

RAJYA SABHA

***SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE**

(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

Thursday, March 31, 2022/ Chaitra 10, 1944 (Saka)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIR

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, as the Question Hour has been dispensed with today, the answers to Starred and Unstarred Questions listed in today's list of Questions would be treated as laid on the Table.

FAREWELL TO THE RETIRING MEMBERS

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendrabhai Modi, Deputy Chairman, Shri Harivansh, the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Shri Pralhad Joshi, the Leader of the House, Shri Piyush Goyal, the Leader of the Opposition, Shri Mallikarjun Kharge, Leaders of various Parties and hon. Members, retirement of about one-third of the Members of this august House every two years is a big occasion. It happens as per the provisions of the Constitution. This enables continuity of the institution of Rajya Sabha while, at the same time, offering scope for infusing fresh ideas and perspectives by the new Members replacing the retiring ones.

Seventy-two Members of this august House are slated for retirement between March and July this year. Sixty-five of them

***This Synopsis is not an authoritative record of the proceedings of the Rajya Sabha.**

represent 19 States while seven are Nominated Members. From my own observation as Chairman of this august House and, as informed by the Secretariat, these 72 Members constitute a vast pool of considerable legislative experience, domain knowledge, parliamentary skills and proven performance in this House. It is not often that such a valuable pool of Members retires in one go. Twenty-seven Members, accounting for 38 per cent of the retiring, would have served two terms or more, reflecting the loss of experience that the House would be incurring. Shri A.K. Antony and Shrimati Ambika Soni would have served five terms, Shri Anand Sharma, Shri Suresh Prabhu and Shri Praful Patel, four terms each, Dr. Subramanian Swamy, Shri Jairam Ramesh, Shri Prasanna Acharya, Shri Sanjay Raut and Shri Naresh Gujral, Sardar Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa and Shri Satish Chandra Misra, three terms each. Another 15 Members would be retiring after serving two terms each. We would be missing this pool of wisdom and experience. The 72 retiring Members have a total experience of 143 terms in Rajya Sabha. Of them, 17 Members were in the Lok Sabha earlier for a total of 38 terms. In effect, the House loses a total parliamentary experience of 181 terms in both the Houses. Shri P. Chidambaram has the longest legislative experience of one term in this House besides being a Lok Sabha Member seven times earlier. Shri Praful Patel served four terms each in both the Houses. Nine women Members are also retiring in this round. The four Ministers completing their term are Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman, Shri Piyush Goyal, Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi and Shri Ramachandra Prasad Singh. Floor Leaders of four parties, namely, Shri Prasanna Acharya of BJD, Shri Sanjay Raut of Shiva Sena, Shri Satish Chandra Misra of BSP and Sardar Balwinder Singh Bhunder of Shiromani Akali Dal are also completing their tenures. I thank the Ministers, the seniors and Floor Leaders for assisting me in resolving some contentious situations. Chairmen of five Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committees of Rajya Sabha are retiring. They are Shri Anand Sharma, Shri Jairam Ramesh, Shri T.G. Venkatesh, Shri Vijayasai Reddy and Dr. Vinay P. Sahasrabudhe. We would also be missing the renowned sports icon, Shrimati M.C. Mary Kom, a Nominated Member. Hon. Members, this is an occasion to recall, in

brief, the contribution of the retiring Members to the proceedings of this House. The contribution of veterans like Shri P. Chidambaram, Shri Kapil Sibal, Shri Praful Patel, Shri Anand Sharma, Shri Jairam Ramesh, Shri Suresh Prabhu, Shri Prasanna Acharya, Shri Naresh Gujral and Shri Satish Chandra Misra is too well-known to be recounted by me. I deem it appropriate to briefly mention the contribution of retiring Chairmen of five Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committees of this House given the importance of these Committees. The Committee on Home Affairs, chaired by Shri Anand Sharma, has studied in depth various issues relating to Covid-19 pandemic. I have gone through that Report given the importance of the issue. The Committee examined the matter in detail, not for fault-finding but to lay out a pathway to tackle such a situation in future in a concerted manner by enhancing our collective preparedness. Shri Anand Sharma, in particular, and Members of the Committee, in general, deserve appreciation for such an approach in the larger interest of the country. The Committee also met more often for an enhanced duration. The Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture is the lead performer both in terms of attendance and duration of the meetings. Under the Chairmanship of Shri T.G. Venkatesh, this Committee strived even harder to further improve the performance to achieve 50 per cent attendance and meeting duration of two-and-a-half hours per meeting, which is the benchmark set by me for these Committees. I am told that Shri Venkatesh used to repeatedly remind the officials to do the needful so that the Committee continues to better its performance and emerge as the best. The issues taken up for examination by the Committee on Science and Technology are highly technical in nature. Despite that, the Committee, chaired by Shri Jairam Ramesh, has taken up important contemporary issues and delivered useful Reports. I appreciate Shri Jairam Ramesh for his initiative of examining the menace of misuse of social media for pornography and its adverse impacts on children and submitting a Report as Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee, which was constituted by me. The Committee on Commerce, to start with, in 2017, used to report low attendance and duration of meetings. But, later, under the Chairmanship of Shri V. Vijayasai Reddy, it has turned around and

