, site offices, temporary construction must be revoked. ... (*Interruptions*) Sir, it is a very important point. The hon. Minister is here. I want a reply from the hon. Minister.

I demand that the Finance Ministry must revoke and cancel any approval given by it to the Kerala Government to obtain external or bilateral loan. In Kerala, on the K-Rail issue, the BJP party is also agitating but the Ministry of Railways, Government of India has given in-principle approval. The Ministry of Finance has also given approval for discussion with various international agencies for getting loan. On the one side, you are agitating, from your party, hon. MoS, V. Muraleedharan is leading the agitation in Kerala, but here, what is your stand. ... (*Interruptions*)

Sir, let me complete. The hon. Railway Minister is here. I am raising a very important issue. It is a very burning issue.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: The issue has been raised.

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH: Sir, we cannot go to our constituency because the Silver Line project is entering into all the properties, all the houses. They are putting

the stones there. ... (*Interruptions*) I am concluding. Chairman Sir, at least you have to be sympathetic with us please. ... (*Interruptions*)

What I am saying is this. I want to know from the Government that on the one side BJP party is agitating against this project in Kerala... (*Interruptions*)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: You are not concluding.

... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH: Sir, I am concluding.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: So, conclude then.

... (*Interruptions*)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: You are a very senior Member.

... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH: Sir, I am a very disciplined Member in this House.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Okay, now please conclude.

... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH: Whatever Chair advises, I always agree to it. But in my constituency, thousands of people are being thrown away because of this project. That is why I am very sentimentally and emotionally raising this issue. You must understand my feeling. The hon. Minister is here. The Government should clarify this. I am asking the hon. Minister, through you. ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI BELLANA CHANDRA SEKHAR (VIZIANAGARAM): Sir, thank you for giving me the opportunity for raising an important issue pertaining to the Railway Ministry in my Vizianagaram constituency.

Sir, construction of Limited Height Subway (LHS) line at level crossing at unmanned level VS-04 on Bobbili-Salur line is very essential for free movement of people and vehicular traffic to YSR Jagananna Nagar and YSR Jagananna colonies. If it is constructed, almost 17,000 people belonging to economically weaker sections would get benefit along with those who are getting *pucca* houses under the YSR Jagananna Nagar Urban Housing Scheme. I have already submitted a request to the DRM, East Coast Railways, Waltair Division, Vishakhapatnam with an estimated cost of Rs. 5.73 crore on 23.11.2021. However, it seems that no action has been taken by the officer concerned in this regard.

Hence, I would request the hon. Minister for Railways, through you, to kindly consider my proposal and see to it that sanction is accorded at the earliest.

SHRI PRADYUT BORDOLOI (NAWGONG): Sir, Assam and the North-East became a part of British India very late. But when the Britishers came to Assam, they introduced a local time in Assam, so that the administration could utilize and optimize efficiency and productivity in industrial activities. In the aftermath of Independence, the IST has been imposed, and we are back to square one. The reason why I am telling you this is that in the eastern place of Arunachal Pradesh, there is a place called Jairampur and Vijaynagar, and from there to Jaisalmer and Gujarat, there is a difference of 30 degree longitude. That means that the time

difference is almost two hours. When we have a single time zone, the people of the North-East are being discriminated because we lose precious day time hours and hence productivity. It creates a lot of problems. After Independence, with the imposition of IST, Assam became a land of *lahe lahe*, that means Assam became very slow. We want to optimize the productivity and efficiency, and that is why, we should have different time zones. You will agree with me that different nations across the world have different time zones. Bigger nations like USA have got 11 time zones; France has got 12 time zones. Why can we not have a separate time zone for the North-East to optimize and utilize the productivity of our people? That is my concern and that is my request to the Government of India.

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (CUTTACK): Sir, the hon. Member is raising a very important issue. He has been raising it again and again. I would like to associate with him. ... (*Interruptions*)

[Translation]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Shri Ranjeetsingh Naik Nimbalkar - not present.

Shri Rajendra Dhedya Gavit

SHRI RAJENDRA DHEDYA GAVIT (PALGHAR): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, in my Parliamentary Constituency, 42 Khalasi tribal fishermen are missing since last three months. Due to higher wages in Okha and Porbandar of Gujarat, many tribal youths from Palghar's Talasari, Dahanu and Vikramgarh talukas go to Gujarat for fishing. In Gujarat, they have been arrested at the Pakistan border for accidentally crossing to the Pakistani side due to being uneducated.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, 347 Indian prisoners are still lodged in Landhi jail, Karachi. They have been in jail since the year 2017. Indian prisoners are not

released even after completion of their jail term. The Government of Pakistan has also confirmed the nationality of the Indian prisoners. But, they are not released even after the India-Pakistan bilateral agreement. At least 8 prisoners in jail are from my Parliamentary Constituency. According to information from Gundanpada, Talasari in Palghar, which is my Parliamentary Constituency, a total of 608 Indian prisoners are still in Pakistan jails. Out of these, 347 prisoners have completed their jail term.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, one such incident happened on 6th November. Shridhar Chamde was shot dead by the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency near Okha and Porbandar. Through you, I would like to request the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs that the whereabouts of the 42 Khalasi tribal fishermen should be found out at the earliest by holding talks with the Government of Pakistan and justice should be provided to these tribals.

SHRI R.K. SINGH PATEL (BANDA): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, a 200-bedded maternity hospital has been set up by the Hon. Prime Minister to provide facilities to the poor patients of Chitrakoot district of Uttar Pradesh. It is ready now. It was also used as a corona center during the corona period. Corona patients were admitted in it. After the corona is over, that hospital is not in use at present.

Sir, there is overcrowding in the delivery ward of Chitrakoot District Hospital. There is also a lack of space. Due to lack of beds for pregnant women, they are provided medical treatment on the ground. Similarly, a 300-bedded upgraded divisional hospital has also been constructed in Banda district. But the staff has not been recruited there and machinery equipment has not been provided yet, due to which these hospitals of Banda and Chitrakoot have not become operational.

Sir, through you, I demand from the Government that the maternity hospitals built in Chitrakoot and Banda districts of Uttar Pradesh, having bed capacity of 300 and 200 respectively, should be made operational immediately by recruiting staff.

HON .CHAIRPERSON: Shri Kotha Prabhakar Reddy - not present.

Shri Om Pavan Rajenimbalkar.

***SHRI OM PAVAN RAJENIMBALKAR (OSMANABAD):** Hon'ble Chairman Sir. Thank you very much.

Today, I would like to share and express the pain and agony of EPA 95 pensioners. Around 70 lac EPS 95 pensioners are there and Rs.417 or Rs.541 or Rs.1250 per month would be deducted from their salaries during service time. After their retirement now they are getting only Rs.500-2500 as a monthly pension. How can they manage with this meagre amount when the inflation is all time high? The government needs to think about it.

Koshyari Committee was constituted to look into it and the same committee had recommended to give Rs.7500 plus dearness allowance eight years ago. But, it has not been implemented till date. Supreme Court had also given an order in this regard on 04/10/2016 and that is also not followed.

Hence, through you, I would like to request the Central government to look into it urgently because the pensioners are agitating for fulfillment of their demand. Justice should be done to them by sanctioning a pension of Rs.7500 per month to each one of them.

Thank you.

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN (KOLLAM): Sir, I associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member. ... (*Interruptions*) What is the Supreme Court doing in it? ... (*Interruptions*) The Supreme Court has not even constituted the Bench for hearing the case of EPS-95. ... (*Interruptions*)

*

English translation of the speech originally delivered in Marathi.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Kindly send slips to the Table.

... (*Interruptions*)

[Translation]

SHRI SHRIRANG APPA BARNE (MAVAL): Hon. Chairperson Sir, I would like to speak in Marathi language.

[English]

*Hon'ble Chairman Sir, we have been demanding the Central government to grant classical language status to Marathi for the last many years. But, the Central government is deliberately ignoring our demand.

Marathi language has many dialects and it has a glorious history of 2200 years.

In the famous Epic Dyaneshwari, Marathi is regarded to be sweeter than nector. Marathi language has got a great literary tradition and many great Marathi authors like Sant Dyaneshwar, Sant Tukaram, VS Khandekar, Vinda Karandikar, PL Deshpande, Bhalchandra Nemade, Mangesh Padgaonkar and others have contributed to Marathi literature. Every Maharashtraian has the feeling of pride and honour for Marathi.

All the people of Maharashtra love Marathi language from the core of their hearts. They have a very strong feeling for it. We have a divine bonding with Marathi.

Hence, I would like to request the Central government to respect the sentiments of all Marathis and grant the status of classical language to Marathi language as early as possible.

Thank you,

* English translation of the speech originally delivered in Marathi.

SHRI SUNIL DATTATRAY TATKARE (RAIGAD): Sir, at the outset, let me congratulate the Department for the whopping increase in the budgetary allocation under the PMGSY scheme for the fiscal year - 2022-23. As you are aware, the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) was launched by the Government of India to provide connectivity to unconnected habitations as part of a poverty reduction strategy.

As the budgetary allocation under the said scheme is raised by 36 percent to Rs. 19,000 crores, I would like to apprise you that since the past three years, Maharashtra as a State is being neglected.

There has been no construction of new roads under the PMGSY and this pains my heart. I would request you to kindly intervene and issue fresh directives to your Department so as to consider the list of proposals sent by the Government of Maharashtra under the PMGSY - Third Phase. The proposal along with the DPR is sent to the Central Government, Department of Rural Development. For the past six months, the same is pending. I would like to request the Government, through you, Sir, to sanction the same immediately without any further delay to rectify injustice meted out to Maharashtra, especially my Raigad parliamentary constituency.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMESH BIDHURI (SOUTH DELHI): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention the Government towards a problem faced by the workers working in Anganwadis, who work with a sense of service. In Indian culture, the people of the country have an emotional inclination towards women, we have also considered the land of India as mother and in our place, in the form of divine power, women power is considered paramount compared to other deities. Even during this festival of Navratri, we believe only in Shakti Dayini Maa Bhagwati, who

destroys evil, but on the other hand, the Chief Minister of Delhi tries to cover his ...* on radio and television by playing a victim card and says in support of 'Bharat Tere Tukde Honge' that in a democracy, it is the fundamental right of a man and he can express his views. Food was being served to the people blocking the road at Shaheen Bagh, Ghazipur border and Singhu border and for this he says that it is their right. On the other hand, the Delhi Chief Minister who was advocating the rights of these people fired about 10,000 Anganwadi worker sisters in Delhi, just because they peacefully staged a sit-in at his house for some of their legitimate demands. The workers who work for the bright future of the children of pregnant women of poor families on a meager salary and they take measures to save them from diseases like malnutrition as well as take the poor-friendly schemes of the Central and State Government to every door. They dedicate their whole life in the service of society. I request the Delhi Government that the 10,000 workers who have been suspended due to sitting on a dharna, did so just to keep their point. So justice should be done to them. Through you, I want to raise this matter in the House. Thank you.

[English]

***SHRI GURJEET SINGH AUJLA (AMRITSAR):** Thank you, Sir. I want to draw your attention towards the plight of farmers who are residing on the Indo-Park border in Punjab. In Punjab, Gurdaspur, Pathankot, Ferozepur, Tarn Taran, Amritsar etc. share 438 kms. of border with Pakistan. Barbed wire fencing of the entire border area has been done.

Sir, the agricultural land of these farmers lies beyond the barbed wire fence and they do farming there. Gates have been installed there and farmers get hardly 4 or 5 hours to do the farming. The government has accepted giving Rs.10,000/- per acre, per year to the farmers. Even this compensation amount is not given in a timely manner.

* Not recorded

* English translation of the speech originally delivered in Punjabi.

When I was elected an MP in 2017, at that time, I found out that compensation amount had not been granted to the farmers from 2012-2017. After repeated pursual and reminders, this compensation amount was granted to them. However, the compensation due to the farmers have not been paid till now from 2017 to 2022. This backlog amount is pending. Only one installment has been paid. Four installments of compensation amount is yet to be paid. Sir, in Amritsar district, in Tehsil Ajnala, Lopoke and Attari, over 380 hectares of such land falls outside the barbed wire fence. A sum of Rs.3,38,12,401/- is yet to be paid to these hapless farmers as compensation. This is the amount to be paid for one installment. Five such installments are yet to be paid to the farmers. Sir, during war with Pakistan, these farmers 'help you' counter the enemy...

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Don't call it 'you help'. Call it 'our help'. The farmers are Indians.

SHRI GURJEET SINGH AUJLA: O.K. Sir. I am sorry. The farmers provide us help. When India was balkanised and Pakistan created, the border area farmers suffered the most. Sir, the compensation of our farmers must be granted to them. Delays should not be there. These are small and marginalized farmers who have only 2 or 4 or 5 acres of land. They are not rich farmers.

So, I urge upon the government to release the 4 installments of compensation amount to the farmers of Punjab, especially to farmers of my area.

Thanks.

[Translation]

SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV (BULDHANA): Thank you, Hon. Chairperson Sir. through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister that it has come to my notice that the Government of India has extended the import of Arhar Dal by one year. Due to this, a fall is being seen in the prices of Arhar and Tur Dal, due to

which the farmers are facing financial loss. It is also becoming difficult to recover the price of their crops. Therefore, I humbly request you to ban the import of Arhar dal immediately till the month of June, so that the tur crop harvested by the farmers can be sold in the market and Arhar Dal can get a fair price. If required, arhar dal should be imported as per requirement. I don't just hope, I have full faith that you will definitely take action in the interest of the farmers by issuing instructions in this regard. I will be grateful to you for this. Thank you.

[English]

DR. BEESETTI VENKATA SATYAVATHI (ANAKAPALLE): Respected Sir, I would like to bring to the notice of this House how primitive our procedure for the assessment of a disaster situation is.

Firstly, the time taken to constitute a disaster assessment team and to deploy it to a site after a disaster has struck is lengthy, often taking several weeks after a disaster has struck. It takes even more time for the team to be constituted, a plan to be developed and logistics to be arranged for these teams to assess the site of a disaster. The methods of assessment are also primitive and are done manually as opposed to being mechanized and digitized. After a few weeks pass from the occurrence of a natural disaster, important information regarding the intensity of the disaster is lost and the severity is underplayed due to ineffective assessment modules. The requisite assistance is not provided. Particularly for coastal States like my State, natural disasters such as floods and cyclones keep coming due to our geography.

Through you, Sir, I request the Minister of Home Affairs to improve our disaster assessment mechanism so that the States are supported in the correct way during their time of need.

[Translation]

SHRI ARVIND SAWANT (MUMBAI SOUTH): Thank you very much, Hon'ble Chairperson, Sir. I have been raising this issue in the House for the last five years. You know that Mumbai city has BDD Chawl Complexes - Worli, Naigaon, Nama Joshi Marg and Sewri. Three of these complexes are built on State Government land. The State Government took a very good decision and made a law to redevelop these BDD Chawls which are about 100 years old and are about to collapse. Now, those people are going to get 650 square feet of space in it for free. There is a BDD Chawl complex in Sewri, which is situated on Mumbai Port Trust land. Till date, permission is not being received from the Central Government for its redevelopment. Because of that, its work has not started. The work of the remaining three complexes has started. Eighty families live there consisting of 680 people. Due to the redevelopment project, there will be more spare land in it, which can be put to better use by BPT, but without the Central Government's permission, the State Government is not able to take steps. Through you, I request the Central Government that although it is too late now but better late than never. Permission should be issued as soon as possible, so that the redevelopment of those buildings can be started by the State Government. Thank you.

**LIST OF MEMBERS WHO HAVE ASSOCIATED THEMSELVES WITH THE ISSUES
RAISED UNDER MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

Members who raised the matters of urgent public importance.	Members who associated themselves with the matters raised.
Shri Pradyut Bordoloi	Shri Abdul Khaleque
Dr. Shrikant Eknath Shinde	Shri Gajanan Kirtikar Shri Shrirang Appa Barne Shri Rahul Ramesh Shewale Shri Om Pavan Rajenimbalkar
Shri Shrirang Appa Barne	Shri Gopal Shetty Shri Arvind Sawant Shri Rajendra Gavit Shri Gajanan Kirtikar Shri Prataprao Jadhav Dr. Shrikant Eknath Shinde Shri Rahul Ramesh Shewale Shri Om Pavan Rajenimbalkar Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel
Shri Rajendra Gavit	Shri Gopal Shetty Shri Gajanan Kirtikar Shri Shrirang Appa Barne Shri Rahul Ramesh Shewale Shri Om Pavan Rajenimbalkar
Shri Om Pavan Rajenimbalkar	Shri Shrirang Appa Barne Shri N.K. Premachandran Shri Rahul Ramesh Shewale
Shri Prataprao Jadhav	Shri Shrirang Appa Barne Shri Rahul Ramesh Shewale Shri Om Pavan Rajenimbalkar Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel
Shri Arvind Sawant	Shri Shrirang Appa Barne Dr. Shrikant Eknath Shinde Shri Rahul Ramesh Shewale Shri Om Pavan Rajenimbalkar
Dr. Ramapati Ram Tripathi Shri Ramesh Bidhuri	Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel

Shri Gurjeet Singh Aujla	
Shri R.K. Singh Patel	Shri Malook Nagar Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel
Shrimati Geeta Kora	Shri Malook Nagar
Members, through whom matters of urgent public importance were raised.	Members who associated themselves with the matters raised.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to request that the replies on the Item no. 18 titled 'Situation in Ukraine' may be taken up first in place of the bill numbered at Item Number 17 which may be taken up later. I would like to request you.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Alright. Let's take up Item Number 18.

Hon. Minister, the reply to the debate.

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY (BAHARAMPUR): Sir, there is an issue.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: We will take it up later. Please sit down.

... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

12.41 hrs

(Hon. Speaker *in the Chair*)

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

Situation in Ukraine* – Contd.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (DR. SUBRAHMANYAM JAISHANKAR):

Hon. Speaker, Sir, I first of all thank all the hon. Members for their views, concerns and sentiments about the ongoing situation in Ukraine. Yesterday, twenty-eight Members spoke on this subject, I listened to all of them with great attention, and all of them made some points of relevance and consideration.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we strive to ensure that foreign policy is a subject of maximum consensus in the country. Certainly, that should be the case with a subject as important as Ukraine, and I was glad to see yesterday that was the case. I was also very pleased that four Ministers spoke on this matter because these Ministers went to the neighboring countries, they participated in the evacuation operations, and they brought a ground perspective which was very important for the House to listen.

Hon. Members would all agree that India's approach should be guided by our national beliefs and values, by our national interest, and by our national strategy. Let me dwell on each of these aspects before addressing some of the specific issues that were brought up by hon. Members yesterday.

What is India advocating in Ukraine? We are, first and foremost, strongly against the conflict. We believe that no solution can be arrived at by shedding blood, and at the cost of innocent lives. In this day and age, dialogue and diplomacy are the right answers

* Further discussion on the situation in Ukraine raised by Shri N. K. Premachandran on 5th April, 2022.

to any dispute. And one should bear in mind that the contemporary global order has been built on the UN Charter, on respect for international law, and for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states.

If India has chosen a side, it is the side of peace, and it is for an immediate end to violence. This is our principled stand, and it has consistently guided our position in international forums and debates including in the United Nations.

Sir, many hon. Members brought up the incident, the happenings in Bucha, and I want to say that we are deeply disturbed by the reports. We strongly condemn the killings which have taken place there. This is an extremely serious matter, and we support the call for an independent investigation.

Sir, the conflict in Ukraine has had significant consequences for the global economy and for our national economy. Like all countries, we too are assessing the implications, and deciding what is best for our national interest. Members are aware that in a complex and globalised world every nation takes into account the reality of interdependence. Therefore, even as they express their position in words and deeds, they also adopt policies that safeguard the wellbeing of their population. As a result, we have seen, even in Europe, that energy flows continue despite tension. Similarly, a conscious effort was made to insulate the fertilizer market from volatility. There are numerous other measures and different domains including financial and payment carve outs. Even non-essential goods that have salience for individual economies have been factored in the equation.

So, what should India do in these circumstances? At a time when energy costs have spiked, clearly, we need to ensure that the common person in India is not subject to an additional and unavoidable burden. Similarly, fertilizer prices have a direct implication for the livelihood of the majority of our population, and indeed for food prices, for all of us. Even the security of the nation is at stake as we maintain our defence posture in the manner that the current security challenges warrant. All these are legitimate pursuits of national interest by India. They are similar to what other nations are doing from their particular perspective. Attributing a political colouring to it is uncalled for; it is unfair. I do not even wish to get into which country is doing how much. Eventually, the numbers will speak for themselves.

Additionally, there was a natural concern for our citizens, especially our students who were trapped in conflict zones. The House will recall that I had made a *suo moto* statement on this subject. But some comments were made yesterday about 'Operation Ganga'. I would like to respond to that a little later.

Keeping these factors in mind, what should be our national strategy? The Government believes that it should have four elements. One, in terms of diplomacy, India continues to press forcefully for an immediate cessation of hostilities and an end to violence. We encourage talks between Ukraine and Russia including at the level of their Presidents. The Prime Minister himself has spoken to them both in this regard.

This was precisely the message that was conveyed to Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov when he was in Delhi. If India can be of any assistance in this matter, we will be glad to contribute.

