

PERSONAL EXPLANATION UNDER RULE 357

Title: Personal Explanation made by Shri George Fernandes regarding certain remarks made against him by Sarvashri Raghunath Jha, Devendra Prasad and others in Lok Sabha on 6th and 7th July, 2004.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES (MUZAFFARPUR): Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to give a personal explanation under Rule 357.

On 6th July, 2004, some hon. Members of this House made an allegation that I have "links" with the key accused in the stamp paper scam, Abdul Karim Telgi and Anil Ghote. A photograph was exhibited to justify this allegation.

Sir, let me, at the outset, say that there is no substance whatsoever in this accusation. Since the accusation is born out of the photographs taken on the occasion of a public function in Dhule, Maharashtra, let me put the facts before you and the House.

Sometime in June, 1999, I received an invitation from Shri Anil Ghote, the then MLA, Maharashtra, on behalf of the Organizing Committee, set up to build a memorial for Param Vir Chakra Vijeta, Shri Abdul Hamid, to unveil the statue of this great hero of the Indian Army who laid down his life in the war against Pakistan in 1965. It was at a time when the Kargil War was on. I had accepted the invitation and said that when hostilities in Kargil ended, I would come for the function.

Towards the end of June, my Cabinet colleague, Shri Ram Jethmalani, got in touch with me and insisted that I spare some time in early July. I was also told that Shri Narayan Rane, the then Chief Minister of Maharashtra and Shri Gopinath Munde, the then Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra, would also be present for this function.

I left Delhi on July 2, 1999 at 7.00 p.m. and reached Mumbai at 8.55 p.m. by an Indian Airlines flight and stayed in the night at the airport rest room. On 3rd July, along with Shri Narayan Rane, Shri Gopinath Munde and Shri Ram Jethmalani, I left by Maharashtra State Government aircraft at 9.00 a.m. and reached Dhule at 11.00 a.m. The function to inaugurate the Memorial of Param Vir Chakra Vijeta, Abdul Hamid, was held between 11.30 a.m. and 1.30 p.m. at Dhule. After the function was over, we – myself, Shri Narayan Rane, Shri Gopinath Munde and Shri Ram Jethmalani – left Dhule at 3.30 p.m. in the Maharashtra State Government aircraft and reached Mumbai at 5.30 p.m. I left for Delhi by an Indian Airlines flight at 8.00 p.m. the same day.

I had no clue about the people who were on the dais at the function, except Mr. and Mrs. Ghote. If a photograph shows Abdul Karim Telgi on the dais, a person whom I have never met in my life, to call this as "links" is, to say the least, unjust. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Some comments were made on the floor of the House about an hon. Member. He is entitled to give his personal explanation. I have allowed him. Shri George Fernandes, please go on.

Nothing else will be recorded except Shri George Fernandes' statement.

*(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, please take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing else will be recorded except Shri George Fernandes' statement.

*(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has the right to give a personal explanation. I have allowed him. You cannot stop him.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, this is not fair.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri George Fernandes, please go on.

...(Interruptions)

* Not Recorded.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : I had known Shri Ghote since the time he and Shri Sharad Joshi had joined together and had launched "Shetkari Sangathan" which fought for the rights of the farmers of the country, through innumerable struggles, for which they were beaten and jailed on several occasions. As a trade unionist, I often participated in their movement. ...(Interruptions) When the Shetkari Sangathan collapsed, I lost touch with both of them. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, please keep quiet.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Some time in October 2002, Shri Anil Ghote, the then MLA, Maharashtra, invited me along with Shri Nitish Kumar and Shri Ram Jethmalani, to unveil the statue of Pandurang Suryavanshi, a martyr of Kargil War from Dhule and the statues of Dr. Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar and Lord Buddha, and to attend a public meeting. On October 26, 2002, Shri Nitish Kumar and I left Delhi by a Jet Airways flight at 2.00 p.m. reaching Mumbai at 3.55 p.m. Shri Ram Jethmalani, who had also been invited for this function, joined us at Mumbai and all three of us left Mumbai at 4.05 p.m. by an IAF helicopter reaching Dhule at 5.40 p.m. The function to unveil the statues and the public meeting thereafter was held between 6.00 p.m. and 8.00 p.m. Immediately after the completion of these engagements, Shri Nitish Kumar left the same night by a train for Ahmedabad to attend to his other commitments. Shri Ram Jethmalani left for Pune. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I have said that nothing else will be recorded except the hon. Member's explanation.

