

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER RE HER RECENT VISIT TO SINGAPORE, AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND MALAYSIA

THE PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI) : Madam Deputy Chairman, from 19th May to 1st June I visited Singapore, Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia, in response to invitations from the Heads of the friendly Governments concerned. The cordiality and warmth with which we were received, not only by the Governments but also by the people, reflected the goodwill and friendship which they have for India.

I had visited Malaysia and Singapore before, though not as Prime Minister. But with regard to Australia and New Zealand, it was a voyage of discovery. Although we have known these two countries through our Membership of the Commonwealth and have had good and friendly relations with them, I felt that it was essential for us to have more direct contacts.

The central purpose of my visit was to make personal contact with the distinguished leaders of these countries, and to exchange ideas with them on current international problems and matters of mutual interest. The visit also provided an opportunity to strengthen our bilateral relations and to promote proper understanding of our problems, our policies, our endeavours and our achievements. I think I was also able to correct certain impressions which had been created in recent years because of our economic and other difficulties.

It was not my intention to seek specific agreements or to undertake negotiations on specific matters. However, the officials accompanying me availed of the opportunity to discuss, with their counterparts, matters relating to the furthering of bilateral cooperation in the economic, technical, scientific and cultural fields.

I had invited our Heads of Missions from Indonesia, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore to meet me in Kuala Lumpur for consultations. They gave a first-hand assessment of the situation and the thinking in these countries, on current problems, and of our developing bilateral relations. I am glad to inform the House that our relations with

these and other countries in the region continue to be good and are being further strengthened to our mutual benefit.

There is a large fund of goodwill for India and the recognition that despite her recent difficulties, India is a vigorous and peace-loving democracy. I was informed that Indian cooperation and participation in economic endeavours would be welcome. On our part, I reiterated our own earnest interest as well as desire to cooperate with them. We are already discussing possibilities of increasing our trade and of developing technical cooperation, joint ventures, etc. A Malaysian delegation has already visited us. Other delegations are expected.

As the House is aware, a sizable section of the people of Indian origin abroad live in some of these countries. Over a million are in Malaysia and Singapore. A majority of them have settled down as citizens of the countries of their adoption, and are contributing to the welfare and development of these two countries. I was assured by the leaders of government in both these countries that there is no discrimination against persons of Indian origin. They do have some problems, which are not unusual in the circumstances. Given goodwill on all sides, the difficulties should not prove insuperable.

Our own views on foreign bases have been expressed on more than one occasion. Our stand on Vietnam is also well-known and was further elucidated. These countries were, in varying degrees, concerned about the possible economic and political consequences of the changing conditions in the area. Naturally, we are interested in the South-East Asian region, which we would like to see as an area of peace, cooperation and prosperity. We believe that the security as well as future of the region lie in the stability, growth and rapid economic development of these countries, based upon such cooperation as their sovereign and independent governments may choose to have.

The Governments of other friendly countries in this region had invited me and I should have liked to respond. I regret I was unable to do so on this occasion. We attach the highest importance to our relations with these and other countries of the South-East Asian region. Fortunately, we have very close relations with them and it will be our constant

endeavour to further strengthen these relations, which are based on mutual co-operation and respect for one another's independence.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I must say that this is a Private Members' day. I would like to know from you how much time you want for clarifications because we have to be very brief. I am asking for your cooperation because we must finish it soon.

SHRI BANKA BEHARY DAS (Orissa): You first allow the questions.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am going to allow but please be brief and no statements but just questions. Mr. Bhandari.