has substantially improved the duration of meetings and attendance, to some extent. Under the Chairmanship of Dr. Vinay P. Sahasrabuddhe, the Committee on Education has shown a very remarkable improvement. I am told that many of the meetings lasted for three to four hours each. I am happy to note that despite being the first-time Members of Rajya Sabha, Shri T.G. Venkatesh, Shri V. Vijayasai Reddy and Dr. Vinay P. Sahasrabuddhe have made a difference and delivered. Hon. Members, I am also pleased to note that among the 45 first-time Members retiring, most of them have demonstrated commendable passion and commitment towards the parliamentary duties. They did well in terms of attendance and participation in various proceedings of the House, in particular, in raising matters of public importance, in Zero Hour and Question Hour, besides larger policy matters. The 84-year old, Shri S.R. Balasubramoniyam, has set an example in attending the House. Since the 244th Session, the first full Session that I presided over in 2017, he has attended all the 234 sittings of the House since then without fail. This is a remarkable commitment to one's parliamentary duties demonstrating that passion and sincerity have nothing to do with the age. I am sure this august House would join me in complimenting him for the same. There are other Members also who are attending, but I am not mentioning their names because they continue to be attending the meetings. There are several other Members among the retiring who have reported more than 90 per cent attendance, I can't take their names given the time limitation. I am extremely delighted to note that Shrimati Chhaya Verma, Shrimati Ranee Narah, Shrimati Sampatiya Ukey, Shrimati Roopa Ganguly and Shrimati Jharna Das Baidya have excelled with their enthusiastic participation and performance. Nominated Members, like Shri Swapam Dasgupta and Dr. Narendra Jadhav, have enriched the proceedings of the House with their analytical perspective. Several first-time Members, like Dr. Sasmit Patra, have shown a lot of promise by quickly adopting to the nuances of the functioning of the House. Dr. Sasmit Patra was also in the panel of Vice-Chairmen and he conducted the proceedings also in a very dignified manner. Hon. Members, to be a legislator is an honour conferred by the people. It is even more a privilege to be a Member of

the Rajya Sabha. Such honour and privilege come with a set of responsibilities towards incorporating the expectations and aspirations of the people in the designing of laws and policies. Unfortunately, at a broader level, that privilege is not being put to the best use. Functioning of the Legislature is being marred by persistent and often unjustifiable disruptions. It is disturbing to note that during the last four years, this august House has lost over 35 per cent of its valuable functional time due to such tendencies. This needs to be curbed before it becomes too late. Disruption-free proceedings offer a range of opportunities to the Members to give out their best, as we get to see during the smooth functioning of the House. Purpose, passion and procedural integrity shall be the hallmarks of legislators across the country. Legislators across the country normally look up to the Parliament, particularly to the Rajya Sabha, because we are the House of Elders. So, I hope that everybody will keep this in mind -- I need not remind it again and again -- and see to it that we maintain dignity, decorum and also have meaningful discussions. I am glad to note that most of the Members retiring kept themselves away from disabling tendencies; most of them. Retiring from the House is not the end of the active pursuit of serving the cause of public and of the nation. It is yet another beginning of a new journey. You are only retiring. You are retired, but not tired. I am aware of it. You will be active in public life and you will be making your own contributions to enrich the public life. I am sure all the retiring Members would look back with contentment of having fulfilled your parliamentary obligations. I do hope that some of you -- I hope that everybody returns, but that is not in my hands -- would return to this august House to continue from where you have left. In either case, I wish all the Members a meaningful and fulfilling journey ahead. As the Chairman, I put on record my appreciation to all the retiring Members for their contributions to the functioning of this august House with passion and commitment. While we will be missing some of you, but each one of you will continue to be in our thoughts. Good things will always be remembered. It was nice knowing you all and it was a very good experience for me. I particularly used to feel very happy when Members used to come prepared, analyse issues and make wonderful

contribution. I used to feel very happy as if our family member was performing in such a manner. That is also an opportunity for me as the Chairman. I have some experience as a Member of the Parliament, a Member of the Legislature, and also as the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and other Ministries. I have seen that Members, who come prepared, on being given an opportunity, they make excellent contribution, and they have been making that contribution. And, it will be going on record. One has to understand that. Nobody is going to tell you. Unfortunately, our Indian media's present tendency is that they do not report the actual proceedings and the constructive contribution made by the Members because they think construction is normal; destruction is abnormal. Once I asked some of the media people as to why they give importance to disruptions only. They said, "Sir, if a dog bites a man, it is no news. If a man bites a dog, it is news." If the Parliamentarians get on to a bench, tear the papers or do something, it naturally becomes news. But, as I said, if a Member comes prepared and makes a wonderful and analytical speech on a subject, it is a news; it should be conveyed to the people. I hope, in future, the media, the Indian media will realise this responsibility and see to it that justice is done. That will also be useful in correcting the behaviour and conduct of the Members and give them needed encouragement or discouragement if they are not performing well. I hope that everybody concerned will keep it in mind. Once again, my best wishes to all of you. Hon. Members, I have decided that after the hon. Prime Minister, who is the leader of the Government and the nation, Leader of the Opposition will speak, and, then, leaders of different parties will be given opportunity. Afterwards, the hon. Members, who are retiring, will be given opportunity. Then the leaders of other parties, who wish to make some observations, will also be given the opportunity. I would request everyone to be brief so that others also get an opportunity. Please keep this in mind. Regarding other things, which you want to talk about in detail, lot of space is available outside. You can meet each other; you can talk to each other and exchange your views. You can also write articles in newspapers; nobody is going to prevent this. I only appeal to all the

Members not to trouble the Chair, whosoever is there in the Chair, to remind you about the time. Please keep this also in mind.

