

**CORRECTION OF ANSWER TO
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 7251
DATED 28TH JULY, 1967, REGARDING
EXPORT CREDIT AND
GUARANTEE CORPORATION**

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Dinesh Singh): For the reply given to unstarred Question No. 7251, answered on the 28th July, 1967, the following may be substituted:

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Zonal Office of the Corporation at Delhi looks after exporters located at Lucknow and Kanpur and in the region of Uttar Pradesh west thereof. The Eastern part of the State is attended to by the Calcutta Office. Besides, exporters are served at specific Centres of Uttar Pradesh by the brokers appointed by the Corporation.

(c) No, Sir.

12.13 hrs.

**CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER
OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

REPORTED SALE OF TROOP-CARRYING HELICOPTERS BY USSR TO PAKISTAN

Shrimati Sushila Rohatgi (Bilaur): I call the attention of the Minister of External Affairs to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:

"Reported sale of troop-carrying helicopters and other lethal weapons to Pakistan by USSR and the training of Pakistani airmen in the USSR for flying these helicopters."

Shri Nath Pai (Rajapur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, before you ask the Minister to reply....

Mr. Speaker: Yes; Mr. Nath Pai had raised an objection; yesterday he pointed out to me certain things. So, the Minister may resume his seat now; let us hear Mr. Nath Pai.

Shri Nath Pai: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I had given a motion of privilege against

the Minister of External Affairs which arose from the statement he made while replying to the debate which was raised in this House regarding the supply of arms. The motion has arisen because on the 6th, there was the disclosure from fairly reliable sources—in this case, the *Washington Post*—which has disclosed that the Soviet Union, contrary to the statement made by the External Affairs Minister, has supplied equipment to Pakistan. Mr. Speaker, I have nothing to say against the Soviet Union; she is a sovereign power and has absolute power to give anything she likes to anybody she likes. Therefore, let us not get diverted into that aspect. We in our country have the same freedom and powers just as the Soviet Union or any other country has its own freedom and powers.

Now, we were told that the Soviet Union has not done any such thing. I had given notice, and this is the only point which I wish to bring to the notice of the House. You had declared on Monday that the matter is pending before you. Now, what happens? What has happened is of grave concern to the House. Instead of coming here and answering the privilege motion or making a statement, the Minister of External Affairs resorts to an action which Parliament takes very serious note of. They privately speak to the press. I am now quoting a press statement which says:

"In anticipation of a motion lying before the House, an atmosphere is tried to be created in the country whereby the force of that motion is destroyed."

There are two points here. The matter is pending, under your direction, before the House. That matter remains to be disposed of. But before any action is taken on my notice, the External Affairs Minister sees to that, that the notice is destroyed by taking to the press. I respect the rights of the Press to seek any information they like. But here was a different case altogether. This is what it says:

"A spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry discounted the report that probably the Soviet Union had also supplied to Pakistan surface-to-air missiles." "We have no information that the Soviet Union has supplied these missiles", he said.

The heading of the statement is very interesting:

"Pak purchase of Soviet 'copters—MI-6 type used in non-combat role."

This is a very important matter. Mr. Chagla was trying to cover himself not by coming to this House, but by taking shelter in this dubious manner by talking to the Press. His statement on the 4th in this House was, no lethal weapons were supplied. Since the news came that copters were supplied, he wanted to cover it by saying that it was non-combat.

I do not want to go into the question whether there is anything like combat and non-combat weapons so far as the armed forces are concerned. A helicopter equipped with an atom bomb can become something. A helicopter may carry troops or anything. I do not want to take your time by going into that aspect.

Mr. Chagla, therefore, has committed contempt of this House. Apart from his talking to the press and the contradiction of his earlier statement, there is another thing. In spite of all this, he goes to the other House, whose rights I respect, and makes a statement, when motions are pending in this House. He has been a very good student of the Constitution and has given very good judgments when he was the Chief Justice of Bombay High Court, before he fell from that high authority and began to defend an indefensible Government....

