

Seventeenth Loksabha

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Title: Further discussion on the situation in Ukraine raised by Shri N. K. Premachandran on 5 April 2022 (Discussion Concluded).

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (DR. SUBRAHMANYAM JAISHANKAR

Hon. Speaker, Sir, I first of all thank all the hon. Members for their views, concerns and sentiments about the ongoing situation in Ukraine. Yesterday, twenty-eight Members spoke on the subject, I listened to all of them with great attention, and all of them made some points of relevance and consideration.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we strive to ensure that foreign policy is a subject of maximum consensus in the country. Certainly, that should be the case with a subject as important as Ukraine, and I was glad to see yesterday that was the case. I was also very pleased that four Ministers spoke on the matter because these Ministers went to the neighbouring countries, they participated in the evacuation operations, and they brought a ground perspective which was very important for the House to listen.

Hon. Members would all agree that India's approach should be guided by our national beliefs and values, by our national interest, and by our national strategy. Let me dwell on each of these aspects before addressing some of the specific issues that were brought up by hon. Members yesterday.

What is India advocating in Ukraine? We are, first and foremost, strongly against the conflict. We believe that no solution can be arrived at by shedding blood, and at the cost of innocent lives. In this day and age, dialogue and diplomacy are the right answers to any dispute. And one should bear in mind that the contemporary global order has been built on the UN Charter on respect for international law, and for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states.

If India has chosen a side, it is the side of peace, and it is for an immediate end to violence. This is our principled stand, and it has consistently guided our position in international forums and debates including in the United Nations.

Sir, many hon. Members brought up the incident, the happenings in Bucha, and I want to say that we are deeply disturbed by the reports. We strongly condemn the killings which have

taken place there. This is an extremely serious matter, and we support the call for an independent investigation.

Sir, the conflict in Ukraine has had significant consequences for the global economy and for our national economy. Like all countries, we too are assessing the implications, and deciding what is best for our national interest. Members are aware that in a complex and globalised world every nation takes into account the reality of interdependence. Therefore, even as they express their position in words and deeds, they also adopt policies that safeguard the wellbeing of the population. As a result, we have seen, even in Europe, that energy flows continue despite tensions. Similarly, a conscious effort was made to insulate the fertiliser market from volatility. There are numerous other measures in different domains including financial and payment carve outs. Even non-essential goods that have salience for individual economies have been factored in the equation.

So, what should India do in these circumstances? At a time when energy costs have spiked clearly, we need to ensure that the common person in India is not subject to an additional and unavoidable burden. Similarly, fertilizer prices have a direct implication for the livelihood of the majority of our population, and indeed for food prices, for all of us. Even the security of the nation is at stake as we maintain our defence posture in the manner that the current security challenges warrant. All these are legitimate pursuits of national interest by India. They are similar to what other nations are doing from their particular perspective. Attributing a political colouring to it is uncalled for; it is unfair. I do not even wish to get into which country is doing how much. Eventually, the numbers will speak for themselves.

Additionally, there was a natural concern for our citizens, especially our students who were trapped in conflict zones. The House will recall that I had made a *suo moto* statement on this subject. But some comments were made yesterday about 'Operation Ganga'. I would like to respond to that a little later.

Keeping these factors in mind, what should be our national strategy? The Government believes that it should have four elements. One, in terms of diplomacy, India continues to press forcefully for an immediate cessation of hostilities and an end to violence. We encourage talks between Ukraine and Russia including at the level of their Presidents. The Prime Minister himself has spoken to them both in this regard.

This was precisely the message that was conveyed to Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov when he was in Delhi. If India can be of any assistance in this matter, we will be glad to contribute.

Two, the ground situation calls for urgent humanitarian relief. We have already provided 9 tonnes of relief material. I was glad to see that many hon. Members yesterday noted it and appreciated it. We did it even while we were in the middle of an evacuation. So, I think, that also is a factor that should be recognised. Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Yulia Svyrydenko called me a few days ago to request for supply of more medicines. The House will be glad to know that this is underway and delivery should start very soon.

Three, we will work with the international community and partner countries to mitigate the economic hardships that are resulting from this conflict. Obviously, our focus is to soften its impact on our own economy. But equally, there are partners who are going through very tough times. Coordinating on lowering energy prices is one collective initiative. In the case of neighbour like Sri Lanka, we are even supplying fuel and food on credit. Food security is another major concern. India has been approached for the supply of wheat and sugar by many countries and we are responding positively. The House will be glad to know that whether it is basmati rice or non-basmati rice, sugar, wheat, our exports in the last quarter have gone up very, very substantially. We have delivered for the world in terms of vaccines. We did it earlier for medicines. So, I would like to assure the House, through you, that we will also step forward where global demands for food grains and other materials are concerned, and we will do it in a manner that is helpful to the global economy, which will not take undue advantage of countries in distress.

