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Title: Regarding passing of Demands for Grants (Railways) and (General), the Finance Bill without discussion.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY : Madam, I am referring to Rule 218(1). I am not referring to any of the points that the Leader of the Opposition made before walking out on the scams etc. etc., whether you discuss it in the House is a matter to be taken up later. My point of order is with regard to the observations you made at the beginning. You referred to the decisions arrived at the All Party Leaders Meeting and the BAC meeting on four points – Demands for Grants (Railways), Vote on Accounts, total Appropriation Bill and the Finance Bill. ...(*Interruptions*) जरा किताब निकालिए और सुनिए। You said that this would be passed without discussion. Now I am reading Rules 218(1) and 208(1). Rule 208 () says:

"The Speaker shall, in consultation with the Leader of the House, allot so many days as may be compatible with the public interest for the discussion and voting of demands for grants."

It is nowhere mentioned that you can do the voting without discussion. If you want, Madam, to suspend this Rule, then a Motion has to be moved so that without discussion you can pass. Again, please look at Rule 218(1). Rule 218(1) and (2) says:

"Subject to the provision of the Constitution, the procedure—  
The debate on an Appropriation Bill shall be restricted to matters of public importance or administrative policy implied in the grants covered by the Bill which have not already been raised—"

So, there will be a debate on the Appropriation Bill.

As regards the Finance Bill, rule 219(1) says, "At any time after the introduction of the Bill, the Speaker may allot a day or days for the completion of all or any of the stages involved in the passage of the Bill". Now, the Finance Bill was originally slated for 6<sup>th</sup> of May.

I respect the decisions made at the leaders' meeting. But a decision made at the leaders' meeting cannot circumvent or rule over the Rules of Procedure in this House. You cannot have voting without a discussion. Whether the discussion will be for one hour, two hours or five minutes is a matter that you can decide and the House can decide. But you cannot pass this financial business without discussion. Otherwise, the Government should have moved a motion for suspension of all these three rules.

Mr. Chidambaram, with regard to the Finance Bill, has moved for suspension of rule 80(i) so that he can go outside the competence of the Bill to introduce amendments. Nobody from the Government side moved any motion for suspension of the rules. Why is a rule there? Even after a decision of the very respected leaders of the different parties, in which the leader of our party Sudip Bandyopadhyay was also present, we cannot circumvent this rule.

So, Madam, your observation that we have decided to pass the budget and appropriation Bill without a discussion is not consistent with the rules. So, I demand that whatever you want to do, you allot five minutes but allow the discussion and let us go through the whole gamut of procedure. On the four Ministries which were selected for discussion and voting, let discussion take place even for five minutes. For the Finance Bill, let the discussion take place. Otherwise, you have to suspend all these rules and then have it in the House.

Without discussion if you set a precedent like this for exigencies of today because the Government wants to have this financial business passed, it will be setting a bad precedent, and posterity will blame us for circumventing, overriding the rules of procedure established after a long struggle in this House.

Madam, I again insist that some debate, whatever you decide, must take place before the voting can take place. There is no provision of voting without discussion under the rules of procedure of the House.

MADAM SPEAKER: Now, we are already having a discussion.

MADAM SPEAKER: Prof. Saugata Roy had raised a point of order. I have gone through all the rules and also what has happened in the past and I may mention that under particular circumstances, this House has passed the financial business without discussion in the past also.

...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: Please listen to me. I have not completed. Please sit down. I am still speaking. It immensely pains me that circumstances are such that we have to dispense with discussion and we have to pass these four items. The time fixed for Guillotine is 1.30 p.m. and this was fixed in the Leaders' meeting yesterday.

...(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: Please sit down. Let me complete first. What is this habit? I have not completed. So, I have taken the point that you have made and very briefly I may allow few Members to speak so that this necessity of discussing this is not dispensed with completely. Please do keep in mind that at 1.30 p.m. the Guillotine has to take place and Members are requested not to make long speeches and I will just allow a very few people only if they have valid points and they are not going to repeat the points.