Two, the ground situation calls for urgent humanitarian relief. We have already provided 90 tonnes of relief material. I was glad to see that many hon. Members yesterday noted it and appreciated it. We did it even while we were in the middle of an evacuation. So, I think, that also is a factor that should be recognised. Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Yulia Svrydenko called me a few days ago to request for supply of more medicines. The House will be glad to know that this is underway and delivery should start very soon.

Three, we will work with the international community and partner countries to mitigate the economic hardships that are resulting from this conflict. Obviously, our focus is to soften its impact on our own economy. But equally, there are partners who are going through very tough times. Coordinating on lowering energy prices is one collective initiative. In the case of a neighbors like Sri Lanka, we are even supplying fuel and food on credit. Food security is another major concern. India has been approached for the supply of wheat and sugar by many countries and we are responding positively. The House will be glad to know that whether it is basmati rice, non-basmati rice, sugar, wheat, our exports in the last quarter have gone up very, very substantially. We have delivered for the world in terms of vaccines. We did it earlier for medicines. So, I would like to assure the House, through you, that we will also step forward where global demands for food grains and other materials are concerned, and we will do it in a manner that is helpful to the global economy, which will not take undue advantage of countries in distress.

Four, there are cases, there are issues like the supply of edible oil. Some Members referred to it yesterday because we import sunflower oil in very large quantity from Ukraine, or fertilizers that I spoke about.

Now, our commercial diplomacy has to find additional sources to address this disruption. There could be more such examples in the days to come. I would like to apprise this House, through you, that whether it is the supply of lentils, edible oils, or the requirement of raw materials for fertilisers, we are really looking today in different ways at global markets, from Mercosur to Kazakhstan, Tanzania, Australia, and Canada, to see how we can lighten the burden for the common people in India as a result of this crisis.

Let me say that overall, therefore, India's approach will be to promote dialogue, to end the conflict, and to mitigate economic distress for itself and for the world, and to work with its partners to these ends. I can also say that many other nations which have engaged us recently, at the level of the hon. Prime Minister and at my level, with other hon. Ministers, share such a view. Many of them are glad to work with us and many of them are pleased that we have taken the lead on many of these issues.

[Translation]

Hon. Speaker Sir, through you, I would like to tell the House regarding 'Operation Ganga'. Yesterday, we discussed it in detail. This House should be aware of our perspective and experience also. That is why, I am glad that the four Ministers who

went there and had direct i.e. hands-on experience, could put forth their views in the House yesterday.

I would like to emphasize regarding 'Operation Ganga' that it was the first evacuation of the government on this scale ever carried out by any country. We evacuated 20,000 Indians and also citizens of other countries. No other country undertook this. I can also quote the Ministers of External Affairs of other countries with whom I keep a regular touch. One of them visited our country a few days back. He proudly mentioned that he evacuated two planes full of their citizens out of Ukraine and enquired me how many had we evacuated. He was surprised when I told him that we evacuated 90 planes full of our citizens. The fact is, our example is an inspiration for them. They feel that, when India is doing, similar action should also be taken from our side also.

Yesterday, discussion was held regarding advisory. It is quite natural that in times of such crisis, people would say that we acted in haste or did not act quickly or we should have acted otherwise or my comments lacked the desired effect. I would like to tell the House that had our advisory been not effective or not been taken seriously, how four thousand of our citizens safely flew out before the conflict? They decided to leave only because they understood the importance of advisory. We do not issue advisories every other day. People take it seriously and comply when there is an advisory from any of the embassies for the non-essential people to leave that country and return to India.

It is also natural for the House to ask as to why all the people did not leave. They did not leave because they were students. We can imagine how a 20 year old student thinks, there was a time when we were students.

The students ask the university at first place, they consult their friends, student advisors and the contractors. They watch television and read newspapers. They felt that their education will get disturbed and get interrupted if they left Ukraine for India at that time.

This feeling took hold because several universities declined to provide online courses at that time. For example, I can quote a University in Kiev which said that it can not switch to the online mode at all. A university in Odessa expressed its inability to offer online facilities beyond 25 February. Our embassy staff tried in vain to contact the university in Kharkiv and even sent someone to contact them, but they were not even ready to meet. There were two more universities in Sumy and Vinnytsia where our students were in large numbers. They were saying that they would continue operating at the most for a few weeks but you should stay back as it is not likely to be so serious an issue.

One of the hon. Members reminded us yesterday and some reports also emerged that Russia is withdrawing some units of her troops. I was also monitoring at the moment, but to be sure, I once more checked to know the opinion of the Government of Ukraine. The Government of Ukraine was advising its citizens and our students who were stuck there, not to panic and that they will be able to control the situation. In a way, their overall signalling put our citizens and students in a real

dilemma. That is why, four thousand people left Ukraine while the rest 18000 people decided to stay back and wait to examine whether the situation really worsens.

After the crisis, it was being said in the Parliament yesterday that we should have evacuated everyone or we should have advised in such strong words as to frighten everyone to flee. It is because the mindset of the students is not fully understood. We should understand this dilemma as well if we are really rooted to ground and understand the mindset of the students. Even a little discussion on this aspect of Operation Ganga, yesterday ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: So, the students only have erred? ... *(Interruptions)*

Dr. SUBRAHMANYAM JAISHANKAR: Adhir Ranjan ji, it was not their fault. ... It is your mentality to find faults. ... *(Interruptions)* I am sorry for that Hon. Speaker Sir. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: You are passing the buck on to the students. ... *(Interruptions)* *[Translation]* That is why I am asking ...*(Interruptions)*

DR. SUBRAHMANYAM JAISHANKAR: Hon. Speaker Sir, it is clear that 20,000 people cannot take a collective decision in such a situation...*(Interruptions)*

It was also discussed yesterday about what was special in Operation Ganges. Whether it was like the evacuation operation conducted earlier or it was different? The last speaker, General V.K.Singh has said very objectively that every operation is

unique. There is war somewhere and there is tension. The situation may be different somewhere else.

At various places, we used the army, civilians and Air India. With my 45 years of experience, I am saying this about Operation Ganga that we have never rescued such a large number of citizens from a situation and challenges we faced in Operation Ganga.

13.00 hrs

Hon. Speaker Sir, I can definitely talk about the challenges faced in this operation. We may remember that we conducted Operation 'Rahat' in Yemen in 2015. At that time, war was going on in Yemen. The Hon. Prime Minister phoned the King of Saudi Arabia for a ceasefire so that our citizens can be brought back by the planes. But at that time, war was going on and it was very difficult to get a ceasefire but finally, there was a ceasefire in both the cities so that we could rescue our people out of there. There was no complete ceasefire across the country but only in two cities. The war was going on in other places. The citizens of Yemen themselves were trying to leave the country. When Operation 'Ganga' was going on, around thirty lakh Ukrainian citizens were trying to get out of their country. The second specialty of this operation was that the Hon. Prime Minister was personally involved in this. The Hon. Prime Minister himself called and spoke to the leaders. Our students were majorly trapped in two places and a ceasefire was declared so that our people could be rescued from there. Yesterday, an Hon. Member said that we did not do some things because of the election. I would like to remind the House that in the middle of the election campaign, the Hon. Prime Minister returned to Delhi and talked to the leaders and held meetings

and supervised it. You should also keep that in mind. The situation in two cities in Ukraine, Sumy and Kharkiv were really bad. Shelling was going on in Kharkiv and you know that one student, Shri Naveen was killed. In Sumi, firing was going on between Ukraine and Russia. One Hon. Member said that he does not know the impact of the involvement of the Hon. Prime Minister. I was with him in that room when he raised this issue with Mr. Putin and he said that Indian students were in danger in Kharkiv because firing was going on in Kharkiv. Because of that conversation our students left Kharkiv and went to a safe zone where they had been told by the Russians that there would be no firing. There was firing while we were evacuating people from Sumi and at one point the students had even boarded the bus and the firing started again when we were about to leave.

The Hon. Prime Minister spoke to both the Presidents. Because each of the countries was saying that the other country is firing and he made them to understand and to order their armies not to fire during a certain period of time. We took help and protection from Ukraine and took Red cross with us. Evacuation in Sumi has been done like this. Yesterday, someone asked what the embassy had done. There were some students in some cities for which we could not do anything or we could not reach there. As the embassy is in the capital city, students stayed in the embassy for a long time. When a lot of our people got stuck in the western border, we moved the embassy phase wise, first half of the embassy and then the rest of the embassy went to Liviv which is in western Ukraine so that they may be closer to the border and can help students from inside Ukraine because our team was on the outer border of Ukraine. We kept in touch with people who were stuck in western cities like Kharkiv or Sumy. A discussion was

held yesterday about helping to get them out. I don't want to take credit from the students because I don't have words to explain what they have gone through. It is true that most of the people, who came out from there, came out in trains. Special trains were run because we put pressure on the Ukrainian Government and told them that our students are there and to keep running the trains until they are completely evacuated. Some people took separate buses, some people contacted contractors and for some people we also arranged buses.

Sir, now 'Operation Ganga' is over and our students are back. I think at this time we should think about what we have done together and how we have done it. I agree that there are some lessons in this as well. Whenever we do any operation, be it 'Operation Rahat' or 'Sankat Mochan', there is a tradition in our Ministry that we study every evacuation operation we do. We learn what we should learn from that operation. We should accept that this 'Operation Ganga' was a collective effort. This collective effort was not only made by the Government or the Ministries but it also involved the Indian community. We have many businesses in Ukraine and its neighboring countries. They helped us a lot and the students also helped. We should also know that many students who escaped from there worked in the campus and helped other students.

Sir, I also observed that when there was a single bus, they had to decide among themselves who would go and who would stay. The students showed a lot of courage. They gave chances to other people. We should know this too. Yesterday, there was a discussion regarding the role of Ministers at that time. I personally and already know the foreign ministers of Ukraine, Russia and all neighboring countries. When this fighting started, I talked to everyone. Since there was already a good relation between

us, they also responded. I would say that if our Ministers had not gone, we would not have got that kind of attention from those Governments. They would not have helped because they had their own difficulties and priorities. There was a problem at their borders and their citizens were also in trouble. I say this clearly that our Ministers helped us a lot. Their visits reduced my work load to half. They are not in the House at the moment but I would like to commend them because it is the team spirit of the Government that if one Ministry is overburdened, the rest of the Ministers engage with that Ministry rather than taking a departmental perspective and they all work together as a member of a team. Today, I appreciate that.

Sir, yesterday, many people talked about what the Ministry of External Affairs had done and I do not want to repeat that. In my statement, there is data about 13,000 phone calls, 9,000 e-mails and WhatsApp messages which were received from personal contacts of many people but it is also a fact that it was our duty. We had to do that at that time. May God forbid such problems do not arise again in the future but we will make our preparations based on our learning from experience at this time.

The Members have expressed their concern regarding the students who have returned recently. It is natural that we should be concerned. If they belonged to our family, we would have worried as their parents are doing today.

Sir, I would like to inform the House that the Ukrainian Government has taken a decision regarding them, *[English]* Mr. Speaker, Sir, there will be relaxation for them in respect of completion of medical education. There is an examination called 'KROK-1' for the third-year students going to the fourth year. That has been postponed to the

next academic year and the students will be allowed to pass to the next academic year based on the completion of the standard requirements.

For sixth-year students, there is an examination called 'KROK-2'. Normally, you have to pass KROK-2 to be awarded the degree. So, the Ukraine Government has taken this decision and we have pressed them in this matter because the larger number of foreign medical students in Ukraine are mainly from India. There are students from other countries also. So, on the basis of the results of the academic assessments, the students will be awarded the degrees without taking part in KROK-2 examination.

Then the issue was raised regarding the other students. What happens to them? Sir, obviously the Ministries concerned are also discussing this matter. From the Foreign Ministry's point of view, I can say that they are in touch with them. An hon. Member yesterday referred to Hungary.... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY (KOLKATA UTTAR): Sir, I would like to inform the hon. Minister, as I mentioned yesterday, I had met with the hon. Prime Minister last week and we had a discussion on this issue. During our talk, the ...* I would like to know the latest position in this regard. ...*.

DR. SUBRAHMANYAM JAISHANKAR: Sir, I want to update that picture. Yes, there was an offer from Hungary. In addition to Hungary, we have been in touch with Poland,

* Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

Romania, Czech Republic and Kazakhstan because they all have similar models of education.

There was also a question about education loan. All these students have taken education loan. According to our figures, 1,319 students have outstanding loans. Hon. Finance Minister has informed this House a few days ago that the Government has asked the Indian Banks' Association to assess the impact of the conflict and initiate consultation in regard to the repayment of loans.

This is the information that I wanted to share with the House. But some individual hon. Members mentioned about very specific points. I would like to reply to some of them. I cannot give reply to all of them because of time limit. I do not want the hon. Members to whom I will not reply to think that I have not taken them seriously. I have taken everybody very seriously. But I think some points deserve a very specific reply.

I would like to begin with some observations made by Shri Premachandran ji. He contrasted our advisories with those of western countries. Now, I would like the hon. Member to appreciate that western countries had a political approach and a political agenda. Their advisories did not have the same intent like ours, the welfare of the community concerned. They were also the part of a larger political game which they were playing. Again, I want to emphasize that in this case, there was nobody else who has done the evacuation before we did the evacuation.

In fact, when fighting started, many countries – I do not want to take their names – actually told their people, 'Sorry, there is nothing we can do for you, you are there, you are stuck'. So, when we evacuated, again I want to say, we served as an

inspiration. There are Foreign Ministers who said, 'We watched you', and said, 'We will also do something'. Yes, we brought back citizens of 18 countries. For example, when we left Sumy, along with us, more non-Indian students came out and they came out because of a ceasefire that we had helped to achieve. So, I would say there is no reason for us to be, in any way, excessively critical of what happened.

There was this issue also that we gave priority to some areas and some cities. We looked after all students. At that stage, in fact, frankly many of our hon. Members and even State Governments approached us and it is natural. A State is worrying about the students of its State. I listened to them very openly. But I gave all of them the same answer. I said, 'I have listened to you, but when I look at the students over there, those students do not tell me they are from one particular State, the students are behaving like they are all Indians, they are showing a unity, they are showing a collective ability, please do not disrupt us'.

Sir, in fact, we were also under pressure to run flights to different cities. We were asked, 'Can you bring them to a particular State?' If we did this, it would have disrupted the sense of togetherness which the students were showing out there. So, we took a decision that flights would come only to Delhi and Mumbai. But I would compliment every State Government. Every State Government made excellent arrangements, everyone of them worked with us so that the movement of students from airport to their homes was very smooth, and I would like to use this opportunity, Sir, to convey my appreciation of that.

Sir, Manish Tewariji made two observations which I would like to respond to. One was, he said that friends have to be spoken to honestly. These may not have been his exact words, but, I think, this was his sentiment. I can assure him, Sir, through you, all our conversations with everybody on this matter has been very candid, has been very direct, and the positions that I stated in the House have been communicated with as much directness to all our partners. So, nobody has any doubt where we stand on this matter.

There is just one minor issue which I wanted to clarify to him, because he referred to an exchange I had with the British counterpart. She was very careful. She, actually, told me, 'We recognize your sovereign right to take decisions'. The provocative question which was asked was asked by a member of the Press. It was not done by another Foreign Minister whether we are buying huge amounts of oil or not. I have clarified to Brijendra Singhji about the impact of the Prime Minister's conversation.

I want to tell Dr. Sumathy that the view that no assistance was given to students is not right. Students took trains, students took buses. I accept, many students worked among themselves, worked with their student contractor. But we were guiding every student contractor.

In fact, another Member said, 'What were you doing? You were only issuing advisories'. Let me tell you, at that moment, it was our advisories which told people what to do, saying this border is clear, this is where you should go etc. For example, Dr. Sumathy referred to a situation where we told students to walk. We told students to walk because on that day, Sir, there was heavy firing on Kharkiv. There were hundreds

of students who had gathered at the railway station. We were really worried for them. We created a safe zone; the safe zone was 12 kilometres, and we wanted the students to understand, 'It is absolutely important, you move there'.

So, that is the reason why we said this. Again, I applaud what the students have done, and the courage and the endurance that they have shown. I think, we should all appreciate that.

Supriya-ji asked: 'Did you speak to universities? If the universities did not advise properly, did you take it up?' Yes, we did. We were very frustrated with some of the universities, I would also say that. But it is because we would keep talking that eventually, at least, the initial 4,000 actually left.

There was one issue which Shrikant Shinde-ji raised a question about whether other people moved earlier than us. I would say, as regards evacuation, we were the first. If individual citizens left, yes, many of them did. As I said, many of them left as part of a larger political plan that their particular countries set. But the bulk of the students were there. They were not only from our country. We saw students from Egypt, from Morocco, from Algeria, from our own neighbours -- Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan. So, the bulk of the students were there. I think as Gen. V.K. Singh explained yesterday, the psychology of the people was: "No, no, no. This will pass. Let us talk to our friends." Friends are saying: *[Translation]* "why are you going if I am not going?" *[English]* So, that was really what the situation was. I think, we should really show understanding.

Let me, Sir, finally conclude with one common issue which all Members raised, which is: 'worry about the world order'. What is this conflict? What does this mean? There is the relationship between countries. How is this moving?

I want to say this, yes, the world order is changing. The world order has been changing for many years. That is why G-7 became G-20. The world order changed because of COVID-19.

Countries saw what happens when there is too much concentration of economic production in one geography, when there is not enough resilience and reliability in supply chains. The world order is changing because countries today worry about trust and transparency, they are worried where is the data, which technology should they trust. The world order is changing because the Afghanistan-like situation happened. So, we are left with a problem close to our homes, which we are worrying about more than the countries which were there earlier. Now, the world order will change partly because of the consequences of this. But what is the solution to it? To my mind, the solution is, we have to be stronger; we have to reduce our dependency on the external world. It can never be total. But the way to deal with the new world order is really 'Atmanirbhar Bharat', and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' is not just an economic policy, 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' is a Bharat, which looks after its people, a Bharat which is capable of running 'Operation Ganga'.

Thank you, Sir.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY (KOLKATA UTTAR):Hon. Minister, Sir, I raised one issue, and it is involving the Prime Minister of the country. I was carrying a letter of

a Chief Minister of a State. She placed some proposals for 350 odd students from West Bengal, the State to which I belong. What would be their future? So, she placed some proposals saying, 'I will absorb these students in my own State.' As an outcome, ...* I am repeatedly mentioning these words. And, it was a long discussion, not a one-minute or two-minute discussion. But what would be fate of these students, I want to know.

You are saying they would be sent to the adjacent countries like Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania. So, these are the places. We want more specific replies on what would be the fate of these students. You are saying that Ukraine agreed. But what is the existence of the Ukraine Government now? Are they under the control of the Soviet Russia/Russian Federation or are they standing on their own feet? That is still uncertain. It is not clear from your observations made in your speech.

Let the House and the student community be assured that when and how these students are going to be replaced in different parts of the world, either it is in the Eastern European side or it is, particularly, Hungary in a time-bound manner. What would be the time limit?

[Translation]

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: Sir, yesterday we heard the speech of four hon. Ministers. Today, hon. Jaishankar was also repeating their words. We want to know something new from you. Many types of restrictions have been imposed against Russia. All the exercises are being done to remove Russia from the SWIFT system, yet business is going on with some banks. In this situation, what will be the effect on the transaction between Ruble and Rupee? Are we worrying about Rupee

* Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

and Ruble due to coming out of SWIFT system? *[English]* I would like to know whether this Government has been approached by other countries to mediate in the war between Ukraine and Russia in order to find out any convenient way so as to solve the issue amicably.

SHRI ARVIND SAWANT (MUMBAI SOUTH): Sir, the future of the students is blinking in unexpected light. What exactly is happening to the admissions of these students? You are giving some relief. I heartily appreciate the efforts taken by the MEA as well as the Government. But, as far as the future of the students is concerned, as there are some suggestions about that, the students still have apprehensions about it. It is because the parents are meeting us and asking about the future of their children. The internship is of six years. You said that KROK-2 will begin, that is fine. But, what about the other students? What measures are we taking about that? I would like to have a specific answer about it.

DR. SUBRAHMANYAM JAISHANKAR: Sir, broadly, there are two concerns, one is on the future of the students. I completely understand that this is something which all hon. Members will worry about. I think, this is something which is between the Ministry of Education and other organizations dealing with medical education. They are seized of the matter. I only wanted to update the Members because, specifically, Sudip Bandyopadhyay ji, yesterday mentioned his conversation with the Prime Minister and Hungary.

I wanted to point that in addition to Hungary – again, Hungary was the first one to offer and offered most generously – there were other offers as well which we are exploring. All our embassies are at work and, obviously, our effort will be to see that our students are assisted as much as possible.

Regarding Adhir Ranjan ji's interest on the payment mechanism, I want to assure him that our effort today is to stabilise economic transactions between India and Russia because it is very important for us. Russia is a very important partner in a variety of areas. I think, all hon. Members understand that. So, at the moment, there is an Inter-Ministerial Group which is led by the Finance Ministry seeing how the payments issue can be best addressed. There are experiences from the past which are relevant in this regard. But, I think, this is quite honestly an issue where the Finance Minister would, finally, have to take a call.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister has given a very detailed reply. The way the Central Government and all the State Governments together successfully faced this serious challenge and the manner in which the children of our country were brought out in that situation, is certainly commendable. I think the whole House should appreciate this. It is my feeling that in future, the full House will work together in the interest of the country on such issues.

