

12.16 hrs.

RE: RECENT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN GUJARAT

[*Translation*]

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (Chittorgarh): Mr. Speaker Sir, I want to submit that a situation creating a deadlock in the House is never a pleasant experience. If some deadlock arose in the House two days before the festival of Janma Ashthami....(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Please listen. Please sit down.

[*Translation*]

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: The deadlock that occurred in the House recently, just two days before Janma Ashthami, is not a matter of happiness for the Bharatiya Janata Party; in fact, it a matter of concern. I had expected, and expect even now, that the concern which we have expressed will be shared by our other friends in the House.

Our anxiety arises out of a basic issue. A deliberate attempt has been made to create an artificial constitutional crisis in Gujarat. If the Government of Gujarat seeks to prove its majority in a legal and constitutional manner, it is thwarted, not once but twice, from seeking the vote of confidence. The entire episode, surreptitious moves culminating into that situation, intriguing silence of the Government, reports emanating on who is meeting whom, what kinds of talks are going on, what inducements are being offered - all this was natural to cause suspicion in our minds that an effort was afoot on the part of the Government to create a crisis somehow or the other and prevent the elected Government of the State from proving its majority. That was our complaint. The Constitution has been violated there....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR (Barrackpore): Whose jurisdiction is this... (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: You do not have to react. I will react to this

[*Translation*]

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Mr. Speaker, We had expected and demanded and continue to demand, that the Government should make its stand clear.

Many things are said by the Government with regard to Article 356. Their manifesto also incorporates many things. We want an assurance from the Government that it will not

unduly interfere in the Gujarat situation, that it will not create an artificial constitutional crisis there, but allow the elected Government of the State to continue to function constitutionally and let it prove its majority in the Assembly which it is prepared to do. Only that is our demand and we expect the Government to give an assurance in this respect. The deadlock that arose in the House was basically due to this and the only solution is an assurance from the Government.

[*English*]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I really rise because the hon. Deputy Leader of BJP has commented that other parties should have responded. Yes, we have responded - we have condemned your attitude here.

Sir, still, the hon. Member Shri Jaswant Singh has not said how this Parliament was involved by disturbing the proceedings here in a very important Session, the Budget Session. We have hardly tried to discuss the Demands for Grants of various Ministries.

Shri Vajpayeeji shows concerns but it appears that his wise counsel is not being accepted by his Party, apparently... (*Interruptions*)... by your conduct and behaviour. Then, either you have persuaded him to change his opinion or he has failed to impress upon you; or he has two opinions to be applied.

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI (Allahabad) : Our Party is behind Shri Vajpayeeji.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Very good. For a change, something has taken place.

SHRI HANNAH MOLLAH (Uluberia) : They are not behind Shri Advaniji. That is very good.

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : He is our leader in the House. Talking about parliamentary party, as a parliamentary party, our party is behind Vajpayeeji... (*Interruptions*)... Do not try to create confusion which is not there... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Sir, why should I try to create confusion when confusion is already there in their ranks? It is unfrotunate that many parties have no presence in Gujarat, specially the secular parties. Many of the secular parties, I hope, will soon be there.

What is happening in Gujarat? It is your own internal quarrel. You cannot keep your people together. I am not using the word 'flock'. If some Minister there, is deprived of all his clothing, it is not our function. We have not done it... (*Interruptions*)... You want him to be brought into the House... (*Interruptions*)... What are you talking?... (*Interruptions*)...

Sir, they give us so many lectures on morality, on public behaviour, on allowing the Parliament to function. But now they are trying to hold the whole country to ransom, the Parliament is not functioning for a subject which the Parliament has nothing to do. They go in a procession and all that - all right. But why are they appealing to us?

Shri Jaswant Singh, you should turn otherwise your head that side and address your own Members and your own party people in Gujarat. Certainly, we want that the Gujarat Assembly should decide who should be ruling there. And I must congratulate the Government that they have not interfered and they have let the parliamentary process continue there, operate there. Then, why are you blaming the Government and why are you stalling the proceedings in Parliament?

Not a word in justification has been said. If the hon. Deputy-Speaker of the Assembly has not acted properly - as you say - there is a procedure to be followed. We cannot remove him just to suit their convenience... (*Interruptions*)

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : That is the whole thing. Let the proper procedure be allowed to be followed and the Government assure us... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Shri Jaswant Singh has asked here 'why the Government is silent'? What should the Government do?

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : Advise them.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : The Government has not fallen into a trap. I congratulate the Government. I am sure you have seen the wise counsel of our Home Minister.

SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA (Outer Delhi) : The Ruling Party and the Congress have defended the role of the Deputy Speaker there... (*Interruptions*)... I have the statement of Shri Sharad Yadav... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI : The conduct of the Deputy Speaker has not been defended here.

MR. SPEAKER : Please do not complicate the matter. Let us listen to Shri Chatterjee. Nothing will go on record.

(*Interruptions*)* ...

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER : What all this is going on?