श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी (राजस्थान) : प्रधान मंत्री महोदया ने दक्षिण पूर्व एशिया के देशों का जो दौरा किया है, यह वास्तव में स्वागत योग्य है और इस क्षेत्र में किये जाने वाले दौरे अधिक होने चाहिये। इसमें कोई संदेह नहीं कि वहां पर कुछ भारतीय हैं जिनकी कुछ समस्याएं हैं, परन्तु यह केवल भारतीयों पर ही वहां पर भेदभाव किया जा रहा हो और उनकी समस्याएं हों, इतना ही नहीं है। दक्षिण पूर्वी एशिया के इन देशों में आपस के तनाव और राष्ट्रीय वैमनस्य के कारण कुछ समस्याएं निर्मित हुई हैं और प्रधान मंत्री महोदया ने भी कैनबेरा के अपने भाषण में इस बात का उल्लेख किया है कि भारत भी इन बढ़ती हुई जिम्मेदारियों को वहन करने के लिये तत्पर है। प्रधान मंत्री ने अभी वक्तव्य में कुछ आर्थिक और टैकनिकल क्षेत्रों में सहयोग करने की बात कही। लेकिन मैं यह पूछना चाहता हूं : क्या प्रधान मंत्री महोदया ने इस बात को अनुभव किया कि उनकी जो समस्याएं हैं, तोडफोड़ की, घुसपैठ की, जिससे वह आज परेशान हैं, तो इन आर्थिक और तकनीकी क्षेत्रों में सहयोग से उनके मनों में वह कुछ विश्वास जगा पायी है क्या ? या इसके अतिरिक्त भी क्या कुछ और क्षेत्र हैं, जिनमें उनको कुछ सहयोग देने की आवश्यकता है ? क्या इस प्रकार के सहयोग देने के लिये सरकार की आज तक

की अपनाई गई विदेश नीति के संदर्भ में इस प्रकार के सहयोग देने में किसी प्रकार की अड़चन पैदा हो रही है ? इन बातों पर जरा वह स्पष्टीकरण करें।

SHRI S. S. MARISWAMY (Madras) : The Prime Minister was in Singapore and had talks with the Singapore Prime Minister. In the course of the talks did the Singapore Prime Minister express any keen desire to have Indian co-operation to build a dockyard in Singapore in place of the British dockyard which is being dismantled now ?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal) : I would like to ask four sets of questions.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Four sets or four questions.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : Four sets of questions. The first is this. What led the Prime Minister to believe that there is a possibility of co-operation, to quote her words or of the joint communique, 'for peace and progress of this region between India and Australia'? Every body knows that Australia maintains not only inside a white Australia policy which is racialism but also aggressive postures in the whole region. • Therefore I would like to know on what basis she made that statement and how her statement is expected to help the image of India ? Secondly, I have carefully studied the speeches she was making and also the joint communiques or whatever were the documents that were issued. It appears that there was a deliberate attempt not to say much on Vietnam and I would like to know the reasons for it. In this connection I would like to know why the American aggression on Vietnam was not condemned and why was it not force fully repeated that the aggression should stop and the bombings by the Americans should unconditionally be stopped and there should a stoppage of all acts of war ? In this connection may I know from the Prime Minister whether she privately and otherwise asked the Australian and the New Zealand Governments to withdraw their Expeditionary Forces from Vietnam where they are fighting on the side of the Americans on the Asian soil and suppressing Asian freedom. This she should explain. I would like to know also what she did to impress upon Malaysia and Singapore especially Malaysia, that they should not

[Shri Bhupesh Gupta]

seek the co-operation of the British Forces or the British Imperialist Forces in that region because after hardly she left there was another conference by some of these Powers for aggressive designs. Therefore as far as personal contacts are concerned, I need not go into them. I leave it to personal equations but as far as political implications of it are concerned, I would like to know in what manner have we made positive changes as far as Australia and New Zealand are concerned and also to some extent Malaysia. I hope these points should be explained, because I find she was not saying anything about imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism. I have given a motion for discussion on this. Were these words tabooed during her visit there?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN. Mr. Das.

श्री राजनारायण (उत्तर प्रदेश) : आप हमका क्यो नेगलेक्ट करती है। हमारी पार्टी का चौथा नम्बर है। मैं आपसे जानना चाहता हूँ . .

उपसभापति : यहाँ इससे और पार्टी से कोई सबध नहीं है।

श्री राजनारायण : आपने भडारी जी को बुलाया, आपने स्वतंत्र पार्टी के मेम्बर को बुलाया, लेकिन आप हमको नेगलेक्ट करती है। अभी भूपेश गुप्ता के पास चली है अब आप चली गई है बाक बिहारी दास के पास। मुझे विवश होकर इस प्रश्न को रखना पड़ रहा है। मैं कई बार खड़ा हुआ, लेकिन आप अपनी आख को बचा कर दूसरी तरफ चली जाती है।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am not going party-wise in this.

