

Title: Observation regarding circulation of copies of statements by Ministers.

16.46 hrs.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Hon. Members, today when Shri Jaswant Singh, hon. Minister of External Affairs stood up to make the statement regarding his recent visit to Nepal, hon. Member Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi and some other hon. Members demanded that copies of the statement should have been circulated to the Members in advance. Thereupon I had observed that copies of the statement would be circulated after it was made by the hon. Minister. Sarvashri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi, Madhavrao Scindia and Shivraj V. Patil submitted that as per the convention, copies of the statement should have been circulated in advance.

I have since gone through the past practice and procedure in this regard. Copies of the statement received from the Ministry are treated confidential till the statement is actually made in the House. The hon. Minister may also alter the text of the statement before it is actually made in the House. Further, in the Lok Sabha, no clarificatory questions are allowed on the statement of the Minister.

Therefore, copies of the statement proposed to be made by the Ministers are not circulated to Members in advance. They are supplied later to the Members through the Publication Counter. This has been a well-established convention of the House.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL (CHANDIGARH): Sir, they always do like this.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: This position is now made clear.