The House is adjourned till 2.30 pm.

(English)

13.29 hrs

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Thirty Minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

14.35 hrs

The Lok Sabha re-assembled at Thirty Five Minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

14.35 ½ hrs

(Dr. (Prof.) Kirit Premjibhai Solanki *in the Chair*)

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

[Translation]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Matters under Rule 377.

Shri Ganesh Singh

(i) Regarding promotion of natural farming

SHRI GANESH SINGH (SATNA): Hon Chairperson, Sir, the Central Government has taken many effective steps to make farmers use organic fertilizers instead of chemical fertilizers. A provision has also been made in this budget to give incentives to the farmers doing natural farming. The Central Government is going to bring a pilot project for natural farming on both sides of the River Ganges up to a distance of 10 km.

I would like to tell the Government that Madhya Pradesh has many rivers like Narmada, Tamsa, Semrawal, Ken and Betwa with abundant water flow and demand that they should also be included in the pilot project for natural farming. I specially demand to include Tamsa, Semrawal and Satna rivers under my Parliamentary Constituency Satna in this plan.

HONORABLE CHAIRPERSON: Shrimati Aparajita Sarangi.

... (Interruptions)

[English]

(ii) Regarding establishment of a DRDO lab, Ordnance factory, Sainik School and Defence Recruitment Centre at Deoghar

DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY (GODDA): Deoghar has been included in the list of prominent cities and has been declared as a mega tourist destination by the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India. Deoghar is a unique and extremely revered site of one of the 51 Shaktipeeths and also of Dwadash Jyotirlinga in the country. This is a religious and cultural capital of Eastern India which catapults the holy place to an international acclaim and is visited by over 5 crore pilgrims every year.

I request for kind consideration of the following:

1. Regarding the requirements of land for the proposed Military Station, the area available will be approximately 400 acres which can be reduced or increased once the feasibility is done. The land will be near the ongoing DRDO centre project at Deoghar (Jharkhand).
2. DRDO Lab at Deoghar (Jharkhand)
3. Ordnance Factory or any defence infrastructure project at Deoghar (Jharkhand)
4. Sainik School at Godda (Jharkhand)
5. Defence Recruitment Centre at Deoghar.

You know well that large parts of the State are affected by Naxalism and terrorism. The spread of Naxalism and terrorism is an indication of the sense of desperation and alienation that is sweeping over large sections of Jharkhand's Santhal Pargana region, which have not only been systematically marginalized but also cruelly exploited and dispossessed.

[Translation]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Shri Sanjay Kaka Patil. Shri Sunil Kumar Singh. Dr. Sujay Vikhe Patil.

... (*Interruptions*)

(iii) Need to curb pollution in Indira Gandhi Canal and also to grant Membership of BBMB to Rajasthan

SHRI NIHAL CHAND CHOUHAN (GANGANAGAR): Hon. Chairperson Sir, due to the increasing pollution in the water by the industrial units of Rajasthan, the water of Indira Gandhi Canal has become unfit for drinking and irrigation. Water is a big problem in Rajasthan and its availability is very limited. The pollution in the Indira Gandhi Canal, whose water is allocated to the states of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan, has reached an alarming level. The Indira Gandhi Canal, which has become a lifeline for the desert areas of Rajasthan, is now becoming a case of diseases. People using highly polluted water coming from Punjab are falling ill in large numbers and cases of diseases like jaundice and cancer have increased. The maximum effect of this pollution is being seen in Hanumangarh and Sriganganagar districts of Rajasthan. Under the National River Conservation Plan, Rs 774 crore was released by the Central Government to the Punjab Government for setting up 26 sewage treatment plants with a total capacity of 663.20 MLD. Now the monopoly of Haryana and Punjab in BBMB has ended. In this regard, I request the Central Government that Rajasthan should also be given membership in BBMB now.

(iv) Need to establish Kendriya Vidyalayas in Rajsamand Parliamentary Constituency, Rajasthan

SUSHRI DIYA KUMARI (RAJSAMAND): Hon. Chairperson Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government through the House to the need to open Kendriya Vidyalayas in Rajsamand, Merta, Bhim and Jaitaran under my Parliamentary Constituency Rajsamand (Rajasthan). A large number of families of defense personal and Central Government employees reside in my Parliamentary Constituency Rajsamand. There has been a continuous demand to open a Kendriya Vidyalaya here to provide high quality education. In this regard, I have requested earlier also by writing a letter to the Hon. Minister of Education. All the formalities to open Kendriya Vidyalayas in Rajsamand, Merta and Bhim have been completed and the proposal has been sent from Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan's Jaipur regional office to its headquarters while the process of Jaitaran Kendriya Vidyalaya is still pending. Kendriya Vidyalayas have an important role in setting new records in school education. Quality education can improve the future of the students. For this, Kendriya Vidyalayas should be established in the areas as per the requirement. The permission to open a Kendriya Vidyalaya is necessary for the entire Parliamentary Constituency of Rajsamand to be benefited.

Therefore, through you, I demand from the Government that Kendriya Vidyalayas should be opened in the district headquarters Rajsamand, Merta, Bhim and Jaitaran.

[English]

(v) Regarding plight of jute mills and jute growing farmers

SHRI ARJUN SINGH (BARRACKPUR): Sir, I would like to draw the kind attention of the hon. Textile Minister to the jute Industry in West Bengal. The jute industry is going down, and the employees of this industry have lost their jobs in large numbers. The bureaucracy is fully responsible for the plight of jute farmers and jute mills. It is because of a big difference in jute prices between the Government price and the market price, mediator in the market gets full benefit, and makes huge profit, which actually belongs to farmers and jute mills. For the first time in the history, the Jute Commissioner had fixed the rate of jute in September 2021 at Rs.6500 per quintal while the market price stood very high at around Rs.6700 to Rs.9000 per quintal, as per the Jute Balers' Association. If the farmers do not get fair price for their crop, they will be encouraged to divert cultivation of jute to other crops. I request the hon. Textile Minister to please look into the matter, and save jute mills and their workers, who suffer due to such fixation of rates. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, through you, I request the Government to look into this issue of public importance.

[Translation]

(vi) Regarding alleged irregularities in storage of paddy in Chhattisgarh

SHRI CHUNNILAL SAHU (MAHASAMUND): Hon. Chairperson Sir, the paddy of the farmers of Chhattisgarh is purchased through the Rural Co-operative Society. There is a provision to transfer the paddy from the purchase center to the storage center within 72 hours by the agency designated by the State Government. But, the paddy purchased in the month of December is being lifted now in March. In such a situation, it is natural for paddy to dry up and the Government has also given a rebate of 3%.

But at present, the administrative officers are insisting to record the drying percentage as zero of the paddy and taking action against the paddy procurement center in-charge and the manager/committee of the concerned co-cooperative. They are even asking for details of their motorcycle and house property. In this way, the officials of the State administration are taking action against the in-charges/committees of the procurement centers.

Therefore, I request the Government through the House to send a Central Investigation Team to investigate the negligence done by the administrative officials in this regard and save the members of rural co-operatives from financial losses.

(vii) Need to accelerate pace of construction work of Rewa-Singrauli railway line, part of Lalitpur-Singrauli Railway line Project

SHRIMATI RITI PATHAK (SIDHI): Hon. Chairperson, today I would like to urge the Hon. Minister of Railways that the Lalitpur-Singrauli rail project is very important for my Parliamentary constituency Sidhi which has no railway connectivity and is going to make the dreams of people living in this constituency come true. In 2015, the Honorable Prime Minister shown a special interest and a time limit was set for the works of this project, due to which the works were expedited. The result of the same is that Madhya Pradesh's largest railway tunnel has been completed in Chhuhiya Valley of Baghwar. Just a few days ago, the Minister of Railways had also posted the photo of the said tunnel, but I want to inform that there is a need to speed up the project from Rewa to Singrauli. The pace of project works has slowed down in the past months.

I request that the concerned officials should be directed to speed up the works from Rewa to Singrauli, a part of the Lalitpur-Singrauli Rail Project, as a result of which the work of the project could be completed within the time limit set by the Hon. Prime Minister.

(viii) Need to continue the services of Poshan Sakhi in Jharkhand

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH (CHATRA): Hon. Chairperson, Under the Umbrella ICDS sponsored by the Central Government, in the year 2016, 10388 Poshan Sakhis were appointed in six districts of the State, namely Dhanbad, Giridih, Dumka, Godda, Koderma and Chatra. For the last six years, they were working with dedication and sincerity to get rid the problem of malnutrition in children in the State, as a result of which there has been a reduction in the cases of malnutrition. Commendable work was done by Poshan Sakhis even during the Corona period. These Poshan Sakhis are given honorarium of only 3000/- per month as salary. This honorarium also remains pending for many months. The current Government of Jharkhand has issued an order on March 25, 2022, terminating the services of all 10388 Poshan Sakhis of these six districts from April 01, 2022. Poshan Sakhis were made unemployed by the Jharkhand Government. Where will the Poshan Sakhis, who work for only Rs. 100 per day as honorarium, go to after working for 6 years? They have spent 6 important years in the service of the State. After giving their full cooperation in saving the State from malnutrition and Corona, now these Poshan Sakhis are unemployed.

Through you, I demand from the Central Government and the State Government to issue instructions to continue the services of 10388 Poshan Sakhi permanently in six districts of Jharkhand State namely Dhanbad, Giridih, Dumka, Godda, Koderma and Chatra. The pending honorarium of Poshan Sakhis should be paid immediately.

(ix) Regarding construction of Rajasthan Sabarmati link Canal

SHRI PARBATBHAI SAVABHAI PATEL (BANASKANTHA): Hon. Chairperson, under my Parliamentary constituency Banaskantha district, the ground water level in Dhanera, Dantiwada, Lakhni, Deesa, Tharad, Amirgarh, Danta, Palanpur and Deodar tehsils is very low and this ground water level is continuously going down. If we talk about the present level of ground water, then water is not available here even at thousand feet. It is taking the form of a complex and dreadful problem in itself and the farmers are suffering due to this problem. Because of this, farmers are facing a lot of difficulties for irrigation. Along with being a public representative, I am also a farmer myself, so I can feel the pain of the farmers very well.

Sir, this constituency is dominated by farmers and all the farmers here are engaged in the business of agriculture and animal husbandry and they do not have any other source of income. That's why they are facing many difficulties even in getting the means to earn their livelihood.

Atal Bhujal Yojana is being run by our Government to address the concern of continuous depletion of ground water reserves in India. The objective of the scheme is to improve groundwater management in priority areas of the country through community participation. Under this plan, a provision has been kept for the construction of Rajasthan Sabarmati Link Canal. If the work of this canal is completed soon, then a new source of irrigation water will be found in the above-mentioned Tehsils of my Parliamentary constituency, which will benefit the farmers here and a complex problem will also be resolved to some extent.

Sir, along with this canal, we have to find other means of irrigation, so that this problem can be solved completely. Therefore, through you, I request the Honorable Minister that action should be taken as soon as possible to strengthen the irrigation system in my Parliamentary constituency.

**(x) Regarding construction of a bridge for pedestrian traffic across railway lines
in Naroda railway station, Ahmedabad, Gujarat**

SHRI HASMUKHBHAI S. PATEL (AHMEDABAD EAST): Hon. Chairman, Sir, through you, I would like to inform the Hon. Minister that Naroda Railway Station in my constituency Ahmedabad East (Gujarat) is being renovated by Western Railway. For this, I thank the hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Honorable Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav. Naroda Railway Station is being renovated. There is no way to walk on either side of it. Because of which people living on both sides of the railway station and school and college students are facing difficulty in commuting and students and people working in school and college have to go over the station track. And there is a possibility of accident anytime so it is very important to build a foot bridge so that people do not have to cross the railway track compulsorily from both sides of the railway track.

Honorable Chairperson, through you, I would like to request the Minister of Railway to construct a foot over bridge at Naroda Railway Station as soon as possible.

(xi) Need to provide adequate compensation to farmers whose lands have been acquired for fencing purpose in border areas of Jammu and Kashmir

SHRI JUGAL KISHOR SHARMA (JAMMU): Hon. Chairman, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Government to those border places in the State of Jammu and Kashmir where fencing has been done. Due to the fencing, the farmers cultivating the land on the other side of the fencing, which was on the other side of the barricade and has been acquired, have become unemployed. Their only support is land. Ever since their land has gone other side of the fencing, they are living miserable life. They have come to the point of starvation. What is the fault of those poor farmers in this fencing system? Neither did they get any employment nor have they received the compensation for the land so that they can support their family.

Hon. Chairperson, I, therefore, would like to request the Government through you to make efforts to give compensation to those farmers as soon as possible.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Rahul Kaswan - not present.

Shrimati Mangal Suresh Angadi – Not present.

(xii) Regarding road accident insurance plan for licensed vehicle drivers

SHRI R. K. SINGH PATEL (BANDA): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, road accidents are taking place on a large scale in the country, in which licensed drivers die every day. There is no provision for accident insurance while issuing driving licenses to drivers. If a licensed driver dies in an accident, financial assistance should be given to his dependent family after the accident. Such as farmers accident insurance, labor accident insurance, insurance of labor card holders, financial assistance is given to their dependent families. But if a driver holding a driving license dies, his dependent families wander from door to door. As there is a provision to provide accident insurance to registered workers, similarly it is necessary in public interest to provide accident insurance scheme to licensed drivers.

Through you, I, therefore, request the Government and the Minister of Road Transport and Highways to make efforts to implement the Driver Accident Insurance Scheme in the country.

[English]

(xiii) Regarding declaration of State road from Mannarkkad to Coimbatore via Attappadi and Chinna Thadagam as sub-highway to National Highway No. 966

SHRI V.K. SREEKANDAN (PALAKKAD): It has been a long pending demand of the people, mostly Tribals, living in Attappadi, to declare the State road from Mannarkkad to Coimbatore via Attappadi and Chinna Thadagam as sub-highway to National Highway No. 966. Declaring this State road as sub-highway to National Highway No. 966 will really help the tribal people. Due to the present condition of roads, the people are not able to save the lives of their near and dear ones as journey to the nearest hospitals at Perinthalmanna or Coimbatore takes a lot of time and, in between, patients succumb to illness.

Moreover, Attappadi is an agricultural area cultivating many types of spices and other agricultural produce. These tribal farmers are finding it very difficult to transport their produce to the nearby market at Coimbatore, and as such are unable to get a decent price for their produce.

Declaring this State road as sub-highway, and the expected development on this account will reduce travel distance from Kozhikode to Coimbatore, and can save fuel as well as pave the way for overall development of this tribal inhabited area. Therefore, it is urged that the said State road may please be declared as sub-highway to National Highway No. 966 urgently.

15.00 hrs

(xiv) Regarding prices of life-saving drugs

ADV. DEAN KURIAKOSE (IDUKKI): Prices of essential medicines including painkillers, antibiotics, anti-infectives are set to go up from April with the Government allowing an increase of over 10 per cent for the scheduled drugs.

India's drug pricing authority on Friday allowed a price hike of 10.7 per cent for scheduled drugs, which are under price control. This is the highest price hike allowed. Over 800 drugs under the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM) will see a price rise from April.

The NLEM list includes drugs like paracetamol, antibiotics like azithromycin used to treat bacterial infections, anti-anemia, vitamins and minerals. Some drugs used for treating moderately to severely ill COVID-19 patients and steroids are also included in the list.

These medicines have a profound impact on the lives of people. The Government's reasoning around inflation indexing of price does not hold water in a country like ours where crores of people struggle to buy food, let alone lifesaving medicines. I urge upon the Government to reverse this decision and ensure that lifesaving drugs stay affordable to the people of India.

**(xv) Regarding setting up of a trading point along the Indo-Bangladesh Border
in Murshidabad district, West Bengal**

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY (BAHARAMPUR): Setting up of a trading point along the Indo-Bangladesh Border in the district of Murshidabad, West Bengal to facilitate commercial exchange with Bangladesh.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Dr. Kalanidhi Veeraswamy -- not present.

Shri Raghu Rama Krishna Raju.

(xvi) Regarding naming of Centrally-sponsored schemes by Andhra Pradesh Government

SHRI RAGHU RAMA KRISHNA RAJU (NARSAPURAM): I draw the attention of the Government to the issue of renaming the Centrally-sponsored schemes by Andhra Pradesh Government. Almost, all the Central schemes are being renamed on the personal names of the Chief Minister and his family names. For example, PM Kisan Samman Nidhi Scheme has been termed as YSR Rythu Barosa, PM Fasal Bima Yojana as YSR Free Crop Insurance Scheme, and other farmer welfare schemes are termed as YSR Zero Interest Farm Loans, YSR Polambadi, YSR Organic Policy, YSR Agriculture Testing Labs.

State is trying to take credit through nomenclature based on the Chief Minister, his family members and even his lineage while grants are made from the Central Government budgets. Recently, hon. Finance Minister on her recent visit to AP observed and raised the issue before media and alerted the concerned officials to be more vigilant in implementing the schemes. When the matter was brought to the notice of hon. Minister of Women and Child Development, she had promptly acted and communicated that the ban of co-branding any Central-sponsored schemes will be viewed seriously.

I request the Government to take swift corrective action in the matter before it goes out of control.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Shri Kuruva Gorantla Madhav – not present.

**(xvii) Regarding sanction of an integrated cold storage for Potatoes in
Arambagh Parliamentary Constituency**

SHRIMATI APARUPA PODDAR (ARAMBAGH): Sir, West Bengal is a major potato-growing State of India and farmers mainly grow Jyoti, Chandramukhi and hybrid varieties like Super S1, Super 6 and Pokhraj. Around four lakh Lakh acres of land is under potato cultivation in Bengal and an estimated 10 lakh farmers are engaged in potato farming. Potato production in West Bengal is higher by nearly 16 per cent at 110 lakh tonne out of which 71 lakh tonne of potatoes were kept in cold. storage this year.

In Potato farming, cool temperature is of utmost importance for good produce. My constituency of Armabagh has substantial number of potato farmers who store their produce in cold storages for which they have to fork out additional fees, often to private entities. West Bengal has vast growth potential in the horticulture sector and being one of the leading producers of potato, there is a requirement to shift from cold storages to integrated cold chains to realise its full potential. Modernisation-cum-retrofitting of the existing traditional cold storages into multi-purpose cold storages will be the right step. In view of the expected high production of potato in West Bengal in the current year, I request the Government to sanction an integrated cold storage for potatoes in my constituency of Arambagh.

(xviii) Regarding hike in prices of Petroleum Products

PROF. SOUGATA RAY (DUM DUM): Sir, thank you for thanking us.

Under Rule 377, I point out to the astronomical ... (*Interruptions*)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Kindly go by your text.

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: Sir, one or two lines may be here or there.

[Translation]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Kindly go by your text.

[English]

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: Sir, you look at Rule 377 in the book. I am going by the book.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: No.

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: Please allow me. This is a very important matter. Petrol and diesel rates in the country have sharply increased after the latest round of fuel price hike by oil marketing companies (OMCS). Experts have said that the continuous increase in fuel prices will have a widespread impact on citizens and the overall economy. The petrol and diesel prices across the country continued their northward march and its retail rates to unprecedented levels while burning bigger holes in the consumers' pockets. The common people are cutting on their other expenses to manage their spending on fuel prices. Every citizen of the country is in anguish and deep distress regarding the spiralling fuel and gas prices. India is witnessing systematic erosion of jobs, wages and household income. The middle class and those at the

margins of our society are struggling. These challenges have been compounded by runaway inflation and an unprecedented rise in price of almost all household items and essential commodities. I urge upon the Government to intervene in the matter and take immediate steps to check the steep hike in the prices of petroleum products daily.

**(xix) Regarding construction of RoB, VUP and CUP on NH 52 in Churu
Parliamentary Constituency, Rajasthan**

[Translation]

SHRI RAHUL KASWAN (CHURU): In my Lok Sabha constituency Churu, work is to be started to convert National Highway No. 52 from 2 lanes to 4 lanes. Before the construction of the road, the road was inspected by the officers of various departments to ensure the safety of the road. During this inspection, it was found that there is an urgent need to make VUP and CUP to reduce accidents at many places. There was high demand of these in villages Bhangiwad, Baghsara, Athuna, Khotia, Dhani Dispura, Ramsara, Dhadhar, Lakhau, Laddia, Dudhwa Khara, Khemana on Sadulpur bypass, Dhadhal and on the way to Gulpura, Sheopura and Indasar. At many places along with these, the villagers had also demanded for the construction of ROB. One of the main reasons for this is that in these villages, the residential areas are on one side and all the Government institutions and railway stations are on the other side and the common people have to cross the road many times due to which there is a possibility of frequent accidents and accidents also happen in many places due to which the lives of common people is in danger. I, therefore, urge the Government that ROB, VUP and CUP should be constructed at all these places as per the requirement so that accidents can be avoided in future.

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Shri Sanjay Jadhav – not present.

