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Title : Need to withdraw the move to shift Foreign Division of SBI from Kolkata.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (ULUBERIA): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government to the issue relating to the Foreign Exchange Department of the State Bank of India that has been functioning efficiently from Kolkata since its inception.

Sir, in this present age of computerisation and modern communication, handling foreign exchange business from Kolkata is not a problem but repeatedly an attempt is being made to shift the Foreign Exchange Department from Kolkata. This matter was discussed once when the Chairman of the SBI, Mr. G.G. Vaidh met the then Chief Minister, Mr. Jyoti Basu, and he assured that this would not be taken up further because it was decided in a joint meeting that 50 per cent would be shifted and the work would be done on 50:50 basis. But it was never done. The Kolkata office could not do more than 23 per cent work in spite of the decision.

But again an attempt is being made. There are some lobbies which are trying to scuttle the Kolkata office and shift it from Kolkata. It will create a problem. It will create problem for the employees. It will damage the business. Many people, who have foreign exchange business dealings in Kolkata, have already closed their offices. If it is totally shifted, then many such offices will be shifted and it will create further problems. So, I request the Government that it should take note of this matter, and it should check those lobbies which are both inside and outside the banking system and also those scrupulous business people who are trying to shift the office from Kolkata to other places. That office should be allowed to function from Kolkata. That is my demand.

MD. SALIM (KOLKATA – NORTH EAST): Sir, the erstwhile Imperial Bank, which was a part of the State Bank of India, used to function from Kolkata. ...(*Interruptions*) It was a political decision to shift the banking capital from Kolkata to Mumbai. Now, the Foreign Exchange Department is also being shifted.

MR. SPEAKER: No, I am sorry. I would not allow this. I cannot allow this.

MD. SALIM : Sir, I associate with this.

MR. SPEAKER: Of course, association is allowed.