Four, there are cases, there are issues like the supply of edible oil. Some Members referred to it yesterday because we import sunflower oil in very large quantity from Ukraine, or fertilizers that I spoke about.

Now, our commercial diplomacy has to find additional sources to address this disruption. There could be more such examples in the days to come. I would like to apprise this House through you, that whether it is the supply of lentils, edible oils, or the requirement of raw materials for fertilisers, we are really looking today in different ways at global markets, from Mercosur to Kazakhstan, Tanzania, Australia, and Canada, to see how we can lighten the burden for the common people in India as a result of this crisis.

Let me say that overall, therefore, India's approach will be to promote dialogue, to end the conflict, and to mitigate economic distress for itself and for the world, and to work with its partners to these ends. I can also say that many other nations which have engaged us recently, at the level of the hon. Prime Minister and at my level, with other hon. Ministers, share such a view. Many of them are glad to work with us and many of them are pleased that we have taken the lead on many of these issues.

माननीय अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से इस सदन को 'ऑपरेशन गंगा' के बारे में बताना चाहता हूँ। कल इस पर काफी विस्तार से चर्चा हुई। यह ठीक है कि हमारा परिप्रेक्ष्य, हमारा जो अनुभव है, उसे यह सदन जाने। इसलिए मुझे बहुत खुशी हुई कि जो चार मंत्री वहाँ गए, जिनका वहाँ डायरेक्ट यानी हैंड-ऑन तजुर्बा था, वे कल सदन के सामने बोल पाए।

'ऑपरेशन गंगा' के बारे में, मैं एक प्रकार से एम्फेसाइज करना चाहता हूँ कि हमारा सबसे पहला इवैकुएशन ऐसा था कि हमारे स्केल में आज तक किसी देश ने इवैकुएशन नहीं किया। हमारे जो 20 हज़ार नागरिक आए और जो दूसरे देशों के नागरिक, जिनको हम भारत वापस लाए। यह काम किसी और देश नहीं किया। मैं यह भी कह सकता हूँ कि बाकी विदेश मंत्री, जिनसे मेरी बात होती है, कुछ ही दिन पहले या एक विदेश मंत्री आए। उन्होंने मुझे बहुत गर्व से कहा कि मैं अपने देश के नागरिकों से भरे दो प्लेन्स यूक्रेन लाया। फिर उन्होंने मुझसे पूछा कि आपके कितने प्लेन आए? वे हैरान हो गए, जब मैंने कहा कि हमने अपने नागरिकों से भरे 90 प्लेन्स लाए। यह बात भी है कि जो बाकी देश हैं, वे हमारा उदाहरण देखकर, एक तरह से हम उनको प्रोत्साहित करते हैं। उनको लगता है कि भारत कर रहा है, तो हमारी ओर से भी ऐसा कुछ करना चाहिए।

कल एडवाइज़री की बात हुई। यह स्वाभाविक है कि ऐसे क्राइसिस में लोग यह कहें कि आपने जल की या नहीं की या आपको किसी और तरीके से करना चाहिए था या आपके शब्दों के प्रयोग में कुछ कमी रह गई। मैं हाउस को समझाना चाहता हूँ कि अगर हमारी एडवाइज़री का प्रभाव कुछ नहीं होता या लोग उससे सीरियसली नहीं लेते, तो हमारे चार हज़ार नागरिक कांफ्लिक्ट के पहले क्यों निकले? वे इसीलिए निकले क्योंकि उनकी समझ में आया कि एडवाइज़री का क्या महत्व होता है। हम हर रोज़ एडवाइज़री इश्यू नज़र करते हैं। जब किसी भी राजदूतावास की एडवाइज़री है कि जो नॉन-एसेंशियल लोग हैं, वे देश को छोड़कर घर वापस चले जाएं, तो लोग उसको मानते हैं।

हाउस का यह पूछना कि सब लोग क्यों नहीं गए, यह भी स्वाभाविक है। वे इसलिए नहीं गए क्योंकि अगर स्टूडेंट्स हैं, एक जमाने में हम सब स्टूडेंट्स थे। जब कोई 20 साल का स्टूडेंट है, तो उसके मन में क्या होता है?