Mr. Speaker: So far as his making a statement in the other House is concerned, if a question is asked there, he has to answer into there. If he says it must be answered here first, they might take the same view there.

Shri Nath Pai: Article 75(3) says:

"The Council of Ministers shall be collectively responsible to the House of the People."

Whenever a major statement is to be made involving a policy of this Government, your predecessors have repeatedly directed the ministers that if a matter is pending before this House, this House must be given priority. I do not want to enter into a false competition. I am sorry Mr. Chagla is not here. I am not in the habit of criticising somebody who is not present here. But his behaviour, is to say the least, deserves an unqualified condemnation from you as being one of grossest impropriety to the House.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance (Shri Morarji Desai): My hon. friend said that the Minister of External Affairs spoke to the press. But what he read out was that a spokesman of the ministry said something.

Mr. Speaker: About answering in the other House, it is not a major policy matter and if the same question is asked there by an hon. member, what is to be done? He says, it must be answered here first. They might also take the same view there.

Shri Nath Pai: I have read out the relevant article from the Constitution.

Mr. Speaker: The Constitution itself has created the other House also. Now, the Deputy Prime Minister has pointed out that some spokesman of the ministry had given the information. Let us hear the answer to the calling attention notice.

Shri Nath Pai: Do you condone this, Sir? I am a little surprised. It is the minister who is answerable for what the ministry does. I was taken by surprise that an experienced administrator like Shri Morarji Desai should come forth with such an unconvincing

[Shri Nath Pai]

reply that it is the spokesman of the ministry who said it. At whose behest does the spokesman speak? Who is answerable to the House—the spokesman or the minister?

Mr. Speaker: The minister is responsible. You have made your point.

Shri Nath Pai: I want your point. My point is not so important.

Mr. Speaker: About the matter being answered in the other House, as I have already said, let us not immediately here and now raise it. The other House is also sovereign. It is not such an important matter of policy or a major policy issue. The paper has said "spokesman of the Ministry". The Deputy Prime Minister and also the Prime Minister are here. I would like them to look into it.

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy (Kendrapara): Sir, it becomes still more objectionable because when the matter was pending before the House a spokesman of the Ministry spoke to the Press. Is it the case of the Deputy Prime Minister that when the spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs spoke to the Press he was unaware of the motion that was pending before the House? Either the Minister is responsible or the spokesman of the Ministry is responsible; somebody is responsible and it amounts to contempt of the House.

Shri P. Venkatasubbalah (Nandyal): Sir, this matter has to be considered in the context of the news published by the *Washington Post*. The *Washington Post* has published certain reports regarding supply of helicopters by Soviet Russia to Pakistan. This matter was publicised in our Press. So it is the duty of the Ministry of External Affairs to clarify the position. So the Minister is not at all involved in this and it does not amount to any contempt of the House or breach of privilege of the House.

Shri Morarji Desai: My hon. friend was surprised when I asked for some information. I have not explained anything. I asked for information, whether there was any reason to believe that the spokesman, as he is called by the paper—it is not that the person who gave the information called himself the spokesman, it is that paper which says that he was the spokesman of the Ministry—was Shri Chagla? Is there anything to suggest that. I would also like to say this, that if somebody from the Ministry has said something which is wrong or unauthorised then, certainly, when the Minister comes to know about, he holds that person responsible for it and takes him to task. How can the Minister be held responsible for it?

Mr. Speaker: The matter has been brought to the notice of the Government. I am not going to give any ruling here. It is not necessary. I am sure, when something is pending before the House, the ministers would like to respect the House and make a statement on the floor of the House. I do not think there is any difference of opinion on this. The whole House is agreed on this point that when some matter is pending before the House it shall be answered first on the floor of the House. Whether in this case the spokesman of the Ministry knew about it or not is a different matter. It has got to be looked into. I would request the Minister of Foreign Affairs and also the Prime Minister to look into it and find out whether it was known to him, whether it was done intentionally and then take the necessary action.

श्री प्रेम चन्द वर्मा (हमीरपुर) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं आप से कहना चाहता हूँ कि...

