

RAJYA SABHA

***SUPPLEMENT
TO
SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE**

(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

Friday, March 28, 2025/ Chaitra 7, 1947 (Saka)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' RESOLUTION – *Contd.*

Need for Establishing Council for Future Affairs to Drive Innovation in Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain, Quantum Computing and Water Reuse to Create Policies for Technology Transfer, IP Ownership and Market Deployment

DR. FAUZIA KHAN: This Resolution is very imperative in today's times. While AI presents immense opportunities, its potential for misuse is also equally serious. A global study has revealed that only 20 per cent of corporations using AI had an ethical framework in place. The unchecked biases in AI can deepen inequalities and erode public trust, therefore addressing this challenge demands collaboration through a structured partnership between academia, industry and governance. India's internal security landscape is no longer confined to traditional threats. Cyber attacks on India's critical infrastructure have increased by 300 per cent. Such breaches can lead to identity theft, to espionage, and even sabotage of democratic institutions. The Government must not only enforce data protection, but also integrate AI into regulatory frameworks to monitor and mitigate the misuse effectively. India must act swiftly to modernize its defence infrastructure. The proposed Council for Future Affairs is a forward looking initiative. India has the talent and technological capability, but there is a clear academia-industry gap. Let us not allow technology to become our vulnerability. Let us make it our shield. With this Resolution, we take a step forward towards securing India's digital and physical frontiers in an increasingly complex world.

SHRI BRIJ LAL: The main intention of this Resolution is to draw attention of the Government of India to rapid evolution of emerging technologies, which are reshaping global economic power structures. It is mentioned that despite a strong research ecosystem in the country, fragmentation among institutions, industry players hamper innovation and delay commercialization. Research spans multiple fields with many experts but remains fragmented. A proposal suggests integrating efforts through a Council for Future Affairs (CFA) to create a unified framework for research-driven innovation in AI, blockchain, quantum computing, small nuclear energy, water reuse, and other emerging fields. The CFA would act as an apex body of experts, industries, policymakers, investors, academic institutions, and startups to ensure a multi-stakeholder approach. A Research and Product Development Council under CFA is proposed to focus on specific technologies, aligning research with national priorities. Adequate funding is needed for long-term research, prototype development, and commercialization in collaboration with industry and global

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

investors. The CFA would also set national goals, define research objectives, and formulate policies for technology transfer. The Government is already addressing these concerns through the Empowered Technology Group (ETG), Anusandhan, and the National Research Foundation. ETG, established by Cabinet approval on February 19, 2020, oversees national policies on research, development, procurement, and adoption of emerging technologies, ensuring India's leadership in key domains. NITI Aayog has developed strategies, roadmaps, and future directions in emerging technologies. The ETG Anusandhan framework addresses research fragmentation by uniting stakeholders from atomic energy, space, defense, electronics, telecom, and science & technology. On atomic energy, Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh emphasized transitioning to clean energy. Research on Small Modular Nuclear Reactors (SMNRs) is underway, with deployment in remote areas. Two 200-kilowatt SMNRs will be installed at Narora Atomic Power Plant, Uttar Pradesh. India has made significant progress in nuclear energy. Initially, we used Uranium-235 technology, followed by advancements in Plutonium-239. Now, with Thorium, which accounts for 25% of the global reserves in India, we are promoting clean energy. In the defense sector, we were once dependent on imports. During the 1962 war, our soldiers had outdated 303 rifles, while the world had already adopted SLRs. Due to a lack of resources, we suffered defeat. Now, the Prime Minister has launched the C-295 aircraft project in Vadodara, making India more self-reliant. Earlier, we imported aircraft like AN-32, AN-12, and IL-76 (Gajraj), but now we are developing modern military aircraft capable of landing on mountainous and short runways. We have developed Tejas fighter jets and 5th-generation fighter aircraft (AMCA), with 4.5-generation aircraft already in service. The AK-203 rifle, which was previously imported from Russia, is now being manufactured in Amethi, Uttar Pradesh. It has a 700-meter range and can fire 700 rounds per minute. India has now developed the naval variant of the BrahMos missile. Earlier, we imported defense equipment, but today we are exporting, making India self-reliant in defense production. Today Brahmos is in demand all over the world. Earlier we used to be an importer of defence products, today we are exporting and under the guidance of Hon'ble Modi ji, we are going to become a major defence product exporter. Today tap water is being provided in every home. Our country is an agricultural country. Where 60 crore population is involved in agriculture work. Keeping in mind the irrigation facilities, work is being done to link Ken-Betwa rivers, which is going to transform agriculture in Bundelkhand. When our citizens remain healthy, only then the country will be healthy and will develop. Such medicines have been made in the field of health, which are very useful. In our 'Ayushman Bharat Yojana', a coverage of Rs 5 lakh has been given, people who are more than 70 years of age, irrespective of their income, they are also being given a coverage of Rs 5 lakh today. In this budget, import duty on all life saving drugs was reduced so that even a poor person can buy it. Today, the people of our country are healthy and when the citizen is healthy, he will be able to contribute to the progress of the country. Our Prime Minister's goal is that we will make a developed India by 2047 and achieve the target of net zero carbon emissions by 2070.

