

## RAJYA SABHA

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### \*SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE

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(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

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Friday, February 02, 2024/ Magha 13, 1945 (Saka)

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### BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Hon'ble Members, I am extremely pleased to extend my greetings to hon'ble Members of Parliament, Shri Sant Balbir Singh, Shri Prem Chand Gupta and Shri Naresh Bansal on their birthdays. Shri Sant Balbir Singh's birthday is today and, of the other two, it is tomorrow, the 3rd February. For them, advance birthday greetings!

**Shri Sant Balbir Singh** has been a Member of this august House since July, 2022, representing the State of Punjab. He is a renowned environmentalist, social reformer and a spiritual leader. He has also been Sarpanch of his native village, Seechewal, twice and has won the Nirmal Gram Award for his village in 2008. He has been honoured with several prestigious awards including Padma Shri in 2017 for his pivotal role in conserving holy rivulet Kali Bein.

**Shri Prem Chand Gupta**, currently a Member of this House since April, 2020, is in his fifth term in the House of Elders. He is a former Union Minister also. He is also the Leader of the Rashtriya Janata Dal in Rajya Sabha and is a trained pilot.

He is married to Shrimati Sarla Gupta and is blessed with two sons, Mayur Gupta and Gaurav Gupta and one daughter, Shalini Aggarwal.

**Shri Naresh Bansal** has been a Member of Rajya Sabha since November, 2020. Shri Bansal had served in various capacities in Uttarakhand before entering political life.

He is married to Shrimati Kshma Bansal and is blessed with two sons, Kunal Bansal and Siddharth Bansal and one daughter, Megha Bansal.

Hon'ble Members, on behalf of this House, I wish them a long, healthy and happy life and extend greetings to their family members.

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### RULINGS BY THE CHAIR

#### (i) The Discussion on a Member of the other House or on Any One who is not a Member of Rajya Sabha

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Hon'ble Members, on 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2023, I had imparted a ruling and I was called upon because the Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition, Shri Mallikarjun Kharge, wanted a ruling on that. I Quote:

"On March 13, 2023, the hon'ble Leader of Opposition, Shri Mallikarjun Kharge, responding to the assertions of Leader of the House, Shri Piyush Goyal, who demanded apology for 'the shameless way by which a senior leader of the Opposition in a foreign country has attacked the democracy of India, insulted the Parliament of India' raised a point of order that there could be no discussion/reflections in the Rajya Sabha on or about a Member of the Lok Sabha or anyone who is not a Member of the Rajya Sabha. I concluded, after bestowing earnest consideration on this momentous aspect, I am of the firm view that there can be no issue or individual beyond the purview of discussion in the Rajya Sabha and the same is exclusively subject to regulation by the House and the Chairman. The two precedents relied upon by the hon'ble Leader of the Opposition have no bearing on the issue being determined herein. I further took note of the situation that notice had to be given to me if you level allegations against a Member of Lok Sabha and further, the authenticated record made available by the Leader of the House, Shri Piyush Goyal, bears out that his demand of apology on the overseas statements made by a senior leader of opposition is factually premised and does not graduate to making 'allegation of a defamatory or incriminatory nature'. The documentation submitted by Leader of the House, as per directive, bears out his assertions imparted in Rajya Sabha on March 13, 2023, same being in consonance with facts and situation. In view of categorical and firm constitutional prescriptions, I cannot persuade myself to sustain the point of order raised by the Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition, Shri Mallikarjun Kharge and the same is hereby declined."

Now, what is really worrisome is that if a senior person and the Leader of the Opposition rakes up the same issue on the same premise that we can't discuss it, whether we discuss it or not is prerogative of the House. But we can discuss, and Hon'ble Members, the issue raised by the Leader of the House is existential one.

**(ii) The Order of Speeches of the Mover and Seconder for the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address and of the Members seeking Amendments thereon**

**MR. CHARIMAN:** Shri Digvijaya Singh, Hon'ble Member had raised a point of order that as per practice, after the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address is moved by a Member and seconded by another Member, the Members who have given amendments thereto are called to move their amendments and thereafter, the Mover and Seconder are allowed to speak.

In this regard, the practice is regulated by Rule 242 of the Rules of Procedures and Conduct of Business in the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) regarding inter-alia Order of Speeches. Accordingly, the Mover of a Motion has the right to speak thereon immediately after moving the Motion and similarly, the Seconder would also speak after seconding the Motion. Thereafter the Motion becomes the property of the House and Amendments may be moved thereto by other Members.

Therefore, that is the stage when the Members who have given amendments are called to move their amendments, if they so desire.