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. Even Shri Nath Pai had to wait for three days before raising it here. The hon. Member wants just to get up and raise something. How can I allow that?

श्री प्रेम चन्ध बर्मा : मैं उस के बारे में नहीं कह रहा हूँ। आप मेरी बात को सुन लीजिए। मैं स्वैस्चन आबर के बारे में आप से स्पष्टीकरण चाहता हूँ।

Mr. Speaker: There is no Question Hour allotted when the Speaker will answer the questions of hon. Members.

श्री प्रेम चन्ध बर्मा : मैं सिर्फ इतना ही कहना चाहता हूँ कि

Mr. Speaker: The other day, when I took objection, Shri Nath Pai was good enough to come and discuss with me in the Chamber. That is the normal courtesy expected of every hon. Member. No hon. Member can simply get up and raise any point here. I do not want to hear the hon. Member here. How can I answer without knowing the subject matter. Therefore, he can come and discuss with me and then if I allow he can raise it here.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी (बलरामपुर) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, जब माननीय सदस्य, श्री नाथ पाई, ने आप की अनुमति से यह मामला उठाया, तब विदेश मंत्री, श्री चागला, सदन में नहीं थे।

Mr. Speaker: Other ministers were there.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : अब वह आ गए हैं और वह स्पष्ट कर सकते हैं कि उन का इरादा प्रेस को कोई ऐसी सूचना देने का नहीं था, जो कि उन्हें पहले सदन को देना चाहिए थी, और यह कि उन का इरादा सदन की किसी तरह की अवमानना करने का नहीं था। यह बात विदेश मंत्री कह सकते हैं। इस में उन को कोई आपत्ति नहीं होनी चाहिए।

The Minister of External Affairs (Shri M. C. Chagla): I am sorry, Sir, I do not know what transpired here. I was answering a Calling Attention Notice in the Rajya Sabha. Without

knowing the facts, I want to give a solemn assurance to the House that I will never be guilty of telling anything to the Press to which it is not entitled before the matter comes to this House. I know this House, I know the Members of this House and I give this solemn assurance to them.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister.

Shri S. Kundu (Balasore): Sir, on a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: I have already called the hon. Minister.

Shri S. Kundu: Sir, you do not even listen to us. The whole difficulty is that when we get up and speak, you do not even listen to us.

Mr. Speaker: I have been listening to the leader and deputy leader of the party all the time. Now he says that I was not listening to them.

Shri S. Kundu: My point of order is this. Once Shri Nath Pai has raised a question and it is discussed here, it becomes the concern of the whole House. The question is not whether a spokesman of the Ministry has spoken or not. Certain matters have trickled down to the press. It is the constructive responsibility of the Government to see that these matters do not go to the press. The Government should realise its responsibility.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you for the suggestion. You have had your say. Now, the hon. Minister.

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of External Affairs (Shri Surendra Pal Singh): The Government have seen reports in the press stating that the Soviet Union is selling helicopters to Pakistan. We are making enquiries. One or two reports we have received so far indicate that one MI-6 helicopter arrived Chaklala airport on July 25th, accompanied by 9 Soviet air and ground crew. The helicopter is to undergo extensive evaluation trials for the next 2 months, after which,

[Shri Surendra Pal Singh]

Pakistan may buy three to four of such helicopters. The deal has been processed through civilian channels.

The Government are aware that the USSR commercial organisation "AVIA-EXPORT" sell helicopters and civilian transport aircraft freely and these sales do not fall within the restrictions applied to the sale or gift of military equipment by the USSR to other countries.

Shrimati Sushila Rohatgi: Mr. Khrushchev had clearly stated from time to time that Kashmir was an integral part of India. But, since the Tashkent Agreement, a visible change is seen in the attitude of the Soviet Union and there is also closer contacts between the Soviet Union and Pakistan, though it has constantly reiterated its friendship with India. May I know from the hon. Minister when was the last occasion when such an assurance that Kashmir was an integral part of India was made?

