

[Shri Ram Saikia]

- (25) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (23) and (24) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT-1978/97]

- (26) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, New Delhi for the year 1995-96, alongwith Accounts.

- (ii) Statement (Hindi and English versions) regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, New Delhi, for the year 1995-96.

- (27) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (26) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT-1979/97]

[English]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR (BARH) : Speaker, Sir. . .

MR. SPEAKER : Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee's name is first or the priority list. I will come to you after her.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Your name is everywhere. Your name is here even in the list of the Panel of Chairman.

12.03 hrs.

RE: RESERVATION OF WOMEN BILL

[English]

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE (Panskura) : I have risen to press before the House a very important item, which seems a very vexed item for the Parliament or at least for the Government. The former Prime Minister, Shri Deve Gowda promised all lady MPs that the Bill seeking one-third reservation of seats in Lok Sabha and Assemblies for women, the 81st Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 1996, would be passed in this Session itself.

[Translation]

SHRI ILIYAS AZMI (Shahabad) : Why not hundred percent reservation. . . (Interruptions).

[English]

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : We will come to that.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ (South Delhi) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are taking such an important issue and you are well aware as to how much significance it assumes. But somebody is saying to give hundred percent reservation and some 80 percent. She is speaking about 81st Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 1996 but some Members are saying to give 100 percent reservation. How the things will go, if you discuss such a serious issue so casually ? . . . (Interruptions). It seems as if women here are standing and begging for reservation . . . (Interruptions).

SHRI ILIYAS AZMI : This is a joke with our democracy. It was done earlier and it is still continuing . . . (Interruptions).

[English]

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : Let me finish. I am sure my sisters and some of my brothers also would like to speak.

The present Prime Minister, in his first speech, assured not only us but the whole nation that this Bill would be passed in this Budget Session. Now, the Budget has been passed and only four days are left for the Budget Session to be over. Therefore, I earnestly appeal to the Government and to the leaders of all political Parties to at least place this Bill before the Parliament in this very Session.

And then, let us see what happens.

[Translation]

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (Silchar) : So that truth comes without fear or favour. . .

[English]

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : An assurance was given once and it was not kept. An assurance was given the second time and that was not kept. This will create a very bad impression in the minds of people. I will end by recounting an incident that occurred today. In the morning, while I was coming hurriedly to the House to give notice for this special mention, the taxi driver wanted to know as to why I was in such a great hurry. I told him about the notice and asked that boy if he thinks one-third

reservation for women should be there. He said, "Yes, *mataji*, yes, it must be there." So, we must understand that it is not only women but men from various walks of life also support this. . . .(Interruptions).

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur) : Sir, that shows that there is public support for this measure. I request the Government to bring the Bill tomorrow. . . .(Interruptions).

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA (Ponnani) : If you ask Taxi driver and the passenger is mail, he will say, "*Dadaji*, *dadaji*, no such reservation should be given." . . .(Interruptions).

SHRI GEETA MUKHERJEE : If the passenger is a particular type of Member of Parliament, it may happen.

[Translation]

DR. GIRIJA VYAS (Udaipur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to extend my support to Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee and make a request to you to direct the Government that this Bill be brought in this Session itself, for we do not hope much favour from the people who are talking here like this. Just now, our Chief Whip Saheb has said that let the truth come out without fear or favour. He is correct and, therefore, Let us conduct a test to find out as which party favours this Bill and how much favours ? Which party comes forward to protect the rights of women and to what extent ? . . .(Interruptions).

SHRI ILIYAS AZMI : Sir, Now it is evident that whose brain child is this ? . . .(Interruptions). And the idea to rain the whole nation come in his mind.

[English]

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Sir, from my party's side there is full support for this and from my side there is further support . . .(Interruptions). I am not against it. We support it.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE (Dumdum) : The Left Front is unanimous about this.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : The Prime Minister called a meeting of all political parties where we have made it very clear that this Bill should be brought and passed in this Session. This issue was discussed on the floor of the House a number of times. There is no need for further discussion. The only thing that is needed is action to pass the Bill to give one-third reservation to women in the legislatures. Hardly four days are left before

the adjournment of the session. We want to know whether the Government is bringing the Bill or not. What is the intention of the Government ? We had very categorically said in that meeting . . .(Interruptions).

MR. SPEAKER : It is enough, I am not allowing a debate on this.

SHRI PRAMOTES MUKHERJEE (Berhampore) (WB) : My party is of the same opinion that the Bill should be brought before the House and passed immediately.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : We are in support of the Bill. The Government should bring the Bill and pass it in this Session.