श्री राजनारायण : क्यो नहीं जा रही है ? यहाँ की परम्परा रही है कि पार्टी वाइज नाम पुकारा जायेगा।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN. If the Chair is to go by the Rules of Procedure-Rule 252-there should be no clarifications. Questions are not allowed on statements, which procedure the other House follows but even so, I have permitted and I want the questions to be direct, to be brief and without any statement attached or any comments. Mr Das

SHRI BANKA BEHARY DAS: It is good that the Prime Minister went to

these countries and had personal contacts with the Governments of these countries. I want to know from the Prime Minister whether in the course of her tour she discussed with them the question of British withdrawal from the eastern region, and how other countries are viewing it, because we are concerned with that. After this withdrawal, again, America and the Soviet Union as today's papers carry the news—may try to influence this area. I want to know whether she discussed with them this question that only those countries which are interested in this region come into the picture and others who are outside the zone do not interfere in the affairs of this zone. I want to know from the Prime Minister also whether she discussed the question of Vietnam with these countries. If so, what was the reaction of these countries, and particularly which are the countries which look from the same angle at the question of Vietnam as we are looking at it? And the third clarification I want from the Prime Minister is about communist China, because some of these countries are very much perturbed as we are perturbed about communist China and the threat to this region. What were the views of these countries and how far both of us can co-operate in meeting the challenge from communist China?

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE (West Bengal) : Madam, I also want to ask a question.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Well, all the Members cannot put questions. Leave the discretion to the Chair. Now Mr. Rajnarain.

श्री राजनारायण : माननीया, प्रधान मंत्री जी का आस्ट्रेलिया, न्यूजीलैंड, मलेशिया और सिंगापुर का भ्रमण हुआ। मैं पूरा वक्तव्य सुन कर इस नतीजे पर पहुँच रहा हूँ कि किसी स्पैसिफिक प्वाइन्ट को लेकर वहाँ पर बातचीत नहीं हुई। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि अगर किसी स्पैसिफिक प्वाइन्ट पर कुछ विशेष बात हुई है, तो प्रधान मंत्री इस ओर हम लोगों को बतलायेगी।

दूसरी बात यह है कि इन सभी मुल्कों का कामनवेल्थ से सबध है और नित प्रति अख-बागे में यह चर्चा होती है कि ब्रिटेन के इस क्षेत्र से हटने पर जो वैक्यूम क्रिएट होगा, जो शून्यावस्था पैदा होगी, उसको भरने के लिए

रूस प्रयत्नशील है। आज भी हमने एक ध्यान आकर्षण का प्रस्ताव पेश किया है, जिसमें कहा गया है कि इस हिन्द महासागर में अपनी सैन्य शक्ति बढ़ा रहा है और ब्रिटेन द्वारा हिन्द महासागर में जो रिक्तता पैदा हो गई है, उसको भरने के लिए एक आधुनिक विध्वंसक और एक तेलवाहक जहाज अपने बेड़े में रखे हुए है। मैं सरकार का ध्यान इस विषय की ओर आकर्षित करना चाहता हूँ। तो मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि सरकार ने इस संबंध में इन मुल्कों के साथ कोई चर्चा की या नहीं की। क्या सरकार को इस बात की जानकारी है कि आस्ट्रेलिया की आबादी एक वर्ग मील पर चार, पांच से ज्यादा आदमी की ओसत नहीं पड़ती है। मगर हमारे उत्तर प्रदेश को देखा जाय, उत्तर प्रदेश के पूर्वी जिलों को देखा जाय, तो किसी किसी क्षेत्र में एक वर्ग मील पर आबादी का हिसाब 800 आदमी पड़ता है। वहां पर योरूप के लोगों को लाखों रुपया खर्च करके बसाया जा रहा है, मगर भारतीयों को बसने नहीं दिया जाता है। इस संबंध में मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि प्रधान मंत्री जी ने आस्ट्रेलिया की सरकार से इस संबंध में चर्चा की या नहीं की? मैं स्पष्ट ढंग से यह भी जानना चाहता हूँ कि अगर हिन्द महासागर के संबंध में चर्चा हुई थी, तो जिस तरह से हमारी हिमालिया के संबंध में एक पालिसी होनी चाहिये, उसी तरह से हिंद महासागर के संबंध में भी एक पालिसी होनी चाहिये।