PRIME MINISTER (SHRI NARENDRA MODI): You have fixed a lot of limitations for the speakers, I will try my best to express my feelings by following those limits. Well, we have a farewell ceremony here, our friends are retiring, but as in Bengali it is said 'Aami aschi', or in Gujarati it is said 'Aavjo', 'Come again', in a way we would like that you, 'become member again'. These great personalities of ours have a huge amount of experience up to five tenures. Sometimes experience has more power than knowledge. Experience has a great importance of its own. When experienced people leave, there is something missing in the decisions that are going to be made for the generations to come. In such cases the member remain here, have to carry forward the saga of those experiences. I believe that what we all have learned from the companions who are going to bid farewell from here today, let us all resolve that we will definitely use the sanctum of this house to carry forward the best among them. We spend a long time in between these four walls. There is a constant flow of emotion, expression, anguish and enthusiasm of every corner of India. We take away more from the house than what we contribute to the house. Today, I would say that even though we are retiring from this house, but take this experience in all four directions for the best interest of the nation. It should also be our endeavour that all the important contributions we have made in the House during our term, you must scribe those memories somewhere. We collect them, then from it we will accumulate such a valuable treasure, which can be of useful for the generations to come. This is the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', our great personalities have sacrificed a lot for the country. Now it is our responsibility to sacrifice. We should carry this idea from here. The country will get strength from your contribution. The Chairman has said that you should meet everyone personally, so I will definitely try to meet everyone personally. I will tell you all the good things about me and whatever good things you have, I definitely notice them.

LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION
(SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE):

We are fortunate that the Prime Minister has also come to this House today and extended his best wishes to all. 72 people are about to retire. There are many intellectuals who have come here working in every field. These include former Chief Ministers, former Prime Ministers, many Ministers, people from the ruling party, people from opposition parties, nominated members and all other members. Today we are bidding farewell to at least 13 senior colleagues of my party including our Deputy Leader, Shri Anand Sharma ji and our Chief Whip Shri Jairam Ramesh ji. If we had not got the support of their experiences, there might have been many difficulties in working. Our senior most leader A.K. Antony ji, who has been a Chief Minister and a Union Minister, is very experienced. He speaks less but does more. We should learn this from him. Ambika Soni ji also kept guiding us and Chidambaram sahib is also a legal expert and he gives his considerate views in economic matters also. Apart from them, our party's Chhaya Verma ji, Shamsher Singh Dullu ji, Ranee Narah ji, Ripun Bora ji have left their mark. We got an experience with so many leaders. We have many friends from the opposition as well. They also contributed a lot in this house. While being a nominated member, Shrimati M.C. Mary Kom achieved accolades in the world of sports. Then, there are our Leaders of the House Shri Piyush Goyal ji, Finance Minister Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman ji and Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi ji from BJP. All these people have worked here with great restraint. We may have differences of opinion, but we all have to do the best work together. This house is a permanent house. Old people will go and new people will come and this house will go on forever. According to our Constitution, there is no difference between the authority of both the Houses except money bills. This house is as powerful as the people's elected Lok Sabha. Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji had said that if the ruling party takes the cooperation of the opposition, then national consensus can be reached on many issues. You should pay more attention to what we talk about with logic. In the end, I would like to say that even after you retire, you should go ahead

with courage, because a politician never retires. We will always be with you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (SHRI HARIVANSH):

Today, the term of 72 hon'ble members in the Rajya Sabha is coming to an end. I do not consider the words 'farewell' and 'retiring' appropriate for such emotional moments. In Indian tradition and culture, we do not have the psyche to bid farewell to anyone. There is a word in Telugu called Poirā, which means go and come back. Therefore, I wish that many people would come back again. This house reflects the 'Unity in Diversity' of the country. People bring their knowledge, their experience from different States. Their expertise, diverse approach, different thinking gives us all a chance to think and gain knowledge. I personally thank them all. I would like to tell about our senior member Shri A. K. Antony. I was standing at the airport with three or four people, he came and stood behind us for tickets. We saw him and we all went back. He refused and went back again. His integrity, honesty, simplicity in public life will always inspire us. I have always learned from the knowledge that Anand Sharma ji has about rules and procedures, constitutional matters and government. We have learned a lot from the experience of our senior members like Subramanian Swamy ji, Satish Chandra Mishra ji, Jairam Ramesh ji, Suresh Prabhu ji, Sardar Balwinder Singh Bhundar ji, P. Chidambaram ji, Kapil Sibal ji, Praful Patel ji, Sanjay Raut ji. We also had some new members who have made their mark in their first term itself. Dr. Vikas Mahatme ji, Dr. Narendra Jadhav ji, Naresh Gujral ji raised many important issues. The tenure of two honorable members of our Panel of Vice-Chairman, Shri Surendra Singh Nagar ji and Dr. Sasmit Patra ji is coming to an end. I express my gratitude to them for the maturity they showed in the smooth running of the House, and for their help. The tenure of nine Hon'ble Chairperson of the Committees of Rajya Sabha is coming to an end. They have contributed through their Committee reports and debates which can not be forgotten. After these members leave, we can gain from their expertise in the Rajya Sabha. We may invite them again to our ordination programs. They can inculcate a perception about politics and parliament among citizens and students by engaging with the

public outside. In the end, I convey my best wishes to my colleagues for their better future and better health.