स्टूडेंट्स सबसे पहले यूनिवर्सिटी से पूछते हैं, अपने दोस्तों से पूछते हैं, जो स्टूडेंट एडवाइज़र्स होते हैं, कॉन्ट्रैक्ट्स होते हैं, उनसे पूछते हैं। वे टेलिविजन में देखते हैं, न्यूजपेपर पढ़ते हैं। उनको उस समय लगा कि अगर वे उस समय यूक्रेन छोड़कर भारत चले जाएं, तो इससे उनकी एजुकेशन डिस्टर्ब हो जाएगी, खराब हो जाएगी और उनको नुकसान पहुंचेगा।

यह फीलिंग इसीलिए हुई क्योंकि बहुत सारी यूनिवर्सिटीज ने उस समय ऑनलाइन-कोर्सेज देने से इंकार कर दिया। उदाहरण के तौर पर मैं आपसे कह सकता हूँ कि कीव में एक यूनिवर्सिटी थी, उन्होंने कहा कि हम तो ऑनलाइन मोड पर कनवर्ट ही नहीं कर सकते। ओडेसा की एक यूनिवर्सिटी ने कहा कि हम 25 फरवरी तक ही ऑनलाइन की सुविधा दे सकते हैं। खारकीव में जो यूनिवर्सिटी थी, उसको राजदूतावास फोन करता रहा, उन्होंने वहां किसी को भेजा भी, लेकिन वे तो मिलने के लिए ही तैयार नहीं थे। सुमी अरैबिक्स विनिस्सिया में दो और यूनिवर्सिटीज थीं, जहां हमारे विद्यार्थी काफी संख्या में थे। वे कह रहे थे कि हम ज्यादा से ज्यादा कुछ हफ्तों के लिए चला सकते हैं, लेकिन हमारी राय है कि आप रुक जाओ, यह इतना सीरियस नहीं होगा।

कल एक मेंबर ने हमें याद भी दिलाया, इसी समय रिपोर्ट्स भी निकलीं कि रूस अपनी फौज की कु यूनिट्स को वापस ले जा रहा है। मैं उस समय मॉनिटर भी कर रहा था, पर मैंने अपने लिए एक बार और चे किया कि यूक्रेन की सरकार उस समय क्या कह रही थी? यूक्रेन की सरकार अपने देश और हमारे स्टूडेंट्स जो उन्हीं के बीच में थे, उनसे कह रही थी कि आप पैनिक मत हो, इसको हम संभाल लेंगे। ओवरऑ सिग्रलिंग जो थी, उन्होंने हमारे नागरिकों को, हमारे स्टूडेंट्स को सचमुच एक किस्म से दुविधा में डाल दि और इसीलिए चार हजार लोग यूक्रेन छोड़कर आए और बाकी 18,000 लोगों ने कहा कि हम अभी रुक जा हैं और देखते हैं कि हालात सचमुच बिगड़ते हैं या नहीं।

कल मैं संसद में जो सुन रहा था, क्राइसिस के बाद कहना कि सबको निकलना चाहिए था या हमव ऐसे कठोर शब्दों में समझाना चाहिए था कि सब डर के मारे निकल जाएं, यह मुझे लगता है कि स्टूडेंट्स व जो माइंडसेट है, वह इसको पहचानता नहीं है। अगर हम सचमुच ग्राउंड के साथ जुड़े हैं, अगर हम स्टूडेंट की मानसिकता को समझते हैं, तो हमें यह दुविधा भी समझनी चाहिए। ऑपरेशन गंगा के बारे में कल थो सी यह भी चर्चा ... (व्यवधान)

श्री अधीर रंजन चौधरी (बहरामपुर): गलती स्टूडेंट्स ने की है? ... (व्यवधान)

डॉ. सुब्रह्मण्यम जयशंकर : अधीर रंजन जी, यह गलती नहीं थी। ... (व्यवधान) यही आपकी मेंटेलिटी है कि आप गलती ठूँढते हैं। ... (व्यवधान) क्षमा कीजिएगा स्पीकर सर। ... (व्यवधान)

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: You are passing the buck on to the students. . (Interruptions) मैं इसीलिए पूछ रहा हूँ। ... (व्यवधान)

डॉ. सुब्रह्मण्यम जयशंकर : स्पीकर महोदय, यह साफ है कि ऐसी सिचुएशन में 22,000 लोग कलेक्टिव एक निर्णय नहीं ले सकते। ... (व्यवधान)

यह भी कल चर्चा हुई कि ऑपरेशन गंगा में क्या कुछ स्पेशल था? क्या यह पहले वाले इवैक्युएशन ऑपरेशन जैसा था या इसमें कुछ अलग था? आखिर के स्पीकर जनरल वी. के. सिंह जी ने बहु ऑब्जेक्टिवली कहा कि हर ऑपरेशन एक किस्म से यूनीक होता है। कहीं युद्ध है, कहीं नहीं है, कहीं तना है, कहीं नहीं है। कहीं सिचुएशन कुछ और है।

