RAJYA SABHA

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*SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE

(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

Monday, December 09, 2024/ Agrahayana 18, 1946 (Saka)

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Members, I am pleased to extend warmest birthday greetings to Shrimati Sonia Gandhi, a distinguished Member of this House, on her birthday. Shrimati Gandhi, who now represents Rajasthan in her first term in this august House since April 2024, has served five consecutive terms in the Lok Sabha from 1999 to 2024. She served as the President of the Indian National Congress from 1998 to 2017 and again from 2019 to 2022 – the longest in the party's history. She happens to be the Chairperson of the United Progressive Alliance from 2004 to 2023. Shrimati Gandhi has made literary contributions by authoring books "Rajiv" and "Rajiv's World", dedicated to the memory of her late husband, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, who served as the Prime Minister of this country and later on the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha. I personally cherish the meaningful bond I shared with late Shri Rajiv Gandhi. Shrimati Gandhi has been involved with preserving our national heritage which is evident in her editorial work on "Freedom's Daughter" and "Two Alone, Two Together" – compilations of correspondence between India's first Prime Minister Pandit Nehru and Shrimati Indira Gandhi, who became Prime Minister later on. She has a diploma in oil painting conservation from the National Museum, New Delhi, reflecting her keen interest in art, music, and handicrafts. Today, Shrimati Gandhi's son, Shri Rahul Gandhi, serves as the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, and her daughter, Shrimati Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, has been recently elected to the Lok Sabha. On behalf of this House and personally, I extend heartfelt wishes to Shrimati Sonia Gandhi ji for a long, healthy, and prosperous life ahead and extend greetings to her family, friends, and admirers.

OBSERVATIONS BY THE CHAIR

MR. CHAIRMAN: (i) Hon'ble Members, as we gather in this august House today, from the Chair I seek to reflect upon a historic milestone in our country's journey towards democracy. The first sitting of the Constituent Assembly of India was held on this very day, the 9th of December in the year 1946, after its constitution on the 6th December, 1946. This moment mark the beginning of the profound task of crafting the Constitution of India, a document that stands as a corner-stone of our Democratic Republic. The first meeting of the Constituent Assembly was Chaired by Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha who was then the oldest Member and also the oldest parliamentarian in India having served as Member of the Imperial Legislative Council from the year 1910 and also in the Central Legislative Assembly from 1921. The Constituent Assembly received three messages of felicitations

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

from America, China and Australia which were read out by the Chairman then. Under the leadership of stalwarts, such as Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the Assembly undertook the monumental task of debating and drafting provisions that would guide the destiny of an independent India. They did so with unwavering commitment, often transcending personal and ideological differences in the spirit of nation-building. This House, the Rajya Sabha, derives its strength and purpose from the very principles enshrined in the Indian Constitution. It is our duty and constitutional ordainment, as Members of Parliament, to uphold and protect these principles, ensuring that the aspirations of those who came before us continue to resonate in the policies and practices of today. Let us take inspiration from the vision and dedication that the Members of the Constituent Assembly exemplified. Their debates remind us of the value of constructive dialogue, mutual respect and harmony in the House, which are essential for the functioning of parliamentary democracy. Hon'ble Members, as we recall the import and significance of this momentous and seminal situation in our history, let us also renew our pledge and commitment to serve the people of India with integrity and diligence, ever mindful of the sacrifices that made our democratic journey possible. It is an occasion for us to commit and resolve that our actions will be exemplified keeping in view the Preamble of the Indian Constitution, and our dialogue and discourse will be attended with respect for one another in a spirit of deep understanding. I am sure the Hon'ble Members will display very high standards in parliamentary proceedings and functioning so as to be a role model for legislatures all over the country.

(ii) I would appeal to all the Members of the House to carefully consider the oath of the Constitution they have taken. Their oath is very specific. They have to ensure integrity of the nation on a priority basis. Any challenge to the unity of the nation, to the integrity of the nation, from within or outside, requires all of us to offer united challenge. This is not a challenge to one section or the other. This is a challenge to our very existence. We, as a nation, are committed to fight these sinister forces, these forces that are inimicable to India. This inimical force mechanism, a deep state that is evolving, is required to be neutralized by all of us.

I would appeal to the Hon’ble Members to share the sentiments of the people at large. People at large are extremely concerned. All divisive forces, all forces that are pernicious to the concept of Bharat, all forces that have sinister design to run down our democracy, to bring down our progress, to impede our economic upsurge, have to be defeated by us. That is the sentiment which 1.4 billion people share. That sentiment has to emanate from this House also. This House, at this critical moment, when the country is facing such serious challenges, must send a united voice to motivate the people at large, inspire the people, so that these forces are defeated. We, in this country, that is rising at a very fast pace, cannot afford to either countenance or overlook such kind of evil designs, and our conduct should be such that people get more interest in our Parliament. If dialogue in Parliament does not share the sentiments of the people at large, the Parliament will get into irrelevance. It is fundamental for Parliament to debate such serious challenges that the nation is facing from forces that are determined to run down our country by employing various mechanisms. The functioning of the deep state has been noticed. It affects us more perniciously than COVID disease. This is an occasion where the entire nation needs to speak in one voice. The nation must give a direction to the people at large, so that all enemies of Bharat, within or outside, are taught a lesson never to venture in a misadventure to challenge our integrity, our sovereignty, and impede our progress. I am sure the Members from both sides will soul-search themselves, live up to their oath, and set an example to the nation that we are first Indians and the nation is first for us. Our commitment to nationalism has to be 100 per cent.

We shall not allow our nationalism to go down. We will not bear any challenge to our unity, integrity and sovereignty.

RULING BY THE CHAIR

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Members, a point of order collaterally has been raised that Rule 267 of our Rules is invocable not by the Treasury Benches. This is a matter on which I seek to give my ruling. If you go through Rule 267, the Rule is very explicit. The Rule bestows a Member of this House to give notice and does not make any distinction whatsoever between a Member on account of she or he belonging to a political party and, therefore, I have not declined notices on the premise that they come from the Treasury Benches, nor have I ever declined notice on the premise that they come from the Opposition Benches. There can be conceivable situations when a Member belonging to the Treasury Benches – these are the combinations which are there – can also feel it expedient to invite the attention of the Chair that the Business of the House should not be taken up and precedence be given to the subject matter of Rule 267. As a matter of fact, let me remind Hon'ble Members, and I have put it in one of my rulings also, that there have been occasions when all sections of the House have felt it expedient to suspend working of the House as regards the normal Business and take up an issue of great import. Therefore, declining of notices is on account of procedural failures and not enough to invoke my discretion.

MATTER RAISED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIR

Demand to constitute a Special Commission to protect the Rights of Patients and Doctors

DR. LAXMIKANT BAJPAYEE: Today the mutual trust between patients and doctors in the healthcare sector has weakened. Patients suffer due to unnecessary treatment, excessive fees and unclear information. I urge that a special commission be established to protect the rights of patients and doctors.

GOVERNMENT BILL

The Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PANKAJ CHAUDHARY): I move that the Bill further to amend the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, the State Bank of India Act, 1955, the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1970 and the Banking Companies (Acquisition of Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1980, as passed by Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration.

Discussion not commenced.

P. C. MODY,
Secretary-General.

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