SHRI SHRI DEREK O'BRIEN: I will tell my grandchildren that when I was in Parliament, two former Prime Ministers used to sit here; Dr. Manmohan Singh and Mr. H. D. Devegowda, and Mr. Narendra Modi was the Prime Minister. I will tell my grandchildren that when I was in Parliament, I took a ferry car service with another MP and when I got off at home, I realised that I did not have Rs. 10 to pay for the ferry. So, I borrowed the money from the MP of a party whose ideology I hated. I will tell my grandchildren that when I was in Parliament, there was a Central Hall there where we would sip coffee, eat toast and also had lots of gossip. I will tell my grandchildren that in one sunny morning of March, can you spot me in that group photograph? And then the grandchild will say, 'dada, is that you? You were so young at that time.' May God bless every Member who is retiring today.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Bidding farewell to retiring members is always emotional and painful. Members who are retiring, are very prominent, renowned and stalwarts. They are retiring only from this august House, but their career will see their contributions in various other spheres. I would like to say that this august House or this Parliament is a real symbol of integrity. Here only we all confluence, forgetting the States, the languages, the ideologies and apart from that, only our friendship flourished. Those elders who are retiring leave behind that torch which we people will be carrying forward and so also those who will come behind us. I don't say that they are retiring. I wish some of them to come back, many of the colleagues. There are many moments to be cherished which will be lingering in our minds. Their remarkable contributions will be on the records, on the annals of Parliament history.

SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA: I am one of the Members who is retiring in the month of June, in the last of June. Six years back when I came to this House as a Member of Rajya Sabha and I took oath in the name of God, I promised that I will uphold the values of the Constitution. When I am retiring after six years, I am asking my

own conscience, I am asking myself whether I have fulfilled whatever promise I have given to this country and whatever oath I had taken in this House. I urge upon all the retiring Members that we should do a self-introspection, whether we have perfectly, successfully and to the satisfaction of our country men discharged our duties or not. There are many other learned Members, some are Vice-Chancellors, some have written so many books, some occupied many important academic positions in their past. Parliament is not just a monument. It is a living witness to great movements. Democracy, no doubt, is about majority. But democracy can't live without the Opposition. Democracy means both majority and minority. Dr. Sasmit Patra is our Party's young face in this House and everybody is recognising his contribution to this House. We are all dedicated to public service. I hope whoever comes from my party, will continue the high traditions.

***DR. K. KESHA RAO:** We never say goodbye. We say ' we will meet again'. I am not expecting that all the 72 Members will come back, but the four Ministers who are retiring, whose contribution has been praiseworthy, will come back. We will use their experience and our experience, the knowledge, the wisdom of the people, who are retiring and also of those who are here. Their contribution is well known to all of us. All are equal and they have equally given to this House what they could and they have given their best, and we have learnt.

SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY: I am fortunate enough to be a Member of this august House and glad to work under your leadership. Shri Jairam Rameshji has got a special place in my heart, because he always guided me. I am really fortunate to work under your leadership. All of Members have become friends and members of family. I am thankful to Shri Naresh Gujral and also Smt. Roopa Ganguly. I would not be able to refer every hon. Member who is retiring. I wish all Members and also wish them to come back to Parliament again. If they are not reelected, they will continue to serve the people of this country.

SHRI ELAMARAM KAREEM: I wish the very best to all the retiring hon. Members. I am sure that everybody will be very active in his or her social life and also political life. Obedience is not the only thing in democracy. Standing there on certain occasions is not a disrespect to this House. I think that I am very lucky to be here, working with all these stalwarts. One day we all have to retire; we have to retire not only from this House, we are compelled to retire from life also. But our experience and our contributions will always be remembered.

DR. M. THAMBIDURAI: This is an occasion to remember the hon. Members who actually participated in the debates. I hope, some of these seventy-two retiring Members, will come back. Shri Navaneethakrishnan is a guide for us. As a Member of Parliament, he served very well. I have learnt many things from him. I would also like to make a special mention of the name of Shri Anand Sharma. We had never dreamt that some day we will come from our villages to Parliament and would participate in the discussions. We all spend our time to serve the people of this country; we spend our time for the democracy of our country. When we are in politics we have no time for our own families. There is no retirement in the public life.

PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV: After every two years a day comes, which makes people sad. Many a times, many people who can't come back, never meet again or meet after a very long time. May god bless and your parties nominate you again and we keep meeting you.

SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak at the farewell function of 72 colleagues today. It is a fact of life that one third of the members of the House have to retire after every two years. Rajya Sabha is the heart of democracy. The members who contributed in this assembly, who are retiring today, they may or may not be able to come back to the assembly, but they have made a huge contribution, which we all remember. We pray to God that these people do very well in their future life, spend their life in the service of society and country.

SHRI SATISH CHANDRA MISHRA: First of all I would like to thank you that during these 18 years I got the opportunity to experience many things with you. Never before did we experience before coming to this house. I did withdraw from the profession of a lawyer , but never completely. I would regret one thing that we could not see the change that should have happened in this society. We also tried to bring that change. It is our duty to rise above this caste system, class system and religion system. I got the opportunity to go to international forums, the opportunity to speak at the United Nations twice and all the experiences , from this House. I would like to thank the employees , the Secretariat and others who have helped me over the 18 years.

SHRIMATI VANDANA CHAVAN: I would like to extend my best wishes to all the retiring Members. Probably, it is the first time that a galaxy of such illustrious Members is leaving us at one go. it, definitely, makes us feel that we are going to miss them. I mean, all these Members, when they speak, they actually make us feel that we benefit so much and we get so much of knowledge. I would like to once again convey my best wishes to all of you and I am sure you have a wonderful future even when you are out from here

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: This is a special occasion for the House and for me also. It is also a day to express the gratitude. I am grateful to everyone and I thank them for the affection and respect I have received. I have seen good moments in this House and learnt a lot from the experiences. It is my thought that national parties should be strong and all parties should flourish, only then would this democracy flourish. Political and ideological differences are the strength of democracy. People, in political life, see the political opponent or critic as an enemy, which should not be the case. I urge all of you to come together to create such an environment in the country so that people can live with love, respect and listen to each other with respect. Taking the farewell, I want to say one thing that many things are said in politics, you people should also pray that may the party you belong to, become stronger.

