

Considering the floating population at the Madurai Railway Station, I request that escalator facility may be made available at the Madurai Railway Station. It should be done on a war-footing.

My next point is cleanliness. This has been the concern of every hon. Member right from the hon. Member, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, who spoke first on it. The reason why railway stations are not properly maintained is that the work is being given to private contractors who sub-contract the work and pay only fifty per cent payment to them and that is why the work is not being done properly. At most of the railway stations, including the Chennai Railway Station, the work is once again taken back by the Railways themselves and now they are properly maintained. As a woman representative, I would like to suggest this to our hon. Railway Minister. In Tamil Nadu, more than one lakh self-help groups have been created by our Deputy Chief Minister, Mr. M.K. Stalin, and they have been given many jobs. Why cannot we give this work to them as an initiative to maintain cleanliness both at railway stations and toilets on running trains? Why don't we give this work to the NGOs on a trial basis? This way they will be better maintained.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, with these words, I thank you once again for having given me this opportunity.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The House stands adjourned to meet at 2.30 p.m.

The House then adjourned for lunch at two minutes past one of the clock.

The House re-assembled after lunch at thirty minutes past two of the clock,

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI TARIQ ANWAR) in the Chair.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Evacuation of Indian nationals from Libya

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI TARIQ ANWAR): Statement by Smt. Preneet Kaur.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR): Sir, I rise to share with the House information on the efforts undertaken by the Ministry of

External Affairs and other Government of India Ministries and Departments to assist in the evacuation of Indian nationals from Libya.

In view of the disturbed conditions in Libya, the Government of India took the decision to relocate Indian nationals out of Libya and assist in their return home. The first special flight of Air India left Libya on February 26. Since then, an air bridge has been established between Tripoli and Delhi.

By the end of the day today, 9209 Indian nationals would have been evacuated out of Libya including 1450 out of Tripoli and Sehba by Air India flights. We expect to complete the exercise of evacuating all those desirous of leaving Libya by March 10. It may be noted that some Indian nationals have opted to stay on in Libya.

A passenger ship, Scotia Prince, has also ferried 1,188 Indians from Benghazi to Alexandria in Egypt from where they arrived in Mumbai and Delhi by special flights organized by the Government yesterday and early this morning. The ship turned around from Alexandria last night at 2330 hours for Benghazi, from where we are coordinating the transport of another 1,150 of our nationals back to India via Alexandria. The ship will dock at Benghazi early morning tomorrow.

As we speak, a passenger ship, Red Star One, is also on its way to Misurata and Sirte to ferry Indian nationals to Malta from where special flights are being arranged out of Valletta to bring them back. An air bridge is also being put in place from late tonight between Sehba and India and we hope to evacuate about 2000 Indian nationals from there over the next 5 days, beginning today.

We have confirmed reports that 750 or so Indian nationals from Kufra in South East Libya have reached Benghazi by the land route. They will now be picked up by the passenger vessel en route to Benghazi.

A large number of Indian nationals have crossed the Libyan border into Tunisia and Egypt. They have been assisted at the border by Indian Embassy officials to be issued travel documents, temporarily housed in hotels and other shelters and provided assistance for their return to India by commercial and special flights. Similar assistance has also been provided by our Missions to Indian who managed to reach other countries such as Malta, Greece, Gulf States etc.

We have taken special care, in association with the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, that returning passenger to India are facilitated at Delhi and Mumbai airports. At the Delhi airport a special terminal has been made available for the returnees, who are now being met by the concerned company representatives and assisted by officials of the respective State Governments, the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs.

An IAF IL 76 aircraft has been stationed in Cairo to undertake possible evacuation operations from Libya. A second IL 76 aircraft has also been put on readiness to be dispatched as and when the need arises. Two ships of the Indian Navy - INS Jalashwa and INS Mysore are en route and are expected to be in the region by March 8 to assist in the evacuation operations of any Indians that might still be in the coastal towns of Libya.

As part of the effort to ensure the safe and orderly evacuation of Indian nationals from Libya, External Affairs Minister spoke to his Libyan counterpart on March 2. The Libyan Foreign Minister assured EAM that all Libyan authorities concerned would extend every possible assistance for this purpose.