SHRIMATI JEBI MATHER HISHAM: I express my gratitude to allow me to speak on this Private Member's Resolution, which revolves around technology. As I begin, I must acknowledge the visionary leadership of Shri Rajiv Gandhi, the true architect of the Digital India and telecommunications revolution. At a time when technology was barely a recognized term, he envisioned and implemented the Technology Mission, integrating it into people's daily lives. From advancements in immunization and agriculture to making telephones accessible to every citizen and introducing computers, his contributions have shaped the technological landscape we see today.

Artificial Intelligence presents both promise and peril. While it puts vast knowledge at our fingertips, it threatens jobs, especially in a country already facing record unemployment. Bill Gates recently pointed out that AI will drastically reduce white-collar jobs while labor-intensive work may persist. In a country already facing a 45-year-high unemployment rate, where countless educated youths are struggling to find jobs despite promises of job creation, the impact of AI on employment is deeply worrying. As a voice for the youth, I must ask: What is the government's plan to tackle the looming rise in unemployment caused by AI? Beyond this, AI poses a threat to democracy itself. Since 2014, we have witnessed the systematic capture of the fourth pillar of democracy—the media—by the ruling dispensation, leaving little room for free expression. Social media, too, appears manipulated, with algorithms ensuring that only government-approved narratives dominate public discourse. Now, with AI's growing influence, there is a legitimate fear that even electoral data could be tampered with, endangering free and fair elections. If AI is weaponized to control public opinion, pushing narratives dictated by those in power, democracy itself is at risk. What happens if extreme ideologies are embedded into AI-driven platforms? Who will regulate and safeguard against such manipulation? The government must act swiftly to balance AI's benefits with safeguards. Without proactive measures, we risk deepening unemployment, eroding privacy, and weakening democratic institutions. The proposed Council for Future Affairs, as suggested by hon' Member, raises concerns about its potential control by the ruling dispensation, similar to the ED, Election Commission, and CBI. This could undermine democracy in India. However, no matter how much media, social media, or AI is controlled, the reality faced by the poor and women cannot be ignored. Despite repeated appeals, we know they may have no impact, but we continue to be India's voice. If we do not speak, India loses. If AI benefits people, it should be encouraged. However, security and employment remain key concerns, particularly for the youth and women. The government must address these seriously. Rajiv Gandhi championed technological development for public good, not self-promotion. Today's leadership should take inspiration from this and prioritize people's welfare over self-interest.