SHRI ANIL DESAI: We are bidding farewell to our retiring Members. I wish all the very best to them. All these Members have contributed immensely. With their knowledge, they served the House. They served the cause of the nation. I wish in future too they would play the same role.

PROF. MANOJ KUMAR JHA: Many of our retired members will come back, some will not. There will be a void here. I extend my heartiest congratulations to all the retiring members.

SHRI VAIKO: Today we may be parting. We may come back. Some of them may not come back But we can never forget the best experience we have had here with our colleagues. I wish all my colleagues success in their endeavour, whichever they may take. They may succeed in their life with full pleasure and happiness

SHRI ABDUL WAHAB: I wish all the very best to all the retiring Members. I hope everybody will be coming back.

SHRI SANJAY SINGH: 72 honorable members representing 19 states are retiring from service today. I extend my heartfelt best wishes for their future. Their contribution will always be remembered. I congratulate my fellow colleagues who are retiring from this House. I hope many of these members come here again. Let the atmosphere of harmony prevail in this House remain like this and we all keep working to keep democracy vibrant.

SHRI RAM NATH THAKUR: It is the farewell day today. Today 72 experienced, revered and knowledge-giving people from 19 states are retiring from this House. I wish they come back here again. I wish them all the best on my behalf and on behalf of my party.

SHRI G.K. VASAN: Many senior Members of this august House are retiring. This House is a bond for everybody from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and Members would miss this bond. We have seen the skill of most of the Members. Senior Members from my State are retiring. I wish for many Members that they come back to this House. On behalf of my Party, I wish all the Members a great future.

SHRI KANAKAMEDALA RAVINDRA KUMAR: While entering into this House, I considered myself fortunate enough that I had become a part of this House with stalwarts of this House like A.K. Antonyji, Piyush Goyalji, Jairam Rameshji and Anand Sharmaji. I used to learn from them. From our Party, Shri Y.S. Chowdary is also retiring by this time. I learnt from him. From our State, Shri Vijayasai Reddy is also retiring. Irrespective of the political considerations, I really appreciate him. I hope that they will come back to the House and they will render their service to the nation.

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Many of our senior colleagues are going to retire from this august House after successfully completing their terms. I know that they will come back again. We will be always remembering their contributions to the parliamentary democracy. I, on behalf of my party, wish all of them a healthy and successful life.

SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD: We learned the traditions here as Members from all the leaders of this House. The Deputy Chairman gave a lot of protection to us. On many occasions, we have raised the matters of the poor people here. We want the discrepancies prevailing in the country to be removed. I congratulate the leaders of my party and Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav ji and National President for our coming here for the second time. We will continue to remember our fellow Members from all the states of the country.

SHRIMATI ROOPA GANGULY: My political career started from 7th January 2015. Before that I had nothing to do with politics. I suggest that a travelator should be installed in the new Parliament House that is under construction. By coming here, I always took care of the dignity of the this House. Mentoring programmes should be conducted here and fountain pens should be placed on the counters of artifacts in the Parliament. I got to learn a lot from here and I loved it. If the Parliamentary manual book is made from the material of soft toys, even after throwing them away, it will not hurt much.

SHRI K. SOMAPRASAD: I never expected that I would become a Member of this august House. I must express my thanks to my party. This was a very unique experience to me to attend this august House with eminent personalities. This will help in my future public work. I have entered the Well several times as part of protests. That decision was taken by my Party and the group. But, I do not regret that because that was a part of my job. I would like to express my sincere thanks to everybody.

SHRI H.D. DEVEGOWDA: I must convey my regards to all Members who have contributed their mite to this House. We are all here to extend our cooperation with the Chair. The only thing is, today we are losing very close friends from this House. I pray to the Almighty that they come back to this House and we work with them again.

CH. SUKHRAM SINGH YADAV: I am not expecting that I will be able to come here again. I have not ever seen the person running the House better than the Deputy Chairman. He is a soft spoken and tolerant person and God will give him the fruits of that. I appreciate the staff here. I will also remember their services. Every party leader sitting here is good. Rajya Sabha is such a place where the people of the whole country get a family. This will probably never be accomplished in life. I would like the Rajya Sabha to once again do the work of connecting the people of the whole country. I thank you all.

SHRI SWAPAN DASGUPTA: I have had the honour and privilege of being a Member of this House. Today, we have come to a situation where law-making is less important than delivery, performance and facilitation. Therefore, in my view, when this House and the other House move to the other Parliament building, we must think whether law-making should become the central focus of the Parliamentary agenda or move to something else.

SHRI DHARMAPURI SRINIVAS: It would be the dream of every politician of the country to enter the portals of this august House at least once in lifetime. I too had that dream. I will be failing

in my duty as a human being if I don't admit that my old friend and colleague, Shri Kalvakuntla Chandra Sekhar Rao, the Chief Minister of Telangana State, gave me this opportunity to represent his party as a Member of Rajya Sabha from Telangana since 2016. I profusely thank him for this gracious gesture. This is for the first time that I am speaking in Rajya Sabha since I became its Member. I often felt that as a great nation did we succeed in wiping every tear from every eye as the Father of the Nation envisioned? The question remains. The unity of the nation, achieved with undeterred resolve by Shri Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel is still our strength. The geographic diversity and the diversity of its cultures, languages, physical characteristics, cuisine and customs of our nation never came in between our unity. Inculcation of the national pride is the need of the hour. Dr. Manmohan Singh led the Government for two clear terms heading a coalition Government . Programmes and policies envisioned by the UPA Chairperson, Shrimati Sonia Gandhi like the Right to Information Act, Right to Education Act, National Employment Guarantee Act, Unique identification Authority of India, Rural Health Mission and many such progressive measures have been enacted under his leadership.