कहीं हमने फौज का इस्तेमाल किया है, कहीं सिविलियन – एयर इंडिया का इस्तेमाल किया है ऑपरेशन गंगा के बारे में मैं यह कहूंगा और मैं 45 सालों के अनुभव से कह रहा हूँ कि जो सिचुएशन, चुनौती ऑपरेशन गंगा में थी, आज तक इस सिचुएशन में हमने, इस संख्या में इतने नागरिकों को कभी न निकाला।

13.00 hrs

अध्यक्ष जी, यह बात मैं विश्वास के साथ कह सकता हूँ और इसमें क्या चुनौती थी, वह भी बताता हूँ आपको याद होगा कि हमने वर्ष 2015 में ऑपरेशन 'राहत' यमन में चलाया था। उस समय यमन में लड़ाई चली रही थी। प्रधान मंत्री जी ने सउदी अरब के राजा को फोन करके युद्ध विराम कराया ताकि हमारे प्लेन वा जाकर हमारे नागरिकों को वापस ला सकें। लेकिन इस समय लड़ाई जारी थी और युद्ध विराम करवाना बहु

मुश्किल था, लेकिन अंत में दो शहरों में युद्ध विराम हुआ ताकि हम अपने लोगों को वहां से निकाल सकें। युद्ध विराम पूरी तरह से नहीं था, केवल दो शहरों में हुआ और बाकी जगह लड़ाई चल रही थी। वहां के नागरिक स्वयं देश से निकलने के चक्कर में थे। जब ऑपरेशन 'गंगा' चल रहा था, तब करीब 30 लाख यूक्रेन नागरिक स्वयं यूक्रेन से बाहर निकलने का प्रयास कर रहे थे। इस ऑपरेशन की दूसरी खासियत थी कि प्रधानमंत्री जी का इसमें पर्सनल इंटरवेंशन था। प्रधानमंत्री जी ने स्वयं फोन किया और लीडर्स से बात की। दो जगह हमारे विद्यार्थी बहुत बुरी तरह से फंस गए थे, वहां युद्ध विराम कराया ताकि हमारे लोग वहां से निकल पाएं। कल एक माननीय सदस्य ने कहा कि इलेक्शन के कैलकुलेशन के कारण आपने कुछ चीजें नहीं कीं। मैं सदस्य को यह भी याद दिलाना चाहता हूँ कि इलेक्शन कैम्पेन के बीच में प्रधानमंत्री जी दिल्ली वापस आए और लीडर्स से बात करके मीटिंग की तथा डायरेक्टली सुपरवाइज किया। यह भी आपको ध्यान में रखना चाहिए। यूक्रेन में दो शहर सूमी और खारकीव थे, जहां हालात बहुत खराब थे। खारकीव में शैलिंग हो रही थी और आप जानते हैं कि हमारे एक विद्यार्थी श्री नवीन की मृत्यु हो गई। सूमी में यूक्रेन और रशिया के बीच फायरिंग हो रही थी। हमारे माननीय सदस्य ने पूछा कि प्रधानमंत्री के बात करने का प्रभाव पता नहीं क्या था। मैं उनको बता सकता हूँ कि मैं उनके साथ कमरे में था, जब उन्होंने खारकीव के विषय पर पुतिन साहब के साथ यह मुद्दा उठाया और कहा कि हमारे विद्यार्थी डेंजर में हैं, क्योंकि खारकीव में फायरिंग हो रही है। उस बातचीत के कारण हमें इतना समय मिला कि हमारे स्टूडेंट्स खारकीव छोड़कर एक सेफ जोन, जो कि रशियन्स बताया कि यदि आप उस जगह जाएंगे, तो वहां फायरिंग नहीं होगी। सूमी से लोगों को निकालते समय फायरिंग हुई और एक समय तो विद्यार्थी बस में बैठ भी गए थे और हम निकलने वाले थे कि फायरिंग फिर शुरू हो गई।