**(xx) Regarding implementation of
Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (G) in Odisha**

SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU (BEHRAMPUR): The Ministry of Rural Development opened Awas plus window to identify the eligible households left out from the Permanent Wait List (PWL) of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (G) by 7th March, 2019. Our State of Odisha could register only 35,000 households within the stipulated period as the functionaries were preoccupied with the work of General Elections of 2019. After Cyclone Fani, Awas plus window was opened for 14 affected districts during September – October, 2019. Our State identified 7.87 lakh households in these districts making the total registration to 8.22 lakhs. The Ministry allotted the target of 8.17 lakhs under PMAY (G) to Odisha from the Awas plus list. During field verification of August – September, 2021, 5.6 lakh households from the identified 8.22 lakhs were found eligible for sanction of PMAY (G) houses. The hon. PM during his visit after Cyclone Fani committed to sanction 1.84 PMAY Special houses to the Cyclone Fani affected families. I request the hon. Minister of Rural Development to allow opening of the Awaas plus window for one month to accomplish the migration of data of 5.09 lakh households from Rural House Portal list to PWL through Awas plus and also include 1.84 lakh PMAY Special houses to the Cyclone Fani affected families as committed by the hon. Prime Minister in May, 2019.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Dr. G. Ranjith Reddy – not present.

**(xxi) Regarding resolution of water disputes between
Rajasthan and other States**

[Translation]

SHRI HANUMAN BENIWAL (NAGAUR): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, through you, I would like to say by drawing the attention of the Minister of Jal Shakti towards the demand of early settlement of the pending water disputes of Rajasthan State that on 31.12.1981, there was an agreement signed between the Chief Ministers of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan regarding the sharing of surplus water of Ravi-Beas rivers and according to this out of the surplus water of Ravi-Beas rivers the total available 17.17 M.A.F, the share of Rajasthan was decided to be 8.60 M.A.F. Later, the Government of Punjab brought the Punjab Settlement Act 2014 against the said agreement. Then the constitutional bench of the Hon. Supreme Court upheld the earlier agreement by giving its opinion and Rajasthan was allocated 1.119 BCM Yamuna water under the agreement dated 12.05.1994 signed between the Yamuna basin States like Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Union Territory of Delhi. In this case, Rajasthan is not getting its share of water from Tajewala.

Also, Bharatpur district is not getting full share of water of Yamuna due to unauthorized exploitation in the State of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana. Along with this, directions are also required to be given to the Government of Punjab through the Government to increase the capacity of the head works regulator of Indira Gandhi Feeder located at Harike Barrage from 15,000 cusecs to 18,500 cusecs so that the damage caused by the flood water can be prevented and that water can be useful to the people of Rajasthan.

The Government of India needs to settle the pending water disputes of Rajasthan as soon as possible in view of the vast geographical location and desert of Rajasthan so that the issue of water shortage in Rajasthan can be resolved to a great extent. For this, the Center will have to hold a meeting with the concerned States and should take a decision soon. Otherwise, Rajasthan will not be able to get its share of water due to such cases pending for years .

[English]

(xxii) Regarding start of several flights from Belgaum

SHRIMATI MANGAL SURESH ANGADI (BELGAUM): Sir, Belgaum airport in the State of Karnataka has the distinction of being one of the oldest airports in the State, having been established and operated since pre-Independence era.

The city is educationally forward with the establishment of the Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU) and Rani Channamma University (RCU). Besides having several engineering colleges, medical and dental colleges, the city is industrially forward too.

It has often been the persistent demand of the Constituency residents for the start of daily flight services on routes: (1) Belagavi-Bangalore (morning flight), (2) Belagavi-Gorakhpur (Uttar Pradesh), (3) Belagavi-Darbhanga-Gaya (Bihar), (4) Belagavi-Shirdi (Maharashtra), and (5) Belagavi-Varanasi with stress for the start of cargo services too.

The potential for further growth of the IT and BT Companies herein is exponential and the city is also a hub of industrial activities. Besides, many people from North Karnataka visit the holy shrines situated in North India frequently.

Belagavi airport has been chosen under UDAN Phase-3 and more than thirteen air services are already found operational. Hence, I request the hon. Minister of Civil Aviation to please look into the matter towards the early start of the above flight services

on the said routes along with the start of cargo services. In this regard, I sincerely thank our hon. Prime Minister and hon. Civil Aviation Minister. Thank you.

15.18 hrs

**WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION AND THEIR DELIVERY SYSTEMS
(PROHIBITION OF UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES) AMENDMENT BILL, 2022**

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Item No. 17 – Minister of External Affairs.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (DR. SUBRAHMANYAM JAISHANKAR):

Sir, I beg to move:

“That the Bill to amend the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act, 2005, be taken into consideration.”

Sir, the House is aware that India implements its international obligations responsibly and this is recognized by the international community. Weapons of Mass Destruction and Delivery Systems Act, 2005 prohibits unlawful activities in respect of biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons, and their delivery systems. The initial focus was on export controls because we thought at that time in 2005 mainly in terms of trade of goods and technologies.

In recent years, however, international regulations relating to weapons of mass destruction have been strengthened. In particular, the recommendations of the UN Security Council and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) have mandated

provisions against financing in relation to these weapons. Presently, there are no specific provisions in the 2005 legislation relating to prohibition or prevention of financing. So, there is a need to amend the WMD Act to do so.

The proposed Bill is intended to prohibit financing of prohibited activities under the Act or any relevant Act in relation to weapons of mass destruction. It also proposes empowering the Central Government to freeze, seize or attach funds or financial assets or economic resources for preventing such financing or prohibit making available such funds and resources. This Bill is in our national interest. It is in our global interest. It strengthens our credentials and image. I commend it for consideration.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Motion moved:

“That the Bill to amend the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act, 2005, be taken into consideration.”

SHRI UTTAM KUMAR REDDY (NALGONDA): Chairman, Sir, thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Bill to amend the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act, 2005. As the Minister just stated, the new legislation prohibits the financing of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. We cannot disagree with the Minister on the Bill. But however, I want to make a few observations and suggestions.

The entire Bill speaks about a person, an individual who finances weapons of mass destruction. Probably, you have only amended the original Act and not had a look at that. But I would like to suggest that more than individuals who finance weapons

of mass destruction and their delivery systems, it is organizations; it is countries. Also, the original Act envisaged largely for Indian citizens and extra-territorial applications. But you should now consider that this Act applies to foreigners, foreign citizens where we have extradition agreements with the foreign countries. We all know who is financing the terror operations against India. There is specific information about them regarding financing weapons of mass destruction. I think, FATF has also put Pakistan on the grey list. The Government of India needs to do more about countries financing weapons of mass destruction against India.

I would like to bring to the notice of the Minister, through you, that as far as weapons of mass destruction are concerned, I have personal knowledge. I have served in the Armed Forces of India. I have served on both China and Pakistan borders as a fighter pilot. It should be alarming that all of the Pakistani aircraft and the modern Chinese aircraft now are delivery systems for any of the weapons of mass destruction. They can deliver tactical nuclear weapons; they can deliver chemical weapons. So, on the one hand, you have the modern acquisitions by Pakistan and China and the present aircraft being able to deliver weapons of mass destruction and on the other hand, the Indian Air force with a sanctioned strength of 42 fighter squadrons has now come down to 28. I think, the Government should take a very, very serious note of this.

I would like to also bring to the notice of the Government, through you, that weapons of mass destruction were seriously used last in World War II when the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were totally destroyed by an atomic bomb.

After that, for many decades, countries were afraid to use weapons of mass destruction. But of late, countries are becoming more brazen in using these weapons whether it is in Syria or in the present Russia-Ukraine conflict where the Russian President himself in his statement asked his nuclear forces to be alert.

I think, the Government of India must take note of this disturbing trend. The Government of India must also take note of the fact that the weapons of mass destruction -- whether they are nuclear, chemical, or biological -- are now becoming far more potent and powerful. I would also like to caution the Government of India that drones are now being manufactured to carry weapons of mass destruction. This is an alarming situation. Now, we also have a situation where we have instability in our neighboring country. Actually, anything is possible now.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to mention a few points about proliferation financing, which this Bill talks about. Most countries use existing mechanisms against terrorism and money laundering to achieve non-proliferation financing. The FATF report on 'proliferation financing' suggests that countries must also raise awareness and help clarify the obligations on individuals, firms, and financial institutions to be vigilant to proliferation and proliferation financing as well as provide a basis within the country's legal framework to report suspicious financial activity. The present Bill does not mention either.

In order to fully achieve deterrence against proliferation financing, a level of international cooperation is required with respect to extradition. This is to avoid creating safe havens for violators of the law, and to ensure mutual legal assistance for

investigation and prosecution against proliferation financing and against those who are financing weapons of mass destruction. However, at present, India has only around sixty extradition treaties or agreements with other nations.

Once again, I would like to mention about delivery systems. Please do not go by an earlier definition of delivery systems. Today, all fighter aircraft, in Pakistan and China, are capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction. The Government of India must take appropriate measures on that.

Sir, before I conclude, since you were speaking about ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN (KOLLAM): the Indian aircraft are not capable of that. ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI UTTAM KUMAR REDDY: I cannot say that. ... (*Interruptions*). Before I conclude ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN: A doubt is being raised that the Indian aircraft are not capable of that. ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI UTTAM KUMAR REDDY: At present, India's nuclear policy does not permit tactical nuclear weapons.

We are talking about weapons of mass destruction. We are talking about financing of weapons of mass destruction. From its inception, the institution of the National Security Advisor and the Deputy National Security Advisor is being somehow restricted to the Indian Foreign Service or Indian Police Service. It would be very

appropriate if a military expert will also be the NSA or, at least, the Deputy NSA of this country. Thank you very much.

[Translation]

COL. (RETD) RAJYAVARDHAN RATHORE (JAIPUR RURAL): Hon. Chairperson, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on 'The Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems' (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill.

Sir, you imagine that a tired person is going home after working all day and suddenly without any explosion or fire, 11 people die and 5,500 people get seriously injured. This happened because of the leakage of Sarin gas chemical agent inside the subway of Tokyo. *[English]* It was a terrorist attack. *[Translation]* It is possible and it can happen in India too. Fortunately, the chemical agent used there was of poor quality. Had it been of very potent quality, it would have caused a lot of havoc. Similarly, America was attacked on 9/11 and when America was recovering from it, letters started coming to people's homes. Whoever opened the letter used to die. Letters were laced with Anthrax. This can happen in India as well. It is the responsibility of the Government to keep the citizens safe.

That is why this amendment Bill has been brought and it has been brought to secure this country. Small nation, rogue nation or any international terrorist group are likely to do all this and these chemical agents and biological weapons are manufactured in a very simple way. You can go to any retail store, buy different things from there and combine them to make chemical agents. That is why this bill has been brought so that it can be stopped. The use of these weapons of mass destruction is also unpredictable.

We cannot do early analysis to find out the extent to which it can cause damage. If you fire a bullet, it hits the right target but Weapons of Mass Destruction make no difference between combatants and civilians. It cause havoc on a large scale and later, it destroys the eco system. It destroys the entire eco system from plants to animals.

Sir, these can be chemical weapons, biological weapons, radiological weapons and also nuclear weapons. This Bill has been brought to keep an eye on its development, financing and also on those people associated with it. I am talking about the year 2014, when our new Government was formed. At that time a public policy survey was conducted in which it was asked which party is trusted with the security of the country above all? *[English]* Who are you most confident in national security? *[Translation]* 31 percent people have selected BJP as the most trusted party in terms of national security.

It happened in 2014. After this, the Government has done many such works which ensured national security. Modi ji had an interview before becoming the Hon. Prime Minister in which he was asked how would he respond when a terrorist group or rogue nation attacks. He said that he will respond in their manner. The surgical strikes or air strikes happening today is an example of India responding in their way. Today, the country is becoming secure and there is zero tolerance towards terrorism. International Anti Terror Alliance is being formed by the then Prime Minister. In the world order, India is emerging on its own. India is changing under the changing global order.

[English]

DR. FAROOQ ABDULLAH (SRINAGAR): I want to remind that when Shri Vajpayee Ji was the Prime Minister, Kargil war took place. It was he who ordered the Air Force to strike with whatever weapons they have so that the war could be ended and he succeeded. I think, as you were in the Army, you knew how many casualties you would have had. It was his decision, master decision, to use whatever you have and destroy the enemy in those very bunkers, that were our bunkers, that they were sitting in. You must be clear about it. He did it and he did it with firm determination.

[Translation]

COL. (RETD) RAJYAVARDHAN RATHORE (JAIPUR RURAL): Sir, today India's place is emerging stronger under the changing global order. *[English]* There are possibilities for India to emerge even stronger. *[Translation]* India has always had a big role in humanity. Not only now, but this has been the role of India for centuries. 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' is written in Rigveda in Mahaupanishad. We consider this as our principle and if we consider the whole world as one family, then it is also very important to take care of the whole world. Keeping the same in mind, the Hon. Prime Minister not only strengthened the security of the country but also started making such rules by communicating with the other countries so that an Anti Terror Alliance could be formed. 41 percent of the world's population lives in BRICS countries. It has 24 percent GDP of the whole world. A counter terrorism plan has been adopted in accordance with them. Hon. Prime Minister inspired them to adopt this. Similarly, the Hon. Prime Minister insisted for a Comprehensive global strategy to combat terrorism and a greater role for the United Nations during the G-20 Summit. He carried out bilateral talks with the President of the US and spoke to the Presidents and the Prime

Ministers of other countries. Talks were held with different countries from all over the world regarding how all the countries can come together and create an anti-terror platform?

As a result of that, the Hon. Prime Minister said that the United Nations should be further strengthened. The bill being introduced today is based on the ideology and thinking of the United Nations.

The Hon. Prime Minister raised his voice on terrorism inside the 75th United Nations General Assembly. He raised his voice on Smuggling of Illegal weapons, drugs and money laundering. Recently, the Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations has talked about further strengthening the Convention on Biological and Toxin Weapons. India is continuously motivating the powers of the world to enact such laws so that the terrorists do not get any place to hide. These weapons of mass destruction can reach non-state actors and terrorist outfits and it can cause destruction on a large scale. The law enacted in the year 2005 was limited in scope. That law has been further strengthened. Now, the Government has the power to freeze the accounts and property of such persons, who are involved in any way in weapons of mass destruction, their funding and transportation. The law enacted in the year 2005 was very limited in scope. The focus of that law was only on the person who manufactured these weapons and it could be applied to them only. Should the Government wait till the manufacturing of weapons of mass destruction to take actions against that person? It will be too late for that. There are huge possibilities of its proliferation. For this reason, today this amendment has been brought in this Bill. As I have said earlier that we have a zero tolerance policy towards

terrorism and State aggressors. These weapons of mass destruction can be made in a very simple way. A study was done in America on how a civilian by acquiring these chemicals from the retail shops can make such a weapon. It is possible in every way and that is why this bill has been introduced to stop it. There are shell companies, which can manufacture small parts of it. They will not make a complete weapon of destruction in itself, but it can be a part and when many such parts are combined, a complete weapon will be ready. So that, all the companies, whether small or big, who are preparing these chemicals and biological weapons can be stopped. Money laundering and funding of weapons of mass destruction, both of these are related to each other. That is why, focusing on the route of its finance, medium of finance, its source and the financier is very important. It is a live example that after 9/11, there have been very few terrorist attacks in America and that is because they understood the root cause of it.

They found out its financing pattern and due to it, terrorist attacks stopped. That's why, the main point in the amendment of the Act of 2005 introduced today is that the one who is doing finance can now be arrested and punished. Now, all its financiers will be considered also as involved as its manufacturers. This is exactly similar to the United Nations resolution based on the same ideology. The proposed amendment aligns with the United Nations Resolution 1540 of 2004.

Sir, in order to strengthen India in every way, we are making such laws in collaboration with the forces of the country and the world, based on the ideology of the United Nations, so that all citizens can be safe inside the country and elsewhere. There should not be such kind of attacks, like Nerve gas agents happened in Tokyo

or Anthrax or any new creative way with any weapons of mass destruction. This amendment is being brought keeping in mind the FATF standards. We are in close proximity with some countries which follow the ideas of weapons of mass destruction and many times they have used or are likely to use these weapons and chemical or biological weapons. That's why our country needs to be fully prepared so that we can keep our citizens safe to every extent. I congratulate and support the amendment brought by the Ministry of External Affairs today.

[English]

SHRI A. RAJA (NILGIRIS): Mr. Chairman Sir, I thank you for the opportunity that has been given to me to comment upon Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022.

Sir, I am happy that the Government has brought the Bill to strengthen the earlier legislation which was brought during the UPA Government in 2004 and 2005.

I recall India's role in the domain of disarmament. Ever since Independence, India's Foreign Policy has been in pursuit of global nuclear disarmament. In 1998, at the Special Session of the United General Assembly on Disarmament at New York, the then Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, gave a proposal to the United Nations for a phased elimination of nuclear weapons in a time bound framework. But that attempt did not succeed since some of the countries were not cooperating at that time. Since then, time and again, we proved India's status, though we got the status as nuclear weapons State, and we did not mitigate our stand that our objective is nuclear weapon free world.

Sir, India all along advocated International Non-Proliferation Agreement under which countries would agree to stop production of fissile material to be used as weapons but all the attempts including the proposal that was made by the then Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, were futile since the States which were declared as nuclear weapon power States were not willing to accept some of the terms which were proposed by Shri Rajiv Gandhi at that time.

In 1972 and 1998, we have come across some exercises like that of Pokhran but that does not give any impression about us that we are not against disarmament. We proved that all our efforts in this nuclear domain is only for our security and integrity.

Sir, the Bill is aimed to fulfil a limited purpose, namely, to prohibit financing of any activity in relation to weapons of mass destruction and freeze such accounts if any. That is the provision available in the Bill. As such, it is completely consequential to the earlier legislation. Everybody in the House has welcomed it. There is no deviation in that stand.

On the other hand, using this occasion, I want to touch some information on the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Though we are not party to that, in letter and spirit, off the record, we are abiding by the NPT. Even when we are not a member of the NPT, we are strictly following the Treaty. I want to recall some memories, as such.

What type of tangible achievements are going to be made by these legislations passed by India or any other country under the NPT or non-NPT? That is the apprehension in the mind of everyone. What is the mechanism available to holistically implement a legislation passed by the respective Parliament of the State which really wants to have peace, irrespective of the political entity of the State? That is the question.

My friend from the National Indian Congress says that we are not having adequate mechanism in terms of aircraft and other mechanisms to curb this menace. But when we are making a legislation like this, to implement such a legislation, what type of a Treaty are we going to enter into with other countries? If other countries would not be in line with this legislation, what will be the purpose or solution of this legislation? I have my own doubt about it.

Sir, what did America do in Iran in the name of proliferation? In the name of proliferation, America entered into Iran and did all the inhumane activities. Mass destruction was done in the name of proliferation. Nobody could stop it. Now, what is happening in Ukraine? Russia cannot be stopped by America. America did a wrong thing in Iran and the same wrong thing is being done by Russia. But both the countries are silent. The entire humanity is in peril.

That is why, I want to submit my own apprehension before this House. I want to invite the attention of the hon. Minister through you, Sir, that just making legislations, I think, cannot be a holistic approach to curb the menace. Let some international treaties be initiated by the United Nations.

My learned friend, the hon. Minister, is having a rich experience through his service in various countries. He might have met with many Ministers, many political heads of countries across the world. He must have witnessed many incidents in respective countries where he worked. Yes, State-wise legislation is essentially needed. But what is needed more is a collective and holistic mechanism through the United Nations or any other forum not only to curb the menace but to implement this type of legislation in a proper manner irrespective of State boundaries. That has to be addressed properly.

Sir, what type of hypocrisy is being perpetuated in North Korea by America? There are many incidents in the world. What is happening in Ukraine? Countries including America have become helpless to address these issues. There are hundreds of incidents of pilferage in black market by the underworld of passing nuclear knowledge, materials and equipment. The hon. Minister might be aware of all these things. Sir, as reported, there are about 34,500 nuclear weapons at present in 50 countries excluding the weapons with the terrorists. As the House is aware, a few years back, a Pakistani nuclear scientist had stirred the issue of transfer of technology of nuclear weapons by proliferating them to the other countries. The world has witnessed this. What happened after that? A new emerging situation and an emerging challenge about the proliferation has arisen as a scientist of a neighbouring country has violated

the commitment given to us by Lahore Declaration. The hon. Minister must be aware of what Lahore Declaration says. That was signed by the then Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Shri Musharraf. I am quoting from the Lahore Declaration: “The two sides will engage bilateral consultation on nuclear doctrines to development confidence building and to avoid conflicts between us”.

This Declaration was signed by the then Prime Minister Shri Vajpayee and Shri Musharraf. Was it abided by Pakistan? Bilateral talks, agreements, treaties, diplomatic relations at the Minister level or at the Ambassador level or the Secretary level – all these have become a mockery now-a-days. That is why, the Government has to think what type of mechanism we can put forth before the United Nations to address these issues in a holistic manner.

Sir, there is a big market of nuclear trafficking as the United Nations report says. The report suspects that there are underworld operations behind it. But still, there is no holistic approach. A few years back, the United Nations Security Council requested all the States to adopt measures to criminalize the assistance of acquiring weapons of mass destruction. I think that this Bill has been brought to fulfill this obligation of United Nations Security Council. I wish I am correct in this regard. For this reason, I welcome the efforts of the hon. Minister and the Government.

