

Agreement with USA for refuelling their aircrafts in India

*67. SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR:†

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India had entered into any Agreement with the U.S.A. regarding the grant of refuelling facilities for U.S. civil and military aircraft in India;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) whether the agreement was reviewed after the out-break of war in the gulf?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: The answer is extremely general and very vague in reply to this question. This House was misled by no less a person than the Prime Minister...

DR. RATNAKAR PANDEY: V. P. Singh.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: ... and, therefore, I asked a specific question whether in the past such refuelling was permitted; if so, by whom and when. That is the real point. If you are saying V. P. Singh, you should have said it here very categorically. But you are not categorical. Therefore, I say put the whole record... (Interruption) We are not blind followers of anybody. Therefore, it is for you to put the whole record here and make it very clear. My question is: Who permitted it and when was it permitted?

DR. RATNAKAR PANDEY: V. P. Singh.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: You are not the Prime Minister. The Prime

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Jagdish Prasad Mathur.

Minister is sitting here. Let him answer that question. This is a very serious matter and it has affected us very adversely. If you say V. P. Singh had permitted it, let his name come here so that we will consider it. V. P. Singh has categorically denied that he recommended the refuelling. (interruptions)

डॉ० रत्नाकर पाण्डेय : बी० पी० सिंह ... (व्यवधान) ... बोलते हैं। इस मामले में भी ... (व्यवधान) ... बोल रहे हैं, वे जो कहते हैं, उसके विपरीत काम करते हैं।

श्री सभापति : अन-पार्लियामेंट शब्द इस्तेमाल में कीजिए।

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: V. P. Singh has denied it. So let the Prime Minister say so; let him produce the record here. My question is: Are you prepared to put down the record here as to who permitted it and that air corridor and transit facility also includes refuelling? That also should be very specifically stated here. Who permitted it in the past? When was it permitted? These are my specific questions. Please answer them categorically.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR): The honourable Member is confusing two things. When I said that there is a normal international practice that whenever a nation allows its air-space to be used by another nation's air force, there is a rule all over the world that transit landing is essential and whenever there is a transit landing, there is a refuelling facility involved in it. It has nothing to do with giving permission, because, if you allow a plane to land, you also automatically allow it to refuel. About his question, as to who ordered it in the past, I said, Mr. Chairman—and I repent it today that whenever the refuelling facilities or any facilities were given, they were given by the Government of India and not by individuals. I shall not like to go into the past... (Interruptions)... Please hear me... (Interruptions)...

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Why should you not go into the past?... (Interruptions)...

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, that is not the question... *(Interruptions)*... I ordered the refuelling and I am not going into the past. That is what I said and that is what I say... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: I am asking about the past... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: I am not going to speak about the past... *(Interruptions)*... because past things are not to be repeated in this House. It is neither to the credit of this country, nor to the practice and tradition of the House. I shall not like to indulge in this type of gimmickry. I am not going to say who did it. I only say, Mr. Chairman, to the hon. Member that the answer would not be very pleasant to him. So I do not want to... *(Interruptions)*... say... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: I am prepared to hear unpleasant words... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: I have a point of order... *(Interruptions)*... Please permit me... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI M. M. JACOB: I am objecting to the point of order. There is no point of order during Question Hour... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: All right, no point of order. You can treat it as a supplementary. I want to ask a question. The Prime Minister said that it will not be pleasant... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: Sir, my name is also there and I should be called first... *(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Wait a minute... *(Interruptions)*... I have asked Mr. Chimanbhai Mehta. If everybody jumps up, what can I do?... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: Sir, I am concerned with a very small question... *(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gurupadaswamy, you are a senior Member. Please