So we want to know from the Leader of the House, who is present here, when the Bill is coming. We want the Bill be brought and passed in this Session itself. . . .(Interruptions). The hon. Prime Minister has given an assurance in this House. . . .(Interruptions).

SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY (Basirhat) : What is the reaction of the Government ? . . .(Interruptions).

MR. SPEAKER : Okay.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI ILIYAS AZMI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, No leader has got the power to demolish the entire democratic system of the country. This is a ploy to destabilise our democratic system or else why we are separately raising this question. . . .(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY : We want to know the reaction of the Government on the assurance given by the Prime Minister ? . . .(Interruptions).

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I whole heartedly support to whatever Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee has said just now. This Bill has crossed all the barriers and now it should be brought in the House without any further delay. First this Bill was introduced in the House, then it was referred to the Joint Select Committee. The Joint Select Committee gave their report long back. After that it was to be introduced in the House in its amended form. The Law Minister sat through the entire proceeding of the Joint Select Committee. Now it has been

[Shrimati Sushma Swaraj]

decided to introduced this Bill again in its amended form. But inspite of our repeated requests, so far this Bill has not been brought in the Parliament. We are loosing one after another days, one session after another session but, it still remains unheeded.

As you have said just now that this Bill is meant for a specific purpose and the B.A.C. is meeting today. You have suspended the Question Hour and ruled that this Bill be passed but that was no avail. This Bill has seen many ups and downs and we gave our consent to everything you wanted from us. But this time, now, I want you to decide in the meeting of B.A.C. that this Bill be introduced and passed in its amended form by the Parliament. Only then the promise-made by the Prime Minister for welfare of the women will be fulfilled.

My submission is that unless and until participation of women in politics is encouraged, it would not be possible to find out a solution to their problems. This Bill will prove a stone mileage for women and a solution to their problems. Therefore I request you to take a decision in the meeting of B.A.C. to be held today so that this Bill is introduced, considered and passed in this very session itself. This is my appeal to all of you in this House that please try to see that this Bill is passed in this sessid it self. So Sir, you may please decide today its consideration and passing time . . . (Interruptions).

SHRI ILIYAS AZMI : I think we have a lot of time on this Bill. I want to say very categorically that the champion of social justice and reservation, Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar himself was dead against the political reservation. From the year, 1951, when he resigned from the Government, till he breathed his last, he continued his struggle against the political reservation. Political reservation can not be a means to uplift any person. I want to say that like my party has accepted a women as its leader, why can not B.J.P. accepts Sushma Swaraj ji as their leader ? Then if Sushma ji gives tickets and gives 100 percent reservation to women of her party, we will be having no objection thereto. Likewise, if other parties give 100 percent reservation to the women of their respective parties, then also we will be having no objection but, in case, this Bill is passed, the whole political system will become paralysed. If the Prime Minister has uttered a sentence, it does not mean that Ms voice is the voice of God and now that has become a law; Neither the Prime Minister is any God or Khuda nor his sentences are any

couplet of Geeta or Quran . . . (Interruptions).

Mr. Speaker, Sir, four days still remain there, before this session is adjourned, therefore, you allot some time and let us discuss the pros and cons of this Bill is totality before it is passed so that we can ascertain us to how much benefit or loss this Bill would cause to the country.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is one more note worthy point in this Bill and that is to ascertain further as to who are those women who are likely to benefit from this Bill. I want to say that whatever struggle we have fought so far for social justice and social change, attempts are being made to undo all those efforts by bringing and passing this Bill seeking reservation for women. . . (Interruptions).

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government is committed for introduction of women reservation Bill.

We are committed on this score in our minimum need programme also and because of this we have held a meeting of All Party Leaders on 7.5.1997 and as ail of you know, that meeting is still not over. We have to hold more such meetings. Since it is a constitutional matter and we require two-third majority in order to get it passed and hence, on this score we do not want to give a signal to the world that we are having divided opinion in our House on the issue of women reservation. We already have held the first meeting which would be followed by the second very soon. The Prime Minister is coming back on 14.5.97. When he comes back, we will apprise him of the opinions of the House.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY (Chhapra) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, on 3.5.97 in my Parliamentary Constituency Sonapur. I was murderously attacked. When I had drawn your attention towards this incident you had given me an assurance to fix time to speak in the house about this incident. You had also asked the hon. Minister of Home Affairs to make a Statement thereon. Sir, today is 12th May and this session is going to end by 16th of May. But so far the hon. Minister of Home Affairs has not made a statement in this regard.

Sir, it is really very sad and surprising thing that an M.P. is prevented from visiting his Parliamentary constituency and performing his legislative duties by assaulting him. The law and order situation in Bihar has deteriorated