श्री अर्जुन अरोड़ा (उत्तर प्रदेश) : क्या पालिसी होनी चाहिये।

श्री राजनारायण : तो मेरा निवेदन यह है कि जो इस क्षेत्र से लगे हुए देश हैं, उन देशों की सुरक्षा के लिए कोई बाहरी देश खतरा पैदा न करे और सैन्य संतुलन का खतरा पैदा न करे। तो मेरा सरकार से विनम्र निवेदन यह है कि वे साफ बतलायें कि उनका वहां जाने का मकसद क्या था। क्या उनके

जाने का कोई राजनैतिक मकसद था, उन्होंने अपने वक्तव्य में चार वाक्य पढ़े कि वहां जाने का राजनैतिक, आर्थिक, टेक्निकल और सांस्कृतिक मकसद था।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : That will do.

श्री राजनारायण : मुझे आश्चर्य होता है कि जब मैं बोलने खड़ा होता हूँ, तो आप बीच में टोकना शुरू कर देती हैं और सात बार आप टोक चुकी हैं। आखिर आपको मेरी शक्ल से इतनी नफरत क्यों है और यह मामला क्या है कि जब मैं बोलने के लिए खड़ा हो जाता हूँ, तो आप बीच में चार पांच बार टोक देती हैं। जितना समय और लोगों ने लिया है उतना ही हम भी ले रहे हैं। श्री भूपेश गुप्त जी ने और दूसरे लोगों ने जितना समय लिया है, उससे कम समय हमने लिया है। हम नया प्रश्न पूछ रहे हैं और वियटनाम की बात नहीं कर रहे हैं। हम तो अपनी देश की चर्चा कर रहे हैं। अपने देश के लोग वहां पर बसे हुए हैं और उनके साथ अन्याय हो रहा है। इसके संबंध में प्रधान मंत्री जी ने कोई चर्चा नहीं की। इन तमाम बातों पर रोशनी आनी चाहिये। सांस्कृतिक मसलों पर क्या चर्चा हुई, इस बारे में हमें मालूम होना चाहिये। हमारे वहां पर जो मंदिर बने हुए हैं, उनको देखने के लिए प्रधान मंत्री जी वहां गई या नहीं और उन लोगों से वहां पर उन्होंने बातचीत की या नहीं की। इन सब बातों का जवाब हमको मिलना चाहिये।

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE : I will ask really one question, Madam Deputy Chairman. Now it is quite clear that these four countries, particularly Australia and New Zealand are certainly very committed countries, very committed to the imperialist bloc; Australia and New Zealand belong to the SEATO, and Singapore and Malaysia are nearer the SEATO bloc or the imperialist bloc. Now I put this question. What were the special circumstances under which the Prime Minister had the occasion or felt the urge to pick out these four countries

[Shri A. P. Chatterjee]

and travel there ? Another question arises from this. There is a rumour—and there was a spate of rumours at that time also—that it was not merely economic co-operation that was the subject-matter of the talks between our Prime Minister and the Heads of these States, but also political talks, and there was a suspicion also that the Prime Minister went there to strike an anti-China and anti-socialist note with these countries. Now, whether this is a fact or not we want to know from the Prime Minister, on the second aspect of the question whether there was a political talk with the Heads of these States, or not, and what was the nature of this political talk. These are the two questions.

SHRIMATI * INDIRA GANDHI: Madam, a number of questions have been asked. I think that some of them have already been dealt with in my statement; for instance, I gave the reason the last questioner has asked what was the reason—for travelling to these countries. I thought I had explained it not only in the statement today but at very great length in my speech when we were discussing the Russian arms supply to Pakistan, that we are interested in making friends with other countries even where some of their policies may be different from ours and their way of looking at certain questions may be different from ours. We are interested in making friends with these countries, and in trying to understand why they are shaping their policies in a particular way and how things are going. This was why I travelled there. I think all these countries are going to play an important part in the changing conditions in Asia, and it is very important for India to keep in touch with them.

Then the question was whether there was any political talk. Obviously, when the Heads of Governments meet, there is political talk, and in fact all talk that takes place, even on economic matters or other matters is, in a sense, political talk. So there is no doubt about that.

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But if political talk necessarily means that one is creating an alignment against somebody or block against somebody then it was not so. My purpose in going, as I said just now, was to know their thinking, what influences them to shape their policies and also what they think about the future of that region. It does not neces-

sarily mean that we have the same views as they have or that we agree with them on these matters but I think the exchange of views was useful to us in understanding that whole area. I think that commitment point is also met by this.