As assured by External Affairs Minister, the cost towards evacuation of Indians from Libya assisted by Government in their safe and orderly return to India is being met by the Government.

Hon'ble Members are aware of the complicated situation in Libya. The security of Indian nationals and their safe return to India is the Government's foremost priority. Despite considerable logistical challenges the Government has put in place a well coordinated operation 'safe home coming' to bring home our nationals in the quickest and safest manner possible. I hope the House will join me in extending support to all those involved in this operation for the safe return of Indian nationals from Libya. Thank you.

SHRI V.P. SINGH BADNORE (Rajasthan): We commend the work that you have done. Is there any panic among the Indians who are still there and who are wanting to come from there? Is there any sort of a fear psychosis there? What is it and how soon can you get most of them out? That you have not really specified.

SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR: I would like to, through you, Sir, tell the hon. Member that there

is, certainly, some anxiety if you are stuck in a place which is undergoing turmoil. But I don't think there is a great deal of panic. For most of the people, there is designated person being allocated. The officers have been allocated to deal with different groups of people. Lists are available with them. The Embassy in Egypt is doing a commendable job as is the Embassy in Libya. They are coordinating. The people from Benghazi are being taken across the border, by ship, by road, to Alexandria, and, as I said, as of today, we have evacuated 9,209 Indians. We can't put the exact figure on how many people there are but as estimated, there may be about 16,000 persons. As I said earlier, we hope that we will evacuate them all by the tenth of this month.

SHRI V.P.SINGH BADNORE: People are being targeted. Tell us the reasons for their being targeted.

SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR: No, no; we are not being targeted for any reason. In fact, we are getting cooperation from the Libyan Government, that they have allowed us to use two other stations as well, besides Tripoli, to land our aircraft. They have allowed us to bring ships from Alexandria. And this is in all parts of Libya. So, we are not being targeted. There is a general sense of turmoil there. That is their internal problem. Our people have been working there. And we are committed to bring them back, and, I think, with God's grace, we should be able to bring most of them home back safely. Only those who don't want to come back by choice will be left there. Thank you, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI TARIQ ANWAR): Some more Members want to seek clarifications from you. Let them seek together and you can reply after that.

SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR: Okay, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI TARIQ ANWAR): Mr. Sudarsana Natchiappan.

DR. E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN (Tamil Nadu): Thank you, Mr. Vice-Chairman.

We are, really, very proud of Dr. Manmohan Singh's Government, Sir, especially the Foreign Minister, Foreign Secretary and the Minister of State, and most specifically the Ambassador, Ms. Mani Magalai, who is there in Libya, and is doing a wonderful job for the past two-and-a-half years because I know her personally that when some people from Sivagangai area were facing the

harassment of the local people, 30 persons were repatriated with the help of the Ambassador. Therefore, we know how excellently the Embassy is working. During the recent memory sequences, we find that through the best teamwork they have done it. We are happy that the people are being protected, and that their assets also are being protected.

Now, I would like to pose a question. Is there any convention or agreement with the Government of Libya, be it this Government or a successive Government or any other Government, to protect the moveable and immoveable properties of the citizens of India who are coming out of that country now for the protection of their life? More specifically, their bank accounts and other movables, which are left there as it is, are to be protected, and they have to be transferred to the concerned persons.

Number two, Sir, is: Is there any compensation provision there for the people who are not having such type of income or property, who are losing their livelihood and are coming back to India? The third one, Sir, is regarding the rest of the people who are citizens of India and are living in Libya. They have to withstand all their attacks. Is there any provision made for the protection of those citizens? And in which way is the Government of India dealing with these issues?

श्री तरुण विजय (उत्तराखंड) : उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, जब काहिरा से भारतीयों को यहां लाया गया था तो समाचार आए थे कि एयर इंडिया द्वारा उनसे दोगुना किराया लिया गया है। अभी जो हम लीबिया से भारतीयों को ला रहे हैं, उन्हें राहत दे रहे हैं, उनको मदद दे रहे हैं, मैं इसकी प्रशंसा करता हूँ। यह अच्छी बात है, लेकिन इसके लिए उनको कितना खर्च करना पड़ रहा है और क्या यह खर्च उनको सामान्य दरों पर करना पड़ रहा है या काहिरा की भांति उनसे भी अतिरिक्त और दोगुना खर्च लिया जा रहा है?