Shri M. C. Chagla: It does not strictly arise out of this. But, as far as I know, Russia stands by her commitment, which she has given expression to several times in the Security Council and elsewhere, that she looks upon Kashmir as an integral part of India.

Shri D. N. Patodia (Jalore): This deal has been termed as more or less a commercial deal. But it does not stop there, because their Air Force personnel are being trained in the Soviet Union. Also, these helicopters are capable of being used by the army; they can be used as bombers in times of war. Under these circumstances, may I know the difference between a commercial deal and a political deal?

Shri M. C. Chagla: The difference is this. This is not a deal between government and government. It was a deal between people..... (Interruptions)

Shri Nath Pai: We have never heard such a piece of downright rubbish. In the Soviet Union everything is State controlled.

Shri M. C. Chagla: It was done by a body just like our STC. May I point out that when it comes to a war everything which can be used for civilian purposes can be turned for use during the war.

Shri Virendrakumar Shah (Junagadh): Who is the buyer in this case?

Shri M. C. Chagla: We buy helicopters for civilian purposes. Passengers are carried in such helicopters.

Shri Nath Pai: Are they being bought by them for tourist traffic?

Shri M. C. Chagla: USSR is an independent, sovereign country. If she enters into a trade deal with another country, how can we object to it? It is a commercial deal.

Shri D. N. Patodia: Sir, on a point of order. The hon. Minister has stated that the Government is not involved in it. May I know who gives training to the personnel; is it the air force or the commercial organisation?

Mr. Speaker: There is no point of order.

Shri P. Venkatasubbalah: As the hon. Minister has rightly pointed out, USSR is a friendly country who stood by us on all the international questions that confronted our country. The hon. Minister made a statement the other day that there had been an assurance from the Soviet Government that only non-lethal weapons will be supplied to Pakistan in keeping with the spirit of the Tashkent agreement. Now the hon. Minister has come out saying that it is only a commercial deal. I would like to know whether the Minister has tried to contact the Soviet Government and find out how a distinction can be drawn between lethal and non-lethal weapons and be-

tween combat and non-combat forces. Helicopters can also be used to transport troops. In that case, is this action of the Soviet Government in keeping with the assurance that they have given to the Minister?

Shri M. C. Chagla: USSR looks upon helicopters as non-lethal and helicopters are for sale to any country.

Shri Ranga (Sri Kakulam): Have you written to them?

Shri M. C. Chagla: We have got an assurance repeatedly and we are in touch; but, may I just point out that according to USSR, helicopters are non-lethal and anybody can buy them from the State organisation—not only Pakistan but ourselves or any country.

Shri Hem Barua (Mangaldai): But they are big helicopters.

Shri M. C. Chagla: But, take the case of tanks and sabre jets. It is obvious that they cannot be used for civilian purposes. But, suppose we were at war; then, we would mobilise the nation and everything can be used for war purposes. However, the question is: *Prima facie*, if a plane is sold for carrying passengers or for transport, is that a lethal weapon?

Mr. Speaker: Shri Venkatasubbaiah asked whether this has been brought to their notice.

Shri M. C. Chagla: Yes, Sir; we have.

Shri Swell (Autonomous Districts): From all the reports that we have it appears that these are giant, high-flying helicopters which are designed to be of particular use in high mountainous regions. Before the last Indo-Pakistan conflict in 1965 Pakistan sent a large number of infiltrators into Kashmir, but their designs did not succeed because of the long line of communications and scanty supply of ammunition and food. I would like to know whether the Minister has considered the possibility of Pakistan using these giant, high-flying helicopters to transport troops to different parts of Kashmir, big amounts of

food and ammunition, heavy artillery, anti-aircraft artillery and mortars and setting up defence perimeters within Kashmir as a prelude to an onslaught on this country; if the Government has considered this aspect of the question, I would like to know from the Minister whether he has conveyed this to the Soviet Union and told them that the sale of these helicopters to Pakistan would be an unfriendly act towards India.