Sir, I conclude with the words of the former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. In his first address to the nation, he said:

“India is a responsible nuclear power. We will continue to work to prevent proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. At the same time, we remain committed to the goal of universal nuclear disarmament.”

Sir, I am happy this Government is keeping the commitment which was given by Dr. Manmohan Singh without any reservation and criticism.

PROF. SOUGATA RAY (DUM DUM): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to speak on the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022. This Bill has been brought forward in the interest of national security and national interest. So, we support the Bill.

Sir, this Bill is formed out of the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) to prohibit financing of terrorist activities. It empowers the Central Government to freeze, seize or attach funds or other financial assets or economic resources for preventing such financing; prohibit making available funds, financial assets or economic resources for any prohibited activity in relation to weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

This Bill has been brought forward in a hurry because only on 4th April, the United Nations, meeting at Geneva, expressed deep concern over proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Our Permanent Representative Dr. Pankaj Sharma said that India has been drawing the attention of the world towards these threats and the need to strengthen international cooperation to address them through its annual consensus. He said: "We are deeply concerned about the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, which endangers international peace and security".

Sir, the whole theory is about a terrorist getting his hands on weapons of mass destruction. What are weapons of mass destruction? They are, nuclear, radiological, biological or chemical weapons. The weapon of mass destruction was last used in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Since then, though the world has seen many small

wars, weapons of mass destruction, which kill millions of people in minutes, have not been used. This is called Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) and, that is why, nobody goes for it. But now, there are eight countries in the world, China, Russia, North Korea, Pakistan, India, France, UK and USA which have got weapons of mass destruction. This includes India and Pakistan and five of these countries are signatories to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). India has not been a signatory to it. We have always cited our own security concern and, that is why, we have not signed the NPT, though we are for disarmament. Mr. Raja spoke at length about Shri Rajiv Gandhi's initiative in the matter.

Now, the important thing is to ensure the safety of our country in future. We may notice that in the 9/11 terrorist attack America had their twin towers destroyed. Since then, they set up a new department called, Department of Homeland Security and since that time, no major terrorist incident has happened in the United States of America.

If you go to USA, not as a Minister but as an ordinary person, you would realise that they have really tightened their homeland security. The main point is to tighten our own homeland security so that this does not happen.

Now, having said that ... (*Interruptions*)

THE MINISTER OF JAL SHAKTI (SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT): What is happening in West Bengal? ... (*Interruptions*)

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: That is not very important. You went to Bengal and lost all the seats. That is why, that place is always in your mind. Why do you forget your defeat? You were going around in those villages and you lost all the seats ...

(Interruptions) Why are you talking about it? You are now a Minister of the Government of India. You forget about your defeat in Bengal ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Prof. Sougata Ray, kindly address to the Chair.

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: Yes, Sir.

We have gone through this process long ago. We remember Pokhran, 1998. We remember, just to get out of US sanctions, Jaswant Singh-ji and Strobe Talbot talked for hours together, days together to bring the Americans to understand our position with regard to vis-à-vis Nuclear Proliferation.

Now, the External Affairs Minister, who as I said, is a diplomat and taciturn, does not waste a single word, does not make a single wrong comment, made a comment today that the world order is changing. He said that he will be on the right side of the world order. I would like to know from the hon. Minister, what world order is he talking of, and which side will we be. Yesterday, I raised some questions. He was busy and I instigated him. He did not reply. I asked: "Why has India gone into passive diplomacy where our diplomacy consists only of the Prime Minister ringing up Putin and Zelensky, and the External Affairs Minister meeting the British Foreign Secretary or the Russian Foreign Minister?

Do we not have anything else?" Tanks of one country are pummelling another country. Leave aside whether Zelensky is pro-American or Putin is right. We do not ask. But look at the courage that the Ukrainians have shown. Everybody thought that Russian tanks would cut through Ukraine like a knife through butter. But the people in Ukraine have resisted which proves that nationalism is still a force in this world.

[Translation]

DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY (GODDA): Sir, is this the way? ... *(Interruptions)*

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: Russia will attack, is it good?... *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Kindly come to the point.

... *(Interruptions)*

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: Sir, please stop this*

[English]

Sir, I am saying that we should not take sides. But I say that when a country is being attacked even in today's day and age, we should sit up and take notice. Jawaharlal Nehru would not have been a silent spectator. India's Panchsheel does not advise being a silent spectator to aforesaid genocide. India must be proactive considering her size, her importance.

[Translation]

Our diplomacy ... *(Interruptions)* whoever speaks among you, I will also not allow Hon'ble Jaishankar to speak. You have become a big ...* ... *(Interruptions)* You people do nothing. ... *(Interruptions)* He changes his place and sits here. He does ...* here every day. Is this the way things happen? ...* ... *(Interruptions)*

HONORABLE CHAIRPERSON: Please keep your voice low.

... *(Interruptions)*

* Not recorded

* Not recorded

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: You are speaking on an international relations.

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: Why should a Minister disturb me? ... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

HONORABLE CHAIRPERSON: You should not say such a thing that there should be some bitterness in the international relations. Now express your views.

... *(Interruptions)*

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: I shall not be cowed down by any threat. I am addressing you.

HONORABLE CHAIRPERSON: You should not say a thing which may cause some bitterness in the international relations. Kindly convey your views.

[English]

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: Sir, I am slowly in a process of concluding my speech. I started my speech by supporting this Bill. I started by praising Mr. Jaishankar. I said that the Foreign Minister must persuade the Government to take a more pro-active role in the matter of conflict between Ukraine and Russia.

16.00 hrs

What is wrong in that? I am again urging him to take a more proactive role in bringing the world from the brink of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) to having a better nuclear-controlled regime. India is totally silent on this issue. Only some officers go here and there. We have not heard a single statement by the Prime Minister on the

problem of nuclear proliferation. We have not had any major statement from the Prime Minister on the matter of one country invading another country. Yes, it is said that Foreign Policy is 'enlightened self-interest'. I know that. We have read what Machiavelli said but Foreign Policy is not Machiavelli alone. Foreign Policy is also Panchsheel and Gautam Buddha's teaching. We are a 5000-year-old country. We must have a proper Foreign Policy. That is why, Sir, again, I am assuring the Minister our full support in any further efforts he may take towards the activities of rogue states, rogue individuals, and criminals who tend to use weapons of mass destruction. But, let me tell you, Sir, that on the internet they are showing a method in which a college boy can assemble together a small nuclear device. The point is not that but the point is to have vigilance. Abraham Lincoln said that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. Are you vigilant enough? Do we keep track of who is doing what in the country? That is the important thing. We must defend ourselves.

Lastly, Sir, I will stop by quoting two lines by John Donne, the famous poet, quoted in Ernest Hemingway's 'For Whom the Bell Tolls'. He said:

*Any man's death diminishes me,
because I am involved in mankind;
and, therefore, never send to know for whom the bell tolls;
it tolls for thee.*

When somebody else is attacked, I feel the bell is tolling for me. We also have to defend our heights in Galwan or in Pangong Lake. We have to defend our areas in Arunachal. We have to find out friends who defend us in this difficult situation and that should be the crux of our Foreign Policy.

With that, Sir, I support the Bill and thank you for allowing me to speak.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much.

Shri Sanjeev Kumar ji.

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (CUTTACK): Sir, this word ...* is unparliamentary or not. ... (*Interruptions*)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: It should be removed from the record.

[Translation]

DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY: Sir, the Hon. Member repeatedly says in his speech that I change my seat frequently...(*Interruptions*) He is so senior, he does not even know that the seat of a Member of Parliament, except the Cabinet Minister and some of the opposition...(*Interruptions*)

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: Sometimes he sits there, sometimes he sits here... (*Interruptions*)

DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY: That is my wish. It will be decided by the Chair... (*Interruptions*)

HONORABLE CHAIRPERSON: Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Singari.

[English]

DR. SANJEEV KUMAR SINGARI (KURNOOL): Thank you hon. Chairperson for giving me this opportunity to speak on the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022, on behalf of YSRCP.

Sir, this Bill seeks to amend the principal Act of 2005. The proposed amendment states that no person shall finance any activity which is prohibited under this Act, or under the United Nations (Security Council) Act, 1947 or any other relevant Act and the Government of India shall have powers to freeze attach the assets of such person or organisation, indulging directly or indirectly in such unlawful activities.

Sir, the main objective of the Bill is to prevent unlawful activities relating to biological, chemical and nuclear weapons including export of weapons or transfer of technology to anti-social elements.

Sir, YSRCP supports the proposed amendments because they are related to national security and the security of mankind.

Sir, I would like to speak in Telugu.

□ While thanking our Hon. leader Shri YS Jagan Mohan Reddy and people of Kurnool for giving a person like me from ordinary family, this opportunity to speak in Parliament which is a Temple of the democracy. On behalf of YSRCP, I would like to express my views. Recently, United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has come out with guidelines against use of Weapons of Mass destruction. Through resolution no. 1540, UNSC has placed responsibility on Member Nations. We need to amend our laws in line with International Society. This is our international responsibility. Therefore, I feel

* ...* English translation of this part of the speech originally delivered in Telugu.

that today we have this need to amend our law. As per the resolution of UNSC, there will be financial sanctions on countries which violates law.

The objectives of this amendment is to punish those who manufacture weapons of mass destruction, to seize financial sources of those persons or organizations which support such unlawful activities, and to see that funds are not collected to support such activities. It is commendable that this act which was passed in 2005, is being amended now after 17 years.

Our enemy nations which are not capable of fighting with us are sowing seeds of hatred in the minds of disoriented youth of our country and thus indulging in indirect war. For such nations, this law should serve as a warning.

Our country is moving ahead in disarmament. Because we believe that whole world is one family. We want everyone to prosper. We want that nuclear weapons are wiped out from the world. This amendment is an effort in that direction. India is committed to 'No first use' policy when it comes to use of Nuclear weapons. Even though we are capable of retaliation against hostile countries which may attack us. We still wish peace. Our country is fighting terrorism for so many decades. If terrorists get hold of weapons of mass destruction, we all know the consequences. We should respect the resolution of United Nations and also make other countries to honor this resolution.

Sir, we should talk about biological weapons in this context. COVID pandemic should be considered as a biological warfare. Before a virus infects a human being, it should first infect an animal. After multiple mutations in animals, that virus would infect human beings. No one could prove that Covid was infected through animals. It is

believed by intelligentsia that American Scientists and Chinese Lab were conducting some experiments, which accidentally resulted in Corona pandemic throughout the world. We witnessed how humanity suffered during Corona pandemic. Due to scarcity of oxygen, we lost lakhs of lives. I would like to inform the House that Corona is known to mankind for the last 60 years. There were many diseases which were treated successfully. But there are many diseases which are far more dangerous than Corona. Whether we are prepared for any such biological warfare in future? Only due to lack of oxygen, we lost lakhs of lives. We need to have an aim and strategy in place, to face any such crisis in future. In this direction, we need to strengthen our basic health infrastructure, by having adequate quantity of oxygen, ventilators and medicines at village level as well. This should be our plan.

By mere passage of these bills, we should not assume that we are capable of handling any crisis. Like a knee jerk reflex, we witnessed intense suffering due to Corona pandemic, therefore we should be prepared for such unforeseen perils in future so that we can manage them efficiently.

I have a question in my mind for the last 40 years and I would like to seek an answer from the respectable members of the House. India was a slave for more than 1000 years, under foreign rule. The main reasons were, we do not have modern weapons then. There was no unity amongst 750 kings in India. But now the situation is different. We are an united country. We have powerful weapons with us. Therefore, many countries fear our capabilities. I thank Union government for making efforts in strengthening our country's capabilities.

I thank, hope of weaker sections and trendsetter Shri YS Jagan Mohan Reddy for giving me this opportunity. I also thank honourable Chairman for giving me opportunity to speak on an issue of national security.*

Jai Hind.

[Translation]

SHRI VINAYAK BHAURAO RAUT (RATNAGIRI-SINDHUDURG): Hon. Speaker, today, the Hon. Minister has introduced The Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition and Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022, I rise to support it.

Sir, as you know that terrorist activities are increasing in our country and many Indians lose their lives in these incidents. Terrorist activities are happening not only in our country but all over the world. There is a need to control the commotion raised from these activities. There is a need to control the attempts being made to disturb the whole world by using weapons.

Sir, I express my gratitude towards the Hon. Minister for introducing the Bill by taking the initiative from the Government. I hope that India will keep moving forward to maintain peace and security in the world. Through this Bill, the 17-year-old law of 2005 is getting amended for the first time. This Bill is going to keep the illegal use of mass destruction weapons such as nuclear, radiological, chemical, biological and other equipment in check.

Sir, an important decision has been taken by the National Security of the United Nations Organization to amend the 17-year-old law and to move towards a

new direction by incorporating new suggestions. Now, it is needed. As Saugata da has said, eight countries possess weapons of mass destruction. They have declared themselves the possession of such weapons. These eight countries are China, India, France, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States. These countries have declared that they would be ready to destroy destructive weapons if there is a need arises to maintain peace in the world. India is also one of these countries which is a matter of pride for us.

Sir, the Bill covers illegal activities relating to biological, chemical and nuclear weapons delivery systems. Prevention of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems requires unified legal provisions to control material, enterprises and technology exports. All countries should exercise restrain themselves, they should not resort to illegal activities, should not do terrorist activities such acts should be neither supported or promote, instead these activities should be banned. All countries should exercise self restrain. India is moving forward in this direction and it is the greatest thing. According to international organizations and the United Nations Security Council, weapons of mass destruction can kill large numbers of people in a short period of time.

It is seen now. Since the start of the war between Russia and Ukraine, the whole world knows the number of people being killed by the use of such weapons. Therefore, the need has arisen to eliminate the weapons of mass destruction.

Recently, the Foreign Secretary of India while representing the country said that India is in favor of a nuclear weapon-free world and India will always be ahead

in the goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. I appreciate him for this. We can see the damage caused in various countries when chemical weapons reach the hands of terrorists during the war between Russia and Ukraine.

Chairperson Sir, through this Bill, I would like to say that in the 26/11 attack, the terrorists used such destructive weapons in America. Our country also witnessed bomb blasts in Mumbai in 1992-93. Hundreds of people lost their lives in the Mumbai bomb blasts. After that, 26/11 was a huge terrorist attack. The terrorist also attacked on our parliament in 2001. When weapons reach the hands of the terrorists, they misuse it to kill people in various parts of India be it Parliament and Mumbai. The people of Mumbai and all the MPs are the witness of that.

Therefore, there is a need to destroy such weapons and establish peace all over the world. Gautam Buddha, said the same thing in his teachings. Saint Dnyaneshwar of Maharashtra has said that - 'Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah, Sarve Santu Niramaya'.

Everyone should stay well and should be awakened to live peacefully. Therefore, destruction of such weapons is the only message being send by India today.

I conclude my words by expressing my gratitude and congratulating the Hon. Minister. Thank you.

[English]

SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU (BEHRAMPUR): Thank you, Sir. I rise to speak on the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022 brought by our hon. External Affairs Minister. This is a very old Act. In 2005 when this Act was passed, it banned only manufacturing of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Sir, the Bill seeks to provide for provisions against financing of proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and their delivery systems so as to fulfil our international obligations. The United Nations Security Council's targeted financial sanctions and recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force have mandated against financing of proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destructions and their delivery systems, and this Bill has been brought in this background.

Sir, when it comes to preventing Weapons of Mass Destructions and proliferation, we need to be conscious of both State and non-State actors. Money laundering, terrorist financing and financing for proliferation of weapons of mass destruction can have negative effects on a country which may include increase in violent and organized crime and corruption. From an international perspective, it can result in loss of reputation in the international market, loss of donor functioning, loss of foreign direct investment and loss of credibility for the financial sector. Therefore, identifying, assessing and understanding proliferation financing risks on a regular basis is very much essential.

Sir, India has always made its position clear on this issue. India opposed signing the NPT and CTBT for valid reasons. India had campaigned for imposing a ban on

nuclear weapons' testing for a long period. In 1954, India initiated a global call at the UN Disarmament Commission for putting an end to nuclear testing and a freeze on fissile material production. In 1978 and 1982, at the Special Sessions on Disarmament, India proposed banning nuclear testing. In 1988, India introduced an action plan for the time-bound elimination of nuclear weapons. However, in 1993, India took a different course and opposed the treaty on the ground that it is silent on destruction of existing nuclear stockpiles.

The treaty also does not contain any time-bound programme for destruction of nuclear weapons, thereby leaving nuclear disarmament solely to the discretion of nuclear weapon States.

Sir, India underlined the importance of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention as examples of non-discriminatory treaties in the field of disarmament for the total elimination of specific types of nuclear weapons of mass destruction. India reaffirms that disarmament is a primary goal of Chemical Weapons Convention and should remain a priority till the complete destruction of all chemical weapons is achieved.

India is a responsible nuclear weapon State and is committed, as per its nuclear doctrine, to maintain a credible, minimum deterrence with the posture of no-first-use and non-use against the non-nuclear weapon States. At the UN, India supports the full and effective implementation of Chemical Weapons Convention and emphasizes the strengthening of the OPCW to fulfill its important mandate.

The present Bill is in our national interest and in accordance with our international obligations. I, on behalf of my party Biju Janata Dal, support this Bill. We always support any step in the direction of our national security and global peace.

In fact, our hon. Chief Minister, Shri Naveen Patnaikji has advocated for inclusion of *ahimsa*, that is, non-violence in the Preamble to our Constitution. That will strengthen India's position as a leader of peace.

With these words, I support the Bill and conclude. Thank you.

SHRI RITESH PANDEY (AMBEDKAR NAGAR): Sir, I rise to support the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022.

16.24 hrs

(Shri Kodikunnil Suresh *in the Chair*)

The Bill, under clause 2, seeks to insert a new section, section 12A which reads out that no person shall finance or provide financial services for any activity which is prohibited under this Act, or under the United Nations (Security Council) Act, 1947 or any other relevant Act for the time being in force, or by an order issued under any such Act, in relation to weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

Sir, I have two small apprehensions on this Bill, and I am sure that through my discussion over here, those points would be addressed. In Resolution 1540 (2004), the Security Council decided that all States shall refrain from providing any form of support to actors that attempt to develop, acquire, manufacture, possess, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery, in particular

for terrorist purposes. The Resolution requires all States to adopt and enforce appropriate laws to this effect as well as other effective measures to prevent the proliferation of these weapons and their means of delivery to actors, in particular for terrorist purposes.

Nonetheless, detecting proliferation-relevant illicit financing is even harder than detecting money laundering or terrorism financing. The risks posed by Weapons of Mass Destruction stem not only from ready-made bombs, nuclear, chemical, or radiological material but also from dual-use goods and technology that are traded, shipped, and used globally. Even the components for nuclear power reactors that generate electricity rely on dual-use components and technology that can be used in a nuclear weapons programme. You can find these things in laptops, transistors, and in instant coffee maker also; the same technology is used, which, sort of, is related to the same matter that we are discussing here. A common perception within the private financial sector is that proliferation financing controls refer to the implementation of country-specific sanctions, for example, those designed to prevent North Korea and Iran from tapping into the global financial system for proliferation activities.

However, country-specific sanctions should be seen as integral but not the only part of proliferation financing controls. Financial institutions are aware of UN Security Council resolutions though they are not always well-equipped to implement country-specific ones. Moreover, sanctions implementation is the limited capacity of financial institutions to distinguish proliferation activity. Financial institutions see only a small part of data related to a given transaction and they do not have the technical expertise to distinguish what is proliferation-relevant and what is not. So, that is a very difficult thing

for financial institutions to figure out and that is something that has to be taken into consideration.

One of the most important areas for the Government to work upon is on informing the private sector promptly to match changes in UN designations of entities and individuals. For example, if the UN Security Council designated new entities or individuals as proliferators, but a given country failed to update its lists, what happens is that these financial institutions continue to trade with these entities because they are not made aware of these changes in time. So, that is also something that needs to be considered.

Finally, I would like to say that there are certain practicalities that come into these issues and they need to be resolved. Financial institutions use software that screens transactions against the lists of UN-designated entities and individuals. In practice, such screening systems return a high number of false positives. Basically, what that means is that because of name similarities, when you update the list, a high number of names come back to this system as false positives and that percentage is around 95. So, this is a huge risk. Risk managers spend a lot of time trying to figure this out, which is very, very difficult for them. For example, they have to take such high volume of numbers and names, and they have to get into a menial job of separating them, which they could use for some other thing.

On behalf of Bahujan Samaj Party and *behen* Kumari Mayawati ji, I would like to support this Bill. I have one more request. We have not passed a single Bill unanimously. There are many Bills that have been passed, and there have been

support from the Opposition as well. I think such a Bill, when everybody is supporting it, *[Translation]* The Chair at least should also listen to us because we are also involved in this. Thank you.

[English]

DR. FAROOQ ABDULLAH (SRINAGAR): Sir, I have one request. We have hon. MLAs from Maharashtra. I think it will be nice if you could welcome them.

SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SADANAND SULE (BARAMATI): Sir, I stand here in support of the Bill that we are discussing today. I would definitely like to quote what the India's stand at the UN is. It says that "they are deeply concerned over proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery system." The earlier speaker, Professor Saugata Babu has already spoken about it at length, but in a synopsis, I would like to say that "India supports the full and effective implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and emphasizes the strengthening of the OPCW to fulfill its important mandate."

