

12.12 hrs.

Title: Regarding Indian Foreign Policy with particular reference to West Asia.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (RAIGANJ): Sir, right from the days of our national struggle led by Mahatma Gandhi, followed by the first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and even our late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, India had formulated and articulated a very constructive approach to consolidate the peace process in the Middle East as well as contributed to all peace movements of the world.

Right from the days of Pandit Nehru and Rajiv Gandhi and also later on during several successive Governments, we tried to further consolidate the Non-Aligned Movement in order to see that the forces of aggression, designs of imperialist onslaughts and colonial onslaughts are defeated and frustrated. It is a misfortune that history could not keep pace in that order. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, some powers in the world have started showing their teeth aggressively and nakedly, inviting all kinds of fascist culture, posing as warlords.

It is unfortunate that a country with a population of more than one billion, that is, India, which has been the pioneer of all kinds of peace movements against such onslaughts, is sitting like an onlooker of what is happening in the Middle East. It is our country, our Government and our sovereign Parliament, which has stood in defence of the Palestinian cause right from the days of our national struggle. It was our Congress Government, the Government of India and this Parliament, which recognised Palestine and its cause. We gave them the first diplomatic recognition. After the war in Afghanistan in the name of fight against terrorism was over, for the last three months, the focus has shifted to destabilise the cause of the Palestinian struggle. We are reading every day in the newspapers about what is happening in West Bank. Now, a dictation has started on who could be the leader and who would not be the leader, ignoring the right and might of the people. The last onslaught is on the State of Iraq. Even smaller nations like Bahrain, Jordan and Syria have started reacting against it. Even the Russian Parliament has reacted a few days ago. We would like to know where the Government of India stands in this scenario. We are not hearing any observation, any comment or any concern expressed by this Government.

In this process, if something goes wrong in Palestine and ultimately the war phobia comes to the Middle East, India would be affected next. The Seventh Fleet is operating near our zone. It is therefore in the fitness of things that the Government comes out with a clear statement in the House. There should be a discussion in the total ambit of the foreign policy at this moment, which the Lok Sabha has been deprived from discussing. Therefore, I demand that you may kindly advise or direct the Government to come out with a statement first and then allow the House to debate the whole issue. India cannot be treated like a banana nation in some other part of the world that would sit quiet and idle and not react at all. This is not only the concern of the Congress party; it is the concern of the entire House and the nation as a whole.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (BOLPUR): Sir, I congratulate Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi for raising this issue. I strongly demand that the Government must make its position clear. We cannot give up our national foreign policy which is in favour of these countries. Today, what is happening is bypassing of the entire agreed foreign policy of the country. It was our national foreign policy, which has been jettisoned. ...(Interruptions)

We cannot accept this. ...(Interruptions)

श्री लाल बिहारी तिवारी (पूर्वा दिल्ली) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, दिल्ली के अंदर बिजली और पानी की सप्लाई न होने से दिल्ली की जनता त्राहि-त्राहि कर रही है। दिल्ली में डेढ़ करोड़ की पापुलेशन है। (व्यवधान)

यहां लोग झुग्गी झोंपड़ी और गरीब बस्तियों में रहते हैं। (व्यवधान) रात-रात तक बिजली न होने के कारण लोग परेशान हैं। दिल्ली में पीने का पानी नहीं है। दिल्ली के अंदर कांग्रेस सरकार ने बिजली का प्राइवेटाइजेशन कर दिया है। (व्यवधान)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Sir, it is not a lighter issue. ...(Interruptions) Let the hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs say something about it. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: If Shri Suresh Prabhu wants to say something he can say.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : It is a question of foreign policy. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : It is a question of country's image. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: All of you may please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : The Government should react and make a statement. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi, I have heard you. Please sit down now.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Sir, on the very first day, you expressed your concern that the issues concerning the nation have to be responded by the Government. This is your own advice. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Will you please give me time to speak to Shri Suresh Prabhu, hon. Minister, who is present here. Please sit down. He is also a Minister.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Now, I am speaking to the Minister. Do you not allow me to speak to him?

...(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (BANKURA): Shri Suresh Prabhu can respond. ...(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): One of the corner-stones of India's foreign policy always has been of national consensus. The views expressed by the hon. Member, Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi will definitely be passed on to the concerned Minister. We will definitely take note of whatever sentiments have been expressed here. ...(Interruptions) As I said earlier, the Indian foreign policy has been one of the most consistent ones in terms of articulating the consensus of the people, which has been reflected in the national foreign policy. ...(Interruptions)