Shri M. C. Chagla: I do not know much about these helicopters but they can carry 65 passengers; I think, their range is about 350 miles....

Shri Hem Barua: 65 armed passengers or what?

Shri M. C. Chagla:..and they can go to a height of 14,000 feet. As I said, the Russian attitude is that these helicopters can be sold to any country for civilian use. If the country uses something, which meant for civilian use essentially, for military purposes—well, as I said, anything can be so used.... (Interruption)

Shri Hem Barua: Have you pointed out that possibility to them?

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं इस बारे में सवाल पूछना नहीं चाहता। मेरा आप से निवेदन है इसी मामले को लेकर मैंने एक कार्य-स्वयं प्रस्ताव दिया था और मैं ने उस प्रस्ताव में कहा था कि सरकार की विदेश नीति विफल हो गई है क्योंकि सोवियत रूस से उस को जो आश्वासन मिले थे उन आश्वासनों का पालन नहीं किया जा रहा है। अभी भी मंत्री महोदय ने जो वक्तव्य दिया है उस से हमारी आशाएं और बढ़ रही हैं और मैं आप से अपील करूंगा कि आप हमारे ऐडजर्नमेंट मोशन पर विचार करिए, उसकी अनुमति दीजिए जिससे कि सदन स्थगित होने से पहले इस पर चर्चा हो सके।

Shri Swell: My question has not been answered.

May I take it from the Government that they do not consider it at all possible for Pakistan to use these helicopters for these purposes and that they do not consider it necessary to convey the misgivings of this country to the Soviet Union and to tell them that the sale of these helicopters to Pakistan would be an unfriendly act?

Shri M. C. Chagla: As regards the possibility of troops being carried by these helicopters, I am sure, my colleague and friend, the Defence Minister, will consider it when he considers the question of the security of the country.

Shri Hem Barua: You also know the possibility of their use.

Shri M. C. Chagla: I have said so. Any civilian aircraft can be used for military purpose; any ordinary plane can be used for military purpose. As regards telling the U.S.S.R. that it is an unfriendly act, I want to repeat my answer to Mr. Vajpayee that the assurance given by the U.S.S.R. from the highest person to the lowest person that they will not supply....

Shri Hem Barua: That was the assurance given by America also.

Shri M. C. Chagla: ...lethal weapons to Pakistan stands and we have no reason to believe that they have departed from that assurance.

Shri A. B. Vajpayee: The House should be given an opportunity to discuss this before we adjourn.

Mr. Speaker: Let us see how best it can be done. It all depends upon which work will have to be given up and which work will have to be taken up.

Shri Ranga: The only point that arises is whether they would be good enough, if they have not done it already, to contact the U.S.S.R. Government and tell them.....

Mr. Speaker: He has said that.

Shri Ranga: That is the only answer have been asking for.

Mr. Speaker: When Shri Venkatasubbaiah specifically asked whether this has been brought to the notice of the U.S.S.R. Government, I remember, Mr. Chagla said, "We have".

Anyway, I have nothing more to say; I cannot express my opinion. I do not know whether we have time now. We are adjourning tomorrow evening. We will have to re-shape the whole work otherwise. Therefore, I cannot say anything now. Papers to be laid.

12.38 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

STATEMENT RE. ENQUIRY INTO AFFAIRS OF BANK OF CHINA

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance (Shri Morarji Desai): I beg to lay on the Table a statement regarding the enquiry into the affairs of the Bank of China (in liquidation). [Placed in Library. See No. LT-1387/67].

Shri Chintamani Panigrahi (Bhubaneswar): On a point of order, Sir. I want to make a submission.... (Interruption)

Mr. Speaker: Order; order. Is that on Shri Morarji Desai's laying a paper on the Table?

Shri Chintamani Panigrahi: I have given a Call Attention Notice on the wanton and brutal attack on and look of the Oriya passengers and molestation of women in West Bengal area when travelling on the railways and the Oriya people are all agitated over that. That has been rejected....

Mr. Speaker: Order; order. There is no point of order. Just now a Question was also answered.