sit down... *(Interruptions)*... Mr. Mehta, are your supplementaries over?... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: My supplementaries are there... *(Interruptions)*... My specific question that was there in the main question was whether he was prepared to put the record here. He said, it is unpleasant for me. I tell him, I promise him, it is not unpleasant for me. It is unpleasant for me. I tell him, I promise you have been misleading the nation and this House on this question. That is my question that has to be answered... *(Interruptions)*... Why is he not putting the record here? That is the only point... *(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is all right. . *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Sir, my supplementaries still remain... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: Sir, may I answer? The hon. Member is excited over a thing which does not exist. As I told you, there is no record and there is no agreement. An impression has been created in this House—I do not know on what basis—that there has been some agreement and some signature or some record is there... *(Interruptions)*... I say that it is according to the normal traditions and norms in respect of international flights. But a decision has been taken in the past and it has not been taken in the present. I shall not say who took the decision. I said that the decision was taken by the Government of India. It is the Government of India which took the decision and it is not a person who took that decision... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: No, no, Sir... *(Interruptions)*... My supplementary has not been answered... *(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. Your supplementary has been answered. You put your second supplementary... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Sir, my supplementary has not been answered... *(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: No; it has been answered... (Interruptions)...

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Please allow me, Sir... (Interruptions)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. Now, Shrimati Mira Das... (Interruptions)...

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Please allow me, Sir... (Interruptions)...

SHR M. M. JACOB: Your question has been answered. We also want to put questions... (Interruptions)...

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: Your question has been answered. We also want to ask questions... (Interruptions)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Mrs. Mira Das.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): Sir, you have given your ruling... (Interruptions)... Sir, you have given your ruling and you have already said that it has been answered and that it is over now and he has to accept it... (Interruptions)... Mr. Mehta, he has already given his ruling and you have to accept it only... (Interruptions)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Shrimati Mira Das.

SHRIMATI MIRA DAS: Sir, there is no doubt that on the issue of refuelling of the American aircraft, the Government is totally isolated from the public opinion and there is not a single party or a single section of the Press which has has supported this act of the Government because it was so blatantly and crudely done against our policy of non-alignment, peace and against war. So, I would like to know from the honourable Prime Minister as to when this was started. Secondly, I would also like to know whether it is a fact that the American war agents are sitting in the Delhi hotels and guiding the Government... (Interruptions)...

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the honourable Member has asked a question and they are insisting on it. In the present context, the refuelling started in October, 1990, if she remembers the date. She can check up. Many times it was done.

It was started in October, 1990... (Interruptions)... Please hear me. (Interruptions)... Before that, a free corridor was given. It is against all norms of international practices. This was also done at the same time. If you want to know more details... (Interruptions)... I am not free to give those details... (Interruptions)...

SHRIMATI MIRA DAS: Sir, we are not satisfied... (Interruptions)... Sir, I am not satisfied with the reply by the Prime Minister... (Interruptions)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: I cannot ask him to convince you... (Interruptions)... Yes, Mr. Mathur... (Interruptions)...

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : श्रीमान्, प्रधान मंत्री महोदय ने आज भी और बार-बार यह कहा है कि प्रैक्टिस थी, कोई एग्रीमेंट नहीं था। ... (व्यवधान) उन्होंने अभी यह कहा है कि प्रैक्टिस अक्टूबर, 1990 में शुरू हुई। दोनों बातें कंटाइकटरी हैं। उनका यह कहना है कि न यह प्रैक्टिस थी और उनका यह कहना है कि अक्टूबर, 1990 में शुरू हुआ, दोनों का मेल नहीं है।

श्री चंद्रशेखर : हमने कहा कि इन द प्रेजेंट कंटेक्ट अक्टूबर में शुरू हुई है यह कहा है।

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : कंटेक्ट एक ही है। मैं फिर यह पूछना चाहता हूँ कि यह प्रैक्टिस को दोबारा रिव्यू करने के लिए प्रधान मंत्री ने पग कब उठाए जब युद्ध शुरू हो गया। क्या यह पच है कि उन्होंने प्रेसिडेंट बुश अथवा अन्य किसी उच्च अधिकारी से फोन पर बात-चीत की और उन्होंने विरोधी दल के नेताओं को भेटिंग में इसकी जानकारी पहले ही दे दी थी कि अमरीका बंद करना चाहता है या नहीं?