The sequence followed by the House today is therefore in order.

In case, Shri Digvijaya Singh, Hon'ble Member, needs further clarification he may kindly refer to the proceedings of the House dated 7th February, 2023 when the Discussion Motion of Thanks on the President's Address was taken up by the House last year and also peruse the practice detailed in the Publication "Rajya Sabha at Work" at pages 233-235.

## **MATTERS RAISED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIR**

### **1. Concern over Shortage of Pilots/Crew in Indian Aviation Sector**

**SHRI A.D. SINGH:** India is now the third-largest aviation market in the world and various airlines are buying new aircrafts in a very large number. The Government is also expanding the aviation network around the country but there is a lack of trained pilots in the country. The training facilities in India are grossly inadequate. There is an urgent need for establishing more pilot training and flying institutes. DGCA should play a decisive role in coordinating flying training organizations, pilot training in airlines and various examinations, etc., connected with the training of pilots.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

### **2. Need to address Alarming Rise in Student suicides in the Country**

**SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:** The increase in incidents of suicide by students studying in coaching institutes is alarming. Several factors contributing to this trend include academic pressure, mental health issues, isolation, financial concerns, lack of support and the stigma surrounding failure in competitive exams. To deal with this problem, there should be mental health centers and first aid centers in these coaching institutes and educational institutions. Teachers should get such training that they can positively encourage students and take them out of despair. These institutions should also have arrangements for financial support to the students. To end the stigma related to the failure in competitive examinations, Government and NGOs should run public awareness campaigns.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

### **3. Creation of Separate All India Service Cadres of IAS, IPS and IFS for Arunachal Pradesh**

**SHRI NABAM REBIA:** Geographically, Arunachal Pradesh is the largest state in the North East, but the state still does not have its own separate All India Services Cadre. This is affecting the developmental activities in the state. The Arunachal Pradesh Government has also placed this demand before the Centre several times. I again request the Central Government to create a separate cadre for Arunachal Pradesh in all the All India Services i.e. Indian Administrative Service, Indian Police Service and Indian Forest Service at the earliest.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

### **4. Demand for Amendments/Simplification of Provisions with respect to FIR, Arrest and Bail**

**DR. ASHOK KUMAR MITTAL:** The condition of undertrial prisoners in our country is extremely deplorable and it seems that they are not getting justice. Due to lack of clarity regarding the provisions of FIR, Arrest and Bail in the laws of the country, they have become a means of earning for the police administration. By misusing the legal provisions, the police enforce any section of any law and put people in jail for very minor crimes. According to a report, as of December 2022, 75 percent of the total prisoners were undertrials. The new Criminal laws brought by the Government have provided some clarity regarding FIR, Bail and Arrest, but more clarity is needed.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

## **5. Concern over various Problems faced by Railway Passengers in Kerala**

**SHRI ABDUL WAHAB:** Nilambur in Kerala is the last station of Indian railways. After Independence, the Nilambur-Shoranur Express is connecting different places. Nilambur Road Station has now been identified under the Amrut Bharat Station Scheme. But there is a problem with its speed and the electric connection which needs to be resolved by the Government. The long-pending Bathery-Nanjangud-Nilambur to Bangalore project can save, at least, 150 kms. For all these projects, the work needs to be initiated. There are no A.C. coaches in Nilambur to Ernakulam-Kottayam. MEMU train is not there and it is very difficult to travel. I request the Government of India, that immediate action should be taken for Nilambur-Shoranur-Cochin and Kottayam routes. I also request to extend the Nilambur Road Rajya Rani Express to Trivandrum Central.

*(Several hon'ble Members associated.)*

## **6. Need to Construct laying Overland Bridge between Dhanushkodi, Tamil Nadu and Talaimannar in Sri Lanka**

**SHRI M. SHANMUGAM:** For the last two centuries, efforts are being made to provide sea communication between Sri Lanka and Indian mainland and many surveys and projects were prepared. Sehtusamudram Project is one such project for which dredging work was started, but later it was discontinued and abandoned. It needs to be revived. From Dhanushkodi in India, to Sri Lanka's Talaimannar, the distance is only 25 kms., and it can be easily connected with a bridge. It will improve the port connectivity and also the movement of the people. I urge the Government to consider laying overland bridge or under-sea bridge between Dhanushkodi and Talaimannar to improve economic and trade relations and people to people movement between India and Sri Lanka at the earliest.

