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Title: The Minister of state of the Ministry of External Affairs laid a statement regarding Status of implementation of the recommendations contained in the 20<sup>th</sup> Report of the Standing Committee on External Affairs on Demands for Grants (2008-09), pertaining to the Ministry of External Affairs.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): Sir, I beg to lay the statement on the status of implementation of the recommendations contained in the Twentieth Report of the Standing Committee on External Affairs in pursuance of the Direction 73A of the hon. Speaker, Lok Sabha.

The Standing Committee on External Affairs examined the Demands for Grants of the MEA for the year 2008-2009 and laid its Twentieth Report in the Lok Sabha on 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2008. The Report included 15 recommendations on which Action Taken Report was submitted to the Committee in July, 2008. Now, I am laying on the Table of the House the progress made in implementation of the recommendations of the Committee, as required under Hon'ble Speaker's above direction.

We are grateful to the Committee in acknowledging the healthy utilization of funds by the Ministry and its dynamic foreign policy. The Ministry is happy to report that the assessment of the present pace of expenditure and anticipated requirement of funds during the remaining part of the current financial year, indicate that the Ministry will be able to meet its commitments within the funds allocated in Budget Estimates 2008-2009 under the Plan Head.

The Committee had observed a few discrepancies in the figures in the Outcome Budget and the Demand for Grants documents. I wish to inform that the

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\* Laid on the Table and also Placed in Library See No. LT 9883/08.

Ministry have made all the Heads of Divisions responsible to ensure that the information/data furnished for incorporation in documents to be submitted to the Parliament is flawless. The directions of the Committee for providing additional information relating to projects such as factor-wise cost escalation, time run-over, etc. have also been complied with.

As regards creation of posts, the Ministry is happy to report that the Cabinet's approval for creation of 514 posts-249 posts at Headquarters and 265 posts in our Missions/Posts abroad has been obtained on 21<sup>st</sup> August, 2008. These posts will be created over a 10-year period after obtaining approvals of the EAM, FM and PM on an annual basis.

We thank the Committee for nothing that the Tala Hydro Electric Project has commenced sale of surplus electricity to India and that the project has made a savings of Rs. 90 crores which is expected to increase upto Rs. 140 crores. I am happy to inform that the project has been functioning satisfactorily and 1020 MW of power imported from Tala Hydro Electric Project is allocated to various units within India by the Ministry of Power.

The Ministry has appointed Inland Water Authority of India (IWAI) as Project Development Consultant to ensure timely completion of the Kaladan Multi-Model Transit Project without cost escalation, as recommended by the Committee.

As regards Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project, the Ministry would also like to inform the Committee that the Government is committed to establish a long-term, cost effective and secure mode of transfer of gas from Iran to India. Besides official level meetings, the Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas had discussed the matter with his Pakistani counter-part in April, 2008. The specific proposals discussed during the visit of the President of Iran to New Delhi on the pipeline, were thereafter shared with the Government of Pakistan by the EAM during his visit to Islamabad on 20-21 May, 2008. The EAM had also discussed the project during the Indo-Iran Joint Commission meeting in Tehran in November, 2008.

The entire gamut of our bilateral relations with Nepal were discussed and reviewed at the highest level during the visit of the Prime Minister of Nepal to India from 14-18 September, 2008. Both sides have agreed to further enhance the pace of economic development between the two countries through development of major projects such as road networks, rail links, hydel-power projects, integrated Check Posts etc.

It was decided to rename 'India-International Development Agency' as the 'Indian Agency for Partnership in Development'

(IAPD). The Ministry have been actively pursuing the matter for early setting up of IAPD. The modified Cabinet Note on the proposed Agency as per the suggestions of the Cabinet Secretariat in the Cabinet Note submitted earlier on March 7, 2008, was resubmitted by the Ministry on September 23, 2008. As further inter-ministerial consultations were required, the views of Department of Personnel & Training, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions have been sought on December 2, 2008. The Note for the Cabinet's approval will be resubmitted with the comments of the Department of Personnel & Training.

In line with the Committee's recommendations, the Ministry have been streamlining procedures for enhanced utilization of scholarship slots under ITEC/SCAAP and SAARC. Wide publicity on dedicated websites and online processing of applications are some of the new steps introduced by the Ministry to ensure optimum utilization of slots.

Passport Rules and procedures are regularly revised to facilitate speedier passport services. Revised rules and procedures are conveyed to all Passport Offices for compliance and are also displayed on CPV Division's website for the information of the public. As a part of the implementation of Passport Seva Project, passport issuance procedures will be comprehensively computerized, CPV Division's website will be modified accordingly and national call centre for providing clarifications to the public would be set up. To ensure that only genuine applicants are issued passports under 'Tatkal' and post verification schemes, strict documentation norms are followed and system has been in place for careful scrutiny of documents. Ministry of Law have opined that the extra fee charged for 'Tatkal' Passport is within the competence of MEA as it would relate to the Services referred to in Section 5 of the Passport Act and would also commensurate with the expenses incurred in providing these services.

An Inter-Governmental Steering/Advisory Committee comprising of the representatives of the academic/planning/financial/foreign affairs mechanisms of SAARC member states has already been set up for the proposed establishment of SAARC University. The Committee has appointed the CEO of the Project office of the University, experts and conveners of the Task Forces to handle academic and administrative issues of the University.

The Government continues to take up the matter vigorously regarding release of fishermen and prisoners in Pakistan jails with the Government of Pakistan including at the highest level for effective implementation of the commitments given by Pakistan. Consular Access to fishermen and Indian prisoners is also provided from time to time.

The progress made in the implementation of the recommendations is detailed in the Annexure which is laid on the Table of the House. I would not like to take the valuable time of the House to read out all the contents but would request that this may be considered as read.