श्री चंद्रशेखर : सभापति महोदय, मैं आपसे यह जानकारी जरूर देना चाहता हूँ कि कब, कोई तारीख तो नहीं निश्चित है लेकिन मैंने विरोधी दल के नेताओं से बात की थी और मने यह भी कहा था उन। कि उनकी इच्छा के अनुसार रफ़ूजिंग बंद कर दी जाएगी। समझ कब-कब सनेगा

किससे क्या बात हुई और विरोधी दल के नेताओं से मैं क्या-क्या बात की थी उसका जिक्र मैं नहीं करना चाहता :

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : उसके बाद भी शोर मचता रहा । आपके कहने के बाद भी ...

श्री चन्द्रशेखर : शोर तो अब भी मच रहा है, तो क्या किया जाए ?

अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं आपको बताऊँ कि शोर तो आज भी मच रहा है, तो उसके लिए हम क्या करें ?

श्री सभापति : माथुर जी, आपने दूसरा सवाल तो नहीं पूछा ?

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : अच्छा मेरे साथी को पूछने दिया जाए ।

श्री प्रमोद महाजन : सभापति जी, मेरे प्रश्न के बारे में सरकार ने यह कहा है कि ईंधन भरने के संबंध में भारत और अमेरिका में कोई समझौता नहीं है । अभी यहाँ कहा गया कि अंतर्राष्ट्रीय परंपरा के अनुसार जब विमान उतरता है, तो ईंधन देना ही पड़ता है और यह बात समझ में भी आती है कि विमान उतरने के बाद ईंधन न दें, तो वहीं रह जाएगा और किन्तु विमान हम मुंबई हवाई अड्डे पर रख सकते हैं । लेकिन इसमें विमान जो उतरता है, उतरने की अनुमति, उतरने के बाद ईंधन भरना तो समझ में आता है, कोई बीज उतर जाए तो । लेकिन यह विमान जो उतरता है, इस प्रकार के खाड़ी युद्ध हो जाने के बाद, लड़ाकू विमान उतरने की अनुमति यह कौन सी इंटरनेशनल परंपरा है कि इस प्रकार की अनुमति देना सरकार के लिए बंधनकारक है और यह किस परंपरा का पालन हो रहा है ?

और क्या कम से कम युद्ध होने के बाद-क्योंकि अभी बताया गया कि अक्टूबर में यह युद्ध शुरू हुआ था, लेकिन क्या युद्ध शुरू होने के बाद इस पर कोई पुनर्विचार हुआ था ?

श्री चन्द्रशेखर : मैंने पहले भी कहा था कि लड़ाकू विमान उतरने की इजाजत नहीं दी गई थी । ट्रांसपोर्ट प्लेन में और लड़ाकू विमान में अंतर होता है । ट्रांसपोर्ट प्लेन को उतरने की इजाजत दी गई थी और घायलों को वापिस ले जाने के लिए इजाजत दी गई थी । यह परंपरा भी उतनी ही सतत् है या चिरंतन है जितनी दूसरी परंपरा है ।

जहाँ तक किसी विमान के उतरने का सवाल है, हर विमान जो बाहरी देश का उतरता है, उसको उतरने के लिए अलग-अलग इजाजत दी जाती है और उसके लिए कोई सरकार के पास नहीं जाना पड़ता है । एक बार कोई वहाँ का अधिकारी उसको इजाजत देता है ।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shrimati Jayanthi Natarajan.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: My question has already been asked. (Interruptions) I only wanted to know whether Prime Minister V. P. Singh did it. (Interruptions)

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: She is starting a new theory, who has done it? This is more important! (Interruptions)

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Sir, the hon. Prime Minister said that there are no written orders on the file in regard to this refuelling. But how could you say that there is a blanket permission given? What does he mean by blanket permission when there is no writing on the file? As far as I know, these instructions or permissions are conveyed by the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister orally. This is the practice which I have heard. If you have got anything, documentary evidence, you should produce and say that on such and such date there was a written order. But, on the one side, he said there is no written order, on the other he said that there is blanket permission. What does he mean by blanket permission?

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, again the seems to be

some confusion. I said there is no agreement. If the permission is given, there will be some record somewhere. There is nothing without a record or without a file. There must be some endorsement by some officer at that level. It is not always at the level of the Prime Minister or the Prime Minister's Secretariat. What Mrs. Jayanthi Natarajan said I did not say. I said: the Government. I did not say that Mr. V. P. Singh gave the order. You don't get confused about it. Her question is not my answer. (Interruptions). So don't suffer from any guilty conscience. (Interruptions) I have never said that. I said that is the Government of India. At what level it was done I do not want to go into it, nor have I gone into it. I said that this type of agreement is not there. But some record must be there.

