

Fourteenth Lok Sabha**Session : 7****Date : 20-03-2006****Participants : Chatterjee Shri Somnath, Radhakrishnan Shri Varkala, Mukherjee Shri Pranab**

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Title : Motion regarding report of Committee to Inquire into allegations of improper conduct in the matter of implementation of MPLAD Scheme, for reprimanding and suspension of Members.

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): Sir, I beg to move:

“That this House having taken note of the Report of the Committee to inquire into allegations of improper conduct on the part of some Members in the matter of implementation of MPLAD Scheme, laid on the Table of the House on 14 March, 2006, reprimands Sarvashri Alemao Churchill, Paras Nath Yadav, Faggan Singh Kulaste and Ram Swaroop Koli, MPs and resolves that:

- (a) the period of absence from the sittings of the House and the Committees of the said four Members on a request made by Speaker, Lok Sabha on 20 December, 2005, may be deemed to be their suspension from the membership of the House till date; and
- (b) the suspension of the said four Members from the membership of the House may continue till 22 March, 2006.”

Mr. Speaker Sir, this is really a painful duty which is to be done. Just in the

Winter Session, we had to discharge another painful duty/responsibility by expelling some of our colleagues. When a motion is moved to deal with misdemeanour or misbehaviour of the colleagues belonging to the House, it is always a painful duty. But, nonetheless, over the years, our parliamentary system, and particularly this august House, has developed a tradition. I must call it a good tradition, which may be described as self-correcting process.

Starting from the days of Mudgal episode to the latest events, this can be said that this House and the other House have always stood to rise to the occasion whenever it demanded some intervention to correct certain courses and to project the desired image of this sovereign highest legislative body of the country.

I would like to take this opportunity to place on record our appreciation of the Committee members, headed by our colleague, Shri Kishore Chandra Deo, who were entrusted by you to inquire into the matter. The report is a brief one. It is not a big report, having about 72 paragraphs, having 51 pages and the recommendations are also simple. But the hon. Members of the Committee have gone into the details, examined the observations and the views expressed by the charged Members and came to the conclusion. This conclusion is unanimous.

I would just like to draw the attention of the hon. Members to some general observations which the Committee has placed on record, particularly, paragraph 62.

Paragraph 62 says:

“The Committee feels that every vibrant and functioning democracy requires that those who wield power as legislators should use it for the public good and not make it an instrument of self-seeking. This they

can do effectively by personifying the highest standards of personal integrity, probity and rectitude. ”

Perhaps, none of us would disagree with the observations of the hon. Committee. At the same time, perhaps, everybody will agree with me when I say that till date this is the only institution which promptly takes action whenever an action is called for. Perhaps, this certificate cannot be given to any other institutions which are equally vital for the smooth functioning of the democratic system which we have established.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would not like to lengthen my observations. As I started my observations by pointing out that this is a painful responsibility which is to be discharged, but at the same time, it is to be done. Therefore, I recommend to the hon. Members of the House to accept the motion which I have moved and where we have suggested that the Members be suspended. Their period of suspension should cover the entire period from the date from which on your advice the hon. Members abstained themselves from attending the Sessions of the House till the remaining part of the current Session.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, Sir, two other important recommendations have been made by the hon. Committee. I would also like to suggest that these should be examined. Both the recommendations are to the Government. The first is that, while dealing with the subject they pointed out and they came to the conclusion in the course of the examination that there are certain lacunae in the Guidelines of the MPLADS. Therefore, they have suggested to the Government that – and Parliament can also put its contribution because there is a Parliamentary Supervisory Committee to look into the functioning of the MPLADS – those lacunae should be removed and Guidelines should be revised.

Another important recommendation which the Committee has made in Paragraph 72 is this. I quote that recommendation.

“The Committee recommends that the Union Government may initiate steps for laying guidelines and norms for sting operations. ”

This is also important. When I suggest that these recommendations should be examined, I do not mean that any effort should be made to gag the freedom of Press. That is not the intention. That is the Constitutional right guaranteed under Article 19 under ‘Fundamental Rights’ chapter of the Constitution. Therefore, nobody is suggesting it, but at the same time there should be some responsibility, some sense of self-imposed discipline on those who are doing these things so that there is a balance.

With these words, I would urge the House to accept my motion. As I understand, it was discussed in the meeting of the Leaders. There would not be much debate over it. If the House accepts it unanimously, it would be appreciated.

श्री संतो गंगवार (बरेली) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं नेता सदन के प्रस्ताव से सहमत हूँ। चूँकि यह रिपोर्ट सर्वसम्मति से आयी है, इस पर यदि आवश्यक हो तो हम अगले सत्र में चर्चा कर लेंगे, इसलिए इस समय मैं समझता हूँ कि इस पर कोई ज्यादा चर्चा न हो।... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Radhakrishnan, your motion is not in order.

... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (CHIRAYINKIL): You have the right to disallow my motion, but I can have a submission.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Radhakrishnan, you have all the rights subject to the permission of the Chair. What is your point?

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: My point is*

MR. SPEAKER: We need not take into account of what happens in the other House.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : *...

MR. SPEAKER: Let him stop. I will delete it.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Sir, I also understand that even after their suspension by you, they are signing the Attendance Register. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: It has been agreed that there would be no discussion on this motion.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : They are still signing the Attendance Register. How could it be? ... (*Interruptions*) Some of them are still signing the Attendance Register. Sir, you have suspended them and you have asked them not to be present. They are coming here and putting their signature. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Those signatures will be treated as *non-est*.

*Not Recorded

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Sir, they do not deserve a lenient punishment because of the fact that they come here and put their signature, and go away. It is the violation of your Order, Sir. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Let me look after myself.

... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the hon. Chairman and hon. Members of the Committee for the very hard work that they put in and very comprehensive and unanimous Report. That shows how these matters are looked into above the party lines and not from any partisan point of view. This is only for maintaining

the traditions and the glory of this great institution which has been given a pioneer role, the most important role under our Constitution.

Now I am confident that we shall not have any such painful experience in future and all of us will meet with the expectations of the people in the discharge of our obligations. My dream is, and all of you share that dream, that the people will feel proud of us.

It is our great honour that they have sent us here to look after the problems of this country, to secure the development of this country, to remove the problems of the country and to solve them, and they are looking up to us.

There are many national issues. There may be differences of opinion but ultimately we shall all work together in a manner that will earn at least the support and the confidence of the people. Let us remember that and I am sure that the hopes and the expectations that have been expressed by the hon. Leader of the House will be met, and I endorse them. They are shared by all sections of the House. That shows that we take these matters with the importance that they deserve.

Let us now put the motion to vote of the House.

The question is:

“That this House having taken note of the Report of the Committee to inquire into allegations of improper conduct on the part of some Members in the matter of implementation of MPLAD Scheme, laid on the Table of the House on 14 March, 2006, reprimands Sarvashri Alemao Churchill, Paras Nath Yadav, Faggan Singh Kulaste and Ram Swaroop Koli, MPs and resolves that:

- (c) the period of absence from the sittings of the House and the Committees of the said four Members on a request made by Speaker, Lok Sabha on 20 December, 2005, may be deemed to be their suspension from the membership of the House till date; and
- (d) the suspension of the said four Members from the membership of the House may continue till 22 March, 2006.”

The motion was adopted.

MR. SPEAKER: I am very thankful to all the hon. Members for their co-operation. The dignity with which this matter has been dealt with shows that it is not out of any vindictiveness but just to discharge our duties in a proper manner.
