

[English]

1405 hrs.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at Five minutes past Fourteen of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

...(Interruptions)

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I appeal to you that the Bill relating to reservation for women in Lok Sabha and Legislative Assemblies should be passed today, according to your commitment. ...(Interruptions)

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, you have promised that this Constitution (Amendment) Bill would be passed. That promise of yours should be kept up.

MR. SPEAKER : Who said that it would not be passed? Has anybody ever said it ? I have not heard about it. Why are you presuming things ?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I do not know. I have not been told that it would not be passed. But I do not know how you have got this impression.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Then we are happy. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : We will resume the discussion on the Constitution (Eighty-first Amendment) Bill. But before that, there is one Bill for introduction which is again a very important Bill, the Lokpal Bill and then, the next item is the Matters under Rule 377. It is the right of the Members. We will complete these two items and then we will resume the discussion on the Constitution (Amendment) Bill.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ (South Delhi) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am very sorry to say that under the historic initiative you took yesterday the Question Hour was suspended, all the rules were waived but today you are taking up unimportant matters and you will now take up Matters Under Rule 377. Then a Bill was introduced. We have one and a half hours time with us because the Private Members' Bill will be taken up at 3.30 and the House will adjourn *sine die* at 6 O'clock. Yesterday you took a historical initiative which has sent a right message from this Chair world over. It was a revolutionary initiative. Why your revolutionary fervor has got worsened today ?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : No, No. I have not slackened.

...(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : It is a most revolutionary Bill, it should not be treated as an ordinary Bill.

MR. SPEAKER : No, not at all.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Yesterday you suspended the Question Hour at your own initiative and asked the Prime Minister to introduce the Bill and exhorted the Members to pass the Bill without discussion. This Bill has seen many ups and downs since yesterday and ultimately there is talk of referring it to a Select Committee

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I think it is enough. Now you listen to me. Again, you all wasting the time. It is the question of time, do not waste it.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : If the House can sit for the Railway Budget discussion till 7.30 in the morning, do you have any objection for this Bill ? I am available upto 6 O'clock tomorrow morning. My first flight to Beijing is at 7 O'clock tomorrow morning. I am prepared to go to the airport from here. This is my personal position. I do not know what the position of the Government is. The discussion will resume.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : You are talking of the night, but what is the incidence of presence during those hours of proceedings of the House.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I will go by what the House says.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : The House says that the Bill should be passed today without any further discussions

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : The Prime Minister is here.

...(Interruptions)

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I appeal to the Prime Minister that this Bill should be passed immediately. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Let me dispose of the introduction of the Bill. It is also very important and let us also finish Matters under Rule 377.

14.09 hrs.

LOKPAL BILL, 1996

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAM) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the establishment of the institution of Lokpal to inquire into allegations of corruption against public functionaries and for matters connected therewith.

MR. SPEAKER : Motion moved :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the establishment of the institution of Lokpal to inquire into allegations corruption against public functionaries and for matters connected therewith."

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (Chittorgarh) : Sir, I have a point of order. My point of order is that this is another very important Bill that this House was to have. Ordinarily even by the rules the Bill ought to have been circulated to the Members before its introduction. We would waive all that considering the importance of the Bill provided the Government apologise and you censure the Government for this failure ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Has the Bill not been circulated ?

...*(Interruptions)*

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI (Allahabad) : We must have 48 hours' time to look into it. It is a very important Bill and we must have time look into it. ...*(Interruptions)* It is not an ordinary Bill...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

You look to us. Take the House into confidence, how can it be ?

The Bill cannot be introduced in this way.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I do share the feeling of some of the hon. Members. Important issues before the nation and important programmes before the country should not be done in hurry. It is not a good trend. Members are here and they have expressed their opinion. The Bills of this nature or even the present Eighty-first Constitution (Amendment) Bill, as far as possible, we should do as per the procedure after giving proper thought and after a serious debate. It is not good for the country to rush things. Therefore, I would request the Government, in future, to do things in a cool and calm manner according to the procedure. Let us keep this thing in mind.

The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the establishment of the institution of Lokpal to inquire into allegations of corruption against public functionaries and for matters connected therewith."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAM : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

[Translation]

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES (Nalanda) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to raise an objection. We wanted division but you did not allow it and they will go on doing like this. They are in a haste, we are not. We want to study all the aspects. The Bill is circulated in the morning, it reaches us at 9.30 hours. We have not been able to study it so far ...*(Interruptions)* You would have read it, you might have received it yesterday. You belong to treasury benches. You people must have received it earlier. We received it only this morning. I am not joking.

[English]

I cannot allow this acstatic to go and to play with the House in this fashion. There are limits to everything. If they are ignorant of the rules, they must learn the rules. They cannot just come before the House and say, 'We did not know the rules.'

[Translation]

It is not the first time that we are discussing this Lokpal Bill in this House. We have been discussing it for a long time. Why are they after them. I received it in an envelope this morning and I could not go through its contents. That is why I have said no. We are not opposed to the Bill. We are opposed to the fashion in which they have brought this Bill. It has become a habit with the Prime Minister. He will make announcement outside this House that he is doing this or that and later on say that he is not going to do this. He must speak after due consideration. He must maintain the dignity of the Office he is holding.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Fernandes, after the Chair had made observation, I think, we should proceed now.

1414 hrs.

[English]

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

(i) Need to improve the functioning of telecommunication systems in Madhya Pradesh particularly in rural areas

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH (Vidisha) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the telecommunication system has come to a stand still throughout the country particularly in rural areas of Madhya Pradesh. The telephone exchanges remain out of order and the telephones do not work for months together. The telecommunication department has no time bound programme to set these phones right. The tower telephones have remained dead from the day they were installed in Raisen, Vidisha, Bihar and other districts of Madhya Pradesh and no efforts have been made to set them right even after