प्रधानमंत्री जी ने दोनों प्रेजीडेंट्स से बात की। चूंकि दोनों देश कह रहे थे कि फायरिंग दूसरा देश कर रहा है और दोनों को समझाया कि इस समय से इस समय तक आप अपनी फौज को बताएं कि वे फायरिंग करें। हमने यूक्रेन से सहायता ली, प्रोटेक्शन भी ली तथा रेड क्रॉस को भी साथ ले गए। सूमी का इवैक्यूएशन ऐसे हुआ। कल यह भी कहा गया कि एम्बेसी क्या कर रही थी? कुछ शहर थे जहां हम स्टूडेंट्स के लिए कुछ कर नहीं पाए या हम वहां नहीं थे। एम्बेसी चूंकि राजधानी में होती है इसलिए काफी समय तक स्टूडेंट्स राजधानी में रहे। जब पश्चिमी बॉर्डर में हमारे बहुत सारे लोग फंस गए, तो हमने एम्बेसी को फेज वाइज, पहली आधी एम्बेसी को और फिर बाकी एम्बेसी लीवीव में गए, जो पश्चिम यूक्रेन में है। ताकि वे बॉर्डर के नजदीक जाएं और यूक्रेन के अंदर से स्टूडेंट्स की सहायता कर पाएं, क्योंकि हमारी टीम यूक्रेन की बाहरी सीमा में थी। पश्चिमी शहर जैसे खारकीव या सुमी में जो लोग फंसे हुए थे, वहां हमने लोगों के साथ संपर्क बनाकर रख रखा उनको निकालने की सहायता के बारे में कल थोड़ी-सी चर्चा हुई थी। मैं स्टूडेंट्स से क्रेडिट नहीं लेना चाहता हूँ, क्योंकि उन्होंने जो झेला है, उसके लिए मेरे पास शब्द ही नहीं हैं। यह सत्य है कि ज्यादातर लोग, जो वहां से निकले, वे ट्रेनों में निकले। स्पेशल ट्रेनें इसीलिए चलायी गयीं, क्योंकि हम लोगों ने यूक्रेन सरकार पर दबाव डाला और कहा कि हमारे स्टूडेंट्स वहां पर हैं, अतः जब तक वे वहां से पूरी तरह से निकल न जाएं, तब तक आप ट्रेनें चलाते रहें। कुछ लोगों ने अलग से बसें लीं, कुछ लोगों ने कांट्रैक्टरों से संपर्क किया तथा कुछ लोगों के लिए हम लोगों ने बसों की व्यवस्था भी की।

सर, अब 'ऑपरेशन गंगा' पूरा हो चुका है और हमारे स्टूडेंट्स वापस आ चुके हैं। मुझे लगता है कि इस समय हमें सोचना चाहिए कि हम लोगों ने साथ मिलकर क्या किया, कैसे किया। मैं मानता हूँ कि इसमें कुछ सबक भी हैं। हम जब भी कोई ऑपरेशन करते हैं, चाहे 'ऑपरेशन राहत' हो या 'संकट मोचन' हो, तो

हमारी मिनिस्ट्री में एक परंपरा है कि हम जो भी इवैक्युएशन ऑपरेशन करते हैं, उसकी स्टडी होती है। वहां से जो सीखना चाहिए, वह हम सीखते हैं। हमें यह मानना चाहिए कि यह 'ऑपरेशन गंगा' एक कलेक्टिव एफर्ट था। यह कलेक्टिव एफर्ट केवल सरकार या मंत्रालयों का नहीं था, बल्कि इसमें इंडियन कम्युनिटी भी शामिल थी। यूक्रेन व उसके पड़ोसी देशों में हमारे काफी बिजनेसेज हैं। उन्होंने हमारी बहुत सहायता की तथा स्टूडेंट्स ने भी सहायता की। हमें इसे भी जानना चाहिए कि बहुत सारे स्टूडेंट्स जो वहां से निकले, उन्हो कैंप्स में काम किया और बाकी स्टूडेंट्स की मदद की।

सर, मैंने यह भी देखा कि एक बस होने पर उनको आपस में डिसाइड करना था कि कौन जाएगा और कौन रुकेगा। स्टूडेंट्स ने काफी साहस दिखाया। उन्होंने दूसरे लोगों को जगह दी। इसे भी हमें जानना चाहिए। कल यह बात उठी कि मिनिस्टर्स का रोल क्या था? यूक्रेन रूस तथा सभी पड़ोसी देशों के फॉरे मिनिस्टर्स को मैं पर्सनली तथा पहले से ही जानता हूँ। जब यह फाइटिंग शुरू हुई, तो मैंने सबसे बात कर् चूंकि पहले से ही रिश्ते थे, तो उन्होंने रिस्पांड भी किया। मैं यह कहूंगा कि अगर हमारे मिनिस्टर्स नहीं जाते तो हमें उन सरकारों से उस लेवल का अटेंशन नहीं मिलता। वह सहायता वे नहीं देते, क्योंकि उनकी अपनी कठिनाई थी, उनकी अपनी प्रायोरिटीज थीं। उनके बॉर्डर्स में समस्या थी तथा उनके नागरिक भी संकट में थे। मैं यह साफ कहता हूँ कि हमारे मिनिस्टर्स ने मेरी काफी सहायता की। उनके जाने से मेरा काम आधा रह गया। वे इस समय हाउस में नहीं हैं, लेकिन मैं उनकी प्रशंसा करना चाहता हूँ, क्योंकि यह गवर्नमेंट की टी स्पिरिट है कि अगर एक मंत्रालय पर काफी लोड आ जाए तो बाकी मिनिस्टर्स डिपार्टमेंटल परिप्रेक्ष्य व बजाय मिनिस्ट्री के साथ जुड़ जाते हैं और एक टीम के सदस्य बनकर सब लोग काम करते हैं। मैं इसकी आ प्रशंसा करता हूँ।