DR. V. SIVADASAN: Technology should serve society, as reflected in the works of Einstein, Edison, and Newton. While AI brings opportunities, it also presents challenges. The government must ensure that technological advancements benefit all, yet many Indian schools still lack digital access. Digitalization has increased workloads without adequate hiring, leading to worker exploitation. Many companies prioritize profit over employee well-being, particularly in banking and railways, where long working hours persist despite automation. Universities, despite their potential, lack financial support for HR activities. AI and high-end technologies are transforming industries, but their benefits must reach everyone. Workers, especially in IT, face constant employer surveillance due to widespread connectivity. The "right to disconnect" is now a global issue, with Australia, Portugal, and Spain enacting laws to protect employees. India must prioritize fair technological development, ensuring education, employment, and workers' rights are upheld, rather than allowing technology to serve only capitalist interests. In India, the investment for the education is below 3 per cent of the GDP. China, spends Rs.43 lakh crores on research and development. India is spending only Rs.1.1 lakh crore. We spend less than 4 per cent of what China spends on education. The pseudoscience will not help the people of the nation. We should promote AI and technological advancement for the people, not for the market, nor for the profit of big corporate loot. I request all the parliamentarians to support more investment for education, health and research and development activities.

DR. SASMIT PATRA: The Private Members' Resolution proposes to institute a Council for Future Affairs, which would essentially be a cerebral hub for unified strategic

framework for futuristic areas. Why is this needed? China has DeepSeek. Their LLM platform is coming. The day the LLM platform comes in, NVIDIA will lose its capital market share by more than 20 per cent. The stocks will crash across the country and the world. The reason is that technology is going to be the disruptor. As a country, we are trying our best to make the next LLM, which will become the Large Language Model, which will drive AI. I believe this is only the beginning of AI. The artificial intelligence is going to pervade every step of our lives as we go forward, whether it is education, health, agriculture, or anything that you can think of, it is going to be like what the Internet is for us today. Quantum technologies will have the power to decrypt your credit card in less than two minutes. We have to start instrumentalizing it in our labs, in our schools, in our colleges and in our universities. Who is going to think about it? This is something that Shri Kartikeya Sharma is saying in this Private Members' Resolution. Cyber security is going to be the key because our money is going to be digital money. And, tomorrow, hackers sitting in various countries will hack into the systems of our cyber security firewalls and try to threaten us. We need to work on futuristic areas where countries like China, America and others are doing it. We need to create a platform that has to pervade across various silos. Autonomous and hypersonic transport systems are going to revolutionise the way we move across our great country. To fly from Delhi to Kerala takes three hours. Can a hypersonic system take us there in three hours? The USA is doing it. Where are we in terms of doing that? That is why a Council for Future Affairs is necessary. The future of AI is going to provide more opportunities for the youth to become innovators rather than employees. We talked about next generation defence technologies. Wars will be fought through drones and automated systems. Are we prepared for that? Even today, though we are trying to become Atmnirbhar, a lot of our radar technology comes from Israel. A lot of our technology comes from Russia. We have to think about the software, if not the hardware. That is where this Council is necessary. Can we have innovation hubs where children start thinking in classrooms and libraries where they see India 30-40 years from now? Let us tap into the rich Pravasi Bharatiya across the world. Indians who have benefitted from our IITs and IIMs have gone ahead and have done a name for themselves. Let us bring them back. We will be a great soft power. I am pretty sure that a Council for Future Affairs is necessary for creating a unified cerebral thought leadership for our nation.

SPECIAL MENTIONS

1. Need to Preserve and Promote Cultural Heritage of Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar

DR. FAUZIA KHAN: Aurangabad, now known as Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, is home to a rich cultural heritage; yet many of its monuments are in urgent need of attention. The Bibi Ka Maqbara, often called the Taj of the Deccan, is in a state of disrepair. The historic wall surrounding the tomb is on the verge of collapse, temporarily supported by wooden and iron pillars. Additionally, rising pollution is further discolouring the monument, adding to its structural vulnerabilities. Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar has immense potential as an international tourist destination. Key heritage sites such as the Buddhist Caves and the Qila-e-Ark fort also have the potential to become viable tourist attractions. I urge the Government to prioritize funding and conservation, expedite restoration projects, and enhance the tourism experience to transform this city into an international cultural hub.

