

झुका सकें। मैं चाहूंगा कि माननीय पर्यटन मंत्री इस पर अपना जबाब दें और इस सदन को अवगत करा दें, तो पूरे देश भी मैं और दुनिया भर में फिर से एक बार पाटिलीपुत्र की उस धरती पर जहां भगवान बुद्ध का अस्थि-कलश रखा है, उसका मान और सम्मान बढ़े। धन्यवाद।

श्री गांधी आज़ाद (उत्तर प्रदेश): उपसभापति महोदय, मैं इससे अपने आपको सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री रवि शंकर प्रसाद (बिहार): उपसभापति महोदय, मैं इससे अपने आपको सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

प्रो० राम देव भंडारी (बिहार): उपसभापति महोदय, मैं इससे अपने आपको सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्रीमती माया सिंह (मध्य प्रदेश): उपसभापति महोदय, मैं इससे अपने आपको सम्बद्ध करती हूँ।

श्री ललित किशोर चतुर्वेदी (राजस्थान): उपसभापति महोदय, मैं इससे अपने आपको सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री प्रवीण राष्ट्रपाल (गुजरात): उपसभापति महोदय, मैं इससे अपने आपको सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री उपसभापति: आप केवल एसोसिएट करिये। पूरा हाउस एसोसिएट करता है।

श्री दिग्विजय सिंह: सर, हमारी पर्यटन मंत्री जी से दरखास्त है कि वे कम से कम इसका जबाब दे दें, क्योंकि वे पर्यटन को काफी इस देश में बढ़ावा दे रही हैं।

पर्यटन और संस्कृति मंत्री (श्रीमती अम्बिका सोनी): सर, मैं आपके माध्यम से सदन को सूचित करना चाहती हूँ कि यूपीए सरकार की यह मान्यता है कि इस वर्ष विशेष तौर पर तमाम उन कार्यों को हम अपने हाथ में लें, जिससे 2550 साल जो महापरिनिर्वाण के हम मना रहे हैं, उसको और शोभा मिले और जो माननीय सदस्य ने यहां सुझाव दिया है, उसको भी देखना है कि यह शायद वैशाली से पटना लाये गये हैं, उसके बारे में हम बातचीत करके जो भी इस बारे में कर सकते हैं, वह जरूर करेंगे।

Appeal to accept the findings of the Justice Mukherjee Commission of Enquiry

DR. BARUN MUKHERJEE (West Bengal): Hon. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I would like to raise a matter of great public interest. The whole country was eagerly waiting for the Report of the Justice Mukherjee Commission of Enquiry regarding the alleged disappearance of Netaji Subhash

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RAJYA SABHA

Chandra Bose. The Report has, at last, been placed in the House, along with the Action Taken Report of the Government of India. But, Sir, this ATR is absolutely disappointing, not only for the fact that the Government has ultimately thought it best to devote only one sentence to express its reaction about the 671 pages 'Report in three volumes, but also for the fact that the Government has grossly rejected the Commission's findings without assigning any reason or arguments whatsoever in support of their 'action'. This shows the Government's predetermined biased attitude as well their utter neglect, lack of interest and disrespect for the great son of India.

Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose was one of the greatest revolutionary leaders and a great patriot of the country, whose immense selfless sacrifice and contribution to the freedom movement of the country are highly applauded by his countrymen. Mahatma Gandhi has once acclaimed him as the 'Patriot of Patriots'. The people of India have naturally the keen desire and right to know what happened to Netaji after his mysterious disappearance since 18th August 1945. The people could not be convinced about the genuineness of the concocted, motivated story of his death in so-called plane crash. Hence, in spite of the earlier two enquiry reports, one by the Shah Nawaj Khan Committee of 1956 and the other by the G.D. Khosla Commission of 1970, submitting that Netaji died of the plane crash, people continued to be critical of their biased findings. Even Suresh Chandra Bose, one of the three-member Shah Nawaj Khan Committee, submitted his dissentient report stating that there had been no plane crash involving Netaji's death. Congress Party and their Government's attitude in this respect was never above suspicion, whereas there was a widespread feeling among the public that the issue of fiding the truth about Netaji's death still remained.

The then Prime Minister, Mr. Morarji Desai echoed this view on the floor of the Lok Sabha on August 28, 1978, stating that, "Reasonable doubts have been cast on the correctness of the conclusions reached in the two reports and various important contradictions in the testimony of witnesses have been noticed, some further contemporary official documentary records have also become available. In the light of those doubts and contradictions, and those records..."

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You are making a statement. You have just asked for permission to speak on Justice Mukherjee Report. ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. BARUN MUKHERJEE: I am just concluding it, Sir. Government finds it difficult to accept that the earlier conclusions are decisive. I will take just one minute more.

As a follow-up of this statement and under the pressure of public demand, the Central Government appointed the Mukherjee Commission on 14th May, 1999.

In spite of the fact that during the course of the Commission's intensive enquiry, many of the important Government files were not supplied to the Commission, Justice Mukherjee ultimately succeeded in submitting his startling findings that (i) Netaji did not die in the plane crash, and (ii) the ashes in the Renkoji Temple were not of Netaji.