Sir, it is very good that we have brought in this Bill and India has always had a very good and a positive image of a peace-loving and peace-making country. So, I congratulate the hon. Minister for bringing in this Bill. But I would like to bring to the notice of the House of what he said. He said that we have come to the "new world order". It is true that the world has changed. There is a book by Mr. WS Carus, called *Defining Weapons of Mass Destruction*. It is one of the papers where he had said that the Centre of Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction, which is a National Defence University, has recommended "why do we not expand the scope given how the world

is changing?”. Even the war today globally is a hybrid war now as we call it. They have recommended that India’s definition of ‘weapons of mass destructions’ is for nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. So, can we expand it? It may not be literally in this Bill. Maybe in the next few months you could consider this. This is my request to you. There are these new challenges because of this new world order. Can we talk about radiology, talk about high explosives, talk about weapons of mass destruction or in fact potentially include CBRN weapons, other means of causing massive disruptions such as cyber-attacks, electro-magnetic attacks, munitions? If we could make it, I think we will really set a very good order, and a new precedent in the world that India is very serious and committed. That is the only suggestion that I would like to make.

Besides this, I would like to put something on the table. In the larger scheme of things, it is a very small example. In Maharashtra recently there was a small power crisis in Mumbai city for over three hours. People said it was an act of hacking. It was the electromagnetic system which collapsed.

This could be a very small trial, we do not know. But for a city like Mumbai to have no electricity is a big thing. We did not know how it stopped, how it collapsed. There was nothing wrong with the grid. Could it have been an attack? I have no evidence to prove it, but this is how the story begins. The only point I am trying to make here is, could we consider broadening the definition?

Besides this, I would like to talk about some other issue which nobody else has mentioned and that is the zoonotic diseases. It is like a pandemic. There is a story that COVID-19 was probably an attack on the globe. Could we have a broad discussion on

this? This is my suggestion to the hon. Minister. What is interesting in this entire debate is this. When we brought the nuclear agreement, at that time we were sitting on that side and you were in a different role, and there were a lot of objections to the agreement. I do not want to get into a *tu tu main main* on this because it is a very serious Bill. I am so glad that the agreement that the hon. Manmohan Singh Ji had led at that time to put India on the global map today has become a reality. In the Nuclear Suppliers Group, we are a very important part. I really want to know from the hon. Minister that with all the new friendships that you have made in the last few years, why have we not joined the Group as yet? What are we doing to excel our position? America was very positive about it. There were a lot of nations which have supported India, but there are nations which have objected like New Zealand, Ireland, Austria, China. They have objected to us. Now. What is our position with such wonderful relations? I still remember this article. I was too tempted and I hope you indulge me with this and take it on a little lighter note or a little banter in Parliament, sometimes. There was a story which I was too tempted to talk about today. It says, "They talked, they posed, and they left." The Indian Prime Minister and the Chinese President met 18 times since 2014. I stand corrected, it could be more. There were many, many meetings that they have had. I am a big one for dialogue. I am completely against any war.

But what has happened to our position by having so many meetings where they talked, they posed and they left? What really happened between these three activities when they talked, they posed and they left? Something more substantial should come out of it. I would like to ask the hon. Minister where this is.

Like my colleague, Shri Ritesh Pandey talked extensively about the financing of it, I would like to ask this from the hon. Minister. It is a very good Bill. I think that any such thing must be stopped. I think that the entire House in one voice supports your Bill. The only clarification that I would like to ask is that there is a note in the Statement of Objects and Reasons in 5 (b) (i) where it mentions 'freeze, seize or attach funds'. I appreciate it as it is a wonderful thing, but what concerns me and more so because it is something very new.

I am not a financial expert, but I hear so much about the darknet and the crypto, and all these funding being done through this. This is not only our problem. It is a global problem. Right now, our country has taxed it at 30 per cent. The hon. RBI Governor -- and not just the present Governor, but several Governors -- has constantly said about this kind of digital money or 'transaction' as you called it. Right now, I am really confused because it is not legal is what the Government says, but at the same time it is taxing it at 30 per cent. There is too much confusion. So, does an investor invest in it? I am asking this because tomorrow the Government will say this was not to be done. If they are bringing in this into crypto, then it could be an attack here, but somebody could be paying in some other country. How are we going to 'freeze, seize or attach funds'? This is a completely grey area, which I think we must deliberate upon. It is not only about us, but it is a global issue that we need to raise.

Another thing that happened was actually a little embarrassing for us. I respect the hon. Defence Minister. He was very gracious about -- I would call it -- the 'Brahmos experiment'. It was a mistake that happened. It was a misfire. I know that nobody did it intentionally, but the hon. Defence Minister was very kind enough and showed such

humility to come and say that we will take corrective action and we are having an inquiry, but it was not intended at all. But the Philippines has objected to it as per newspaper reports. I am quoting all the data that has come in there. I have no access to any information. I am going by what the media said. If the Philippines has shown concern and if these kinds of situations happen, then how are we going to control it? I think we should make it a little more academic also.

Yes, we support this Bill completely in one voice in this entire House, but we must definitely be very careful about the new technology coming in. We all are just raising our concerns even if these are just to make sure that it is a flawless Bill, and make sure that India is known for what it really is, which is about truth and it is about being a partner to everybody, with absolutely no warfare and a peace-loving nation like the Mahatma would have wanted it. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI JAYADEV GALLA (GUNTUR): Thank you, Sir. I rise to support the Bill moved by the hon. External Affairs Minister. The objective of the Bill is limited. It seeks to ban funding for weapons of mass destruction and gives power to the Union Government for appropriate action against the culprits under the provisions of WMD Act.

Sir, I have a few quick points that I would like to make. Here, I would like to appreciate first the foresight of our former Prime Ministers, Shrimati Indira Gandhi and Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji, in making India a nuclear State. The reason I say this is because as we see what is happening in Ukraine, which remained a non-nuclear country since it believed the assurances given to it by the West and NATO and gave up its nuclear arms. But looking at the current situation in Ukraine, a question arises.

Would Russia have attacked Ukraine if Ukraine had possessed nuclear weapons? Conversely, could Russia have attacked Ukraine if Russia did not have nuclear weapons with the confidence that it would not be countered by rest of the world?

The traditional arguments for nuclear non-proliferation have been somewhat disproven with this current case. Along with the new world order, we also need a new paradigm or a new nuclear doctrine not only to avoid mutually assured destruction between nuclear powers, which was the case in earlier days, but also how do we assure the non-nuclear countries of their sovereign rights. How do we prevent nuclear countries from misusing their nuclear threat to bully smaller non-nuclear countries? This needs to be addressed by the world at large, and India has a leading role to play in defining this going forward.

What is the future of non-proliferation really needs to be carefully examined, understood as a new paradigm needs to emerge?

One clarification I wish to seek is that the proposed insertion of Clause 12A appears to be a little vague. Here, you are saying no person shall finance any activity prohibited under this Act or under the UN Security Council Act, 1947 or any other relevant Act for the time being in force. I think, this appears to be a bit vague as we have not mentioned which are the relevant Acts under which you propose to take action.

So, I suggest for consideration of the hon. Minister to attach a schedule to this Bill and list the Acts, Agreements, Convention, etc. which come under the purview of this legislation.

The next point I wish to make is relating to India's full support and effective implementation of Chemical Weapons Convention, and strengthening the Organization for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, and mandate given to it. And, at the same time, we are also voicing our support for institutional strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention, and bat for legally binding protocol. But, if you look again at the ongoing Russia-Ukraine armed conflict, we have seen umpteen times statements coming from Russia about use of chemical weapons, and Ukraine claiming that Russia may use biological and chemical weapons at any time. So, does it not defeat the very convention and objective which India and other countries are pursuing. If signatories to the Convention are blatantly breaking it, then, what is the use of this Convention?

Secondly, we are going to have the Ninth Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention this year. So, I wish to know what would be the approach of India in this Conference, in the light of ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict. The third point I wish to make is about the effective response to a chemical or biological attack, particularly on our citizens. I wish to know what sort of mechanism we have in place, be it relating to detection or providing antidotes or decontaminate and guide people not to consume contaminated food and water. I am asking this as we have seen the vulnerability of sarin nerve gas bioterrorism attack in Tokyo, where in spite of having much better mechanism than India, which showed the vulnerability of civilian population and killed 200 people. So, I wish to know the kind of mechanism and the national strategy that is in place in the event of a chemical or biological attack.

The next point which I want to make, I think, several Members have also asked is about the Coronavirus questioning whether it is a biological attack or not. I don't think

we have been able to come to any final conclusion on this because China is neither sharing any information nor allowing any inspections. There are contradicting stories which the hon. Minister is aware of, more than what I could understand. If it is a biological weapon, the entire world could do nothing or even come to a conclusion that it is a biological weapon, leave alone taking action or imposing sanctions on China.

In such a scenario, I doubt that enactments like these would be of any help. I wish to have a response from the hon. Minister on this as well.

Sir, I feel, today, more than chemical and biological weapons, the world is threatened and facing risks posed by cyber weapons, hypersonic missiles, drone swarms, pandemic outbreaks, be it manmade or natural. Now, drones are innovative and novel delivery of weapons of mass destruction, be it chemical or biological, and are operated through artificial intelligence. So, we need to evolve strategies and create firewalls against such attacks on India. I am sure the House would like to know what efforts are being made by the Ministry in this regard since there is nothing in this Bill.

Finally, I am fully with the hon. Minister and the Government to ruthlessly crush financing any activity, which even in any remote possible way, is trying to help any activity, to prepare or produce, or help in making weapons of mass destruction, and their delivery. But I just wish to seek one clarification. In the pursuit of India's national interest and for more benevolent use of such technologies, scientific research must have been taking place on such technologies. And, hon. Minister is aware that sort of R&D is critical for the country. So, I ask the hon. Minister to simply clarify what the

Government has done to ensure that such critical research on such technologies is not impeded, even unintentionally, due to this legislation.

So, Sir, these are some of the issues I thought that I should flag and share with the hon. Minister. I request him to look into them and see how best we can strengthen this legislation from all corners to protect not only this country but also its Exclusive Economic Zone and beyond. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI MANISH TEWARI (ANANDPUR SAHIB): Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I do not think that anybody has a quibble with this Bill. As the hon. Minister Jaishankar explained that it is essentially to make us legally compliant with the mandates of the United Nations Security Council and the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force, behind the original Bill which this Bill seeks to amend lies an incredible story of multi-partisanship that we as a country need to celebrate. It is a story of how we first of all created, then nurtured, and sustained our strategic autonomy without giving up our principled position towards a world where there is verifiable, universal and comprehensive nuclear disarmament.

This is a story which started at the inception of the Indian nation itself in 1948 where the Atomic Energy Commission was established. In 1954, we had the Atomic Energy Establishment in Trombay which is now called the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre which was brought into existence in 1962. This House legislated the Atomic Energy Act and after the 1962, Sino-India conflict took place and the 1964 nuclear test was carried out by China at Lop Nur on the 16th October, 1964. We commenced our Nuclear Weapons Programme that culminated in the first peaceful nuclear explosion in

1974 under the leadership of the then Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi and then in 1998, when Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee was the Prime Minister, we decided to make the De Jure De Facto by carrying out two nuclear tests on the 11th May and 13th May, 1998.

Why I say De Facto De Jure is because some people would recall the history of Operation Brasstacks in 1986 and the Robert Gates Mission in 1990 which essentially sent out a very, very clear signal that not only did we have the capacity in the early 90's but, unfortunately, so did our western neighbour across the border. But the incredible thing, Mr. Chairperson, is that all throughout this long journey, unlike Pakistan which opened a nuclear Walmart, – it had a rogue scientist called A. Q. Khan who was not only accused but finally even held *prima facie* guilty by Pakistan itself for proliferating nuclear and missile technology – India has been able to maintain an impeccable track record insofar as non-proliferation is concerned. I think that was the reason why in 2008 when India negotiated the Indo-U.S. Nuclear Agreement under the leadership of then Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh and the Minister was I think the then Joint Secretary (Americas) and had played a very important role in bringing that agreement to fruition.

Not only were we the first non-nuclear weapon State in order to be able to conceptualize an agreement which effectively smashed the entire architecture of nuclear apartheid which was created when the first peaceful nuclear explosion was carried out with the formation of the London Suppliers Group but we were able to also get a 'clean' waiver from the Nuclear Suppliers Group with regard to that Indo-U.S.

Nuclear Agreement. And that brings me to a couple of questions which I have for the hon. Minister which of course may go beyond the amplitude of this Bill.

My first question is that, unfortunately, after the 2008 Indo-U.S. Nuclear Agreement and the 'clean' waiver that we got from the Nuclear Suppliers Group, we do not seem to have made much progress with regard to getting membership of that particular organization. My colleague, hon. Member, Supriya Sule ji, had alluded to some of the obstacles that are there in certain countries which are opposing India's membership of the NSG. I would want the hon. Minister to really try and bring this House up to speed as to whether there has been any progress between 2018, when the Summit was held in Kazakhstan if I remember correctly from the top of my head, and 2022 in our efforts to get membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

My second point, which was alluded to by some Members of this House, is this. We have had this impeccable track record of nuclear non-proliferation. Coupled with that we have maintained a very high degree of exactitude insofar as our delivery systems are concerned. Given that the recent inadvertent launch of the Brahmos missile which landed in Mian Channu in Pakistan which, if you go by reports in the public domain, could have not only endangered civilian aircraft which were in the vicinity of the trajectory of this missile but also may have invited a retaliatory launch given that unlike us our western neighbor actually has a first-use posture, could the Minister actually throw light as to what steps the Government has taken after this inadvertent incident to ensure that something of this sort does not get repeated in future?

My penultimate question is with regard to something strange that I discovered while I was researching for this Bill. In the year 2018, in the Bodh Gaya blast case, the Weapons of Mass Destruction Act was invoked by the National Investigation Agency.

In fact, they invoked Sections 14, 17 and 19 of the Act. The public reports which are there, or whatever is there in the public domain is completely ambiguous about really what happened after these Sections were invoked.

Could the Minister enlighten us whether charge sheets were filed in terms of these relevant Sections of the WMD Act? As I understand it, the Weapons of Mass Destruction Act is essentially to ensure that there is no proliferation of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear weapons. Since this was the first time that our National Investigation Agency had actually invoked provisions of this Act, could the Minister enlighten the House as to what has been the progress of those investigations?

My last point would relate to our no-first-use posture. On the 17th of August, 1999, after our nuclear test, India had put a draft nuclear doctrine in place, which was then formalized on the 4th of January, 2003 by the Cabinet Committee on Security Affairs. Since then, we have had a posture of recessed deterrence and no-first-use.

In the year 2014, just before the elections, in the manifesto which was brought out by the Bharatiya Janata Party, if I recall correctly at page 39 in subparagraph, there was a certain amount of ambiguity with regard to this no-first-use posture. Subsequently, former Defence Minister Mr. Parrikar, when he was releasing a book, had actually gone a little further and really suggested that the no-first-use posture possibly could be under consideration. Even the current Defence Minister Mr. Rajnath

Singh, on the 16th of August, 2019, had alluded to some ambiguity in it after his visit to Pokhran. The reason why I am posing these questions is because all this has created a consternation. Given the fact that our neighborhood is extremely becoming difficult, it would be enlightening to hear from the Minister as to whether we continue to maintain a no-first-use posture or is there any rethink in Government which he would like to share with the House?

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson.

DR. FAROOQ ABDULLAH: Sir, when Pokhran test took place, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee took me also along. I would like to say one thing.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: If you want to speak on this, you can.

DR. FAROOQ ABDULLAH: We are proud of our scientists. With all the information they have, America had no information that India was going to do this test. I think we should take note of this and congratulate our scientists that no one in the world came to know that we had done these tests. ... (*Interruptions*)

DR. SATYA PAL SINGH (BAGHPAT): Thank you, Chairman, Sir. I rise here in defense and support of this new amendment Bill, namely the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022. As we know, it was an old Act in the same name which was enacted in 2005, as many of our esteemed Members have mentioned. As the hon. Minister mentioned yesterday and today also that we are compliant or conforming to the United Nations Security Council's targeted financial sanctions and the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force which have mandated against financing of proliferation of

weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. In view of the above, there is a need to amend the said Act to provide against the financing of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems so as to fulfill our international obligations.

The Bill seeks to insert a new Section 12A – there is not much an amendment in that way – in the existing law which states that no person shall finance any activity which is prohibited under this Act, or under the United Nations (Security Council) Act, 1947, or any other relevant Act for the time being in force, or by an order issued under any such Act, in relation to weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. The Bill would give the Government of India powers to freeze, seize or attach funds or other financial assets or economic resources owned or controlled, wholly or jointly, directly or indirectly, by such person, or held by or on behalf of, or at the direction of, such person, or derived or generated from the funds or other assets owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by such person.

I would like to say that this amendment Bill shows the deep commitment of the Government of India to our counter-terrorism measures. I would like to congratulate our hon. Prime Minister for the way he has taken the leadership when he took over as the Prime Minister of this country, appealing to the world leaders to define the word 'terrorism' and to devise an international counter-terrorism strategy. This amendment also shows our commitment to build a strong internal security infrastructure in this country. This Bill also shows our deep commitment to international obligations and conventions. The Bill also shows our commitment to international peace, security and welfare of humanity.

That is why I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister and the Prime Minister of India. We all know, as has been mentioned earlier, about the devastation and destruction that the weapons of mass destruction carry. We all know the cases of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan. In Hiroshima, it killed 1,40,000 people. In Nagasaki, it killed 74,000 people, and the survivors suffered from cancer and other ailments in their lives. Even otherwise also, as some of my friends mentioned earlier, there have been some recent incidents. Col. Rathore was telling as to what happened in Tokyo subway in Japan in 1995 and in America in 2001. Similarly, one Chechen terrorist threatened that he had buried a dirty bomb in a Moscow park and he will turn Moscow city into an eternal desert. Similarly, recently, one American counter-terrorism official testified before the United States House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence that Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula has high intention to procure chemical weapons and biological devices, particularly in Pakistan and Yemen. So, we cannot say that the threat or the risk is over. We have to be much more vigilant than ever before.

17.00 hrs

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I would also like to share the views of the hon. Member Shri Uttam Kumar Reddy. The present Bill mentions about a person. Perhaps, I would also like to request the hon. Minister one thing. Now, there are such firms and companies. There are also rogue States. Sometimes they try to fund the terrorist activities. Smt. Supriya Sule was talking about it.

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 talks about the chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear (CBRN) weapons. I would like to ask the hon.

Minister whether the Government will include it because there is no clarification on this issue. Similarly, I would also like to request one thing though it is not directly related with his Ministry. It comes under the National Disaster Management Authority, which ultimately comes under the Ministry of Home Affairs. I have attended many conferences and workshops on CBRN. Basically, those conferences or workshops focused on how to defend ourselves. But unfortunately, even our Disaster Management Manual is not very clear. Who will be the first responder? Let us suppose that there is a biological attack or a chemical attack. Generally, or traditionally, it is the police, which is the first responder for such kinds of emergencies.

Is our police prepared for such kind of emergencies? Is our police trained or equipped to face such a situation? Shri Manish Tewari Ji was also talking about it. The Bhabha Atomic Research Centre is a nodal agency of the disaster management mechanism. I would like to know whether the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre will respond to such a situation. What will really happen? CBRN weapons-related disasters are a matter of grave concern for all of us. The whole country is vulnerable to such kinds of attacks. How do we prepare ourselves? How do we train our forces to tackle such a situation? How do we equip ourselves? Nowadays, we say that the NDRF or SDRF will take care of it. But NDRF is not present everywhere. I think, it will take a lot of time. I think, this is an issue which should be addressed urgently. There should be facilities so as to isolate and decontaminate our patients and victims. There is no clarity on that also in our Disaster Management Manual.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to tell you a story from a book namely 'Anti-Gravity Handbook'. In fact, this story had not come to our notice. In 1985, this book was

published. In the said book, there is a wonderful story as to what really happened. In 1965, while Chinese were in occupation of Tibet and Lhasa, they got some Sanskrit manuscripts and those Sanskrit manuscripts were sent to Dr. Ruth Reyna, an American professor, and a Sanskrit scholar and Indologist. At that time, she was on sabbatical at the University of Punjab in Ludhiana. Those manuscripts were sent to her for translation. That Professor translated those manuscripts. The translation was sent to the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore and to the Chinese as well. Our Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore said that 'that manuscript was not of much use and it could not be used. It is not part of the book that we claim, that is, Young Servers'. But after a few years, in the year 1975, the Chinese spoke at a press conference that that manuscript was very important and that they were going to use it for building interstellar spaceships. Years later, one Prof. A.V. Krishnamurthy, from the same Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore said that they believed that some of our texts, especially Vedas and Sanskrit texts, have the references of our spacecraft, aeronautics, and all these things.

I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether we can have a study on this in order to defend our country and to protect our citizens. Can we study these Sanskrit texts so as to find out some defensive mechanisms? Thank you very much.

SHRI E.T. MOHAMMED BASHEER (PONNANI): Thank you very much, Sir, for giving me an opportunity to speak on 'The Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022.

