

SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY (Odisha): Sir, I associate myself with the matter raised by Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, Shri Avinash Rai Khanna; not present.

Now, we shall take up the Special Mentions, which will be laid on the Table except in the case of Shri Shantaram Naik because he is making a Special Mention on Goa. So, only Mr. Naik is allowed to read it.

SPECIAL MENTIONS*

Golden Jubilee of Liberation of Goa from the Portuguese Rule

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK (Goa): Today, Goa is celebrating its 50th anniversary. It was 50 years ago, namely, on 19th December, 1961, that Goa was liberated from 450 years of Portuguese rule. Despite foreign rule of such a long period, the Goans retained their religious and customary rights.

Freedom fighters from Goa were assisted by several other freedom fighters from Maharashtra, Karnataka, Punjab and other States from time to time.

It was the policy of peace that took some years before Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru could say 'Enough is enough'. It was disregarding the opinion of major powers, which were against any operation by India, that Pandit Nehru ordered the military to march into Goa on 18th December, 1961.

After the liberation of Goa, the Goans were given the opportunity, through an opinion poll, to decide between merger into Maharashtra and the status of Union Territory. People, overwhelmingly, voted in favour of getting the status of a Union Territory. Subsequently, in 1987, I was privileged to get an opportunity to raise the issue of Goa's statehood in the other House and the then Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, went out of his way and responded to concede to the demand of Goa's statehood then and there. This was a gesture on behalf of the Prime Minister of the country which Goa will always remember.

Subsequently, Goa was granted statehood on 30th May, 1987.

*Laid on the Table.