सर, जो एम.ई.ए. ने किया, उस पर कल बहुत लोगों ने कहा, जिसे मैं दोहराना नहीं चाहता हूँ। इस आंकड़े मेरे स्टेटमेंट में हैं कि लगभग 13 हजार फोन कॉल्स, 9 हजार ई मेल्स और कई सारे लोगों के पर्सनल कॉन्टैक्ट्स से वाट्स अप मैसेजेज आए थे, पर यह बात भी है कि यह हमारा कर्तव्य है। हमें इस समय कर पड़ा। हम आगे भी ऐसी, भगवान न करे कि ऐसी समस्या फिर से आए, लेकिन हमारा जो इस समय व अनुभव है, उसे लेते हुए हम अपनी तैयारी करेंगे।

अब जो स्टूडेंट्स वापस आए हैं, उनके बारे में मेंबर्स ने चिंता प्रकट की है। यह स्वाभाविक है, हमें चिंता करनी चाहिए। अगर वे हमारे परिवार के हैं, तो हम लोग भी ऐसे ही चिंता करते, जैसे उनके माता-पिता आ कर रहे हैं।

महोदय, मैं हाउस को यह सूचना देना चाहता हूँ कि यूक्रेन गवर्नमेंट ने उनके लिए यह एक निर्णय लिया है, Mr. Speaker, Sir, there will be relaxation for them in respect of completion of medic education. There is an examination called 'KROK-1' for the third-year students going to the fourth year. That has been postponed to the next academic year and the students will be allowed to pass to the next academic year based on the completion of the standard requirements.

For sixth-year students, there is an examination called 'KROK-2'. Normally, you have to pass KROK-2 to be awarded the degree. So, the Ukraine Government has taken this decision and we have pressed them in this matter because the larger number of foreign medical students from Ukraine are mainly from India. There are students from other countries also. So, on the basis of

the results of the academic assessments, the students will be awarded the degrees without taking part in KROK-2 examination.

Then the issue was raised regarding the other students. What happens to them? Obviously the Ministries concerned are also discussing this matter. From the Foreign Ministry point of view, I can say that they are in touch with them. An hon. Member yesterday referred to Hungary.... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY (KOLKATA UTTAR): Sir, I would like to inform the hon. Minister, as I mentioned yesterday, I had met with the hon. Prime Minister last week and we had discussion on this issue. During our talk, the ... * I would like to know the latest position in the regard. ...*

DR. SUBRAHMANYAM JAISHANKAR: Sir, I want to update that picture. Yes, there was an offer from Hungary. In addition to Hungary, we have been in touch with Poland, Romania, Czech Republic and Kazakhstan because they all have similar models of education.

There was also a question about education loan. All these students have taken education loan. According to our figures, 1,319 students have outstanding loans. Hon. Finance Minister has informed this House a few days ago that the Government has asked the Indian Banks' Association to assess the impact of the conflict and initiate consultation in regard to the repayment of loans.

This is the information that I wanted to share with the House. But some individual hon. Members mentioned about very specific points. I would like to reply to some of them. I cannot give reply to all of them because of time limit. I do not want the hon. Members to whom I will not reply to think that I have not taken them seriously. I have taken everybody very seriously. But think some points deserve a very specific reply.

I would like to begin with some observations made by Shri Premachandran ji. He contrasts our advisories with those of western countries. Now, I would like the hon. Member to appreciate that western countries had a political approach and a political agenda. Their advisories did not have the same intent like ours, the welfare of the community concerned. They were also the part of a larger political game which they were playing. Again, I want to emphasise that in this case there was nobody else who has done the evacuation before we did the evacuation.

In fact, when fighting started, many countries – I do not want to take their names – actually told their people, 'Sorry, there is nothing we can do for you, you are there, you are stuck'. So when we evacuated, again I want to say, we served as an inspiration. There are Foreign Ministers who said, 'We watched you', and said, 'We will also do something'. Yes, we brought back citizens of 18 countries. For example, when we left Sumy, along with us, more non-Indian students can

out and they came out because of a ceasefire that we had helped to achieve. So, I would say there is no reason for us to be, in any way, excessively critical of what happened.

