

While our commitment to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy is well-known, where necessary in the light of our national interests, our nuclear policy will be re-evaluated.

The situation in some parts of India's immediate neighbourhood continues to be uncertain in security terms. It is regrettable that Pakistan continues to instigate terrorism against India. We call upon Pakistan to respond constructively to our repeated offers to resolve all outstanding issues bilaterally.

There will be no compromise on our country's vital security concerns. The programme of indigenous development of our defence capability in terms of research and acquisitions will continue and be reinforced in the light of our security needs. We will stress a coordinated approach to national security by revitalising the structure and enhancing the status of the National Security Council.

We repose full confidence in the capability of the Indian armed forces to defend the nation and will do whatever is necessary to maintain and enhance this capability. I am sure honourable Members join me in commending the armed forces for their professionalism and dedication. Recognizing their invaluable contribution Government is committed to taking all possible steps to promote their welfare. We cannot forget the large community of our ex-Servicemen. They have rendered valuable service to the nation and deserve our special consideration. The Government will establish a Sainik Kalyan Foundation with a suitable endowment to take care of their rehabilitation and welfare.

The country is faced with a number of crucial challenges as we stand on the threshold of the next century. The eleventh Lok Sabha will have the honour of contributing to the task of piloting the country to the next century.

My good wishes are with you in this historic task.

JAI HIND

OBITUARY REFERENCES

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Members, I refer with profound sorrow to the passing away of Dr. Govind Das Richharia, Shri Dev Datt Puri and Prof. Rasheeduddin Khan, Former Members of the Rajya Sabha.

Dr. Govind Das Richharia who passed away on 18th March, 1996 was born at Baruasagar in district Jhansi of Uttar Pradesh in February, 1920 and had his education at Baruasagar and Bundelkhand Ayurvedic College. A doctor by profession Dr. Richharia was engaged in social work and was associated with a number of social and educational institutions. He was Chairman of the Jhansi Zila Parishad from 1961 to 1970; Vice-Chairman Khadi and Village Industries Commission from 1980 to 1984 and Convener, Irrigation Committee, Central Parliamentary Group from 1971 to 1976. He was a Member of the—Uttar Pradesh State Plan Advisory Council, Uttar Pradesh Shiksha Prasar Samiti and National Integration Council. He was also a Member of the Governing Body and Executive of the Central Council for Indian Systems of Medicine and Ayurveda.

Dr. Richharia started his Parliamentary career as a Member of the Fifth Lok Sabha in 1971. He represented the State of Uttar Pradesh in this House from April, 1984 to April, 1990.

In the passing away of Dr. Govind Das Richharia, the country has lost a dedicated social worker.

Shri Dev Datt Puri, who passed away on 22nd April, 1996 was born at Jullundur in Punjab in August, 1914 and was educated at Lahore. An Industrialist, Shri Dev Datt Puri

was closely associated with various organisations. He was a Member of the Board of Governors of the Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi; Development Council for Sugar Industry and Technical Education Board, Government of Haryana. He represented the country at the United Nations Sugar Conference held at New York in 1956 and at Geneva in 1958 and 1961. Shri Puri also led trade delegations to Iran and Pakistan in 1961.

Shri Dev Datt Puri started his Legislative career as a Member of the Punjab Vidhan Sabha in 1952. He was reelected to the Vidhan Sabha in 1957. Thereafter, he became a Member of the Third Lok Sabha from 1962 to 1967. He represented the State of Haryana in this House from April, 1970 to April, 1976.

In the passing away of Shri Dev Datt Puri, the country has lost a noted industrialist and a veteran Parliamentarian.

Prof. Rasheeduddin Khan, a former Member of the Rajya Sabha passed away on the 25th April, 1996 at the age of 72. Born at Hyderabad in September, 1924, Prof. Rasheeduddin Khan was educated at Nizam College, Hyderabad and Indian School of International Studies, New Delhi. Prof. Khan was associated with various social and educational institutions like the Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi, the University Grants Commission, the National Committee on Science and Technology, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, New Delhi, Taraqqi-e-Urdu Board, etc. He was the Founder-Chairman of the Centre for Political Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He established the Centre for Federal studies in Hamdard University. He was also a member of the Indian delegations to United Nations 24th General Assembly Ses-

sion in 1969 and the United Nations Security Council Special Session in 1971. An outstanding intellectual and an exponent of our secularism and social harmony, Prof. Khan helped in shaping the thinking and outlook of a whole generation of Indian youth through his scholarly writings and academic lectures. He made invaluable contributions in interpreting and understanding our political system, specially the unique features of our federal polity and society.

Prof. Khan was a nominated member of the Rajya Sabha from April, 1970 to April 1976 and again from April, 1976 to April, 1982.

In the passing away of Prof Rasheeduddin Khan, the country has lost an eminent social scientist, educationist and a distinguished parliamentarian.

We deeply mourn the passing away of Dr. Govind Das Richharia, Shri Dev Datt Puri and Prof. Rasheeduddin Khan.

I request Members to rise in their places and observe silence as a mark of respect to the memory of the departed.

(Hon. Members then stood in silence for one minute)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Secretary-General will convey to the members of the bereaved families our sense of profound sorrow and deep sympathy.

INTRODUCTION OF MINISTERS

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I wish to introduce to you and, through you, to the House my colleagues:

Shri Sikander Bakht—Minister of External Affairs and Urban Development;