(Interruptions) *

* Not Recorded.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : I left for Nasik the same night where, on the following day, a Sunday, I addressed the 14th National Congress for Defence Studies at the Bhonsala Military College in Nasik at 10.30 a.m. and, thereafter, at 2.00 p.m. delivered the Madhavrao Limaye Memorial Lecture.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have nothing more to say except to express my gratitude to you having provided me with an opportunity to make clarifications on the issue raised by some hon. Members of this House. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is allowed on this.

...(Interruptions)

प्रो. विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा (दक्षिण दिल्ली): इनको माफी मांगनी चाहिए, जिन्होंने इस तरह से एलीगेशन लगाए हैं। â€œ (व्यवधान)

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seats.

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (SOUTH DELHI): They should all apologise....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seats. I am now giving a ruling on a matter.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seats. You cannot disturb me. I want to give a ruling on a very important issue. Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, you cannot disturb the hon. Speaker. I am giving a ruling on an important matter. Please take your seats. I will not allow you.

...(Interruptions)

श्री देवेन्द्र प्रसाद यादव (अंझारपुर) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, सबसे पहले नियम 357 के तहत मैंने यह सवाल उठाया था।â€œ (व्यवधान)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Yadav, you are then interrupting the Speaker. I will not permit this.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I am giving a ruling on a very important issue. Please take your seats.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Malhotra, I am asking him to sit down. Why are you complicating it? I am trying to protect you. You are complicating it.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I am going to give a ruling on an important issue. Shri Yadav, you are a senior Member. You are a responsible Member. Please do not interrupt the Chair.

...(Interruptions)

श्री देवेन्द्र प्रसाद यादव : हम आपसे सिर्फ एक निवेदन करना चाहते हैं। â€ (व्यवधान)

प्रो. विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा : हमें भी निवेदन करना है।â€ (व्यवधान)

श्री देवेन्द्र प्रसाद यादव : आपको निवेदन करने से कौन मना कर रहा है। अध्यक्ष महोदय, आप हमें बोलने की परमीशन दें।

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I am giving my ruling on a very important matter. Please take your seats.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It is clear that you are defying the Chair deliberately. Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: All of you must sit down now. I will not allow you. I am on my legs.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing can be shown. I will not allow this. Please sit down. I am on my legs. Do not force me to take unpleasant action. Do not do that.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Fernandes, I am trying to control the House.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I want to give a ruling. Please do not compel me to take unpleasant action. I will not tolerate this. You are interfering with the Chair giving a ruling.

* Not Recorded.

श्री देवेन्द्र प्रसाद यादव : मेरा पाइण्ट ऑफ ऑर्डर है।

MR. SPEAKER: There is no point of order. There is no business now. Please sit down. I am not allowing any point of order.

श्री राम कृपाल यादव (पटना) : यह क्या तरीका है?â€ (व्यवधान)

श्री सुशील कुमार मोदी (भागलपुर) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, ये पोस्टर नहीं दिखा सकते।â€ (व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आप बैठिये न।

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It is not allowed. You cannot show that poster here. You must know it. Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: प्लीज आप बैठिये। You are not the Speaker. I am trying to control the House and do not complicate the matter. I am going to give a ruling. You have no patience to hear the Speaker's ruling. Is this the way the House will run? What is everybody saying about us?

...(Interruptions)

श्री राम कृपाल यादव : फिर हम अपनी बात कब कह सकते हैं?

MR. SPEAKER: You can speak at a proper time when you are allowed by the Chair.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: When you are allowed by the Chair, you can speak. This should be understood here.