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Title: Need to review the appointment of the Chairman of the Indian Council for Historical Research (ICHR).

PROF. SAUGATA ROY (DUM DUM): Sir, with your permission I want to raise a matter regarding the Indian Council for Historical Research or ICHR.

The ICHR is the premier organization in the country guiding and funding historical research in the country and is under the Union Ministry of Human Resources Development. It has its office at 35, Foroz Shah Road in Delhi. Now, the appointment of...* a former professor in the Kakatiya University in Telangana area, as the Chairman of the Indian Council for Historical Research has created a controversy in the academic circles and has re-ignited the saffronization debate among the academics.

Eminent historian, premier historian of ancient India, Dr. Romila Thapar has recently written an article questioning the academic credentials of the newly appointed Chairman. Few people in the history circles have heard of ...* His appointment was done quietly on the sly in the week when the HRD Ministry was busy with the standoff between the University Grants Commission and the Delhi University on the four-year undergraduate programme.

..* has said that he does not belong to the RSS but he shares the RSS view in maintaining that Indian intellectual and spiritual achievements have no parallel...(Interruptions)

योगी आदित्यनाथ (गोरखपुर): सर, ज़ीरो ऑवर में कोई पढ़कर नहीं बोल सकता...(व्यवधान)

यह ठीक नहीं है...(व्यवधान)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Prof. Saugata Roy, please listen to me.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY : What is wrong?â€ (Interruptions)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: I am handling the matter. Please take your seats.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY : You please tell me what is wrong in what I am saying.

...(Interruptions)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please take your seat.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY : It is now 'Zero Hour' which has been approved by the Speaker. It is a small statement I am reading.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: You cannot mention the name of a person who is not in the House. Why are you bringing his name? He is not here. You cannot bring his name.

...(Interruptions)

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: Please listen to me. I am not making allegation or attributing or denouncing anybody. I am just saying that there is a controversy over his appointment.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Do not mention his name. The name that you have mentioned cannot go on record. That is what I am telling you.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: The House should permit this much of freedom of speech. Article 105 is there. So, are you asking me to expunge the professor's name?

HON. CHAIRPERSON: I have already expunged the name.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY : All right, no problem.

This new Chairman has said that he does not belong to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh but he shares the view of the RSS in maintaining that Indian intellectual and spiritual achievements have no parallel. His eagerness is to fix a date for the Mahabharata. No historicity is there. He wants to say that the Mahabharata was written in a particular time. That effort has also been questioned by historians. The new Chairman has a view on the caste system. He supports the caste system. ...(Interruptions) Please listen to me.

I can understand the ruckus raised by the RSS supporters but please listen that there should be some academic freedom in this country and we cannot subject our education and research system to saffronization. We cannot subject it to a particular philosophy. ...(Interruptions)

HON. CHAIRPERSON : Shri Chhedi Paswan.

...(Interruptions)

PROF. SAUGATA ROY : Sir, please let me complete it. ...(Interruptions) I am reading a statement, which is approved by the Speaker. I am carrying this. ...(Interruptions)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: You have already read it.

...(Interruptions)

PROF. SAUGATA ROY : Let me complete it. ...(Interruptions) Sir, his articles have not been subjected to any peer review, nor have they been published in any reputed historical journal. ...(Interruptions) Because of this controversy, I would urge the Government to reconsider the

appointment of the present Chairman, who will tend to saffronize education and historical research.