Sir, of course, this is a good move. The scope of this Bill is very limited. This is a modification of the parent Act to the effect of including funding also within the ambit of the parent Act.

Sir, India's stand was very clear always, now and then. India should stand for protecting the national interests, common goodness, and peace of the entire world.

Coming to this particular topic, we have always advocated for total disarmament. Our desire and ambition was to become a model to the entire world. We have done our level best in this direction. India took the initiative for the International Convention to Prohibit the Use of Nuclear Weapon.

Sir, in 1988, at the special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament at New York, the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi Ji put forward a comprehensive action plan based on this subject.

Sir, the original Bill in 2005 was moved by the then External Affairs Minister Shri Natwar Singh. Our stand was very clear. Nuclear power can be used for security of the nation, development of the nation but at the same time, we were deadly against the misuse of it – whether it is chemical weapon, biological or toxic weapon. That was our clear stand.

Sir, we should be proud of our leaders. Our country should be really grateful to our former leaders. They always took a bold step. We have to appreciate them for their farsightedness.

Rajiv Gandhi Ji's Ministry has shown farsightedness, commitment for peaceful coexistence, and world peace.

Sir, my tributes to such great leaders on this occasion. It may be noted that India has also an institutionalized mechanism to prevent unlawful access to such weapons and their delivery system.

Use of nuclear energy is a useful thing and at the same time, we have to handle the misuse of it and we must treat it with high-handedness.

Many learned friends were speaking about the consequences. If nuclear power is used in a negative manner, we cannot imagine the havoc it is going to make. It will lead to destruction of life and organisms.

Sir, there are many International Conventions such as Chemical Convention, Biological Convention, Toxic Convention and we are all committed to go according to that.

There are many things. I do not want to say much. UN Security Council Resolution 1540 requires all States to adopt measures to criminalise assistance to non-State actors or to acquire weapons of mass destruction and to put in place domestic control to prevent it. Sir, we were taking such an initiative in the past also.

I would like to say one more thing. Misuse of legislation also is a problem. Last time also, when we were discussing about that, we were warning about that. This legislation is very good and everybody will support it. I have no doubt about it.

Sir, I am concluding by quoting the then External Affairs Minister. 'I would once again reiterate that India is committed to safeguard its security as a nuclear weapon State and to deepen its autonomous scientific and technical capability for meeting our security imperatives as well as our developmental goals'.

Finally, he said: 'We are committed to ensure that these do not fall into the wrong hands, especially the terrorists and non-State actors. India has an impeccable record in this regard and India will continue to work to prevent proliferation of weapons of mass destruction'.

Sir, I would like to conclude by saying that this is a legislation which has to be passed unanimously. Let us hope for the best. Let us pass the legislation unanimously.

With these few words, I conclude.

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN (KOLLAM): Hon. Chairperson Sir, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to take part in the discussion on the very important Bill, namely, the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery System (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) (Amendment) Bill of 2022.

Sir, the original Act of 2005 has to be amended. Section 12A has to be incorporated by means of which the financing of all these activities -- financing also is becoming an unlawful activity in respect of weapons of mass destruction -- can be stopped. I fully support this amendment Bill, subject to certain specific clarifications from the hon. Minister.

Sir, it is well accepted that the weapons of mass destruction are always a threat to international peace and security. Nuclear weapons, chemical weapons, biological weapons have already been described as weapons of mass destruction by the Resolution 1540 of 2004 of the United Nations Security Council. On the basis of that we enacted a legislation in 2005 and that Bill was piloted by the then External Affairs Minister, Shri Natwar Singh. That original Act now has to be amended through this Bill.

Sir, we have had the bitter experience of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. On August 06 and August 09, 1945, around 66,000 people died instantly and around 1,60,000 people died because of radiation related diseases by the end of that year. This was the level of devastation caused by these weapons of mass destruction. That is why, in my opening remarks itself I have stated that these weapons are against international peace and security. Under these circumstances, the Disarmament Policy of the Government of India has to be highlighted at all the international forums.

These were first invented by Germany during the First World War. Weapons like poison gas and pressurized tanks which spread deadly toxins over the battle field were used by Germany for the first time. Such weapons killed and wounded thousands of people during the First World War. All these bitter experiences convinced the United Nations to incorporate and adopt this Resolution of 1540 in the United Security Council on 28th April, 2004 in Chapter VII. It is still in existence and India is a strong votary of the Disarmament Policy. Our policy is also very specific with regard to CTBT and NPT.

We have to protect and safeguard the interests of the country and at the same time, we will not use this weapon at first. Such a policy had been framed and is in place

since Independence. Just a while ago, Shri Basheer Saheb said we have to salute our forefathers for devising consistent policies in respect of nuclear disarmament.

Sir, coming to the provisions of this amending Bill, I would like to seek a few clarifications from the External Affairs Minister. This is meant to stop financing for proliferation as well as its delivery. Now, here it says, 'if any person', any person may include a company and the definition of a company is according to Section 20 of the original Act. So, it is very clear. Section 20 says, 'a company includes a group of individuals also'. There is no fault in the definition and there is also no harm in using the phrase 'if any person'. I agree with it. My reservation is this. I would like know whether the provisions of the original Act were not sufficient to deal with this subject also. I would like quote Section 15 of the original Act. It says, 'Punishment for aiding non-State actor or terrorist: Any person, who with an intent to aid any non-State actor or terrorist contravenes the provisions of Section 9 of this Act shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than five years but which may extend to imprisonment for life and also be liable to fine.' Any person, 'with an intent to aid', 'Aid' here means with an intent to finance. So, 'financing' would then mean and include involvement in proliferation and delivery of the weapons of mass destruction and will come within the purview of Section 15 of the Act.

This is an amendment to the original Act. My question to the hon. Minister is, whether or not the amendment is highly required or essential. There is no doubt that I fully support the amendment. Already the existing provision in the original Act itself is very clear but there is no provision to seize the property to which I agree.

Sir, let me come to section 17. It says:

“17. Punishment for violation of other provisions of the Act. -

1. Where any person contravenes, or abets or attempts to contravene,...

‘Abets’ or ‘attempts to contravene’ means a person or a company who is financing this proliferation of the weapons of mass destruction and their delivery also.

Here, section 17 will be attracted.

I would like to seek these clarifications from the hon. Minister. Also, section 3, sub-clause 4 is very clear. The applicability of the Act is also very clear. There is no ambiguity in this. I am only seeking a clarification.

Hence, I fully support the Bill. With these words, I conclude.

SHRI P. RAVINDHRANATH (THENI): Sir, I would like to support the Bill.

Sir, let me first of all take the opportunity to appreciate our hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi for transforming our nation as a global leader through several significant strategic initiatives. Thanks to the vision and leadership of our hon. Prime Minister, India is now playing an active role in being a constructive contributor in the efforts to create an international order through reformed multilateralism and human centric globalization.

I also wish to appreciate our hon. Minister of External Affairs, Shri Jaishankar whose guidance and efforts are helping India secure improved bilateral relations and regional stability.

Sir, the influence of online media was not that rampant in 2005 when this Bill was adopted. Now, on You Tube or dark web, even a teenager can manufacture a WMD sitting at the convenience of their homes, instructed by an insane terrorist or even a hostile nation and financed by another in a different nation. The web of terror financing has expanded manifold and it is important that we protect our nation from such insane terror or militant attacks.

The United Nations Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres in April, 2020 had warned that the pandemic has revived the spectre of bio-terrorism. He has said:

“The weaknesses and lack of preparedness exposed by this pandemic provide a window on how a bio-terrorist attack might unfold.”

Preparation is the key. We cannot be complacent and we cannot be preparing alone. Misuse of WMD leading to incidents like bio-terrorism is a global issue.

India, under the leadership of Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, certainly has reasons to be proud of its achievements. However, in the regional context, India's pride, unfortunately, is also neighbor's envy.

In 2008, when the UPA Government was in power, we saw a massive and coordinated terror attack in Mumbai. This was not an attack carried at the borders. This happened well within our boundaries, at the heart of our commercial capital. Of course, some attackers were neutralized and some were put behind bars. But what about those who financed them? Should we believe that they came within our boundaries without the support of insiders? It means that there is a well-oiled financial network functioning within our nation and across as well.

I support this Bill in anticipation that these terror financing networks will be wiped off from our country as well as across the borders.

I suggest to the hon. Minister that we must encourage the use of technological innovations and policies to improve our counter-proliferation efforts. We must be prepared to combat the use of new mechanisms of financing these weapons, like the use of block chain technology which supports crypto currencies like bit coin or online crowd funding websites.

Sir, our Government should ensure that periodic assessment of this enactment should be there so that we can ensure proper functioning of our multiple agencies engaged in this work.

Sir, I support this Bill on behalf of our Party.

[Translation]

SHRI HANUMAN BENIWAL (NAGAUR): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery System (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill 2022 is being discussed in the House today. Honorable Members who spoke before me also expressed their concern. Every person in the world share this concern. Recently there was the issue of Russia-Ukraine, everyone in India was also worried that there should be a nuclear war and that one country might detonate an atomic bomb on another country. Because, 1,40,000 people in Nagasaki and Hiroshima died during the Second World War from the detonation of bombs by America. Even today, some children being born are suffering serious genetic diseases. The whole world is concerned about the use of nuclear weapons. I would like to thank the Honorable Minister for this.

Sir, in the 'Statement of Objects and Reasons' of this Bill, you have stated that the regulations on the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery

systems by international organizations have been expanded and targeted financial penalties of the United Nations Security Council and the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force have been mandated against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. Keeping the above-mentioned things in mind, the said Act needs to be amended so as to meet our international obligations against financing the proliferation of WMDs and their delivery systems.

Hon, Chairperson, Sir, this Bill prohibits individuals from financing any prohibited activities relating to weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems and to prevent individuals from financing such activities and the Central Government may freeze, seize or attach their funds, financial assets or economic resources. It also prohibits persons from providing finance or related services for the benefit of other persons in connection with any prohibited activity. I support the Bill.

Sir, I was reading an article and I would like to read what was written in the article in the House. It was written that nuclear non-proliferation has been a major challenge for the world for more than six decades but during this time, the pattern of this problem changed. This has changed a lot especially since the end of the Cold War. Since the establishment of the global nuclear order, the potential threats and balance of power have changed drastically, making nuclear non-proliferation more challenging today than ever before. We have to accept the fact that nuclear weapons are ultimately connected to their security for most countries and the offer of the nuclear non-proliferation regime was accepted despite its shortcomings because it makes the world feel more secure with this.

Along with this, it should also be noted that with the diminishing effect of the bargain on Nuclear Non-Proliferation, the number of such countries has increased which are trying to acquire the power of nuclear weapons. During the Cold War,

there was apprehension about the rivalry between the US and the Soviet Union in this matter and it seemed that due to this, a global nuclear war would start. However, today, this threat also includes Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), their delivery mechanism and nuclear terrorism. In this context, it is also necessary to mention the cooperation between China and Pakistan in the field of nuclear and missiles and the missiles-related activities in North Korea and Iran. Each of these has impacted on the military balance in Asia.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, this game of power is affecting the existing nuclear proliferation regime. The main challenge is that the non-proliferation debate becomes more challenging as new countries gain power in the game. Competition, rivalry, chaos and conflict are on the rise in the new global order. The special feature of the global political and strategic system that we have seen so far has been alliances between many countries, rule-based engagement and respect for international law but now, the pressure is building on it. The world used to think that the international liberal order is its right which is not true. Unless it is strengthened on the basis of existing principles and systems and efforts are made to maintain it, the possibility of its elimination cannot be ruled out.

Hon. Chairperson Sir, I will conclude my speech. Since this subject is not connected to this Bill, but today people take illegal licenses and cases of illegal arms are increasing day by day and Rajasthan has been a very infamous state in this matter... *(Interruptions)*

Right now, our hon. M.P. Sir was feeling deeply concerned. I will not talk about his Constituency Ganganaga right now. In Ganganagar district, the administrative officers who took crores of rupees and issued fake arms licenses. In Alwar, a case related to the making of fake arms license in the District Magistrate's office by affixing fake signature and seal of the Collector without the DM's knowledge has come to light. I would like to make a suggestion about this. I would like to give you an example that the ATS of Rajasthan arrested Dalal Grover in the year 2017 under Operation Zubaida. Dalal Grover used to work as a middleman between the District Magistrates of Jammu and Kashmir and the arms sellers. At that time, ATS had seized 565 licenses from him, out of which 93 were of people who had never worked in Jammu. Licenses were issued in their names by stating them to be in jobs there. Apart from the District Collector, the Center should also have its own representative. I meant to say that the District Collector issues the license but we have no interference in that. The people who really need the license keep visiting the Collectorate for many years. But, those who do not need it are possessing three weapons easily. It would be my request that the Central Government should also intervene in this and the representative of the Center should also be on that committee which issues the license.

[English]

SHRIMATI APARUPA PODDAR (ARAMBAGH): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022.

This Bill is in line with our international obligation under the UN Charter of promoting international peace and development. The existing law covers unlawful activities relating to biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons and their delivery systems, and provides for integrated legal measures to exercise control over the export of materials, equipment, and technologies in relation to weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, and for prevention of their transfer to non-State actors or terrorists.

Sir, India is a responsible nuclear weapon State and is committed, as per its nuclear doctrine, to maintain credible, minimum deterrence with the posture of no-first use and non-use against non-nuclear weapon States. The parent Act provides overarching and integrated legislation prohibiting unlawful activities in relation to weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. While reiterating India's firm commitment to safeguard its security as a Nuclear Weapon State and its undiminished commitment to global nuclear disarmament, the Act seeks to effectively translate, at the operational level, India's commitment to prevent proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Sir, the Indian Government must view nuclear weapons as part of a comprehensive national security strategy that includes diplomacy, arms control initiatives, and conventional forces to maximize stability and peace in the region.

Cyber warfare technology is another trans-domain capability that is spreading rapidly. India's nuclear weapons-related systems should be ready to respond to cyber threats. As India remains particularly vulnerable to biological threats and has a history of hostile political conflicts, India needs to take a lead in ensuring the Biological Weapons Convention is effective in its aim at curbing use of biological agents or toxins. The primary focus of India at the Biological Weapons Convention should be to instil and participate in a scientific advisory board on the same lines as the one attached to the Chemical Weapons Convention. The board should have scientists representing various participating countries, industry, societies, and academics.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude now.

SHRIMATI APARUPA PODDAR: Sir, I am just concluding.

Sir, there should be an immediate reform of DRDO whose top laboratory is the Defence Research and Development Establishment located at Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh. Since DRDO's massive failures of its indigenous weapons programmes do not paint an inspiring picture, I would want the Minister to clarify how the Government plans to revamp production at DRDO.

SHRI KURUVA GORANTLA MADHAV (HINDUPUR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity.

Sir, the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022 seeks to prohibit financing of any activity in relation to weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. The Bill also aims to prohibit making available funds, financial assets or economic resources for any prohibited activity in connection with weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

The Bill seeks to modify the 2005 law – Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act, 2005. The 2005 Act prohibits unlawful activities including manufacturing, transport, or transfer and delivery of weapons of mass destruction.

The Bill bars people from financing any prohibited activity related to weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. To prevent such financing, the Bill empowers the Centre to freeze, seize or attach funds, financial assets, or economic resources held, owned or controlled directly or indirectly.

The Bill also prohibits people from making finances or related services available for the benefit of other persons connected to any prohibited activity.

It is in accordance with the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force that have mandated against financing of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems as well as the United Nations Security Council's targeted financial sanctions.

The need of the Weapons of Mass Destruction Bill, 2022 was felt to fulfil India's international obligations.

Sir, I congratulate the Government for bringing this Bill and convey our party's support to this Bill. With these few words, I conclude. Thank you.

KUNWAR DANISH ALI (AMROHA): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise here to support the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022.

[Translation]

Sir, it has been a tradition in the House that we unanimously pass a Bill whenever such a Bill is introduced. I am proud of the fact that from the land of Gautam Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi, we give the message of peace to the whole world. It has been the history of our country that we have always spoken against such things on international platforms. I am happy that our present Foreign Minister has been a career diplomat. He has also continuously spoken about it on international platforms. The whole world knows what these Weapons of Mass Destruction can do from what happened in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. What happened in Iraq for so many days in the name of Weapons of Mass Destruction? Nothing is left there. I would like to compliment and say that from the time of the first Prime Minister of our country, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru to Shri Narendra Modi, we have worked our way to achieve nuclear power. The nuclear test was carried out during the time of Mrs. Indira Gandhi and Shri Vajpayee. Maybe, these tests could have been conducted even earlier and from what I know, the nuclear weapons were ready long ago but the Prime Ministers of that time had other post-liberalization priorities and the concern was mainly about restoring peace with our neighboring

country. So, maybe that is why the nuclear tests were delayed. Pokhran test was done at the time of Vajpayee ji. Sir, there is a need for maintaining secrecy in this. I would like to compliment the scientists of our country who have made a real contribution. We, politicians, may pat ourselves on the back, but secrecy is also important. It was not known to anyone in the whole world even within the country and only three people knew it earlier and they were, Honorable Prime Minister Vajpayee ji, the then Defense Minister George Fernandes and the Scientific Advisor to the Prime Minister, Dr. A.P.J Abdul Kalam sir. Whereas the nuclear scientists of our neighboring country leaked it, they transferred the technology there and the information fell into the hands of such people who could become a threat to the world. But, secrecy was maintained here. Pakistan itself admitted that A.Q. Khan has made the mistake and leaked the information. Hon. Chairperson Sir, Nuclear Supply Group alongwith clean waiver were mentioned here.

When the Honorable Minister will give his reply, then, he will explain. We are unanimous in all such matters. In the year 2008 at the time of Shri Manmohan Singh ji's Government was in power, we were going to take the nuclear waiver but at that time the people from today's ruling party were protesting against the nuclear waiver. Such a thing was laid on the Table of the House which has proved to be ignominy on the name of this House. We support this Bill and want to pass this Bill unanimously.

When the minister gives his reply, we should also pay attention to the nuclear leaks that take place in nuclear plants etc., at the time of Tsunami in Japan and in the plants in Chernobyl. With this, I conclude my speech. Thank you very much.

[English]

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Weapons of (امروہ) علی :

Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities)
Amendment Bill, 2022.