*(Shri M. Shanmugam, Dr. Sasmit Patra, Shrimati Jebi Mather Hisham, Dr. Amar Patnaik, and Dr. John Brittas associated.)*

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## **MOTION OF THANKS ON THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS**

**MS. KAVITA PATIDAR:** I move that an Address be presented to the President in the following form:

That the Members of the Rajya Sabha assembled in this Session are deeply grateful to the President for the Address which he has been pleased to deliver to both Houses of Parliament assembled together on January 31, 2024.

Along with the sentiments of the grand Ayodhya temple built after a wait of 500 years and the life-consecration of Ramlala, the President has also presented before the public the achievements of our Government along with the determination of a developed India by taking steps towards the establishment of Ramrajya. Focusing on the basic mantra of “*Yatra Naryastu Pujyante, Ramante Tatra Devta*”, our Government has worked to improve the destiny of women through schemes like ‘Pradhan Mantri Matritva Vandana Yojana’, ‘Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana’ etc. Due to the efforts of the Honorable Prime Minister, Jan Dhan accounts of crores of women were opened. Today our Government has expanded the role of daughters in every field. Honorable Prime Minister made continuous efforts to increase the economic participation of women resulting into about 10 crore women joining self-help groups. Our Government is running an important campaign to create 2 crore Lakhpati Didis. Increasing maternity leave from 12 weeks to 26 weeks is a perfect example of women's honour. Be it granting permanent commission to women in the armed forces for the first time or giving admission to women cadets in Sainik Schools

and National Defense Academy for the first time – the opportunities provided by the Government today are paving the way for the development and respect of our sisters. They are also playing a role in the success of Chandrayaan-3 and have also contributed to vaccine manufacturing during the Covid. Around 31 crore rupees loan amount has been advanced to women under Mudra Yojana. Today, for the first time, we are witnessing an improvement in India's sex ratio to 1,020 females for every 1,000 males. To protect the honour of our sisters, the practice of Triple Talaq has been criminalized, the Nari Shakti Vandan Act has been enacted paving the way for social and economic empowerment of women and more than 70 percent of the houses were given to women under the PM Awas Yojana while granting ownership rights to them. Death penalty has been introduced for rape of minors and minimum sentence for rape has been increased to twenty years. In addition to women, our Government is continuously working to strengthen the youth power, farmers and the poor. We are determined to realize the Honorable Prime Minister's vision of 'Ek Bharat, Shresth Bharat and Viksit Bharat'. We are moving forward on the development path through various schemes and policies aimed at the development of the nation. From the successful Chandrayaan mission to the recent hosting of the G20 summit, the country has earned respect. After the abrogation of Article 370, there has been a significant decline in terrorist attacks in Jammu and Kashmir. New laws have been enacted to grant citizenship to refugees and 'One Rank One Pension' has also been implemented. India has become the fastest growing major economy. Today we have joined the 'top five economies'. India became the first country to hoist the flag on the South Pole of the Moon. In addition to this, 'Aditya Mission' was also launched successfully. Along with the Delhi-Mumbai Express, India's longest sea bridge 'Atal Setu' has established new dimensions of development. The country got its first Amrit Bharat train. Lakhs of youth were given Government jobs in mission mode. There has been a significant increase in India's exports. FDI has doubled. There has been a four-fold increase in the sales of Khadi Village Industries products. The number of GST payers has increased. 12 lakh electric vehicles have been sold in 2023-24. Today India has become the second largest mobile phone exporting country in the world. During the tenure of one decade of our Government, 25 crore countrymen have come out of poverty.

**SHRI VIVEK THAKUR:** Our Prime Minister has been working with the spirit of intelligence and dedication. Election year budgets are popular, but this budget says that the outline of a developed India in 2047 will be presented in July because it is an interim budget. When it comes to foresightedness, former Prime Minister Shri Manmohan Singh Ji had called demonetization 'organized loot and legalized plunder'. I would like to tell the House that organized plunder and legalized dacoity is when oil was being purchased in the country through oil bonds so that payment does not have to be made in the current financial year and the current account deficit appears less. This happens when attempts were made to keep fiscal deficit under control on paper by carrying forward deficit or borrowing in the budget, and scams like 2G scam, coal scam etc. took place. This happened only because there was a lack of foresightedness and the dedication towards the nation was negligible. When we came to power in 2014, the economic situation was dire, but under the able leadership of the Prime Minister, today we have not only become the fifth largest economy in the world but have also become the fastest growing economy and are soon going to become the third largest economy. Pandemic like Covid shook the global economy but India emerged as a shining star the world now looks at with hope for the solution of every problem. We are proud of today's India. What was the situation of inflation before 2014? The Prime Minister clearly believes that if four castes - poor, farmers, women and youth - are uplifted then the country will automatically develop. Therefore, houses have been provided to more than 4 crore beneficiaries under Pradhan

Mantri Awas Yojana- Gramin. Similarly, under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, about 80 crore beneficiaries are being given free ration. Similar welfare schemes have resulted in lifting out 25 crore people out of multi-dimensional poverty in the last ten years. Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi was rolled out to help the farmers. Crop insurance facility was also provided to crores of farmers. The facility of online trading has also been started by connecting the mandis digitally under e-NAM. The government is continuously making efforts for the all-round development of women. 30 crore beneficiaries under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana are only women.