डा० अरार अहमद : माननीय सभापति जी, सरकार ने ईंधन देने की सुविधा बंद कर दी, इसके लिए मैं सरकार को धन्यवाद देना चाहता हूँ। लेकिन एक बात के संबंध में विरोधाभास है।

जिस तिथि को ईंधन देना बंद करने का समाचार, समाचार पत्रों में छपा, ठीक उसी दिन उसी समाचार पत्रों में यह भी सूचना थी कि अमेरिका ने ईंधन देने से अब मना कर दिया है।

तो यह दोनों बातें अपने आप में विरोधाभास रखती हैं। पहले अगर हमने ईंधन देना बंद करने के आदेश दे दिए तो, अमेरिका के यह कहने की कोई इम्पोर्टेस नहीं रह जाती कि अब हमें ईंधन नहीं चाहिए। और यदि अमेरिका ने यह पहले कह दिया कि हमें ईंधन नहीं चाहिए तो फिर हमारा ईंधन देने की सुविधा बंद कर देने का कोई मतलब नहीं रह जाता। तो हमारा पहले आदेश ईंधन बंद कहने के निकाले या अमेरिका ने पहले मना कर दिया? और यदि हमने आदेश निकाले तो किस भाषा में निकाले और अमेरिका ने पहले मना किया तो किस भाषा में किया?

श्री सभापति : अंग्रेजी में किया, हिन्दी में किया, वह सब बताइए।

श्री चन्द्रशेखर : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं समझता हूँ कि यह कोई सवाल नहीं है, जिसका मैं जवाब दूँ मैंने कहा कि जब उनका जहाज आया नहीं तो फिर ईंधन किसको दिया जाएगा। जब उनका जहाज नहीं आया तभी हमने ईंधन नहीं दिया और कोई जहाज आ जाए तो उसकी ईंधन नहीं देंगे, यह मैंने नहीं कहा और मैं कहने वाला भी नहीं हूँ।

अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं एक बात बताऊँ जिस समय लड़ाई चल रही थी, 24 देशों के ऊपर से हमारे एयर फोर्स के जहाज उड़ रहे थे। माननीय मनस्य ऐसा मानते हैं कि जैसे किसी को दे दिया तो हमने बड़ा भारी उपकार कर दिया या आत्म-समर्पण कर दिया। लड़ाई के बिना भी हमारी एयर फोर्स के जहाज 12-16 देशों पर लगातार उड़ते रहते हैं और उनको लगातार यह सुविधाएँ दी जाती रहती हैं दूसरे देशों से। हम लोग एक सवाल को, जिसका कोई आधार नहीं है, इतनी बड़ी समस्या बनाकर बैठे हुए हैं।

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN: Sir, the Prime Minister has tried to wriggle out from the mess he has created himself. Sir, it has further exposed him. He has said that in the present context, refuelling started from October, 1990. But I would remind the Prime Minister that war started on 17th January, 1991, in the early morning. Though, according to him the refuelling started in October, even after the practical beginning of the war, why refuelling was not stopped by this Government? Then, Sir, even after the Prime Minister said that he has stopped refuelling there are pictures in the newspapers that refuelling was being done in Sahar airport. I would like to know from the Prime Minister when he ordered to stop refuelling and whether after his order there was any refuelling in Sahar airport or any other airport in the country.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to say that I said

in my speech while having a discussion on this point that when the war started, there was an opinion in this country that we could have stopped it, and the Government did not stop it at that time. That I have....

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN: Why?

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: Because I did not consider it necessary. That is why I say... (*Interruptions*). Let me say first because people are asking so many questions. There is no formal protest excepting a statement from Saddam Hussein's Foreign Office. To this day, there is not a formal protest even from Iraq, excepting a statement issued by their Foreign Officer. Our Members are more concerned... (*Interruption*)... in the process of refuelling. That is the exact position today. Not one country which is supporting Saddam Hussein has registered any protest to the Government of India. But I do not go.... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: The protest has come from Iraqi embassy.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: Mr. Fotedar knows about the Foreign Office more than I know it. So..