There was this issue also that we gave priority to some areas and some cities. We looked after all students. At that stage, in fact, frankly many of our hon. Members and even State Governments approached us and it is natural. A State is worrying about the students of its State. I listened to them very openly. But I gave all of them the same answer. I said, 'I have listened to you, but when I look at the students over there, those students do not tell me they are from one particular State, the students are behaving like they are all Indians, they are showing a unity, they are showing a collective ability, please do not disrupt us'.

Sir, in fact, we were also under pressure to run flights to different cities. We were asked 'Can you bring them to a particular State?' If we did this, it would have disrupted the sense of togetherness which the students were showing out there. So, we took a decision that flights would come only to Delhi and Mumbai. But I would compliment every State Government. Every State Government made excellent arrangements, everyone of them worked with us so that the movement of students from airport to their homes was very smooth, and I would like to use this opportunity, Sir, to convey my appreciation of that.

Sir, Manish Tewariji made two observations which I would like to respond to. One was, I said that friends have to be spoken to honestly. These may not have been his exact words, but, I think, this was his sentiment. I can assure him, Sir, through you, all our conversations with everybody on this matter has been very candid, has been very direct, and the positions that I state in the House have been communicated with as much directness to all our partners. So, nobody has any doubt where we stand on this matter.

There is just one minor issue which I wanted to clarify to him, because he referred to an exchange I had with the British counterpart. She was very careful. She, actually, told me, 'We recognise your sovereign right to take decisions'. The provocative question which was asked was asked by a member of the Press. It was not done by another Foreign Minister whether we are buying huge amounts of oil or not. I have clarified to Brijendra Singhji about the impact of the Prime Minister's conversation.

I want to tell Dr. Sumathy that the view that no assistance was given to students is not right. Students took trains, students took buses. I accept, many students worked among themselves, many worked with their student contractor. But we were guiding every student contractor.

In fact, another Member said, 'What were you doing? You were only issuing advisories. Let me tell you, at that moment, it was our advisories which told people what to do, saying the border is clear, this is where you should go etc. For example, Dr. Sumathy referred to a situation

where we told students to walk. We told students to walk because on that day, Sir, there was heavy firing on Kharkiv. There were hundreds of students who had gathered at the railway station. We were really worried for them. We created a safe zone; the safe zone was 12 kilometres, and we wanted the students to understand, 'It is absolutely important, you move there'.

So, that is the reason why we said this. Again, I applaud what the students have done, and the courage and the endurance that they have shown. I think, we should all appreciate that.

Supriya-ji asked: 'Did you speak to universities? If the universities did not advise properly, did you take it up?' Yes, we did. We were very frustrated with some of the universities, I would also say that. But it is because we would keep talking that eventually, at least, the initial 4,000 actually left.

There was one issue which Shrikant Shinde-ji raised a question about whether other people moved earlier than us. I would say, as regards evacuation, we were the first. If individual citizens left, yes, many of them did. As I said, many of them left as part of a larger political plan that the particular countries set. But the bulk of the students were there. They were not only from our country. We saw students from Egypt, from Morocco, from Algeria, from our own neighbours Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan. So, the bulk of the students were there. I think as Gen. V.K. Singh explained yesterday, the psychology of the people was: "No, no, no. This will pass. Let us talk to our friends." Friends are saying: "मैं नहीं जा रहा तो आप क्यों जा रहे हों?" So, that was really what the situation was. I think, we should really show understanding.

Let me, Sir, finally conclude with one common issue which all Members raised, which is 'worry about the world order'. What is this conflict? What does this mean? There is the relationship between countries. How is this moving?

I want to say this, yes, the world order is changing. The world order has been changing for many years. That is why G-7 became G-20. The world order changed because of COVID-19.

Countries saw what happens when there is too much concentration of economic production in one geography, when there is not enough resilience and reliability in supply chains. The world order is changing because countries today worry about trust and transparency, they are worried where is the data, which technology should they trust. The world order is changing because the Afghanistan-like situation happened. So, we are left with a problem close to our homes, which we are worrying about more than the countries which were there earlier. Now, the world order will change partly because of the consequences of this. But what is the solution to it? To my mind the solution is, we have to be stronger; we have to reduce our dependency on the external world. It can never be total. But the way to deal with the new world order is really 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'.

and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' is not just an economic policy, 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' is a Bharat which looks after its people, a Bharat which is capable of running 'Operation Ganga'.