Many important steps have been announced in the budget for the empowerment of the country. A target has been set to make more than one crore women *Lakshpati Didis* and new schemes have been introduced for higher education, development of women labour force and youth power. The budget has brought about improvements in the areas of infrastructure, education and self-employment and rail corridors, port connectivity corridors and high traffic density corridors have been announced which will improve mobility. Besides, schemes have also been introduced to strengthen the supply chain which is an important step towards developing the country. Under Vande Bharat, 40,000 new bogies will be constructed, which will provide better facilities to the common railway passengers. Also, despite the failure of Chandrayaan-2, we have resolved to reach the new heights in space through Chandrayaan-3 and Aditya-L1. Additionally, with the GST and tax structure reforms in the Budget, we have seen a radical improvement in the fiscal condition. GST has created a strong and simple tax system, which has led to an average tax collection of Rs 1.7 lakh crore a month. You are requested to pay attention to the important relationship between religion and economics and take more steps to promote spiritual tourism. Along with this, the North- Eastern region is going to become the focal point in policy decisions with the goal of "Developed India". Many revolutionary steps have been announced in the budget and important points of major policies and schemes of the Government have been shared. The mantra of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas' is taking us towards becoming a developed India by bringing reforms in the areas of fisheries, health, digital revolution, law and justice. I fully support the motion of thanks to the President's address.

**THE LEADER OF OPPOSITION (SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE):** I welcome the address of the Hon'ble President and will try to put before your inadequacies in it. Everyone should get the benefit of education because it is most important for progress. To ensure this, reservation has been given to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other backward classes in the Constitution. But efforts are made to reduce this reservation by adopting various tactics and they are not able to get the amount of scholarship due to them on time due to which they are not able to get admission.

The Government is opening big schools and colleges. This is a good thing but give them admission too. Don't tell them that your job is only to serve, there is nothing else. You cannot read, cannot write, cannot fight for the country. According to Government data for 2022, unemployment is 13.04 percent, and the number of female graduates is 20.06 percent. If we look at the statistics of agencies, the situation is even more dangerous. Due to this unemployment, even if people are educated, the youth are not getting jobs today. Unemployment is a big issue; the Government should have paid attention to it. The Government which is eliminating these Public Sectors one after the other is also eliminating jobs. There are 30 lakh vacancies, and we are ignoring them. There are many vacancies in AIIMS also. The vacancy rate at AIIMS is 41 percent. There is shortage of staff in seven out of twenty hospitals. The Government opened AIIMS, built other institutions, hospitals etc. But why don't the Government build it where it is necessary?

The Government provides every help to those who build up Private Sectors. The Government gives them land, electricity, water, but they do not follow our rules and regulations. Public Sector came first, only then the country improved. Today the Public Sector is closing down rapidly. There is no one to ask. Earlier, trade unionists were also very alert. The Government should emphasize on the Public Sector, help it, and revive it. Public Sector is good for the poor and also for the country. Nothing was told about that either. Agneepath Scheme has been made for 4 years. Earlier it was said that out of 100 people, 25 people would be dropped and 75 people would be retained, but today the situation is that 75 people are being dropped and 25 people are being retained. Agniveer Scheme was to be introduced only for the Army and it planned a policy of 75 percent retention and 25 percent release from service, but the Government implemented a scheme on the Air Force and Navy and made a rule of 25 percent retention and 75 percent release policy. Everyone knows about the impact of inflation. The prices of tomato, onion, milk, groundnut oil, flour and rice have been doubled. Once the Delhi Government was defeated because of onion. Arhar dal was earlier priced at Rs 70, today it has become priced at Rs 150. Farmers agitated and after the movement the Government brought some laws. The farmers opposed the laws brought by the Government and the Government had to withdraw all three laws. The Government had promised to double their income. Along with doubling it, Government had also promised to increase the MSP. Today the income of farmers is declining by 1.5 percent annually. More than rupees one lakh crore has been surrendered to the agriculture budget in the last 5 years. 'PM Fasal Bima Yojana' has also failed. A total of Rs 2,761 crore are outstanding in pending claims under 'PM Fasal Bima Yojana' till 2021-22. Only the agents benefit from this. The agents of the insurance scheme put hundred conditions in it, so that the farmers do not get anything. After the launch of the scheme, 2 crore, 33 lakh farmers were removed from this Scheme. The Government started giving Rs 6,000 annually to farmers, i.e. Rs 16 per family per day, whereas even two cups of tea are not available for Rs 16 in a dhaba. Our demand is for caste census under social justice. We are demanding this because if caste census is conducted, then everything will be known about how many graduates are there in each caste, how many are in jobs, how much land is there. The Government can make plans based on that. This provides an X-ray of the economy.