Then the questions of Vietnam and the British withdrawal have been raised. I have also mentioned in my statement that we did make our view very clear. In fact even before I went they had taken some trouble to read the statements on the stand we had been taking on these issues, so this was not in any way unfamiliar to them but still in giving our appraisal of world affairs we put forward our own viewpoints very clearly and very frankly.

Why has Vietnam not been mentioned in the communique ? Well, we could have stated our point of view but I do not think that that is very important since it was not a question of any new event or thinking on the subject. We had also given our views on what the danger of foreign forces, or people going to fight in other countries and also of having foreign bases. Then there was the question of . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : Did you ask them to withdraw ?

SHRI BANKA BEHARY DAS: We know what the view of the Government of India is. What was their view ? That is what we want to know.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : Did you ask them to withdraw the Australian and New Zealand troops from Vietnam ? The general philosophy is known.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: It is obvious. When I go on a goodwill tour it is not for me to advise them what they should do except to put forward our own point of view very clearly that the presence of foreign forces does not lead to peace or to the settlement of any issue. I think it is understood in that.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : I see, they understood ? It is an illusion.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: Certainly not collusion.

In the beginning the hon. Member asked whether our present policy would block any co-operation apart from the economic, scientific or cultural. I do not think it is a question of blocking policy because it is a question of whether one considers this a desirable thing to do,

whether such a step—I presume the hon. Member had military co-operation in view—is a desirable thing. The question is whether when we are telling other people that they should not interfere we should in any manner push ourselves forward and whether this would serve a useful purpose.

SHRI SUNDAR SINGH BHANDARI: It can be in the form of military missions also.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: I think that comes to the same thing really. Our view is that it would not serve any useful purpose; it would not be the right thing to do. But this has nothing to do with our policy. Obviously if we consider it a good thing to do we could change policy but we do not think that that would be a good thing to do.

The other point was about the dockyard in Singapore. All these points which have been touched upon by hon. Members . . .

SHRI S. S. MARISWAMY : I raised a specific point about it.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: I am talking of all the matters and I am making a general remark first. All these matters were discussed. With regard to the dockyard, there was no specific request made to us because the situation is not still very clear and they are in the process of talking about these things we do not know exactly what will happen.

One hon. Member made a remark—I think it was Mr. Bhupesh Gupta—about the White Australia policy. Now that policy does exist; we made our own views very clear about it.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Then why do you say peace and progress with Australia? In what manner?

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: Well, it is difficult to define peace and progress.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : You are not a philosopher; you are a politician, the Prime Minister of a country. I had been to Australia and it took me some time to convince them that I am a citizen of free India and not a British subject. They said—the immigration authorities—no, you cannot write it; you have to write British citizen. Now, you understand

this all right; how can you deny that? When that is the position you made a ludicrous statement that Australia and India will co-operate for peace and progress in this region. Kindly treat us to this mystery.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: There is no mystery at all, Madam. As I said earlier, though it is very clear that we do not agree on all points our effort is to seek out some area of agreement and try to enlarge it.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: On which point do you agree with Australia?

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: Well, we agree with having democracy for instance and I think that is an important point.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: You agree with believing in God for instance.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Anyway, you are convinced now.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI : British withdrawals from Malaysia and Singapore; I have made a reference in my statement that these countries are concerned about this matter. It is not a question whether policy-wise they consider it a right thing or a wrong thing, but any such big change will create certain problems for them and they have to face these problems. I have also mentioned the specific issue of bilateral co-operation; I cannot mention all the points on this occasion but as I have said the main purpose was to know their viewpoints on various matters, these are specific issues really. I did not go there to make agreements on trade. Delegations are coming here from these countries and ours may go there to decide the details. As I have mentioned, the Malaysian delegation has already been here and they have had a detailed exchange with our officials covering a very wide field including agriculture, forestry, education, health, mapping and survey, technical training and production. Some of our industrialists are going there and some ventures have already been started; others are going to be started. Malaysian industrialist are going to pay us a return visit in August. These are the specific things which were taken up. Similarly with other countries. Once you establish a certain amount of contact then it is followed up by the concerned Ministries which go into the details.

