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Title: Regarding failure of the Government to introduce the Constitutional Amendment Bill on the India-Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement.

DR. SHASHI THAROOR (THIRUVANANTHAPURAM): Madam Speaker, as we have seen in the debate today on Pakistan, there is no political division in this House when it comes to our national interest. We are all unanimously committed to good relations with our neighbours and the protection of our security and safety. That is why, given the complications *vis-à-vis* Pakistan, the importance of strengthening our relations with our other neighbours, and in particular with countries that have become more friendly to us in recent years like Bangladesh, has to be emphasized.

Madam Speaker, as you are aware, in the year 2011, our Government concluded a protocol to the 1974 Land Boundary Agreement with Bangladesh. This was an extremely important issue. A signal to Bangladesh is desired to end a prolonged anomaly that had existed along our borders since 1947.

Madam Speaker, the new Government endorsed this agreement and both the Prime Minister and the External Affairs Minister made statements in its support. They declared in Bangladesh and also in India, that all that was remaining was for the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs to clear the 119th Constitutional (Amendment) Bill in order to proceed to implement this agreement.

Madam Speaker, the Committee worked extremely hard to produce a unanimous report, in which even the parties that were previously opposed to this agreement, have changed their position and supported the Bill in the national interest.

This unanimous report was presented to the Parliament and yet, Madam, for three weeks, we have seen no action in this matter. As the Parliamentary Affairs Minister has mentioned, the President of Bangladesh is in Delhi. It is an embarrassment to our nation that apparently we are not proceeding so far with the matter, which is against our interests. The matter needs to be resolved. This is of utmost importance.

Madam Speaker, I would like to demand from the Government that they kindly explain to this House what their intentions are, the variance between the public statements and their refusal or failure to act so far in this matter and the importance they attach to such a matter. I also convey our appreciation to the Government of Bangladesh for their excellent cooperation with us on other matters, particularly on security matters. They have been arresting terrorists. They have been actually ensuring that attacks on our soil, particularly in Assam and elsewhere, do not take place and as a result, the need for us to reciprocate has never been greater.

I, therefore, call upon the Government to please provide an explanation to this House on their intentions in this matter because they have done so publicly outside the House.

HON. SPEAKER:

Shri N. K. Premachandran,

Shri Mullapaly Ramachandra,

Shri P.K. Biju,

Shri M.B. Rajesh and

Mohammad Salim are permitted to associate with the matters raised by Shashi Tharoor.

SHRI M. VENKAI AH NAIDU: Madam, I have taken note of the issue raised by Shashi Tharoor Ji. The Government is also in the know of things. What is going to be done, that we have already told the country. There is nothing happening behind the scene. The President of Bangladesh is here today. I will convey this to our External Affairs Minister. As and when she finds it convenient, there will be some response on this issue.