

12.12 hrs.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Indo Nepal Relations

[English]

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): Hon. senior members like Shri Chandra Shekhar and Shri Vasant Sathe have made their observations. You will kindly notice that I have made a request to you to permit me to make a *suo motu* statement regarding Nepal.

Before I read the statement, may I assure the House, particularly the senior Members whose concern for democracy anywhere in the world is a point which in a way represents the voice and feelings of the entire country, that the issues before us are not dividing us, the issues before us are unifying us. When we are talking about the sovereign countries in our neighbourhood, we have to keep in mind the limitations and the parameters that foreign policy and foreign policy attitudes define.

With this background, I seek your permission to make my statement.

India and Nepal, whose people are bound by bonds of history, geography, culture, ties of blood and marriage, have had a uniquely close relationship. They share a 1700kms of open border.

In recent times, this relationship has seen some strains. This Government attaches high priority to improving relations with all our neighbours, specially Nepal. We took very early initiatives to this end. At our invitation, His Excellency S.K. Upadhyay, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nepal, visited India from January 3 to 5, 1990 for discussions with PM and with me. His visit contributed to a better understanding of each other's interests and concerns.

As a follow up to this visit, official level talks were held in New Delhi from February

20 to 22, 1990 between delegations led by the Foreign Secretaries of the two countries. The delegations included representatives of all other concerned Ministries on both sides. These talks were cordial, candid and productive. They covered subjects of mutual interest—trade, transit, economic cooperation, security perceptions and I say this with a great deal of emphasis security perceptions, the Nepalese Zone of Peace proposal, cooperation in industry and water resource development etc. Progress was registered towards a comprehensive solution of all outstanding problems.

It was agreed that the next round of official talks be held soon in Kathmandu, so as to work on a set of documents capable of being signed during my visit to Nepal.

Significant progress has thus been achieved towards understanding and resolving outstanding problems with Nepal. This is in line with the Government of India's wish to view with understanding, sympathy and friendship, all the problems of Nepal. The Nepalese side have assured us that they would display the same spirit of cooperation and understanding. We are thus optimistic about achieving a package or comprehensive solution. A piece-meal solution, it is felt, could lead to a recurrence of tensions. In seeking to achieve this, we shall of course be guided by the need to safeguard our national interests.

The Government's attitude to the current mass movement in Nepal, with the stated aim of re-establishing a multi-party democratic system under a constitutional monarchy is determined by the fact that as a major democracy, we cannot but feel committed to the cause of democracy, of equality and human dignity. Today, when momentous changes are taking place all over the world and the global politics are democratised we cannot be averse to such aspirations. At the same time we are firmly committed to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries.

SHRI VASANT SATHE (Wardha): Now,

[Sh. Vasant Sathe]

Sir, this Statement has been made, I believe in the next Business Advisory Committee meeting, you will consider having a discussion on the Statement regarding Indo-Nepal relationship.

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIR (SHRIP. UPENDRA): We can consider it in the BAC.

12.16 hrs.

ELECTION TO COMMITTEES

[English]

(i) Estimates Committee

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. UPENDRA): I beg to move:

"That the members of this House do proceed to elect in the manner required by sub-rule (1) of Rule 311 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, thirty members from among themselves to serve as members of the Committee on Estimates for the term beginning on the 1st May, 1990 and ending on the 30th April, 1991."

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the members of this House do proceed to elect in the manner required by sub-rule (1) of Rule 311 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, thirty members from among themselves to serve as members of the Committee on Estimates for the term beginning on the 1st May, 1990 and ending on the

30th April, 1991."

The Motion was adopted.

(ii) Public Accounts Committee

SHRI P. UPENDRA: I beg to move:

"That the members of this House do proceed to elect in the manner required by sub-rule (1) of Rule 309 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, fifteen members from among themselves to serve as members of the Committee on Public Accounts for the term beginning on the 1st May, 1990 and ending on the 30th April, 1991."

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the members of this House do proceed to elect in the manner required by sub-rule (1) of Rule 309 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, fifteen members from among themselves to serve as members of the Committee on Public Accounts for the term beginning on the 1st May, 1990 and ending on the 30th April, 1991."

The Motion was adopted.

SHRI P. UPENDRA: I beg to move:

"That this House do recommend to Rajya Sabha that Rajya Sabha do agree to nominate seven members from Rajya Sabha to associate with the Committee on Public Accounts of the House for the terms beginning on the 1st May, 1990 and ending on the 30th April, 1991 and do communicate to this House the names of the members so nominated by Rajya Sabha."

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That this House do recommend to