

Title: Regarding delay in filling up the vacant posts in the High Courts throughout the country with special reference to Calcutta High Court.

MR. SPEAKER: I called Shri Somnath Chatterjee to make his submission.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is a very serious problem which has arisen because of the large number of vacancies that are there in different High Courts. Since yesterday, the entire Bar of the Calcutta High Court is on strike. There are 20 vacancies out of 50; some of them are vacant for years. The High Court is not functioning. We do not know why the appointments are held up. Let the hon. Chief Justice of India appoint whosoever he decides fit. The Government should take steps in this matter. I do not know what is being done.

On the other hand, I fear that there will be further delay because of the ongoing controversy, which is there. It is essential – when over 3,00,000 cases are pending in the High Court – that there should be no vacancy; but steps are not being taken. So, I appeal to the Government and also to the Chief Justice of India to take steps so that appointments are made as soon as possible. I am sure that there will be no dearth of people who will be found fit.

*Not Recorded.

Sir, this is creating a serious problem, which is affecting the general public. Therefore, through this House, I appeal to all concerned to take appropriate action soon.

It is one of the cases where the Government should respond!

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: If I do not respond, he objects; if I respond, still he objects. His basic job is to object.

Sir, I totally appreciate the problem of vacancies, not only in the Calcutta High Court, but also in different High Courts.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : I said that it is there in different High Courts.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: I will definitely take up this issue with the hon. Prime Minister and the Law Minister and see that vacancies are filled up as early as possible. I do not think that this is a controversial issue. This is a non-controversial issue. But Shri Somnath Chatterjee cannot stop himself from creating at least a small controversy. He talked about 'ongoing battle'. The ongoing battle has nothing to do with that because the battle is between you and me. It has nothing to do with the Law Minister and the Chief Justice. There is no battle between the Chief Justice and the Law Minister.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, are you taking only the non-controversial issues to the hon. Prime Minister?

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Sir, I assure that I will take it up with the proper authority and see that it happens as early as possible. At the same time, I would say that the advocates should try their level best to see that they do not go on strike because instead of solving the problem, it creates more problems. I would request Shri Somnath Chatterjee to use his good offices to stop them from going on strike.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : I generally do not support that. But the Secretary of the Bar Association is from the Trinamool Congress. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY (CALCUTTA NORTH WEST): Sir, I fully agree with the fact that the lawyers' strike is going on. The Secretary of the Bar Association certainly belongs to the Trinamool Congress. But the problem is this, that the Judicial Minister of the State Government should also perform some role in this matter. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Kindly do not make it a controversial one. You are trying to do it again.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY : He never bothers to meet the Prime Minister, nor the Chief Minister has written any letter to the Prime Minister. ...(Interruptions) I expect that they should also make some efforts in this matter. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Sir, he is not denying that the Secretary is from the Trinamool Congress. Now, he is mentioning about the Law Minister and the Chief Minister of that State.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Sudip Bandyopadhyay, this is not proper.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY : Sir, I want to clarify what is not proper. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Kindly do not make it a controversial issue.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY : There is no controversy. The Judicial Minister should write to the Government of India. That is my submission. ...(Interruptions)

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