

[Shri K. C. Pant]

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12.22 Hrs.

STATEMENT RE: INDEPENDENCE OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF SOUTH YEMEN

THE PRIME MINISTER, MINISTER OF ATOMIC ENERGY, MINISTER OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI) : After more than one century and a quarter of colonial domination, South Arabia today emerges as a free and independent nation—The People's Republic of South Yemen. On this auspicious occasion, we extend our greetings and offer our good wishes to the Government and the people of the new State. We also pay our tribute to the valiant freedom fighters who have laid down their lives during the struggle for their independence.

There have been close and intimate relations for centuries between India and South Arabia. It shall be the earnest endeavour of the Government of India to further strengthen our relations with the independent State and also to extend such economic and technical assistance as we can and which they may need.

As the House is aware, India has consistently supported the right to independence and sovereignty for the people of South Arabia, and for many years now we have made earnest efforts for the achievement of this aim through the United Nations and otherwise. Therefore, it is a matter of great satisfaction and pleasure to us that South Arabia is now an independent nation.

The independence of South Arabia is yet another step towards decolonisation in the world. It is earnestly hoped that the day is not far off when the remaining colonised peoples and countries will also become independent.

The Government of India has extended recognition to the People's Republic of South Yemen and it is our intention to convert our Commission in Aden into

an Embassy with a resident Ambassador. The necessary steps in this regard have already been initiated.

I am sure that all Members of this House, as also the people of India, join me in extending a warm welcome to the new State of the People's Republic of South Yemen in the comity of nations and in wishing it a bright future.

12.25 Hrs.

STATEMENT RE: SITUATION IN WEST BENGAL

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the House is aware of the action taken by the Speaker of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly yesterday, and the observations which he made while adjourning the Assembly *sine die* have been published in the press to-day. While concluding his observations, the Speaker said :

"The matters in issue are of the highest constitutional importance..... It is obvious, therefore, that if I am to find out how exactly I should act so as to preserve and protect the privileges of this House, I should need more time and then only gave a considered ruling on the grave issues at stake. This is why in exercise of my powers under Rule 15 I have adjourned this House *sine die*."

While reserving final judgment, the Speaker has nevertheless expressed his views on a number of issues. I do not wish to comment on the conduct of the Hon'ble Speaker of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly. But there are certain matters on which I should like to make the stand of the Central Government clear.

According to the best legal advice available to us it was within the constitutional competence of the Governor to dissolve the Council of Ministers headed by Shri Ajoy Mukherji in the circumstances in which the Governor did so (Interruptions)

SOME HON. MEMBERS : No, No.