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI): Today many capable and valuable companions are retiring. In a way, it is an interval in their political career. Many people will come back to fulfill this responsibility and many people will continue to work on social and political responsibilities. As Hon'ble Prime Minister himself said in his speech in the morning that those who have been our companions here have a great contribution in parliamentary history, in social areas and this House also appreciates their ability and experience. And certainly their ability and experience has provided great benefits to the country. I convey my best wishes to all our honorable fellow members who are retiring. I have been in Lok Sabha, I have been in Rajya Sabha also. Whether a current Member of the Lok Sabha or even a Member of the Rajya Sabha, we will have deep and friendly relationships with everyone.

SHRI JAIPRAKASH NISHAD: I have got very little time in this House. Let me start by telling you what I got to learn in that time. We saw how mics were broken in front of you inside this House. But I saw how much patience you showed even in the face of such uproar. This was a lesson for all of us. We have learned a lot from this. Dr. Sumer Singh Solanki ji beside me also supports me a lot. We are friends ever since I came here and he also came at the same time. His tribal costumes fascinated me.

SHRI MAHESH PODDAR: The upcoming winter session of Parliament will be held in the new building of Parliament with new technology. I look at it from the point of view that it will not only be a building, but will be a symbol of determination and hard work of this country. I consider myself lucky that my party Bharatiya Janata Party sent me to this House as the representative of the state. I was witness to the implementation of the GST law, the showing of solidarity of all the MPs for the release of Wing Commander Abhinandan from Pakistan, the abrogation of Article 370 and witnessed the functioning of this Parliament despite the global pandemic. I am leaving with the hope that the future of our country is very good. Thank you.

SHRI RAMKUMAR VERMA: I am very fortunate to be in the Upper House of this Parliament of India because the Upper House has great dignity. Embodying unity in diversity, this House provided me the opportunity to be among very experienced and very learned colleagues. I got the opportunity to complete six years and today I am in the hour of farewell. First of all, I want to express my gratitude to the Bharatiya Janata Party who sent me here. Specially I would like to express my gratitude to the honourable Prime Minister and the then National President, Shri Amit Shah ji and the former Chief Minister of Rajasthan, Smt. Vasundhara Raje ji because they chose to make a person from a humble background a Member of this House. The kind of affection I got here fills me with happiness. I have been greatly benefited by the manner in which the discussions of learned parliamentarians take place here. I only hope that if we all continue to work with dignity and maintain unity amidst diversity, then it will benefit the country as well as the society.

SHRIMATI SAMPATIYA UIKEY: I want to express my gratitude to our leader, respected Shri Narendra Modi ji, former National President of Bharatiya Janata Party, Shri Amit Shah and the successful honorable Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh because it is by their grace that a village woman from an ordinary family got the privilege of becoming a Member of this House. I got the support of all the MPs here, got the support of chairman of the committee, Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav ji . He made me a member of that committee again. His guidance has been very inspiring for me. I got to learn a lot of stuff like this here. Thank you so much.

SHRIMATI CHHAYA VERMA: I grew up in a simple family and am the daughter of a teacher. My grandfather was a freedom fighter and there was no political person in my family. When Rajiv Gandhi provided women reservation, I contested the election of the district panchayat in the three-tier Panchayati Raj and became the president of the district panchayat of the capital Raipur. From there my political career started.

DR. SASMIT PATRA: I am thankful to my leader and my hon. Chief Minister, Shri Naveen Patnaikji who sent me to this Upper House at the age of 40. I remember my first Zero Hour submission. It was on Women's Reservation Bill, and at the end, he just said three words, 'Good. Best Submission.' Those three words gave me the spirit to keep fighting for three years, and I am thankful for him and his leadership and for all the blessings that he showered on me. When I worked under your leadership, I got your affection. You were not a merely a Deputy Chairman to me. You were like an elder brother who taught me how to go about my work. I would like to thank someone who is very close to my heart, Shri Prasanna Acharya. He was the Leader of my Party in the House. Three years back, when I came here, I did not know about the nuances. He was like an elder brother and a father figure. I thank Shri Prasanna Acharya for that. Hon. Member, Shri Bhaskar Rao is not here today in the House. He is also retiring. I thank him for his leadership and for his commitment. I thank all the Party colleagues from BJD. There were Members like Shri Derek O'Brien, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman and hon. Minister,

Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw. We came together from Odisha. There were Shri Anand Sharma and Shri Jairam Ramesh. But these three years have been a great learning experience. I thank my hon. Leader, Shri Naveen Patnaik for that. When I came here, my spirit always said that I must speak for Odisha. I tried my best. I would like to thank the Secretary-General and all the senior officers of Rajya Sabha, all the departments and sections for making these three years the most memorable years of my life.

SHRIMATI JHARNA DAS BAIDYA: I have been a Member of this House for 12 years. I came here in the year 2010. I am missing a lot Shri Arun Jaitley ji and Sushma Swaraj ji today. At that time, the opposition and the ruling party wanted to hear each other. But, today patience is running out. First of all, I want to thank my party, because our party elected me twice from the only Rajya Sabha seat in Tripura and sent me here. I want to congratulate my CPI(M) party. In 2010, The Women's Reservation Bill was passed in the Rajya Sabha. But till now in the Lok Sabha, neither the Congress party considered it necessary to pass it nor today the BJP considered it necessary. No one passed that bill. All political parties talk about the Women's Reservation Bill at the time of elections. But, after coming to power, they forget it. I have learned a lot from you all in 12 years here. I would like to thank all the staff here. Here, I didn't have any car in 12 years. Whenever I used to call in Parliament - they also knew that there was only one MP who never came without office car. I will remember them too. I am taking retirement from here. But, I will continue to work for the poor people and the common people.

