

Title: Raised the issue regarding authority of Parliament.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Sir, can I have your indulgence?

Even when other hon. Members raised the Bihar issue, I only raised my hand; but you did not call me. I kept quiet, as a disciplined Member. I did not say anything and I did not complain also. But when I saw the hon. Minister reacting to this issue, I thought that it was my duty to bring to his notice the point of view of our Party. That is what I did. If he does not want to yield, I will also not say anything; if you do not permit me, I will not say anything. Now that he has yielded and you have permitted me, Sir, I am putting forth our views.

With regard to Bihar issue, I also associate myself with the views that have been expressed already here. This is not the first time that the Ruling Party tried to undermine the authority of this House. When Prasar Bharti Bill was passed by this House, the Ruling Party found it convenient not to take it to the Rajya Sabha and to go in for an Ordinance, whereas an assurance was given to us in the BAC that it would be taken to the other House. That was the first time, they undermined the authority of Parliament and taking this House for a ride.

Now, on the Bihar issue, not only this House but also the Rajya Sabha is taken for a ride. We adopted the Statutory Resolution. We opposed it, as an Opposition. What was the decision of the Lok Sabha? The decision of the Lok Sabha was that it ratified the President's Rule in Bihar. How can a Government revoke it without going to Rajya Sabha and without knowing the opinion of Rajya Sabha? This is an example of undermining the authority of Lok Sabha and taking us for a ride.

Likewise, it is the constitutional obligation for the Government to take up the Resolution in the Rajya Sabha also. In the Rajya Sabha, the Government does not have a majority. So, the Government uses the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha to suit its convenience. This tantamounts to taking Parliament for a ride. This is most undemocratic and this should be condemned. The Congress Party also condemns this undemocratic attitude of the Government.

>SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I think, it is very important for me to point out that today being the International Women's Day this House jointly should wish the best to all the women of India and the world and assure our support and commitment to the empowerment of women and their advancement. I think this should be the first and foremost thing the House should collectively do, notwithstanding the little difference that we have on the Bill.

The Bihar issue was raised by Shri Somnath Chatterjee mainly to show some solidarity on an issue where there were some differences between different political parties. I believe that has been rightly and squarely met by the hon. Member and former Speaker, Shri Shivraj Patil. I do not think I have to voice anything on that. But I do believe that it is unfair to say that this House is being treated without respect merely because a constitutional right that exists in the Constitution was exercised by the Government after the approval of this House.

In fact, the demand of the Opposition was to bring the Resolution on the very first day. There was a pressure on the Government to bring the Resolution on the very first day as the very first item. We responded to the Opposition's demand and brought it as the first item, though the Government had the complete jurisdiction under article 356(3) to wait till the last moment; and the Government could have waited till the last week of March, but we did not do it. I took it on my shoulder and the Government responded and said that we will have it as the first item. We had a complete debate and we had voting also. Thereafter, the Government assessed, and the Government looked at the matter. The Government knows about its position in Rajya Sabha. Then it was decided that there is no purpose, even as the last effort, of talking to the leaders of the Opposition. After that the Government took a final decision. But the point which is extremely important for us to understand is that the House was in no way belittled. Full respect was given to this House. As a matter of record, I should say that it is unfortunate that even the respect that was shown to the House is sought to be belittled in the name of small politics. I think we should rise above this. Constitutionally, what was done in this House was correct. ... (Interruptions)

SHRI SURESH KURUP (KOTTAYAM): Why did you not take it up in the Rajya Sabha? ... (Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Please explain that. ... (Interruptions)

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: I have explained it. We know that we would not be able to get the Resolution passed in Rajya Sabha. ... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: No running commentary please.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Why did you bring it in Lok Sabha?... (Interruptions)

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: It is because you demanded for it. ... (Interruptions) There are procedures in existence and under law, I cannot speak about Rajya Sabha here. This is the procedure. This is what I have learnt and this is what I have been taught. If you ask me more, I would say that this House has never been belittled. ... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet again at 2.50 p.m.

13.50 hrs

The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till fifty minutes >past Fourteen of the Clock.

14.54 hrs

The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at fifty-four minutes
past Fourteen of the Clock.

(Dr. Laxminarayan Pandey in the Chair)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before we take up Matters under Rule 377, there will be a statement by the Minister, Shri George Fernandes.