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Title: The Minister of External Affairs made a statement regarding giving factual position regarding interview of Indian Ambassador in Washington D.C. on India-US Bilateral Civil Nuclear Energy Cooperation Agreement.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, most respectfully I would like to submit that in the morning I shared the information with the hon. Members, and I am grateful to them that they allowed me to make my observations. Of course, the hon. Members have their own view as this is a matter on which every individual Member has his views, and they can express it. Every hon. Member is entitled to resort to even the Parliamentary course of redressal like privilege or other things whatever they like to do. I am not going to interfere with that. Most respectfully I am sharing with the House whatever information that I am having with me.

I have received another communication from Ambassador Sen. With your permission, I would like to share that information with the hon. Members. This is the observation, which Ambassador Sen has sent to me. It reads as follows :

"I have received several queries about a report datelined Washington DC, August 20, 2007 by Mr. Aziz Hanifa of Rediff India Abroad, which quoted me extensively on the India-US Civil Nuclear Agreement.

I had an off-the-record conversation with the correspondent giving some assessments on this subject. A number of the comments were, however, either misunderstood or misquoted or quoted out of context. For instance, I did not say that the Hyde Act could not be renegotiated, but said that the bilateral agreement could not, in my view, be renegotiated. With reference to the Hyde Act, I had expressed my assessment it would not be amended in the foreseeable future" [r7]

"Some of the comments attributed to me in this off-the-record conversation were made by me in my personal capacity and do not reflect the positions of the Government". ...(*Interruptions*)

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\* Also placed in Library, See No. LT 6747

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: No.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Please let me complete. You do whatever you like, but let me complete. It will not take even one minute. Please listen to me.

"I fully recognize that such personal views, even in a private conversation, should have been expressed with better judgment and due decorum. For instance, my comment about "running around like a headless chicken looking for a comment here or a comment there" was a tactless observation on some of my media friends and most certainly not with reference to any hon. Member of Parliament. It was certainly not my intention to cast aspersions on any individual or organization.

However, if I have unwittingly hurt any sentiments, I offer my unqualified apologies."

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*(Interruptions)\**

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

*...(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please sit down.

*...(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet tomorrow, the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August, 2007.

**14.14 hrs.**

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock*

on [\[r8\]](#) Wednesday, August 22, 2007/Sravana 31, 1929 (Saka).

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\* Not included

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# The Forty-seventh Report (Hindi and English versions) was presented to the hon. Speaker on 12.6.2007 under Direction 71A of the Directions by the Speaker.

@ The Forty-eighth and Forty-ninth Reports (Hindi and English versions) were presented to the hon. Speaker on 3.8.2007 under Direction 71A of the Directions by the Speaker.

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Fd. by b1 [\[r1\]](#)

cd. by c1 [\[R2\]](#)

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[\[MSOffice5\]](#) fld by f1

[\[s6\]](#) fld by G

[\[r7\]](#) cd.. by h1

[\[r8\]](#) Friday, March 10, 2000/Phalguna 20, 1921 (Saka).