[*English*]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : I can understand their agony, nervousness because the simulated support that was there, the message that they have been trying to give that

* Not recorded

they are very much democracy oriented, that they have a commitment to Parliament, all these things were sought to be projected, but today they stand totally naked. One of the most anti-Parliamentary democratic attitudes one can think of, I am putting it very mildly Shri Jaswant Singh, has been demonstrated by them. Therefore we cannot but condemn the most irresponsible behaviour of the BJP in the House to stall the proceedings of the House.

I am sure whatever the Government has to say will say. But we cannot but protest most strongly against the misuse of the Parliament's time. We are told this is a very valuable time.

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : When did you realise it?... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : I thought that after his long occupation in the Finance Ministry for thirteen days, at least the value of time has been understood by Shri Jaswant Singh and the BJP. They have not learnt even that. But that does not mean that we can be prevailed upon to dance to their tune.

Again, the people of this country will give their judgement at the proper time and they would be put in the proper place.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (Silchar) : In this session we have got very very vital issues to be disposed of. There is the Budget business. We have not heard the reply of the Finance Minister. We have to pass the Finance Bill. We have to discuss the Demands for Grants of certain Ministries.

Now the Gujarat issue has been raised here. It is up to the Government to react or not to react to it. I am not going into it. I strongly object to the remark of one of the very senior hon. Members that the Congress is doing it in Gujarat. When Shri Suraj Bhan goes and takes the Chair, he is the Deputy Speaker. He has nothing to do with the BJP. His conduct is his conduct; not the conduct of the BJP. So, the Deputy Speaker's role should not be tagged up with that of the Congress because the Congress has nothing to do with it. We do not want to do anything. You are enough to finish your own party! You are doing it. We wish you success in continuing to do it. We are least bothered.

But what we are interested and what I shall appeal to the House, irrespective of parties, is that let the House start functioning. There was a very good Question Hour; I had a very good question and very good answer had come.

Now the hon. Prime Minister is here. I would be happy if he tells the House what he told me yesterday. Shri Vajpayee is very reasonable. He says that he would keep his boys under control. I will request that let us start functioning. I must say

that, whatever Shri Joshi says, he should not be behind Vajpayeeji, he should be with Vajpayeeji, because in politics if you are behind, you can stab easily! That is very bad thing.

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : The Congress history is not repeated here. It is with you.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : With these words I request the Prime Minister to say something.

MR. SPEAKER : Would the Prime Minister like to say something?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA) : Hon. Speaker, Sir, with your kind permission, I would like to make the following statement with regard to the Gujarat issue which was the main ingredient for stalling the proceedings of the House for nearly two days.

At least today, the hon. Leader of the Opposition and his Party have cooperated to have the Question Hour. Now, he wanted to know the reaction of the Government. There is no need for me to hesitate so far as the Government side is concerned. I have made it clear yesterday in the Press conference. I am going to read the same thing here today.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, the recent developments in the Gujarat Assembly are a matter of concern for all, including the Government of India. However, as far as the Government of India is concerned, while it has a responsibility to monitor the developments in all the States including Gujarat, since developments of this nature would have an impact on the law and order situation, I wish to make it clear that there is no question of interference in the political affairs of Gujarat by the Government of India. The present situation in Gujarat is something which needs to be sorted out by the political parties in Gujarat and by the State Government.

The Government of India comes into the picture only if it is convinced that there is a break down of Constitutional machinery in the State. Even here, the matter is very much within the jurisdiction of the State Governor. The question of any interference from the Government of India, therefore, does not arise.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAIK (Mumbai-North) : Sir, I have given a notice about Shri Sukh Ram... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I think, I have received your notice. Since I do not have the facts with me, I have called for the facts from the Ministry of Home Affairs and since the hon. Member is a Member of the present House, it is only fair on my part to have his comments also. So, I have asked for his comments, that is the comments of the hon. Member, as

well as the report from the Government of India. After receiving them, this matter could be discussed.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ (South Delhi) : Is he available for giving comments?

SHRI RAM NAIK : Sir, so much of time has already been lost. If you do not allow me today, I can understand that. I think, I would be allowed at least on Monday. If the Member does not reply... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Let us hope that by Monday the reply would be coming.

SHRI RAM NAIK : The point is that we are trying to judge his conduct. If he does not reply, we should not be deprived of discussing his conduct. So, if you want, you can allow me on Monday. But it should not be just... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I am not trying to reject it at all. I am only saying that I am waiting for the report of the Government of India, that is from the CBI and also the comments of the hon. Member. Once I get these two, ...

(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : And if the hon. Member is not available for giving his comments, how would you obtain his comments?

MR. SPEAKER : In order to give his comments, the hon. Member need not be here.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : How will you get the comments of a person who is completely underground? He is not available.

MR. SPEAKER : We have sent the message to him, wherever he is.

SHRI RAM NAIK : Sir, I hope I will be allowed on Monday.

MR. SPEAKER : All right.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I am going to allow all those hon. Members, who have given notices for the Zero Hour. Everybody would be allowed. Please be short and brief, so that everybody gets a chance.

12.34 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER in the Chair]

[Translation]

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN (Murshidabad) : Sir, I had raised a question on 2nd August... (Interruptions)