[Shrimati Indira Gandhi]

I did not visit any temples, or do any visiting of that kind as my time in each place was extremely limited.

श्री राजनारायण : माननीया, मैं एक स्पष्टीकरण करना चाहता हूँ मैंने जो निवेदन किया था उसका जवाब प्रधान मंत्री जी ने नहीं दिया। राजनैतिक, आर्थिक, सांस्कृतिक, तकनीकी कोआप-रेशन की चर्चा हुई तो एक घंटा, आधा घंटा जो इस सदन का समय नष्ट हुआ है उसमें क्या प्रधान मंत्री के बयान से कोई रोशनी पड़ी। मैं स्पष्ट जानना चाहता हूँ कि राजनैतिक कोआपरेशन किस ढंग से होगा, आर्थिक कोआपरेशन किस ढंग से होगा, कल्चरल कोआपरेशन किस ढंग से होगा, तकनीकी कोआपरेशन किस ढंग से होगा। जब प्रधान मंत्री वहां गई, उनकी चर्चा हुई और जब प्रधान मंत्री सदन में बयान दे रही हैं तो उनको बताना चाहिये कि सांस्कृतिक फील्ड में हमने यह यह चर्चा की, तकनीकी फील्ड में हमने यह यह चर्चा की, आर्थिक फील्ड में हमने यह यह चर्चा की, वरना इस तरह का बयान देने से फायदा क्या है।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I think the Prime Minister has given a full reply and I go on to the Private Member's Resolutions. Mr. C. L. Varma will move his Resolution.

SHRI BHUFESH GUPTA : I have given notice of a motion.

श्री राजनारायण : हमारा सुझाव है कि प्राइम मिनिस्टर ने जो बयान दिया है उसपर चर्चा होनी चाहिये।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Whatever process is open to hon. Members, they may take it up.

RESOLUTIONER ACCORDING FULL STATEHOOD TO THE UNION TERRITORY OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

SHRI C. L. VARMA (Himachal Pradesh) : Madam, before I move my motion, one day has been allotted for this Resolution. I would like to know how

many hours it constitutes. I have to say that this is a very important Resolution as far as Himachal Pradesh is concerned. It is a life and death question for Himachal Pradesh.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You will get another one and a half hours on the next occasion. Please begin.

SHRI C. L. VARMA: Thank you very much.

मैं अब आपकी आज्ञा से अपना प्रस्ताव उपस्थित करता हूँ :

“इस सभा की यह सम्मति है कि हिमाचल प्रदेश के संघ राज्य-क्षेत्र को भारतीय संघ का एक राज्य बना देना चाहिये और इस प्रयोजन के लिये संविधान में संशोधन करने हेतु उपयुक्त विधान प्रस्तुत करने के लिये सरकार को आवश्यक कदम उठाने चाहिए।”

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA) in the Chair]

इससे पहले कि मैं प्रस्ताव पर कुछ बोलूँ मैं माननीय सदन का ध्यान इस तरफ खींचना चाहूंगा कि हिमाचल प्रदेश वजूद में कैसे आया क्योंकि हिमाचल प्रदेश 31 छोटी छोटी रियासतों का एक प्रदेश है। जिस वक्त हिन्दुस्तान के अन्दर 15 अगस्त 1947 से पहले आजादी की लड़ाई लड़ी जा रही थी उस वक्त रियासतों के अन्दर भी आल इंडिया स्टेट पीपुल्स कान्फ्रेस आजादी की जंग लड़ रही थी। हमारे हृदय अजीज नेता पंडित नेहरू इसकी रहुनुमाई करते थे। 1938 के अन्दर जो लुधियाने के अन्दर कान्फ्रेस हुई उस कान्फ्रेस में इन रियासतों के सिलमिले में सोचा गया कि ये 562 रियासतें सब सूबों नहीं बन सकती हैं बल्कि ये जितनी छोटी छोटी रियासतें हैं उनको इकट्ठा करके प्रान्त बनाया जाय। इस सिलमिले में यह भी तय हुआ कि जहां तक पहाड़ के लोगों का सवाल है वे कल्चरली और लिग्विस्टिकली दूसरे इलाके से अलग हैं और इसी जल्से में इस बात को मान लिया गया कि एक हिमाचल प्रान्त बनाया जाय जिसमें शिमला हिल स्टेट की