

13.59 hrs

Title: Ruling regarding reference of Question of Privilege against the Minister of State of Department of Disinvestment to Chairman, Rajya Sabha.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, today I have received a notice of question of privilege from Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal against Shri Arun Shourie, Minister of State of the Department of Disinvestment for having allegedly sought verification of the authenticity of a letter purported to have been written by the Cabinet Secretary which was quoted by Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi during discussion on Disinvestment of Public Sector Undertakings on 23rd August, 2001. The Member has also stated that the Minister of State of the Department of Disinvestment has since sought investigation by CBI in the matter.

14.00 hrs.

Shri Bansal has contended that since the said letter was quoted by Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi in the House, the same formed part of the proceedings of the House and the matter regarding investigation with regard to the authenticity of the same should have been referred to the Speaker, Lok Sabha instead of referring the same for investigation to CBI. Shri Bansal has contended that the Minister has committed a breach of privilege by seeking verification of the said letter and also referring the matter to the CBI for investigation.

It may be recalled that on 27th August, 2001, when Shri Dasmunsi sought to raise this matter in the House, several Members expressing their views in the matter, demanded that this matter may be referred to the Committee of Privileges.

I may like to inform the House that Shri Arun Shourie is a Member of Rajya Sabha.

The Committee of Privileges of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha in the Report of their joint sitting in 1954 laid down the procedure to be followed in case where a Member of one House is alleged to have committed a breach of privilege of the other House. In terms of that procedure, when a question of breach of privilege is raised in any House in which a Member of the other House is involved, the Presiding Officer of the House in which question of privilege is raised, has to refer the case to the Presiding Officer of the other House for appropriate action.

Since Shri Arun Shourie is a Member of Rajya Sabha, I am referring this matter to the hon. Chairman, Rajya Sabha for appropriate action in accordance with the above procedure.