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members, we would now take up important urgent matters. I have received 49 notices. So, you can well understand my position. I will try to accommodate as many as possible. I know you all are eager, including Shri Gangwar, if the hon. Members will kindly hold patience and not try to disturb the proceedings. Please hold patience and see whether you are accommodated or not and then we can go on.

Shri Basudeb Acharia.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (BANKURA): Sir, I had given a notice for Adjournment Motion on 2G spectrum...(Interruptions)

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (SABARKANTHA): Sir, this matter was raised the day before yesterday...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I wish you could stop him. I cannot stop him.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, the biggest scandal since Independence...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Let us see how long it goes on.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, the way the spectrum G II has been allotted...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Let me see on what subject you have given the notice. The same matter cannot be raised during the same Session.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: He is right. I uphold his point.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, I have given notice for Adjournment Motion...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: So what? You are raising the same matter.

...(Interruptions)

MD. SALIM (CALCUTTA – NORTH EAST): Sir, we had given notice for Suspension of Question Hour. You promised that you would allow...(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I am referring to the biggest scam since Independence which has caused a huge loss to the Government exchequer because of the way the allotment of the spectrum has been done...(Interruptions)[\[R1\]](#)

Can the House not discuss it when it is being debated outside the House? But you will not give an opportunity to debate and discuss it in the House? (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Do not record anything.

(Interruptions) \*â€

MR. SPEAKER: Let me explain. The trouble is, my appeal was not respected for even one minute. One by one you can do that. You know very well Mr. Acharia that I do not generally divulge what happens in my room. Nowadays, I cannot come early because of my personal indisposition. I came as soon as I was told that there are two motions for Suspension of Question Hour. One was given by Shri Acharia and the other by Shri Dhindsa. I said that I will allow both the matters after the Question Hour. Really speaking, I have not gone through these notices in detail and it is not incorrect when the point is taken.

...(Interruptions)

DR. C. KRISHNAN (POLLACHI): The whole country is watching.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : This is the biggest scam since Independence...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Do not record anything.

(Interruptions) \*â€

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\* Not recorded.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Dhindsa.

...(Interruptions)

श्री अनंत गंगाराम गीते (रत्नागिरि): अध्यक्ष जी, यह बहुत बड़ा स्कैम है। इस पर सरकार को जवाब देना चाहिए। ... (व्यवधान)

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR (BANGALORE SOUTH): The Government should respond on this issue...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It is not for you to intervene. Please take your seat. I have called Shri Dhindsa to speak and only his statement

will be recorded.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, you cannot do that. Nothing is to be recorded without my permission including the Minister's statement. You go on.

...(Interruptions)

**अध्यक्ष महोदय :** ठीकसा जी, आप बैठिए। आपका नाम पुकारा है। आपको बोलने का समय दूंगा। फिलहाल आप बैठ जाइए।

â€¦(व्यवधान)

**अध्यक्ष महोदय :** आप यहां जे.पी.सी. गठित करने की बात करते हैं और जब जे.पी.सी. रिपोर्ट देती है, तो रिपोर्ट की निंदा करते हैं। इस प्रकार से तो जे.पी.सी. की रिपोर्ट भी नहीं आएगी। क्या आप को इस प्रकार से वित्ताने में बहुत अच्छा लगता है?

â€¦(व्यवधान)

MR. SPEAKER: You are disrespecting. The way the Report that was tabled yesterday was criticised by some Members of the House, I can assure you that action is going to be taken. You are here and you are able to speak because you are a Member of this institution. You are deliberately denigrating this institution. See the way you are behaving towards the Chair; towards the whole House and towards the country. Important matters are to be raised.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: The Committees, after deliberations, prepare Reports. See the way it is being criticized and castigated even by Members who say that they have not read it.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Of course, you have a right. Therefore, what is the charm about the Joint Parliamentary Committee?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Why do you want a Joint Parliamentary Committee? Tell me. It is because your leader wants it.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

(Interruptions) â€¦\*

MR. SPEAKER: This is not the way to ask for a structured debate. Last time I allowed you to raise it. You are raising an identical matter now. Therefore, this is not the way to get an answer.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Acharia, you have been asking for a Joint Parliamentary Committee. Now, you want a debate. For a debate to take place, there is a procedure. I do not have to advise you. You know much better than I do.

...(Interruptions)

**अध्यक्ष महोदय :** ठीक है, देखा जायेगा।

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: We shall see that.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Acharia, I will look into your notice for Adjournment Motion.

...(Interruptions)

\* Not recorded.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Madhusudan Mistry, why are you shouting?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Mistry, what are you doing?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

(Interruptions) â€¦\*

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will be recorded.

(Interruptions) â€¦\*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Mistry, I will have to take action. You are creating problem here. Take your seat.

(Interruptions) â€¦\*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (HOOGHLY): Sir, the Government is not responding. ...(Interruptions) In protest we are walking out.

**12.19 hrs**

*(At this stage, Shri Rupchand Pal and some other hon. Members left the House.)*

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing to be recorded.

(Interruptions) â€¦\*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Dhindsa may speak now. Only Shri Dhindsa's statement to be recorded.

(Interruptions) â€¦\*

**श्री सुखदेव सिंह ढींडसा (संगरूर):** स्पीकर सर, मैं आपका बहुत आभारी हूँ कि आपने एक ऐसा इश्यू जो हमारी डिफेंस फोर्सेज़ से सम्बन्धित है, उसे उठाने का मुझे मौका दिया है।

मैं सरकार से यह पूछना चाहूंगा कि डिफेंस फोर्सेज़ जो हमारे देश की हैं, जिन्हें इस देश की रक्षा करनी है...(व्यवधान)

\* Not recorded.

MR. SPEAKER: There will be no luncheon recess today.

â€¦(व्यवधान)

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