Women's participation in the country is 50 percent, hence they should also get 50 percent share in the labor force. The Prime Minister does not talk about the atrocities on Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes and women. It is clear from the actions of the Government that they want to end reservation. UGC recently released a draft guideline on de-reservation of vacancies of reserved category candidates in higher educational institutions and filling them up with candidates from general category if reserved candidates are not available. If no candidate from reserved category is available, instead of de-reserving the entire backlog, stipend lecturers can be hired temporarily to manage the work for a few days. Whether we get anything or not, we are with this country. No matter how much trouble you give us, we will never think of separating from the country. Nothing was said about China. It has been said in the President's address that our forces are responding with a tit-for-tat policy. But the reality is that we are leaving our land under the control of China. In this same month, Chinese soldiers stopped an Indian shepherd from entering the grazing area near Patrolling Points 35 and 36. If we are not able to stop this, they will come further in, which will lead to a huge fight and no peace will remain there. You are not visiting Manipur. Though, people are being destroyed there, their houses are burning but according to you there is peace there. Talking about the federal structure, funds were not released to the flood affected states. There is drought in half of Karnataka, but no money was given for that also. NREGA money is not being

released to Bengal. There is a demand to give special category status to Andhra Pradesh, but nothing is being done in that regard.

It was said in the President's Address that the number of airports has doubled as compared to 2014. This is far from the truth. Second, the Government said a lot of things to humiliate the Congress Party and Nehru ji time and again, but it never praised the work and contribution of Nehru ji for the country. He went to jail for the country, fought for the country, fought for freedom and laid the foundation of the five-year plan. He sacrificed everything to uphold the values of democracy. The literacy rate which was about twenty percent in 1951, increased to seventy-four percent in 2013-14. It stands at 77 percent today which means there has been only a slight increase in it during the regime of this government. Again, life expectancy was only 32 years around the time of independence which increased to 70 years in our regime. Now in this regime, the life expectancy has reduced to 69.27 years. Why is the government not conducting the 2021 census? If the government conducts the census, we will get to know how many people are literate, how much we have progressed and how much development has taken place. What was the need to change the name of Nehruji's museum? Is this democracy? If the government does this, people will lose faith in democracy. Our objective is that if there is development, if roads are constructed, hospitals are built then people belonging to every section of society will benefit from it. Only with this kind of thought-process the country can prosper. The last thing I want to say is that the poor and weaker sections should get justice. This is our policy which we will continue to follow.

*Discussion not concluded.*

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### **PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS**

The following Bills were introduced:

1. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Bill, 2022.
2. The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (Amendment of Article 371A).
3. The Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (Amendment) Bill, 2023.
4. The Kashmiri Pandits (Recourse, Restitution, Rehabilitation and Resettlement) Bill, 2022.
5. The Witness Protection Bill, 2023.
6. The Maternity Benefit for Women in the Unorganised Sector Bill, 2023.
7. The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Amendment) Bill, 2023.
8. The Information Technology (Amendment) Bill, 2023.
9. The Public Service Integrity Bill, 2023.
10. The Elder Persons (Care and Protection) Bill, 2024.
11. The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (substitution of article 155, insertion of new article 156A and substitution of articles 200 and 201).
12. The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Amendment Bill, 2024.
13. The Indian Contract (Amendment) Bill, 2024.

14. The Representation of People (Amendment) Bill, 2024. (insertion of new sections 127B to 127D).
15. The Indian Media Services (Regulation and Licensing) Bill, 2024.
16. The National Commission for Protection from Honour Crime Bill, 2024.
17. The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2024 (amendment of article 361).
18. The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2024 (amendment of articles 15 and 16).
19. The National Food Security (Amendment) Bill, 2024.
20. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (Amendment) Bill, 2024.
21. The Prevention of Fraudulent Calls Bill, 2024.
22. The Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 2024 (amendment of sections 86 and 116A).

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**P. C. MODY,**  
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\*\*\*\*Supplement covering rest of the proceedings is being issued separately.