

Title: Regarding India's buying second-hand Mirage fighter aircraft from France for the Indian Air Force.

DR. (SHRIMATI) C. SUGUNA KUMARI (PEDDAPALLI): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity.

Sir, I draw your attention and the attention of this august House to a very serious and important matter of a second hand Mirage fighter aircraft deal in which 1998 aircraft in non-flying condition is to be introduced into the Indian Air Force.

Tomorrow, that is, on 28th February, 2001, the Court of Commerce in Paris is going to hear a case filed by agents in India against Desault Aviation and its advisors (French Aircraft Manufacturers) for non-payment of commission due to them.

The hon. Defence Minister, Shri George Fernandes on 29th November, 2000 in a statement on record said, "I am making a statement in the House that we are getting 10 new Mirages. These are Mirages 2000."

A firm called Keyser Inc registered in Panama has claimed that it worked very hard to convince against allegations that these are the new aircraft and not the second hand aircraft. But, in fact, these aircraft were sold to Jordan about two years ago.

SHRI E. AHAMED (MANJERI): So, these things are happening.

DR. (SHRIMATI) C. SUGUNA KUMARI (PEDDAPALLI): The French buckled under the pressure of World Bank and cancelled the deal.

These are refurbished and sold to India as Mirage 2000. The country has lost huge amounts of money in foreign currency, and also our defence capability is compromised.

Through you, hon. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I demand the hon. Defence Minister to convince the people of India and this august House about the truth so that the morale of the armed forces is not shattered. Thank you.

SHRI E. AHAMED (MANJERI): Sir, it is a very serious issue. (Interruptions) This is a matter concerning our defence. It is a very sensitive issue. The hon. Minister has to respond because it is an important matter....(Interruptions)

श्री राजीव प्रताप रूडी (छपरा) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं आपका ध्यान बहुत महत्वपूर्ण विषय की तरफ दिलाना चाहूंगा। (व्यवधान)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record, except the speech of Shri Rajiv Pratap Rudy.

(Interruptions) ... (Not recorded)

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY (CHHAPRA): Sir, I think, it is a shocking incident. A group of CITU members attacked the office of *The Statesman*. I am raising a matter of national importance. Democracy is in danger. The Press is being attacked. Sir, *The Statesman's* office is attacked in Siliguri. (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: What is happening in this House now? All the senior leaders, as and when they want, go on talking now. No permission is needed in this House. No notice, no permission and nothing is required.

...(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): They want the Government to comment on every issue raised....(Interruptions)

SHRI E. AHAMED (MANJERI): Sir, we want to know the details.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: If you want to know the reason or anything, that should be within the rules. You have not given any notice. You have not given anything. You are only standing. I would not allow anybody.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: This is 'Zero Hour'. You should set an example to junior Members here.

...(Interruptions)