दूसरी बात, वहां से अनेक लोगों से इस प्रकार की टिप्पणियां मिली कि वे भारत में रह रहे अपने सम्बन्धियों से बात नहीं कर पा रहे हैं और इसमें उनको बहुत दिक्कत हो रही है। तो कम्युनिकेशन या संचार में मदद के रूप में सरकार उनकी क्या सहायता कर रही है?

मेरे ये दोनों बिन्दु हैं कि उनको कितना खर्चा करना पड़ रहा है और संचार की क्या सुविधाएं उनको दी जा रही हैं।

श्री नरेन्द्र कुमार कश्यप (उत्तर प्रदेश) : मान्यवर, सदन की यह जिज्ञासा है कि लीबिया में फंसे हुए व्यक्तियों की संख्या का सही आकलन क्या है? माननीय मंत्री जी ने तकरीबन 15 हजार लोगों को आंकड़ा प्रस्तुत

किया है और कुछ लोगों ने वही पर रहने की इच्छा व्यक्त की है। मान्यवर, मेरी दो जिज्ञासाएं हैं। एक तो माननीय मंत्री जी इस बात को स्पष्ट करें कि लीबिया में रहने वाले भारतीयों की वास्तविक संख्या क्या है? दूसरा यह कि उस संख्या में से कितने लोग ऐसे हैं, जो लीबिया में रहना चाहते हैं और कितने लोग ऐसे हैं, जो भारत में लौटना चाहते हैं? मेरी निजी जानकारी यह है कि लीबिया में हजारों लोग माननीय मंत्री जी के स्टेट, पंजाब से हैं। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से यह भी जानना चाहता हूँ कि पंजाब से कितने लोग लीबिया में रह रहे हैं और वहां फंसे हैं तथा वहां से आने वालों की संख्या क्या है? कृपया यह स्पष्ट कर दें। धन्यवाद।

SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, I also join my colleague, Shri Natchiappan, in congratulating the hon. Minister, her team, the Foreign Secretary and the embassy officials for coordinating their efforts and relieving those people of their psychological pain. I would like to know from the hon. Minister, apart from Punjab, what the break-up of people State-wise is. These people are normally working in the service sector. What is the rehabilitation programme? It is not because of their fault that they are coming back. It is because of certain happenings there. What is the mechanism for rehabilitation and taking care of their livelihood back home?

SHRI N. K. SINGH (Bihar): Sir, yesterday, I have, through a Special Mention, drawn the attention of the Minister of External Affairs to this issue. Considering the volatility and uncertain situation in the Middle East, has the Ministry of External Affairs drawn any strategy paper on the likely contingent effect of what is happening in Libya on other countries, both from the point of view of the burden it might cast on the evacuation, and more importantly on the volatility of oil prices? How will it really affect our overall economic strategy?

श्री राम कृपाल यादव (बिहार) : सर, देश के अन्य भागों में लीबिया से बड़े पैमाने पर लोग आये हैं, जैसा कि माननीय मंत्री जी ने अपने वक्तव्य में बताया। सर, मेरे प्रदेश, बिहार के लोग भी बड़ी तादाद में वहां रह रहे हैं और अपनी जीविका का उपार्जन कर रहे हैं। पिछले कुछ दिनों में मैंने देखा है कि बिहार में भी कई लोग वहां आए हैं। वे सब मजदूर तबके के लोग हैं। मैं समझता हूँ कि वहां से आने के बाद, जो काम वहां करके वे अपना रोजी-रोजगार चला रहे थे...

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री तारिक अनवर) : आपका क्लैरिफिकेशन क्या है?

श्री राम कृपाल यादव : हम वही जानना चाहते हैं।

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्रीतारिक अनवर) : आप क्या जानना चाहते हैं?