SHRI SATISH CHANDRA DUBEY: I come from Champaran district of Bihar province. It has been the land of Gandhiji's Satyagraha movement. I come from a simple family. I had the privilege of working as Booth President of Bharatiya Janata Party. I had the opportunity to be present in the Legislative Assembly from 2005 to 2014, in the Lok Sabha from 2014 to 2019 and in the Rajya Sabha from October, 2019 till now. I only know that the worker never gets tired, the worker never retires. I am leaving this House with full

confidence that my whole life will be devoted to the responsibility given to me by my Party.

SHRI SYED ZAFAR ISLAM: Today, on this historic occasion, you have given me a chance to speak. I am grateful to you for this. Time passed here seems like a moment. But, this time will always be remembered by me. I am extremely grateful to my party leaders. Particularly, the hon. Prime Minister, the hon. Home Minister and the Party President. They offered me an opportunity and made me a Member of this House. My nomination was filed by my party. I was hospitalised at that time. The party took care of my family as well. I got a rock solid support. I can proudly say that I learned a lot here about democratic process and vibrant democracy of India. The debates and discussion take place on various issues. I will try to utilise this experience and knowledge in coming days. I thank each and everyone.

SHRI A. NAVANEETHAKRISHNAN: I really thank the hon. Deputy Chairman and also the hon. Chairman. Every time he hosted dinner or lunch, our hon. Chairman used to invite me like all others. He invited the entire House. I used to enjoy the food because the preferable food of Tamil Nadu is made available there. He is very affectionate. He educated us in all the aspects, like how to behave in the Parliament. I have been a student and beneficiary of this process. I have been sent to this House only by hon. Amma. I was only a practitioner of law. I even moved five Amendments in the GST Bill. I participated in several Constitution Amendments. Now my political life is completed. I come from a village, an agricultural family. I am the first generation lawyer, that too in the Mofussil court. I used to write the complaints filed before the sub-courts and Munsif courts on Article 14, Article 19 and Article 21. Whenever I filed a suit against the Government, I wanted to draw the attention of the court. I said that constitutional right is also a civil right. I had a dream to become the Advocate General of Madras High Court. I never knew that it would become a reality. Without any recommendation, hon. Amma, made me the Advocate General. I expressed my difficulty in discharging the duties of Advocate General. She made me the Chairman of Tamil Nadu Service Commission. Everybody was telling

that I will be terminated. One fine morning, I was informed that I was going to be the Member of Parliament. She said, You know law. I want to make you a lawmaker." I thank hon. Chairman, hon. Prime Minister, hon. Home Minister and the BJP because I became the Chairman of the Committee on Government Assurances of Rajya Sabha. My performance must be known to this august House. Total number of assurances was 1,325 and assurances cleared were 1,551. It is a team work. I would like to thank all the officers, AIADMK party functionaries. I also became the Member of the Finance Committee. I must thank Dr. Maitreya, who accommodated me in it. I would like to conclude by saying that our nation is safe in the hands of hon. Prime Minister. He has made 'yoga' a world-wide phenomenon. It is a proud achievement.

SHRI HARSHVARDHAN SINGH DUNGARPUR: I never dreamed that I would be able to attend this House. I would like to thank our respected Prime Minister ji, Shri Amit Shah ji, Shri JP Nadda ji and Honorable Vasundhara ji for this. Let me tell you that my maiden speech lasted only three minutes. The Deputy Chairman of that time was Shri Kurian ji. Perhaps, some people were speaking in the middle which made him very angry. But his anger turned got directed towards me. He told me to sit down. My grandfather, Shri Laxman Singh ji was a Member of this Rajya Sabha from 1952-58. He was a Member of the first Rajya Sabha which was held in this building. He was the captain of the Rajya Sabha cricket team and Pandit Nehru was the captain of the Lok Sabha cricket team. At that time, these matches were held quite often. But, nowadays all these have stopped. We want this cricket match and sports competition to resume. I am attending the last session of this House. I have had very good experience. We got many friends and we got to learn a lot. Whenever we get a chance to serve the country, we will be again ready for it. I would also like to thank all the Rajya Sabha staff. In the end, I would like to say that under the leadership of our honorable Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji, we feel very secure these days.

DR VIKAS MAHATME: I could come here because the good wishes of the people of my *Dhangar* or Shepherd community

were with me and they kept their faith in me. I was doing limited work before Maharashtra. But, respected Narendra Modi ji and Amit Shah ji gave me a chance. After coming here, I came to know what are the difficulties of the backward class. Because of this, I find it difficult to speak two words, but it is easier to do two operations. Well, I was far away from politics. But, I got an opportunity to undertake public policy through politics, influenced by the magnetic working style of honorable Nitin Gadkari ji. Similarly, respected Devendra Fadnavis ji gave me a chance and because of this I reached here. He also did development work for Dhankhar society. I would like to express my gratitude to him. As an MP, I learned a lot. There was a lot to be learned from the Parliamentary Standing Committee and Parliamentary Debate. I learned after adopting the villages that the first thing to do is to prepare the roads, prepare the drains to carry the dirty water and prepare the building of the Panchayat Samiti. In this regard, Shri Mansukh Mandaviya ji guided me a lot and I was able to connect with people. Now my term is ending. I am not sorry that the term is coming to an end. But, I am sorry that I will remember all the people here again and again. Still I wish that I keep meeting you guys in future also and keep learning something.

