

tile : Need to stop meddling into the religious matters of Sikhs.

*DR. RATTAN SINGH AJNALA (KHADOOR SAHIB): I thank you Madam Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to speak on this very important issue concerning the Sikhs. Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee is the religious body of the Sikhs. It came into existence in 1925. We fought hard against the British to get the Act passed in 1925. The SGPC got the right to manage all the Gurdwaras in 1925. The agitation for the rights of the Sikhs to manage their own Gurdwaras started in 1921. More than 150 Sikhs attained martyrdom during this struggle. I am happy to note that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had wholeheartedly supported the Sikh cause during this struggle. When the Sikhs emerged victorious in this agitation, Mahatma Gandhi remarked that we have won the first battle in our war of Independence against the British. I reiterate that it was after a lot of sacrifices made by the Sikhs that we could win this struggle against the British. Only then did the SGPC come into existence.

Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee is an elected body of Sikhs. Sikhs elect the members of SGPC after every five years. The SGPC members manage the Gurdwaras and serve the Sikh community. Let me remind you, madam, that Sikhs have always been at the forefront to protect the interests of the country. For more than 250 years, the valiant Sikhs fought against the Mughal tyranny. We fought against the British for 100 years for the sake of the country. We opposed tooth and nail the emergency imposed on the country so that democracy could flourish in India.

Madam, disregarding the supreme sacrifices made by the Sikhs, an attempt is being made to meddle into the internal affairs of Sikhs. Sikhs had lost a major chunk of pre-partition Punjab to Pakistan. Later on, Punjab was further divided and Himachal Pradesh and Haryana were carved out of Punjab. Today, an effort is being made to bifurcate the SGPC in Haryana. We will not allow anyone to

* English translation of the speech originally delivered in Punjabi

meddle into the religious matters of Sikhs. SGPC has been at the vanguard in running schools, charitable institutions and hospitals. We believe in the service of entire mankind. SGPC has always taken up all issues pertaining to the Sikhs in any corner of the world. SGPC is the supreme religious body of the Sikhs and Sikhs look upon it with reverence. The orders of Akal Takht are binding on all Sikhs throughout the world.

Therefore, I am shocked that some greedy elements in Haryana are holding an election and trying to divide the SGPC in Haryana. We will not allow this to happen. Madam, celebrated Sufi poet Bulle Shah had said : "I do not talk about now, I do not talk about the future or past. I talk about everyone. Had Guru Gobind Singh ji not been there, who would have taken care of entire humanity." Had the Sikh Gurus including Guru Tegh Bahadur not stood up against tyranny and made their supreme sacrifices, there would have been no temples or Gurdwaras left in this country. Guru Tegh Bahadur did not give up his life for Sikhs. He and his family members made the supreme sacrifice to protect the interests of the Hindus.

Madam, the history of Sikh religion is steeped in sacrifices. So, you should give us some time to air our grievances on matters related to our faith. We had met you in your room, madam and requested you to give us some time so that we may express our concerns in this august House. We will not allow anyone to meddle into our religious affairs. Madam, the ninth Sikh Guru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur ji had said - "For the sake of humanity we will give up our lives but not our faith or self-respect."

अध्यक्ष महोदया : आपका समय हो गया है अजनाला जी। बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद आपको। श्री गुरुदास दासगुप्ता जी।

â€(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : अब आप समाप्त कीजिए। अपने वचन पर कायम रहिये।

*DR. RATTAN SINGH AJNALA : If Hindu religion survives today in India, it is only due to supreme sacrifice made by the ninth Sikh Guru Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur ji

अध्यक्ष महोदया : ठीक है, हो गया। आप बैठ जाइए। समाप्त कीजिए।

*DR. RATTAN SINGH AJNALA : Madam Speaker, I would like to request Hon. Prime Minister and Hon. Home Minister to stop meddling into the religious matters of Sikhs. We will oppose it tooth and nail. We know how to protect our interests. We will not

allow this to happen. I also request you to please give us time to express our views. â€¦ **

अध्यक्ष महोदया : ठीक है, बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद। आपको बोलने का टाइम दिया गया। आप चेयर पर इस तरह का आरोप मत लगाइए। आप चेयर पर आरोप मत लगाइए, यह गलत बात है। आपको बोलने का समय दिया गया। आप उस बात को विद्वृं करिये।

â€¦(व्यवधान)

MADAM SPEAKER: You cannot level charges against the Chair when you are being given time to speak. The other day also you were called, but you were not here. यह गलत बात है। आपको समय दिया गया है।

(Interruptions) â€¦ **

अध्यक्ष महोदया : आप बहस में मत पड़िये, बहस में मत पड़िये। Shri Gurudas Dasgupta.

...(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : आप बैठ जाइए।

â€¦(व्यवधान)

MADAM SPEAKER:

Shri Shailendra Kumar,

Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav

Shri Rewati Raman Singh are also associated with the issue raised by Shri Ratan Singh Ajnala.

* English translation of the speech originally delivered in Punjabi

** Not recorded

MADAM SPEAKER: The next hon. Member to speak is Shri Gurudas Dasgupta.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI KAMAL KISHOR 'COMMANDO' (BAHRAICH): There should be discipline in the House, and the decorum of the House has to be maintained. ...(Interruptions)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : आप बैठ जाइए।

â€¦(व्यवधान)

MADAM SPEAKER: Shri Gurudas Dasgupta.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Madam, I have also given a notice on the same subject.