(Dr. V. Sivadasan, Shri A.A. Rahim and Shrimati Jebi Mather Hisham associated.)

2. Demand for Establishment of Soybean based Food Processing Industries

DR. AJEET MADHAVRAO GOPCHADE: Establishment of soybean based food processing industries and encouraging export of soybean products will increase the income of farmers and strengthen the local economy. Soybean is no longer just a simple grain but has become a multi-purpose crop. These include soybean oil, tofu, soy milk, soy protein soy nuts, soy flour and other value-added products. If the Government develops Nanded in Maharashtra as a soybean processing hub through special schemes, it will not only directly benefit the farmers but will also promote industrial progress in the region. I urge upon the Government that the Government of India and the State Government of Maharashtra should jointly provide a special incentive package for setting up soybean based food processing industries in Nanded district.

3. Demand to Increase and Strengthen Sports Infrastructure in Nagaland

SHRIMATI S. PHANGNON KONYAK: There is a need to strengthen sports infrastructure in Nagaland. While some initiatives under the Khelo India program and State funded projects exist, the sports infrastructure in the State remains below national standards. Although 11 Khelo India projects were approved for Nagaland, many remain incomplete. Without equitable access to training centres and professional coaching, our athletes cannot compete at national or international levels. Nagaland has immense potential in sports, but lack of proper stadiums, training centres and certified coaches hamper our athletes' growth. Immediate corrective action is necessary to prevent losing a generation of sportspersons. I urge upon the Government to take decisive measures to make Nagaland a true sporting power.

(Shri A. A. Rahim, Dr. Sikander Kumar, Shri Maharaja Sanajaoba Leishemba and Shri Gulam Ali associated.)

4. Demand to Expand Jan Aushadhi Kendras in Every Primary Healthcare Centre in the Country

DR. BHAGWAT KARAD: Several transformative schemes have been introduced by the Government to improve public welfare, especially in healthcare. While Ayushman Bharat provides insurance coverage, Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Pariyojna (PMB JAP) focuses on making essential medicines and surgical items affordable for all. Under this initiative, Jan Aushadhi Kendras (JAKs) provide high quality generic medicines and surgical products at 50 per cent to 80 per cent lower prices than branded alternatives. This scheme has saved ₹30,000 crore for the public and continues to benefit millions. To further promote awareness, 7th March is celebrated as "Jan Aushadhi Diwas." There is a need to have a Jan Aushadhi Kendra in every Primary Healthcare Centre. I urge upon the Government to expand Jan Aushadhi Kendras in every Primary Healthcare Centre nationwide, ensuring affordable healthcare for every Indian.

(Dr. Sikander Kumar associated.)

5. Demand for Settlement of Inhabitants of J.N. Road in Sikkim

SHRI DORJEE TSHERING LEPCHA: I rise to voice an urgent need for permanent settlement rights for the inhabitants of Jawaharlal Nehru Road from 3rd Mile to Zuluk in Sikkim, along Indo-Tibetan Border. These residents, descendants of labourers who were made to settle there in 1952 for the construction of this road, long before Sikkim's merger with India in 1975, have upheld legacy of their forefathers.

They played a vital role in national defence during 1962 India-China conflict. Their loyalty was demonstrated even during the recent Doklam skirmish. Their deep knowledge

of the terrain continues to aid security operations in Nathula through Doklam affirming their role in national security. Despite their significant contributions to national security and the State's economy through tourism and cultural exchange, these residents face identity challenges, living on forest land without ownership rights. I urge for the urgent implementation of measures to grant them permanent settlement rights under the Forest Rights Act, 2006 or any other appropriate framework.

6. Demand to Reduce the Duration of the Employment Selection Process and to Make Process Transparent

DR. SIKANDER KUMAR: The youth of our country is the future of the country and plays a decisive role in the development of the country. After completing his studies, he applies for the selection examinations for various government jobs in the country with new enthusiasm, hard work and in difficult circumstances, so that he can contribute to the development of the country. But the time of this selection process becomes so long that it takes several years from filling the form to getting selected, due to which many times the eligibility of the candidate ends due to his being overage. Many times, the cancellation of the examination also causes mental stress to the youth, due to which many youth get involved in unethical activities and many candidates even commit suicide. I would like to request the Government of India that the duration of this selection process should be reviewed to reduce and make the selection process transparent, so that the future of the youth can be secured in the interest of the country.