جناب، اس ایوان کی یہ تاریخ رہی ہے کہ جب بھی اس طریقے کا کوئی بل لایا جاتا ہے تو ہم سب ملکر ایسے کسی بھی بل کو پاس کرتے ہیں۔ مجھے اس بات کا فخر ہے کہ گوتم بُدھ کی زمین سے، مہاتما گاندھی کی زمین سے ہم پوری دنیا کو امن و شانتی کا پیغام دیتے ہیں۔ یہ ہمارے ملک کی تاریخ رہی ہے کہ ہم نے ہمیشہ ایسی چیزوں کے خلاف بین الاقوامی پلیٹ فارم پر بات رکھی ہے۔ مجھے اس بات کی خوشی ہے کہ ہمارے جو آج کے وزیر خارجہ ہیں، وہ کیریر ڈپلومیٹ رہے ہیں۔ انہوں نے بھی لگاتار اسے انٹرنیشنل پلیٹ فارم پر رکھا ہے۔ پوری دنیا جانتی ہے کہ اس طرح کے جو ویپنس آف ماس ڈیسٹرکشن ہوتے ہیں، دنیا نے دیکھا کہ بیروشیما اور ناگا ساکی میں کیا ہوا؟ ویپنس آف ماس ڈیسٹرکشن کے نام پر عراق کے اندر اتنے دن کیا ہوا؟ وہاں کچھ نہیں ملا۔ میں کو مپلیمینٹ کرنا چاہوں گا ہمارے ملک کے پہلے وزیر اعظم پنڈت جواہر لال نہرو سے لیکر جناب نریندر مودی جی تک، جتنے بھی ملک کے وزیر اعظم رہے ہیں، ان کے وقت میں ہم نے نیوکلیر حاصل کیا۔ محترمہ اندرا گاندھی جی کے زمانے میں نیوکلیر ٹیسٹ ہوا۔ واجپئی جی کے زمانے میں بھی نیو کلیر ٹیسٹ ہوا۔ شاید اس سے پہلے وہ ہو سکتا تھا، جو میری جانکاری میں ہے، وہ کافی پہلے تیار تھا، لیکن اس وقت کے جتنے بھی وزیر اعظم تھے ان کی آفٹر لبرلائزیشن ترجیح کچھ اور تھی یا ہمارے پڑوسی ملک کے ساتھ شانتی بحال کرنے کی بات تھی، اس لئے شاید اس کو

ڈیلے کیا گیا۔ واجپئی جی کے ٹائم پر پوکھرن ٹیسٹ ہوا۔ سر اس میں سیکریسی کی ضرورت ہے۔ میں اپنے ملک کے سائنس دانوں کو کمپلیمینٹ کرنا چاہوں گا کہ ان کا یہ اصلی کنٹری بیوشن ہے۔ ہم سیاسی لوگ بھلے ہی اپنی پیٹھ تھپ تھپائیں، لیکن سیکریسی کی اپنی امپورٹینس ہیں۔ ایسی سیکریسی، پوری دنیا میں کسی کو پتہ نہیں تھا، ملک میں بھی صرف تین لوگوں کو پہلے معلوم تھا، عزت مآب وزیر اعظم واجپئی صاحب، اس وقت کے وزیر دفاع جناب جارج فرنانڈز صاحب اور وزیر اعظم کے سائنٹفک ایڈوائزر تھے، ڈاکٹر اے پی جے۔ عبدالکلا صاحب صاحب، صرف تین لوگوں کو معلوم تھا۔ وہی ہم دیکھتے ہیں کہ ہمارے پڑوسی ملک کے جو نیو کلیئر سائنس دان تھے، انہوں نے اسے لیک کیا، وہاں کی ٹیکنالوجی ٹرانسفر کی اور وہ ایسے لوگوں کے ہاتھ میں لگ گئی، جو دنیا کے لئے خطرہ بن سکتی ہے۔ لیکن ہمارے یہاں سیکریسی رہی۔ پاکستان نے خود مانا کہ اے کیو خان نے غلطی کی ہے اور انفارمیشن لیک کی ہے۔ چیرمین صاحب، یہاں نیو کلیئر سپلائی گروپ کی بات آئی اور کلین ویور کی بات کہی گئی۔

جب عزت مآب منتری جی اپنا جواب دیں گے تو اس وقت اس پر روشنی ڈالیں گے۔ ایسے ہر معاملے میں ہم لوگ منفقہ طور پر ساتھ رہتے ہیں۔ سال 2008 میں جب ہم نیو کلیئر ویور لینے جا رہے تھے، اس وقت منموہن سنگھ جی کی سرکار تھی، لیکن اس وقت نیو کلیئر ویور کے خلاف آج کے رولنگ پارٹی کے لوگ مخالفت کر رہے تھے۔ اس ایوان کے اندر ایسی چیز سبھا پٹل پر رکھی گئی جو اس ایوان کے نام پر کالا دھبہ ثابت ہوئی۔ ہم اس بل کے سپورٹ میں ہیں اور بل کو منفقہ طور پر پاس کرانا چاہتے ہیں۔

جب منتری جی اپنا جواب دیں گے تو نیو کلیئر پلانٹس وغیر میں جو لیک ہوتا ہے، جاپان میں سنامی کے وقت اور چرنوبل میں پلانٹس میں لیک ہوا، ہمیں اس کا بھی

دھیان رکھان چاہئیے۔ میں اس کے ساتھ ہی اپنی بات مکمل کرتا ہوں۔ بہت بہت شکریہ
.. (ختم شد)

DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY (GODDA): Hon. Chairperson, sir, under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister, I rise to speak in support of *[English]* The Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022 *[Translation]*. In the 18th chapter of the Gita, Shri Krishna has spoken the whole essence, which was-

Sarvdharmaan Parityajya, Mamekam Sharanam Vraj

Ahan twaan sarva papebhyo, mokshayishyami ma shuch:ll

Today we all are living in a global world. There was never as much danger as today for the common man. After Covid, the whole world is very disturbed. Whether Covid was used as a biological weapon in China or not, America and China have been fighting on this with each other. But no one in the world would have ever thought about it. *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* is discussed a lot in this Parliament, we also talk about it. But could we make *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* possible in the last two years? Today people are worried for themselves. We have seen during Covid that the son was not willing to cremate his father and the father was not willing to accept the dead body of his son.

Today, when the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs was speaking, all the Members supported him and held a discussion. Has the Minister of Foreign Affairs not rightly said that no matter what the foreign policy is, where does India stand in today's date, where

do we feel comfortable, where do we have advantages, didn't we understand this even after Corona? Why are we bothered about the whole world? What is happening in Iran, what is happening in the U.K., what is happening in Ukraine, what is happening in Russia, why should this matter to us? Whatever is happening out there, if someone calls upon us, we will provide our assistance. We should shun the habit of meddling with others' issues. We should be more concerned about who is standing with us?

Farooq Sahab, the region you hail from, there China and Pakistan has occupied a part of Kashmir, which used to be a part of our country earlier. Pakistan has illegally occupied it since 1947-48, the people living in that region are our citizens. But did any country support us since 1947-48 to help us reclaim Pakistan Occupied Kashmir? China took Aksai Chin, they have built the entire road there. What a pity? We are taking support from the entire world and they are not considering us as a strong nation. Do you want to fix the whole world?

The discussion is going on even today. In the utmost respectful manner, I would like to say that first of all we should be thinking about ourselves. I have been saying that the Hon. Prime Minister has followed the principle of Panchamrit. It doesn't help to making fun, or merely by saying that the Bharatiya Janata Party exaggerates itself. The Bharatiya Janata Party is working on the ground. Today we have so much faith in our Prime Minister that's why we are saying this. Is this Bill not a proof of that?

Today in this global world, people are indulging in different activities, some have got money, some people own banks, some have got cocaine and some are into drugs. An incident happened in Purulia which is very close to my place. Weapons were dropped in Purulia. Which country did it and with what intention, we could only partially

investigate that, because we didn't have any law to confiscate someone's property, freeze bank accounts or punish anyone. We were also talking about the 1993 bomb blast.

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude. We are running short on time. The Hon'ble Minister is ready to reply.

[Translation]

DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY: Dawood Ibrahim left in 1993. Are we able to confiscate his property? He has acquired the country's wealth across the world through illegal means. His property is being used against our country's interest. Syed Salahuddin left after the year 1987-88. What could we do about him? Today we all need this Bill. UN resolution came, FATF's resolution came, which has to be signatory. Be it Chemical Weapons, Biological Weapons, Atomic Weapons, cyber security or crypto, we all were required to support FATF resolution with the world to stop such things and to also support the UN on this. It is for this reason that the Hon. External Affairs Minister has introduced the Bill. We stand in support of him. I think the entire House should thank the Hon. Prime Minister for his contribution in becoming Vishwaguru and making India strong.

I conclude my speech with these words. Jai Hind, Jai Bharat.

[English]

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY (BAHARAMPUR): Sir, I rise to support the Bill under the nomenclature 'Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Amendment Bill, 2022' as it intends to amend the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act, 2005. So, without having any reservation or without having any quarrel, all of us are extending our support to this Bill.

Since yesterday, the House has been reverberating and ruminating over the mission, vision, thought, and philosophy of our predecessors such as Jawaharlal Nehruji, Indiraji, Rajivji, and Atal Bihari Vajpayeeji. Ours is a great country; so, it is the bounden duty entrusted upon us to defend and protect the country.

In the year 1988, on the 9th June, at the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament, Shri Rajiv Gandhi presented a time-bound action plan for nuclear weapon free world. So, it was enunciated by our country long back about what needs to be done for the people across the world to stem the rot arising out of the nuclear proliferation.

Here, we are all talking about Hiroshima and Nagasaki catastrophic destruction. It is alarming to note that still, the world possesses more than 13,400 nuclear weapons. There have been over 2,000 nuclear tests conducted till date. So, disarmament is the best protection against such dangers. It was first conceived and enunciated by our country.

Jawaharlal Nehru conceived the Atomic Commission. In 1974, the project, Buddha came. In 1998, we had the project, Shanti. We had, at least, made ourselves as a force to be reckoned with.

So, now the point is that we are trying to resist the threat of weapons of mass destruction by adopting some measures that have been depicted here in this Bill.

[Translation]

I would like to ask one thing to Jaishankar ji that when not just one person but a large number of people from India are leaving the country after looting all the banks of India and we are unable to do anything and those people are having fun sitting by the Caribbean Sea. We are watching them on Facebook and WhatsApp. Now we cannot do anything for those people who are roaming abroad comfortably after looting all the wealth of our country and leaving this country.

This Bill states that if any person is involved in such things then, we need a law to confiscate their property. We are framing the law, we are in favor of enacting this law. I would definitely like to say a couple of things in the larger prospect. ...

(Interruptions)

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Do not disturb.

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: Jaishankar Ji, what is the unequivocal definition of weapons of mass destruction? ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Let him complete, please.

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: I do not have any idea. What is the unequivocal definition of weapons of mass destruction? I think it depends upon the creativity of the enemy. Before 9/11 in America, when the twin tower was demolished, had we, at that time, imagined that an aircraft could be turned into a flying missile? So, it depends upon the creativity of the enemy. So, we have to prepare ourselves for any eventuality. That

should be done right at this situation because rogue States are there. A.Q Khan laboratory, I think, is still existing somewhere in the world. So, how will India be dealing with this kind of unforeseen situation?

Here you are talking about a person. A person cannot do anything on his own capacity. On the one hand, you are talking about State-sponsored terrorism. The implication of it indicates that some States must be behind the terrorist activity. So, we know, and even knowing everything, our hands are tied. We have to plead in the international fora. Besides that, we can do nothing more.

I would even suggest one thing to the hon. Minister and the Government of India. Till date, from 1925 to 2017, 10 International Treaties on Weapons of Mass Destruction have been signed. They are Geneva Protocol, Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, Outer Space Treaty, Non-Proliferation Treaty, Seabed Arms Control Treaty, Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, Chemical Weapons Convention and Treaty on Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. *[Translation]* Which is most important, Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. This is not in force as of now. Now we are in 2022. The date for the same to entry into force has not yet come. The biggest Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty has not happened yet. What is chemical and biological weapon? This is poor man's atom bomb. Smaller country can be used to offset the conventional asymmetric. We saw that Iraq was destroyed in the name of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Weapons of Mass Destruction have been existing since long. Chemical Weapons, Biological Weapons have also been existing from long time. Do we have any

firewall to deal with all these? What is Comprehensive Emergency Mechanism? Do we have that much intelligence or not? Because intelligence is needed the most. After the attack on America, the whole world became alert.

After that we also become more alert, but do we have the resources? We cannot combat this just by passing laws. The Government should take the measurement, we have no objection to that. Whatever steps the government take to at least keep our country safe, we will continue to support them without hesitation. Whether Nehru ji likes it or not, Indira ji likes it or not, Rajiv Gandhi ji likes it or not, but this country belongs to all of us, we were at the forefront of building the country, we have always remained ahead and remain the same in future as well.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (DR. SUBRAHMANYAM JAISHANKAR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have the privilege of speaking to this august House for a second time today, and I would say that it is a particularly satisfying day in Parliament because twice I have seen that there is unanimity in the House on a foreign policy matter. Earlier in the day I said that foreign policy should be a subject for maximum consensus. I am so glad that people are moving in that direction, and the support that I have had from every Member who has participated – there were totally 21 Members, who spoke on this Bill – is indeed something which is very heartening.

It is also natural that there will be questions, there will be concerns, clarifications sought, and naturally when any Bill is tabled, it is the obligation of the Minister moving it to provide it.

17.52 hrs

(Hon. Speaker *in the Chair*)

Mr. Speaker, Sir, what is it today that we are trying to do through this Bill? We are upgrading a law, which is 17 years old, which like many other legislations clearly needs updating, and updating laws and ending terminating antiquated rules are both part of good governance. So, today is an exercise in one way of good governance.

Now, to understand this particular Bill, I would take you back to a legislation which was passed by this House in 1947, which is called the United Nations Security Council Act. The Act essentially obligates us that the Central Government will apply any measures, not involving the use of Armed Forces, which will give effect to any decision of the Security Council. So, we have made a commitment as a part of our foreign policy at the very start of our Independence. We are good members of the UN, and therefore, if there is a UN Security Council Resolution, which requires action, we will implement it.

What they did not do at that time in Resolution 1540 was to specifically refer to finance. So, when we moved this legislation in 2005, we took our provisions from the Security Council Resolution. Since then, the importance of finance has increased. Some Members have raised this issue whether finance was implicit in it. I will address that particular issue. This has been the subject of a comment of the FATF.

Now, all hon. Members will understand the importance of FATF. Today, the FATF evaluates whether countries are responsible in terms of their financial policy. We have seen countries, who have done things, who have followed policies and actions which are not right, brought to account. There are very significant consequences of that. I think, most Members are familiar with the countries involved. Some of them are very close to us.

The FATF has a recommendation number 7 which says that countries should implement targeted financial action to comply with Security Council Resolution and that they should freeze without delay funds and assets and ensure no funds and assets are made available, directly or indirectly, to any person or entity dealing with WMD. So, it is this process – our initial obligation, the 1540 Resolution, the 2005 legislation we passed which today in the light of FATF deliberations and our own security and our international obligation and the importance of finance to this – which is causing us to come to you with this amendment.

Now, some specific issues were raised. I will deal with them very quickly. I think, Uttam Reddyji, who was the first speaker, brought up the issue that we are referring to persons; we are not referring to entities. Now, I would like to inform him, through you Sir, that under the General Clauses Act, 1897, 'persons' is defined to include any company or association or body of individuals, whether incorporated or not, and it covers entities, companies and organizations, and that the original Act, which we are amending today, also uses 'persons' in view of this. I think, Premchandranji, later on in his remarks, recognized this.

The second issue which came up was this. What is the necessity for this? Can it not be done under the current legislation? Why do we have to take the trouble of amending it? Many other countries have specific legislation. Switzerland has Switzerland War Material Act. Germany has Germany's Foreign Trade and Payments Act. So, there are many examples because FATF and the current requirements need a very specific reference to financing.

What were we doing till now? Till now, we were issuing notifications under the United Nations (Security Council) Act, 1947. What would we do? This would relate to financial measures. Our notifications are implemented by the Reserve Bank of India and other involved government bodies.

They would advise banks and they would do the monitoring, following the order which MEA would regularly bring out. Our effort today is to give legislative backing so that this is not a one-by-one *ad hoc* measure, but there is a legal statutory way of dealing with what is a continuous problem.

Sir, there was an issue, which was raised, why this is so limited. It is limited. Many hon. Members have raised many other concerns. People have debated disarmament. They have debated world order. They have referred to other issues also.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, if the House agrees, should the proceedings of the House be extended till the Bill is passed?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Ok sir. ... (*Interruptions*)

[English]

18.00 hrs

DR. SUBRAHMANYAM JAISHANKAR: The issue is whether the proposal is very narrow or not. It is meant to be an amendment for a shortcoming or for something which is missing in the current law. It is not meant to be a new law. It is not meant to be a broad policy directive. So, I acknowledge hon. Members who appreciated it. I

appreciate and understand a lot of what they have said on different issues. Many of them are not directly relevant to what we are discussing. For example, there was a reference to BrahMos missile. I think Raksha Mantri ji has made a statement already on this issue. There were some other issues which came up. I do not want to address all the issues. We are already at 6 o'clock. But I want to emphasize that the whole purpose of this exercise is to make a very specific change in additionality in law so that this country's record, this country's reputation, and this country's security is ensured by financial measures which the Government is in a position to take.

There was also a concern expressed by Ritesh Pandey ji. He mentioned whether businesses by mistake will get caught in this situation that they did not know or something wrong was done or no one told them. Again, in the past, we have experience of this. We have outreach with industry. There is a way of communicating this. There is a long list of individuals and entities who are already sanctioned.

I think anybody who is dealing with this business, who is looking at anything which involves weapons of mass destruction, their technology, their equipment, our reach out, and the nature of the business would alert them to it. So, I think the possibility that somebody would by mistake get caught in a financial law is something which is not realistic. He was also concerned about another issue. He said sometimes you get false positives. You put one name, somebody else's name comes. A sanctions list is not just about names. I have it in front of me. It has a lot of particulars. It has a person's name; it has aliases; it has date of birth; it has place of birth; it has nationality; it has passport number; identification number; address; etc. So, the possibility that somebody would get mistakenly caught in a financial situation, and therefore, will be wrongly harmed is

something for which I would say the experience since 2005 has not borne out. If it has not happened in the last 17 years, I think Members should be confident that that is something which would not take place.

There was also an issue whether this would affect legitimate research and development. I think Jayadev Galla ji raised this issue. That is again not the case. This is a very specialised area. I think the country's scientists and Government are very aware of what they are doing.

Manish Tewari ji raised one particular case. This was relating to Bodhgaya. He wanted to know whether NIA had filed a chargesheet referring to the WMD Act in the case of the Bodhgaya incident in 2018. I would like to confirm to him – he is not in the House – that this was not the case. The FIR had mentioned it. But this was not a decision of the NIA, and when NIA took charge of the case, there was no reference to the WMD Act.

Premachandran ji raised one very specific issue saying that there was a reference to aid and to abet, and if there is aid and abet in the existing law, why should you have a specific reference to finance. The judgement of the Finance Ministry, the Law Ministry, and even the Foreign Ministry is that aid and abet were not sufficient, that it required something very specific on finance. FATF required it. Section 15 only refers to punishment for contravening section 9. He wanted this clarification and he said if I give that clarification, he would be prepared to support the Bill. So, I hope he will support the Bill.

Sir, over and above this, I will very quickly run through some notable points which hon. Members raised. There were references to extradition agreement. It is a very different matter. What extradition agreements we have, what is our success, who have we been able to bring, who did what crime under which regime, is a different subject. We will have, I suspect, differing opinions. We will not have the consensus that we have on foreign policy.

The second issue, I think, is the relevance of this. I think Rajyavardhan Rathore Ji made a very good point. We think of this like something happening in a movie. It is possible. A nuclear attack may happen. These things have happened in real life. In Japan, you had a sarin attack. You had the anthrax letters that he referred to. So, they are not far-fetched scenarios. So, we are dealing with the security of the nation. I referred to the broad purposes.

Saugata Roy Ji today and yesterday made a set of observations, again not specific to the issue. He felt that I was very taciturn. I spoke very little. I think perhaps I am reflective of a Government which does more and speaks less. Maybe he is comfortable with that period, and I noted the remarks of Nishikant Ji. In fact, yesterday, he referred to Krishna Menon. Krishna Menon is known for a record of giving the world's longest speech in the United Nations. Yes. I assure you, I can say the same in six minutes. So, my point is that today, we should be less concerned about giving *gyan* to the world over foreign policy. We should play our role. We should make our contributions. We should look at our national interest. I wish you do this effectively. I am, hon. Speaker Sir, with your permission, referring to this because he made a very specific observation saying that our diplomacy is passive. At the same time, he said,

the Prime Minister had spoken to Ukraine and Russia only. The present conflict is between Russia and Ukraine, who else will he speak to? So, he is speaking to the relevant parties. Maybe doing the relevant thing may look irrelevant to other people, I do not know. But the point I want to make is that we are today in diplomacy very, very focused. In the morning, we had discussed one aspect of our diplomacy. Today, we are looking at a policy and legal issue which is very pointedly aimed at something else.

Beyond this, I would make the point that today there are big challenges. A lot of the challenges are there in disarmament, in arms control, and in the proliferation domains. There are regimes and laws which we are part of. One thing which many hon. Members expressed interest in is, where are we in the Nuclear Suppliers Group. The Nuclear Suppliers Group requires a consensus. There is a reason, and many of you are aware of why that consensus is not there. There are countries which genuinely have concerns which they are willing to debate; there are countries which seem to have another agenda and are creating blocks to the consensus. So, it is something that we are working on. But again, the House will appreciate that since 2014, we have become a Member of the MTCR, we have become a member of the Wassenaar Arrangement, and we have become a member of the Australia Group. So, our role in global arms control, disarmament, proliferation regimes, and initiatives is very strong today. Our reputation is very good, and I believe that the passage of this Bill will strengthen both our national security and our global reputation.

With your permission, this was my response to the queries of the hon. Members.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: The Question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act, 2005 be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

HON. SPEAKER: Now we take up clause by clause consideration.

HON. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That clause 2 stands part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 2 was added to the Bill.

[English]

Clause 1

Short title and commencement

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Vinayak Raut ji, Amendment Number- 1.

SHRI VINAYAK BHAURAO RAUT (RATNAGIRI- SIDHUDURG): Hon. Speaker Sir, I have tabled this amendment as Amendment to the Bill. The Hon. Minister has introduced this historical Bill in the House today. I would like to urge that this Bill should come into force immediately after its passage in Lok Sabha today, in Rajya Sabha

tomorrow and after getting the assent of the Hon. President. This will establish a model tradition in the Parliament. This is my request.

HON. SPEAKER: Are you withdrawing the amendment?

SHRI VINAYAK BHAURAO RAUT: I seek leave of the House to withdraw my amendment.

HON. SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the amendment moved by Shri Vinayak Bhaurao Raut be withdrawn?

The amendment was, by leave of the House , withdrawn.

HON. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 1, was added to the Bill.

Clause 1, Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.

HON'BLE SPEAKER: Hon. Minister, you move the motion to pass the Bill now.

[English]

DR. SUBRAHMANYAM JAISHANKAR: Sir, I beg to move :

"That the Bill be passed."

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: The Question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The Motion was adopted.

[English]

18.11 hrs

MOTION RE: 33rd REPORT OF BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

[Translation]

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (SHRI ARJUN RAM
MEGHWAL):** Hon. Speaker Sir, I beg to move the following:

"That this House do agree with the 33rd Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 06th April, 2022."

HON. SPEAKER: The Question is:

"That this House do agree with the 33rd Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 06th April, 2022."

The Motion was adopted.

[English]

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Sir, 'Zero Hour'. ... (*Interruptions*) Please, Sir. ... (*Interruptions*)

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Now, the House stands adjourned to meet again at 11 a.m. on 07th April, 2022.

18.12 hrs

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on

Thursday, April 7, 2022/Chaitra 17, 1944 (Saka).

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