

[Secretary-General]

15 Point Programme of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment.

**REPORT OF DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY
STANDING COMMITTEE ON URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Sir, I lay on the Table, a copy (in English and Hindi) of the Thirty-first Report on the subject “Functioning of Delhi Development Authority particularly with reference to affordable houses in Delhi and its role in regularization of unauthorized colonies in Delhi and matter connected thereto” of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Urban Development.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, we shall now resume the discussion on the Motion of Thanks on the Address of the President of the Republic.

**CLARIFICATION OF GOVERNMENT CONCERNING
APPOINTMENT OF ARMY CHIEF**

SHRI ANAND SHARMA (Rajasthan): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I had informed of our intention to raise a very serious matter, and, with your kind permission, I would like to draw the attention of this august House and the Leader of the House about a statement which has been made, and, which we believe is now the accepted practice of the Government on Prime Minister’s instructions that the Ministers must make statements using Twitter. Yesterday, there have been repeated tweets and statements made by a serving Minister of State of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region and the Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs, Mr. V.K. Singh, making unacceptable and highly objectionable statements on the appointment of the Army Chief and the persona of the Army Chief designate. We were worried when during the election campaign, this matter was sought to be politicized. The Indian Army has always been kept out of politics. The appointments of Generals, Chiefs of Army, Admirals, Air Force Chiefs have never ever been politicized. Therefore, we were reassured, given the understanding and maturity of the Leader of the House when he assumed the office also as Defence Minister. He made a very correct statement which was reassuring to the country and to the Army leadership. But Sir if a serving Minister is making such a statement, the Government ought to remove this Minister. The Prime Minister must clarify this issue. It is unacceptable.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Thank you.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: He cannot continue in the Government, he cannot be a Member of the Cabinet. He cannot hold his position when he has made this public statement. If he is an ordinary Member, that is a separate issue but he is a serving Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: This is a very serious matter. *...(Interruptions)...* It is not a small issue. I do not want to go into the details as to what the conduct of this individual has been. We have never commented, and, I shall refrain.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: I will be correct but, at the same time, hon. Chairman, Sir, this is not a matter which can be lost over. This is not a matter which can be ignored. This is a very serious development. It does not augur well. It is ominous as to what is going to happen. The Leader of the House is here. If he says that he can keep on tweeting and making such statements demoralizing the Army, castigating the Army Chief designate, and, we should keep quiet about it, I don't think that would be a correct position, and, hon. Members may like to take a view.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY (West Bengal): Sir, I would like to say... *...(Interruptions)...*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do not start another debate on this. *...(Interruptions)...* No, no. We are discussing... *...(Interruptions)...*

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT; THE MINISTER OF HOUSING AND UBRAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): Sir, there are other ways of discussion. *...(Interruptions)...*

श्री सभापति : आप कुछ कह दीजिए, ताकि we can settle this issue. *...(Interruptions)...* Would you wish to say something? *...(Interruptions)...* One minute, one minute, please. The Leader of the House... *...(Interruptions)...* Please one minute. *...(Interruptions)...* The Leader of the House.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: My only appeal is that it is a serious allegation. *...(Interruptions)...*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let the Leader of the House speak. *...(Interruptions)...* No, no. Please. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO (Telangana): Sir, it is a serious matter. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Sir, it is a very serious allegation. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री सभापति : आप बोलिए। येचुरी जी, आप बैठ जाइए।...*(Interruptions)*... It is an established convention that when the Leader of the House speaks, we listen to him. ...*(Interruptions)*... No, no. Let us hear him.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE; AND THE MINISTER OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS; AND THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): Sir, the UPA Government had made the appointment of the next Army Chief some weeks ago. It's been a practice in this country that we keep some issues outside the realm of inter-party politics, and, therefore, keeping various standards of political maturity statecraft in mind, all of us, not only the Government but all of us, must keep the Army and its appointments out of this arena and stand by the appointment. The present Government also is fully defending that appointment. The issues, which are *sub-judice*, really cannot be discussed in this House itself.

As far as the comments against one of the Ministers is concerned, I would urge that this issue directly, indirectly or even collaterally may not be raised for the reason that if one of the major political parties chooses to attack a Minister, then the Minister may consider defending himself. Therefore, that area is which is wholly outside. But as far as the Government is concerned, the appointment is final and the Government fully stands for it.

SHRI K.C. TYAGI (Bihar): Sir, ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no, that is enough. Let's now proceed. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR (Himachal Pradesh): Sir, the Defence Minister should ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री के.सी. त्यागी : सर।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please, please. ...*(Interruptions)*... Let us get on with the business of the House. ...*(Interruptions)*... I would like to draw the attention of hon. Members to Rule 238 (a) that procedure has to be completed if such matters are to be raised. In this matter, this procedure has not been followed.

SHRI K.C. TYAGI: Sir, I agree with you; I agree with the Leader of the House. But, Sir, इन्हीं की पार्टी के नेता...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री सभापति : नहीं, वह बात खत्म हो गई।...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री के.सी. त्यागी : सर, इन्हीं की पार्टी के नेता *

श्री सभापति : अब आप उसका जिक्र यहां नहीं करेंगे।...*(व्यवधान)*... No, no, this will not go on record.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, I am afraid ...*(Interruptions)*... He is mentioning the name of the person who is not there in the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This will not go on record. That is settled.

Now, Shri Jairam Ramesh to continue the discussion on the Motion. Thank you.

MOTION OF THANKS ON THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH (Andhra Pradesh): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to speak on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address. I will be very brief and pointed. During the course of the Address, we also had the benefit of the intervention of the Leader of the House. So, my comments on the President's Address will also be interspersed with some responses and reactions to what the learned Leader of the House had to say.

Sir, the first point I would like to highlight is on para 4 of the President's Address. There is a reference to the mandate of the 2014 elections and very clearly and very succinctly the President's Address says that the 2014 mandate was a mandate, and I quote, "for development through good governance." Sir, I have no problem with this formulation whatsoever. I have also no problem with the various comments on the mandate that were made yesterday by the Leader of the House. But I wish to state that if the mandate of 2014 is seen only through the lens of development and good governance, we are not being realistic, we are not doing full justice to the nature of the mandate. Sir, the election campaign is over. This is a parliamentary forum. We are debating the President's Address. Therefore, I am forced to draw your attention to this fact simply because both the President of India and the Leader of the House raised this issue. Sir, the mandate of 2014 was not just development through good governance, but the mandate was also a consequence of deliberate communal polarization at the ground level in State after State. Sir, I do not believe that any

*Not recorded.