SHRI K.J. ALPHONS: I have been in this House for the past four and a half years. Whenever you vacated the seat in this House, I got this great opportunity to step into your shoes. Nobody can ever step into your shoes. You are a man of wisdom and I am a small person. I am most grateful to you, Sir. My wife got beaten up in 1994 when I was the Commissioner, DDA, and you visited my home. It has been such a personal relationship. You have been always supportive of me for the past 30 years. I am aware that I have been bombarding this House with millions of numbers. I am a man of facts, not of fiction. I offer my apologies if somebody got worked up because of that. I am extremely grateful to the hon. Prime Minister and the Party President for making me a Minister first. I have tried to be the voice of the people for the past 40 years. In this House, I have spoken for the ideology of Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, that all those people who can help themselves must be allowed to function; create work and create jobs. All those who cannot help themselves must be helped

by the Government. I will continue to do that. I will begin my practice as a lawyer.

SHRI SANJAY SETH: I am very fortunate that I got a chance to come here when our country is being led by Honorable Prime Minister, Narendra Modi ji, who has taken our country to a very high position in the world. I came here in the first term with the blessings of honorable Mulayam Singh Yadav ji, who is a very big leader of this country. I thank him a lot. I have seen many things in this house, like introduction of GST, abrogation of 370 and CAA. All these things have happened in front of me, I consider it my good fortune. I would also like to thank you very much and the entire panel of Vice-Chairmen, from whom I have learned a lot sitting here.

SHRI ASHOK SIDDHARTH: I express my gratitude to the National President of my party, respected sister ji, for giving me the opportunity to speak and sit in the Supreme House of the country. I express my gratitude to the great hero of this century, Manyavar Shri Kanshi Ram Sahab, for the opportunity I got to sit and speak in the Supreme House of the country. It was because of him that a son born in an ordinary family could dream of sitting and speaking in this upper house. I express my gratitude to all my senior colleagues of this House, whose cooperation and blessings I have been getting from time to time. Sir, I express my gratitude to you also.

SARDAR SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA: I am very happy to say that here I got a chance to travel all over the world, everyone has given me a lot of respect and hospitality. Here I got time to meet many leaders and Members, who belonged to different states, different cultures, had different languages, their food habits were also different. I am always very happy to meet all of them. I would like to express my gratitude to all the leaders. The Prime Minister and the Ministers in his Cabinet, all of them gave me a lot of love. I would like to say this to all the brothers and sisters sitting here and my companions, whoever I met, all of them gave me love and supported in every manner.

SHRI VIVEK K. TANKHA: This is not my farewell speech, this is my thank you speech. I always believe that you are an author of your own destiny and it is your hard work which takes you everywhere. Parliament is a very important debating platform and this should never be forgotten I always envisage thought of a Parliament as a supreme body. It is because Legislature, Judiciary and Executive, these are three organs of the Government. But, what I found is that the Government, actually, is supreme and not Parliament. Somewhere I feel that Parliament should be empowered again. It was wonderful knowing so many people from so many parts of India.

SHRI RAM VICHAR NETAM: I would like to thank all the honorable MLAs of my state, who gave me the privilege of becoming a member of this Upper House by giving their support and voted for me. I couldn't imagine it. I am from a remote area. I have lived my whole life in the midst of village, poor, farmer, labourers, youth, living a life of struggle and fighting for them. At the same time, today so many dignitaries are sitting in the Upper House, the picture of the whole country is visible. That whole picture becomes clear as we come to the Rajya Sabha such as which state has what culture, what language it is. Rarely does anyone get this opportunity. Only a few people out of crores get this opportunity, which I have got today.

SHRI NARESH GUJRAL: Sir, I have tried to follow advice of my Late Shri I. K. Gujral, but, if, inadvertently, I have hurt somebody's feelings, I would ask for forgiveness. I have to thank you. You have been extremely kind to me and I have learnt a lot from you. I would also like to thank the Deputy Chairman and the entire Secretariat and the staff of this House, and I think, without their help and the required support, this House cannot function. I have moved one Private Member's Bill which says (a) the House must meet for 100 days; (b) If there are disruptions, then, the House automatically gets extended by that many hours or day; and (c) which, I think, is most important, there should be one Session every year where there is no Government Business, no criticism of the Government but we discuss ideas which face the country, the problems that face the country and

together we do sagarmanthan and find solutions for this country. I do hope, Sir, that in the future, this would be carried forward.

SHRI Y.S. CHOWDARY: I would be failing if I don't express my gratitude to Shri N. Chandrababu Naidu Garu who has selected me to get elected to this House twice. I cannot emotionally forget my mentor who has guided a lot, Shri Arun Jaitely, who is not with us today. In fact, I started my journey with him when he was LoP. I also gained rich experience while serving as a Member of various Standing Committees as well as Consultative Committees and also I learnt a lot from every Member of this august House. I would like to serve the nation and the State of Andhra Pradesh continuously.

SHRI SAMBHAJI CHHATRAPATI: I express my gratitude to the then hon. President, late Shri Pranab Mukherjee as well as hon. Prime Minister, Narendra Modi for considering worthy enough to nominate as a Member of Parliament. The term gave me ample opportunities to learn the intricacies of Parliamentary democracy as a true student. I always availed the opportunities to raise issues pertaining to the depressed classes of the society, socially, educationally, economically-backward communities including the Marathas who have a population of 35 per cent in Maharashtra. I tried my very best to speak on protection, preservation and development of forts of Maharashtra and monuments left behind by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. I urge the Government that they should go ahead with the protection of these monuments.

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