Thank you, Sir.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY (KOLKATA UTTAR): Hon. Minister, Sir, I raised an issue, and it is involving the Prime Minister of the country. I was carrying a letter of a Chief Minister of a State. She placed some proposals for 350 odd students from West Bengal, the State to which I belong. What would be their future? So, she placed some proposals saying, 'I will absorb these students in my own State.' As an outcome, ... * I am repeatedly mentioning these words. And, it was a long discussion, not a one-minute or two-minute discussion. But what would be the fate of these students, I want to know.

You are saying they would be sent to the adjacent countries like Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania. So, these are the places. We want more specific replies on what would be the fate of these students. You are saying that Ukraine agreed. But what is the existence of the Ukrainian Government now? Are they under the control of the Soviet Russia/Russian Federation or are they standing on their own feet? That is still uncertain. It is not clear from your observations made in your speech.

Let the House and the student community be assured that when and how these students are going to be replaced in different parts of the world, either it is in the Eastern European side or it is particularly, Hungary in a time-bound manner. What would be the time limit?

श्री अधीर रंजन चौधरी : सर, कल हम लोगों ने चार मंत्रियों का भाषण सुना। आज हमारे जयशंकर जी ने उन्हीं की बात को दोहरा रहे थे। हम आपसे एक नई बात जानना चाहते हैं। आप जानते हैं कि रूस के खिलाफ बहुत किसम के रेस्ट्रिक्शंस इम्पोज़ हुए हैं। स्विफ्ट सिस्टम से रूस को निकालने की सारी कवायद चल रही है, फिर भी कुछ बैंकों से कारोबार चल रहा है। इस हाल में रूबल और रुपये की ट्रांजेक्शन में क्या असेस होगा? क्या हम लोग स्विफ्ट से बाहर आकर रुपये और रूबल के लिए चिंता कर रहे हैं? I would like to know whether this Government has been approached by other countries to mediate in the war between Ukraine and Russia in order to find out any convenient way so as to solve the issue amicably.

SHRI ARVIND SAWANT (MUMBAI SOUTH): Sir, the future of the students is blinking in an unexpected light. What exactly is happening to the admissions of these students? You are giving some relief. I heartily appreciate the efforts taken by the MEA as well as the Government. But as far as the future of the students is concerned, as there are some suggestions about that, the students still have apprehensions about it. It is because the parents are meeting us and asking about the future of their children. The internship is of six years. You said that KROK-2 will begin, that is fine. But, what about the other students? What measures are we taking about that? I would like to have a specific answer about it.

DR. SUBRAHMANYAM JAISHANKAR: Sir, broadly, there are two concerns, one is on the future of the students. I completely understand that this is something which all hon. Members will worry about. I think, this is something which is between the Ministry of Education and other organisations dealing with medical education. They are seized of the matter. I only wanted to update the Members because, specifically, Sudip Bandyopadhyay ji, yesterday mentioned his conversation with the Prime Minister and Hungary.

I wanted to point that in addition to Hungary – again, Hungary was the first one to offer an offer offered most generously – there were other offers as well which we are exploring. All our embassies are at work and, obviously, our effort will be to see that our students are assisted as much as possible.

Regarding Adhir Ranjan ji's interest on the payment mechanism, I want to assure him that our effort today is to stabilise economic transactions between India and Russia because it is very important for us. Russia is a very important partner in a variety of areas. I think, all hon. Members understand that. So, at the moment, there is an Inter-Ministerial Group which is led by the Finance Ministry seeing how the payments issue can be best addressed. There are experiences from the past which are relevant in this regard. But, I think, this is quite honestly an issue where the Finance Minister would, finally, have to take a call.

माननीय अध्यक्ष: माननीय मंत्री जी ने बड़ा विस्तृत जवाब दिया। मैं सोचता हूँ कि जिस प्रकार से भारत सरकार और सभी राज्य सरकारों ने मिल कर इस गंभीर चुनौती का सफलतापूर्वक सामना किया तथा जिस तरीके से उस परिस्थिति में अपने देश के बच्चों को निकाला गया, यह निश्चित रूप से प्रशंसनीय है। मुझे लगता है कि पूरे सदन को इस बात की प्रशंसा करनी चाहिए। भविष्य में ऐसे मुद्दों पर सारा सदन एक साथ मिलकर देश हित में काम करेगा, ऐसी मेरी भावना है।

सभा की कार्यवाही दो बजकर तीस मिनट तक के लिए स्थगित की जाती है।

13.29 hrs

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Thirty Minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled at Thirty Five Minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

(Dr. (Prof.) Kirit Premjibhai Solanki *in the Chair*)

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

माननीय सभापति : नियम 377 के अधीन मामले।

श्री गणेश सिंह जी।