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Title: Issues regarding territorial integrity and national security.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (DARJEELING): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I had been called earlier before some passions of domestic politics intervened and the House was adjourned. I wish, with your permission, Sir, to switch from domestic concerns to some issues which I think are of very high national importance covering the foreign policy of the country, the security policy of the country.

I would refer, Mr. Deputy-Speaker, to two aspects. One is the denial of visa on grounds of Jammu and Kashmir being sensitive or disputed territory as per and by the authorities of the People's Republic of China. This is totally unacceptable....(*Interruptions*)

**उपाध्यक्ष महोदय :** अध्यक्ष जी ने इन्हें बुलाया था, लेकिन हल्ला-गुल्ला होने की वजह से ये उस समय बोल नहीं पाए थे, इसलिए अध्यक्ष जी की अनुमति के आधार पर हमने इन्हें बुलाया है, इनके बाद कॉलिंग अटेंशन चलेगा, आप बैठ जाइये।

SHRI JASWANT SINGH : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, it raises issues of very high national importance. It also impinges on our territorial integrity and national security besides, in my view, being an example of grossly provocative conduct on the part of a neighbouring country.

The hon. the Raksha Mantri who is my dear friend of many years' standing and whom I hold in high regard, found it fit to not really take this matter with sufficient seriousness. I do not want to repeat what he said. ...(*Interruptions*)

**उपाध्यक्ष महोदय :** आप बैठ जाइये। कॉलिंग अटेंशन चलेगा, इनके बाद तुंत चलेगा और ये बहुत देर तक बोलने वाले नहीं हैं।

SHRI JASWANT SINGH : But I do wish to say, Sir, that principally, amongst the functions of the Raksha Mantri, along with the discharge of his duties and responsibilities, is also to safeguard the interest, honour and welfare of all senior officers of the Indian Army, Navy and Air Force. The officer who has been denied a visa is a Lieutenant-General, is an Army Commander of our Northern Army, and is one of the principal officers of the Indian Army. This, Sir, is a slur not just to an individual; as he wears the uniform of the Republic of India, in that sense it is a slur upon India. I do wish and I do so sincerely that the hon. the Raksha Mantri hadn't taken it so lightly.

The second aspect which I wish to also emphasise is about recent events in certain parts of the northern territory of Jammu and Kashmir – and Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India – and northern territories are still treated by us as part of undivided Jammu and Kashmir. I refer to areas of Gilgit and Baltistan in which, I am informed, Islamabad has reportedly handed over *de facto* control of the Gilgit and Baltistan region to People's Liberation Army. As we know, the People's Liberation Army is very much an extension of Chinese national interest and the Policies of the People's Republic of China. Consequently, Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, certain sections of the western portions of Jammu and Kashmir, Pak-occupied Kashmir, stretching from Gilgit in the north to Baltistan in the south have been closed even to citizens of the area including the Army personnel of the Pakistan Army.

All access to this area is now reportedly being controlled by the PLA through the PRC. Reports about these developments have originated very sadly, I say, from a variety of foreign intelligence sources, foreign and Pakistani journalists and also Pakistani Human Rights activist. But I am saddened that till date, not a word has emerged from the Government of India. It is a matter vitally concerning our national interest, and I would really have very much hoped that the Government would have come forward rather than somebody else from abroad informing us, about this.

I might add, Mr. Deputy-Speaker, that the Government has a duty to inform the country, and we have a right to know what the Government has to say in this regard.

There are three additional important aspects. I would not take long to say them.

Sir, this development in the Gilgit and Baltistan area is also accompanied by a kind of simmering rebellion in Gilgit, and there has been firing as also imposition of curfew. What information does the Government have in this regard?

I am informed, secondly, that there is an influx in that area of Gilgit and Baltistan of about 11,000 soldiers of the People's Liberation Army, who are now constructing barracks for permanent residences.

Thirdly, reports have appeared that there are 22 tunnels being dug there, which tunnels could be for the convenience of the passage of rail, road or also possibly for the storage of missiles. I would like to know from the Government what information do you have.

Sir, I wish to add, in conclusion, very briefly but manifestly, the People's Republic of China wants a tight grip on this region so as to further encircle India and to acquire an assured and unfettered road and rail access to the Arabian Sea and the Gulf through Pakistan.

I wish to further add that when the intended high speed rail and road links through Gilgit and Baltistan are completed, China will be able to transport cargo, civil or military, from Eastern China to the new Chinese built ports of Gwadar, Pasni and Ormara within 48 hours from the east coast of China to the Makran coast is directly for us a national issue.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, these issues are of vital national importance. The Prime Minister recently informed us that the Government's policy is not 'reciprocal'. I am intrigued by the use of such delphic phrases. Would the Prime Minister kindly inform us what he means by the policy not being 'reciprocal' when we are being encircled by the People's Republic of China? We are confounded by what the Government is saying. May I add, Sir, a word of caution and advice to the hon. Prime Minister? Statecraft is a very cruel business. Good-nature is bungler at it and Pusillanimity is no alternative to sound policy.

SHRI B. MAHTAB (CUTTACK): Sir, I would like to associate myself with the issue raised by Shri Jaswant Singh ji. We would like to get a response to this from the Government.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri B. Mahtab and Shri Rajendra Agarwal are associating with the issue raised by Shri Jaswant Singh ji.

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