7. Demand for Republication of Indian Arabic Magazine “Thaqafatul Hind” by Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)

SHRI GULAM ALI: The Indian Arabic magazine ‘Thaqafatul Hind’, launched in 1950 by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), played a pivotal role in promoting Indian civilization, culture, history, religion, etc. in the Arab world. The magazine served as a bridge between India and the Arab world, countering misconceptions and strengthening India's cultural identity. The magazine ceased to be published in 2017, leaving a significant void in India's cultural diplomacy. Today, as India strengthens its ties with Arab nations, particularly, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, the revival of this magazine is essential. Given its historical significance and the growing importance of cultural diplomacy, I urge upon the Government of India and the ICCR to take steps to revive ‘Thaqafatul Hind’.

(Shri Maharaja Sanajaoba Leishemba, Shrimati S. Phangnon Konyak and Shrimati Darshana Singh associated.)

8. Demand for Celebrating Festivals Based on Hindu Deities at International Level

SHRI NARESH BANSAL: At present, many days and weeks are celebrated at the international level for different creatures, concepts, famous people, religious factors. All these days are approved by the United Nations Organization. We have to apply to celebrate festival days on Hindu deities at the international level. There are many famous birth dates of God in Hinduism, like Shri Ram Navami, Shri Krishna Janmashtami, Shri Hanuman Jayanti, etc., who took birth in human form and who came to the earth to guide people about humanity. We have to celebrate these days at the international level. There are many idols, books, religious texts, etc. available on ancient Hinduism. Here are the famous Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, etc. available. Through these, the whole world will be aware of the positivity of Hinduism. This step will be a pathfinder for all the countries of the world. I demand from the Government that attention should be paid to it.

(Dr. Sikander Kumar and Shrimati Darshana Singh associated.)

9. Concern over Quality of Processed Food and Its Impact on Health in India

MS. SWATI MALIWAL: Nowadays, processed food and street food are using low quality ingredients without any hesitation. The most worrying thing is that palm oil is being used in almost every snack, biscuit, namkeen and packaged food. It is cheap, but extremely harmful for health. It is increasing heart problems, diabetes and obesity. Momos are now prepared in factories where hygiene is lacking. Recently, a dog's dead body was found during a raid at a factory in Mohali. Now, synthetic cheese made from palm oil is also being sold in the name of cheese, which amounts to playing with people's health and trust. The companies that use sunflower oil abroad are using palm oil and synthetic flavours in India. This is not right at all. A report shows that many packaged items in India are against the standards of the World Health Organization. I demand strict action from the Government on this issue.

(Shri Haris Beeran associated.)

10. Demand for Measures to Curb the Escalating Menace of Stray Dogs

SHRIMATI JEBI MATHER HISHAM: The escalating menace of stray dogs in Kerala has reached alarming proportions. Recently, schools and Anganwadis in Kozhikode district of the State were compelled to declare holidays due to the threat posed by stray dogs. Over the past five years, Kerala has witnessed a significant surge in stray dog-related incidents. 94 persons succumbed to rabies between 2020 and 2024. The situation is further aggravated by a severe shortage of rabies vaccines, depriving many victims of timely medical care. Despite the sterilization and vaccination programmes, the stray dog population continues to grow. Recognizing the crisis, the Supreme Court appointed a Committee to recommend compensation for victims. However, the implementation remains inconsistent and delayed. The State must safeguard human lives, and therefore, it must bear the full medical expenses of those affected. Moreover, the compensation recommended by the apex court must be strictly enforced. I strongly urge the Union Government to sanction a special package to help Kerala combat this crisis.

(Shri A. A. Rahim associated.)

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Secretary-General.

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