श्री राम कृपाल यादव : जो लोग वहां से यहां आ गए हैं, जो मजदूर क्लास के हैं, वहां से आने के बाद बिल्कुल बेरोजगार पड़े हुए हैं। इन गरीब तबके के लोगों की व्यवस्था के लिए, खास तौर पर मैं अपने प्रदेश, बिहार के बारे में ध्यान आकर्षित कराना चाहता हूँ कि क्या उनके सेटलमेंट के लिए सरकार कोई व्यवस्था करेगी? क्या सरकार उनको किसी तरह का मुआवजा देगी या फिर उनको नौकरी देने की व्यवस्था करेगी, ताकि उनकी रोजी-रोटी चल सके? अभी समाचारपत्रों में यह खबर आई है कि कई लोग ऐसे हैं, जो यहां नहीं आ सके हैं और उनके परिवार के लोग बड़ी परेशानी की हालत में हैं। क्या सरकार उनके बारे में पता करने की कोई व्यवस्था करेगी?

SHRIMATI VASANTHI STANLEY (Tamil Nadu): Thank you, Sir. While appreciating the sincere efforts made by the Union Government and the Ministry for bringing back our people, I would like to express my deep concern over the delay. When China claims that it has evacuated its people 100 per cent and small countries like Philippines have evacuated their people, our people are being deprived of their basic amenities. While we express our deep concern, we would like to know the reasons for the delay and request to see to it that all the Indians are brought back immediately. Thank you.

SHRI P. RAJEEVE (Kerala): Sir, I raised this issue during Zero Hour today. According to the information given to me, the Government of Libya has already given an ultimatum to evacuate all foreign nationals on or before 7th March, 2011, that is, coming Monday. What is the status now? How many people have been evacuated till now? How many flights have you used for evacuation purpose? How many flights were of Air India and how many were of private airlines?

Secondly, as for Sebha Airport, we are not operating any flight now. Nearly 2,000 people are trapped at Jufra and Sebha, which is 700 kilometres away from Tripoli. It is very difficult to reach the Tripoli Airport because it is very dangerous to travel by road. I would like to know whether the Ministry or the Embassy have sought landing permission of Indian aircraft at Sebha Airport. I would also like to know whether any evacuation process has started from Sebha.

Sirt is 500 kilometres away from Tripoli. Around 1,500 Indians are trapped in Sirt. It is very difficult to reach Tripoli. There is a seaport in Sirt. What are the steps taken by the Government of India to evacuate the Indian people from these places?

Then the fourth place is Kufrah in western region, where 900 people are trapped. Out of that, 500 have already been shifted to Benghazi. What is the latest position?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI TARIQ ANWAR): Please conclude.

SHRI P. RAJEEVE: Sir, it is a very important issue. I have raised this issue in Zero Hour today. It is a very important issue connected with the lives of several Malayalees and Indians. Please permit me.

I would also like to know whether the Ministry has created any crisis management team. I would also like to know whether the officials are sufficient to handle all these things. I have got several mails mentioning that there is no mechanism. They decide it on the basis of first-come-first-served to catch the flights. How many officials have you deployed to handle this issue in Tripoli Embassy? Is there any crisis management team? You have very good experience of handling such a situation during the Gulf crisis. It is an entirely different situation. The evacuation process is totally unsatisfactory. The people are pleading for their life. Most of them are under house arrest. They have no food and other things. What steps have been taken by the Government to address this issue? Thank you.

श्री श्रीगोपाल व्यास (छत्तीसगढ़) : उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, सबसे पहले तो मैं इस व्यवस्था को धन्यवाद देना चाहूंगा कि इतनी शीघ्रता से माननीय अश्विनी कुमार जी ने हमें इस महत्वपूर्ण विषय के बारे में उत्तर दिला दिया, जिसका आश्वासन उन्होंने आज सुबह दिया था। माननीय मंत्री महोदया ने जिन प्रयासों के बारे में बताया है, उनको सुनकर भी कुछ समाधान होता है। मेरा प्रश्न यह है कि क्या आप यह जानकारी दे सकती हैं कि वहां किसी भी भारतीय व्यक्ति की जीवन-लीला समाप्त नहीं हुई है या वह घायल नहीं हुआ है? आप कह रही हैं कि वहां सभी प्रकार का सहयोग मिल रहा है और कुछ लोग वहां रहना भी चाह रहे हैं। यह कितने आश्चर्य का विषय है कि वहां इतनी भगदड़ मची है, इस देश के सभी प्रांतों से लोग भागे जा रहे हैं। क्या इसका पूर्वानुमान आपके मंत्रालय को नहीं था? यदि था, तो आपने इस विषय में क्या किया?

