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# INDIA AT A TURNING POINT



By Mail Today Bureau in New Delhi

Member of Parliament and former Union minister Shashi Tharoor on Friday said that a conscious political effort was being made to create a sense of 'Hindu majority' in the country even as nothing called 'majority' existed in India. Tharoor maintained that India was a 'collection of minorities' where even dominant castes and languages did not enjoy the majority status.

"Indian society is a collection of minorities, there is nothing called majority. In India, Brahmins constitute nearly 10 per cent of the population but they are the minorities. Even Yadavs with the population of 25 per cent do not enjoy the majority status," Tharoor said at a high-level round table on 'Social Cohesion in Transformation: The Experience of India and Beyond'. The event was organised by Bertelsmann Stiftung, a leading Germany-based media, services and education company, in association with the INDIA TODAY GROUP.

Liz Mohn, Vice-Chairwoman of Bertelsmann Stiftung and Aroon Purie, Chairman and Editor-in-Chief of INDIA TODAY GROUP inaugurated the round table. The event also saw participation from experts and academicians like Paul Van Gelder, Managing Director, Sebastian Indian Social



Bertelsmann Stiftung, in association with the India Today Group organised the event 'Social Cohesion in Transformation: The Experience of India and Beyond'.

Projects (SISP) – Centre; Ashis Nandy, Senior Honorary Fellow, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS); Pavan Kumar Varma, former IFS officer; Arun Maira, former Member of the Planning Commission of India; and author Gurcharan Das.

Earlier, Aroon Purie

said India was progressing towards from regionalism to 'cooperative federalism'. He said the regional parties now have a stake in good governance at the Centre and are also keen to be part of India's growth story. "This has made all the difference in fostering the

unity of India. The idea of India has become a continuing conversation," he said delivering the welcome address at the round table.

Purie identified caste mobilisation, emergence of Hindutva, liberalisation, rise of regionalism and women empowerment as five major transformations in modern India.

"Much of the conflict of Hindutva with the idea of Indian-

ness is unresolved and I am afraid it seems to be becoming worse," he said.

Liz Mohn emphasised that India had to play an important role in developing mutual understanding with Asia. She lauded the cultural and linguistic diversity of India. She exhorted the European countries to come together and tackle global crisis like terrorism and natural disasters.

**“The regional parties have a stake in good governance at the Centre and are keen to be part of India’s growth story. This has made all the difference in fostering the unity of India. The idea of India has become a continuing conversation.”**

**— AROON PURIE, CHAIRMAN & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, INDIA TODAY GROUP**

**Tharoor said Indian society is a collection of minorities, with majority non-existent**