SHRI MAKHAN LAL FOTEDAR: The question is not whether Mr. Saddam Hussein has asked or not. The question is whether you are following the nationally accepted policies of the Government. That is the point.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: You neither understand the nationally accepted policies nor do you know what we should follow. (*Interruptions*). This is what I am saying. I have not deviated...

SHRI MAKHAN LAL FOTEDAR: You have deviated.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: I have not deviated. You do whatever you like. I have not deviated from the nationally accepted policy. Mr. Chairman, Sir, there may be a wrong judgement, you can say. But there is no deviation from the nationally accepted policy and there is nothing like a nationally accepted policy about such matters of refuelling or allowing planes to... (*Interruptions*). Mr. Chairman, Sir, I went on emphasising in this House that nationally accepted policies are non-alignment, nationally accepted policies are friendship with Arab countries, nationally accepted policies are that we shall not allow anybody to use our area for war purposes. All these things were taken into consideration. If there is some difference of emphasis, I say that you are totally justified about your criticism of the Government. And I have well taken the criticism of the Government. But there is no deviation of the nationally accepted policy.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Sir, his question has not been answered. When the Prime Minister has ordered the stopping of the refuelling, even after his order, whether refuelling was done. That was his question.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, again I say there was no order. There was a suggestion that now the refuelling will not be possible in this country because of the political opinion. That also I have said in my speech. This is not an order because refuelling was not allowed by an order. So refuelling was not stopped by an order.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN: Now the question here is, he has not ordered stopping refuelling; only the US Government stopped it.

AN HON. MEMBER: What is wrong in it?

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: The wrong is that Washington dictates the policy of India. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: If a man has got dictation from other countries ... (Interruptions).

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Washington will decide whether her war planes will get refuelling from India or it will be decided by the Indian Government?

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: No, the Government of India will decide and the only other force is the people of India and no other force.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 64.

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: I have been waiting here. I thought you would call me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So many persons are waiting.

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: Now, will you permit me or not?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have passed on to Q. No. 64

SHRI RAJ MOHAN GANDHI: May we welcome the safe return of Shri Digvijay Singh.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: The statement is there.

SHRI C. G. SWELL: The statement has been laid on the Table of the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let him read the answer.

श्री चतुरानन मिश्र : आन्सर तो दे दिया गया है हम लोगों को।

श्री समापति : आन्ली क्वेश्चनर को दिया जाता है, बाकी को नहीं।

श्री चतुरानन मिश्र : अग टाईम किलिंग करना है तो मुझको.... (व्यवधान)

श्री समापति : टाईम किलिंग का स्वाल ही नहीं है। इतने पुराने आदमी है आप, थिफ जो क्वेश्चन करता है उसको दिया जाता है। आन्सर आप ने मिल

गया तो क्या दुनिया को मिला गया ?
उनको जवाब देने दीजिये।

Initiatives taken by Government for averting the war in the Gulf

*64. **SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:**†

SHRI SARADA MOHANTY:

Will the Minister of **EXTERNAL AFFAIRS** be pleased to state:

(a) what initiatives were taken by Government at various levels to avert the War in the Gulf; and

(b) what measures are being taken by Government to stop the war and also for a peaceful settlement of the dispute including the issue of Israeli occupied Palestinian territories?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (**SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH**): (a) India took a series of initiatives at bilateral and multilateral levels to avert war in the Gulf. These included Prime Minister's contacts with Heads of States concerned, consultations with a number of countries by the then External Affairs Minister and the Deputy Minister for External Affairs as well as our close participation in peace-making efforts at United Nations Security Council and Nonaligned Movement.

(b) Government are persisting with efforts in the United Nations Security Council and in the Nonaligned forum to bring an end to the Gulf conflict and bring about a peaceful settlement.

Government are also actively pursuing efforts for a just and honourable settlement of the Palestine problem, in keeping with India's consistent and principled position in this regard.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Chaturanan Mishra.