SHRI S. THANGAVELU (Tamil Nadu): Sir, two workers, Murugaiah and Ashok Kumar, from Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu, who were employed with the Korean group, have been killed there. I request the Government to provide compensation and employment to the family members of the deceased.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR): Sir, a question was asked whether there was any agreement between India and the Libyan

Government so as to ensure protection of property of the Indians being evacuated? I think it is the host country whose responsibility is to protect all the assets of the residents in their country, including foreign nationals. We are not aware of any compensation scheme in place in Libya for compensating the losses incurred during this period of time.

A question was asked as to how many people want to live in Libya and it was also asked as to how many people are from Punjab. It is estimated that about 10 per cent might want to stay there. However, they are assessing the situation. So far as Punjab is concerned, there were nearly 300 people, mainly in the Benghazi area, working with two companies there. They have been in touch with me specifically throughout these days. They have been through a very difficult time. But they are safe. Whatever little their moveable assets were, they say, have been ransacked. They have all been loaded on the ship at Benghazi, which is going to leave for Alexandria. It will be docking on the 5th morning, that is, tomorrow morning, and they should be leaving tomorrow evening.

Our nationals are not required to pay any money for their repatriation. The condition in Libya is still very unsettled, so there is no arrangement regarding the protection of properties that they are going to leave behind. This will be taken up with whichever Government ensue after this. We hope they will be cooperative and helpful in looking after whatever our citizens have left behind and compensate them accordingly.

Then a question was raised: is there any strategy? What is going to be the fall out of what is happening in the Middle East and especially in this wake of surging oils prices, etc.? We are at the moment assessing the developments in the Middle East in close consultations with our Ambassador there. The welfare of our citizens is being monitored. I think we can only take a call on it after the situation improves there.

The hon. Members wanted to know how many people are there from which parts of the country. As I said, there were nearly 300 people from Punjab. There are people from Kashmir, Kerala, Orissa and Bihar. There were some labourers from Bihar who had gone there. We, so far, have not compiled State-wise figures. As soon as we do that, I am sure, the Minister of External Affairs will inform the House.

The hon. Member wanted to know about the resettlement of Bihar labourers who have come back. Since they all went there privately and were working with private firms and companies, on humanitarian grounds, whatever the Government can do, it will take a look at it. We would also request your State Government to see how they could be helped in looking after these labourers.

इन्होंने बिहारियों की बात की थी, हम सब भी हिंदुस्तानी हैं। ...*(ब्यवधान)*...

श्री राम कृपाल यादव : बिहारी नहीं, हिंदुस्तानी कहिए।

श्रीमती परनीत कौर : हिंदुस्तानी तो वे हैं। उन्होंने ही बिहार की बात की थी, इसीलिए मैं बात कर रही हूँ।

As far as arrangements that have been made to Indian Embassies, our Embassies in Tripoli, Cairo and Tunisia, they have all been strengthened with additional staff from various neighbouring Embassies. As I said, - I spoke with the officials - they are at the border between Benghazi and Egypt. They have already put in place five or six officials who are facilitating the people. Some of them have gone by road, and the others have crossed over. So, whatever is possible is being done. And, in Embassies, where there are no officers, they have put responsible citizens as nodal officers...

SHRI P. RAJEEVE: How many officers have been deputed to Tripoli, specifically?

SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR: I don't have the exact figure ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI P. RAJEEVE: You are dealing with a major crisis in Libya, and as the Minister, you should know how many people are working there.

SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR: I am sorry for that. I will give you the number ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI P. RAJEEVE: You are taking this issue lightly.

SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR: We are not taking it lightly. I have just got the number. There are 12 officials in Tripoli.

SHRI P. RAJEEVE: My question is: What is the additional number of people who have been deputed to deal with this issue?

SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR: The additional staffs are assisting the officers from Cairo ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI P. RAJEEVE: But how many of them are there? Sir, I seek your protection. People are crying for their lives there. I want to know how many people are there to facilitate the people in this time of crisis.

SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR: There are 12 people stationed at Sehba, which is on the border of Egypt.

SHRI P. RAJEEVE: I want to know how many officers have been deputed at the Tripoli Embassy to deal with this crisis. That is the specific query.

SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR: There are 12 officers in Tripoli.

SHRI P. RAJEEVE: How many additional officers are there?

SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR: The additional officers are not there in Tripoli; they are in Egypt and Tunisia. And, from other Embassies, they have pooled in people to man the border and to facilitate our people going across the border ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI P. RAJEEVE: This is a very serious issue...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI TARIQ ANWAR): I think she has replied.

SHRI P. RAJEEVE: She has not replied. The External Affairs Ministry has not deputed a single, additional person to Libya. They have deputed people to Egypt and Tunisia. That is okay.

SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR: People are crossing over the border at Egypt and Tunisia. So, there have been people from the Embassy of Cairo put at the border to facilitate these people. It means that they are helping the people from Libya going across, and there are seven in the Mission in Libya. I said that there are 12 people. So, if you want to know the additional numbers, there are five people, in addition, in Libya itself and seven people more who have been sent to Tripoli, where in addition to these twelve people, there are seven more who have gone there to Tripoli itself.

Then, another clarification, that was sought, as to whether there was an apprehension that 7th March was the cut-off date. There is no such cut-off date given by them, allowing us to evacuate our people. We hope that by 10th March, we would evacuate everyone from there. There was a question raised as to why China has taken out their people quicker than us, that there have not been so much delay. I would like to say that China has really not published any official statement regarding the number of people evacuated from there. And, to the best of our understanding, Philippines has not evacuated its nationals as yet. Our nationals at Kufra have been escorted, and, I think, at the moment, there is not a single Indian that is left in Kufra. And, from Sehba, as of today, we are planning to airlift 2,000 people. Permissions are there in hand. The Air India Flight - it is at Jeddah - will operate its first flight today.

Sir, there was another question about how many have been hurt and how many have died during this crisis. We have had two accidental deaths during road travel between Tobruk and the Egyptian border. This was two weeks ago. Assistance had been provided by the Government. There has been none who has been hurt in the evacuation. But, yes, there have been these two accidental deaths in the road travel two weeks ago.

I think, Sir, I have covered everything. If there is anything else, I am ready to respond.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI TARIQ ANWAR): Thank you.

SHRI P. RAJEEVE: What is the position of Indians ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI TARIQ ANWAR): This is not a discussion.

SHRI P. RAJEEVE: It is the question of the life of our people. What is the position of the Indians in ...*(Interruptions)*... I want to know. What is the position of Indians in...., that is, 500 kilometres away from Tripoli? Have any arrangements been made for them?

SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR: Sir, arrangements have been made for every single Indian who is living there. ...*(Interruptions)*... I am just giving you the ground realities. If you like, Sir, I would have it put down on a piece of paper with all the facts and figures and you could have it.

SHRI TARUN VIJAY (Uttarakhand): Sir, we must record our appreciation for the good work that the Ministry of External Affairs has done in helping Indians living in Libya.

SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR: Thank you very much.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' RESOLUTION

Redefining contours of food security proposals and restructuring proposed 'Food Security Bill' as 'Food and Social Security Bill'

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI TARIQ ANWAR): Now, we shall take up Private Members' resolution, Shri N.K. Singh.

SHRI N.K. SINGH (Bihar): Sir, I move the following Resolution:

"This House resolves to redefine the contours of the food security proposals to include minimum entitlements for health and education consistent with human dignity and to restructure the proposed Food Security Bill as the 'Food and Social Security Bill.'"

The current debate on food security neither fully addresses food nor security. There are two directions that the proposed Bill could take to strengthen Food Security: one, to look at the structural roots of agriculture and, the other, to focus on enhancing food production. We will need to address this sooner rather than later. I have no doubt that these will be important macro concerns.

Therefore, Sir, while I would like to mention some important considerations about food, I would like to concentrate more on security which is involved. Security at the national level does not automatically translate into food security at the household level: presence of food does not mean that it can be afforded by all people.

However, on the first part of my intervention, which is on 'food' part of food security, we have reasons to worry. India has the same climate worries as any region, if not more, given the dependence on the monsoon and its vulnerability to global climate change issues as well as regional issues like aerosol pollution. Secondly, the likely impact of ground-level ozone, which is expected to