Unfortunately, the Congress-led Government is still inclined to stick to its earlier biased stand and has outright rejected the above-said findings of the Mukherjee Commission without assigning any reason therefor. It appears that an attempt is being made to hide the truth. In such a case Hon. Members of the House are mostly competent to discuss the whole report and give their judicious opinion in the matter.

We, therefore, demand that (i) the ATR of the Government be scrapped, (ii) Mukherjee Commission's findings be accepted, (iii) the Japanese Government be immediately informed that the Government of India has nothing to do with the so-called ashes of Netaji, kept at the Renkoji Temple, and (iv) All financial assistance to Renkoji Temple be stopped immediately. In view of these demands and arguments, I request you, Sir, to allow a full discussion on the matter, enabling the hon. Members of all the parties to submit their views freely. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI DEBABRATA BISWAS (West Bengal): Sir, this is a very serious issue, and it needs...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You associate if you want to associate.

SHRI DEBABRATA BISWAS: Sir, this is not a question of association. This is not a simple matter. This issue is hunting us for the last fifty years, cutting across the political line. The whole countrymen are demanding that they want to know the truth. Now it needs a discussion, and I think...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You have made a demand. ...*(Interruptions)*... You see you have brought it to the notice ...*(Interruptions)*..., एसोसिएट कीजिए। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

SHRI DEBABRATA BISWAS : Truth must come out. That its the point.
...(Interruptions)...

श्री रुद्रनारायण पाणि (उड़ीसा) : महोदय, यह गंभीर विषय है। अगर मैं अपने आपको सम्बद्ध करता हूँ तो वह भी डेली रिकार्ड में नहीं आता है? ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री उपसभापति: वह आता है। अगर आप एसोसिएट करते हैं तो वह रिकार्ड में आता है।
...(व्यवधान)...

श्री रुद्रनारायण पाणि: सर, मैंने एसोसिएट किया था, लेकिन उसके अगले दिन वह पेपर में नहीं आया। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री उपसभापति: अब पेपर में नहीं आया तो उसके लिए मैं जिम्मेदार नहीं हूँ। ...(व्यवधान)...

SHRI DEBABRATA BISWAS: Sir, I want to know ...(Interruptions)..
The Minister is present here. ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Home Minister is here.
...(Interruptions)...

SHRI DEBABRATA BISWAS: Sir, this is not ...(Interruptions).... Let the
Minister say ...(Interruptions)....

AN HON. MEMBER: Sir, I associate ...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I will request the Minister to react.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL): Sir, the Government is not averse to have a discussion on the Report. As a matter of fact, the notice was given to the hon. Speaker in the other House and the discussion on the Report is fixed. Now, if a notice is given to the hon. Presiding Officer of this House, and the matter is fixed for discussion, we would reply to it. If this is an important matter, then offhand statements and long statements, without giving any opportunity to the other side to speak are not good.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: So, the Government has agreed to have a discussion. Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad.

श्री ललित किशोर चतुर्वेदी (राजस्थान) : सर, मेरा यह कहना है कि जो एसोसिएट करते हैं, उनका नाम रिकार्ड में निश्चित रूप से आना चाहिए। ...(व्यवधान)...

उपसभापति: जरूर आएगा, जो एसोसिएट करते हैं, उनका नाम रिकार्ड में जरूर आएगा।
...(व्यवधान)...

श्री ललित किशोर चतुर्वेदी: हमने देखा है कि जो हमारे पास आती है ...(व्यवधान)... उसमें नाम नहीं होता है। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री उपसभापति: अब मैं कह रहा हूँ कि आपका नाम आएगा, जो एसोसिएट करते हैं उनका नाम आएगा। श्री रवि शंकर प्रसाद।

Reported Remarks of Pope Benedict XVI on Conversion Legislation in India

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD (Bihar): Sir, I am raising a matter of great importance. Sir, India is a democracy governed by rule of law, and our Constitution is supreme. Under our Constitution, certain fundamental rights are given. Article 25 mentions freedom of religion and freedom of conscience. It is quite in accord with our civilisational ethos which say that conscience must be free, faith must be free, and adherence to religious preach must be free without any coercion or intimidation.

Sir, in our country taking this basic constitutional premise, many State Governments have also come with laws prohibiting forcible conversion. The Madhya Pradesh Legislature came with an Act in 1968; the Orissa Legislature came with an Act in 1968; and now Arunachal Pradesh and Rajasthan have also passed laws. This was challenged in the Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court in a constitution bench, way back in the year 1977, said that, "the freedom to propagate does not mean the freedom to convert." That is the constitutional position in our country.

Sir, Pope Benedict XVI, as a spiritual and religious leader, occupies a very exalted position and is also entitled to my respect and the respect of the House. But, Sir, he has shown complete insensitivity to our concern when, as the head of Vatican at a formal occasion of presentation of credentials by an Indian ambassador, he criticised religious intolerance in India, and most important, he has termed as 'reprehensible' the attempt of certain legislators to legislate bills in this connection. Sir, this is grossly unwarranted. I protest it, and what is more important and I must say this that in Indian democracy a House is sovereign. A House can pass a law of a constitutional assignment. For the Pope to say that that House is enacting something reprehensible is grossly unwarranted. We protest and we condemn it. And what is a matter of greater concern is the ambivalence of the Government of India. It is maintaining a conspicuous