

## **RAJYA SABHA**

*Tuesday, the 23<sup>d</sup> July, 2024 /1 Sravana, 1946 (Saka)*

*The House met at thirty minutes past one of the clock,*

*MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.*

### **BIRTHDAY GREETINGS**

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, I am pleased to extend birthday greetings to hon. Member of Parliament, Shri Subrata Bakshi. Shri Bakshi is a Member of this august House since April, 2020. He is the West Bengal State unit President of AITC and also Deputy Leader of the Party in Rajya Sabha. He brings with him a wealth of experience - a Cabinet Minister in West Bengal Government (Minister of Public Works and Transport), Member of Lok Sabha from 2011-2014 and 2014-2019 and a Member of West Bengal Legislative Assembly from 2001-2011. He exemplifies amiability, decorous demeanour and his participation has been highly impactful and enriching. He is married to Shrimati Sahana Bakshi and the couple is blessed with a son- Saptarshi.

Hon. Members, on behalf of this House, I wish him a long, healthy and happy life and extend greetings to the family members.

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### **RULINGS BY THE CHAIR**

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, yesterday I had indicated that I will give my ruling on the issue of electronic filing of notices.

(i) Hon. Members, India's digital stride has globally been acknowledged. The World Bank chief, Shri Ajay Banga, reflected thus: "I cannot praise enough what India is doing to open up space for entrepreneurs. That is visible in the digital space. India put in place public digital infrastructure that is so well attuned for private initiatives to blend in to take advantage of this infrastructure".

World Bank in its G20 document has reflected that India has achieved financial inclusion targets in just six years which would otherwise have taken at least 47 long years owing to its Digital Payment Infrastructure (DPI) such as Jan Dhan Bank accounts, Aadhaar and Mobile Phones (the JAM trinity).

Adaptability and acceptability of digitisation is reflected in India accounting for more than half of the global transactions. Even millions of farmers receive three times

a year direct transfers to their accounts. Such service delivery is increasingly getting into this digital mode.

In this situation, hon. Members, it would not be sending right signals that we, from the Parliament, do not lead by example.

After deep thought and taking into consideration the concerns raised by Members, a suitable mechanism for facilitating the hon. Members in the matter has been put in place and an IT Helpdesk has been set up in the Lobby for resolution for their queries in this regard and also for contingent situations. I would welcome any suggestion of hon. Members to enable them to go digital.

In this premise, I am sure, hon. Members will appreciate and support this gesture. We have to be forward-looking rather than be retrograde and this would inspire and motivate people at large to go digital.

(ii) Hon. Members, Shri Digvijaya Singh, while addressing the House, on 22<sup>nd</sup> July, indicated and I quote: "Sir, I have a point of order under Rule 238." And, he, in particular, made reference to the explanation thereof, relevant extract as under:

**"238. Rules to be observed while speaking**

A member while speaking shall not —

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- (v) reflect upon the conduct of a person or persons in high authority unless the discussion is based on a substantive motion drawn in proper terms.

**Explanation:-** The words "persons in high authority means persons whose conduct can only be discussed on a substantive motion drawn in proper terms under the Constitution or such other persons whose conduct, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be discussed on a substantive motion drawn in terms to be approved by him", that is, Chairman.

The occasion for Shri Digvijaya Singh to raise the point of order was at my taking serious notice of the conduct of Shri Jairam Ramesh, who sitting in his chair and without permission of the Chair, in high decibel, made highly derogatory objectionable observations against high constitutional authority, that were instantly expunged. I had indicated thus and I quote what I said:

"...I take it not only as nuisance but also as disturbance...Don't create it like a street. Mr. Jairam Ramesh, you cannot create like this. ...I take a very strong objection....The hon. Member, firstly, is speaking while sitting in his chair; then, the

hon. Member is speaking without getting my permission and the hon. Member is using disparaging words, objectionable! ...I appeal to the senior leadership that let us rise to the occasion and see that the dignity of this House is not so shattered..."

The contextual situation, as indicated, leaves no doubt that the point of order has been raised in a wholly inconceivable manner and, as a matter of fact, takes exception to the disregard of mandate of Rule 238 by Shri Jairam Ramesh. In this situation, the point of order raised by Shri Digvijaya Singh, under Rule 238(v), is without merit and declined.

Hon. Members, I take the opportunity to urge all of you in this august House to follow protocol and adhere to the rules. It is highly inappropriate for a Member to address the House without leave of the Chair. In this case, the conduct of the hon. Member is aggravating as he, in high decibel, without leave of the Chair, sitting in his seat, imparted unbecoming and disparaging remarks against high constitutional authority, causing disturbance and disruptions in the House. Such conduct by one with parliamentary experience and ministerial background is unfortunate and reprehensible. Given the frequency of such incidents, I urge the hon. Member to reflect and adhere to rule-based conduct.

I also seek to draw attention of hon. Members that late Shri S.B. Chavan, as the first Chairman of the Ethics Committee, in 1998, in the First Report of the Ethics Committee, had imparted directions to the Members including, *inter alia*, that Members must not do anything that brings disrepute to the Parliament and affects their credibility. I would urge the hon. Members to go through the Report carefully and ensure that they uphold the standards it sets forth.

The Report, for the benefit of hon. Members, has already been uploaded today on Member's Portal. We need to exemplify, hon. Members, our conduct that is worth emulation. And, I would urge the hon. Members that this is a very, very serious aspect. I find that there has been some murmur. I have carefully thought about it and unless we rise to the occasion, we will be sending a wrong signal.

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## REGARDING RULE 238 AND OTHER MATTERS

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Tiruchi Siva, do you want to say something?

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA (Tamil Nadu): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I recall that earlier, in the House, an issue was raised about a Member of the other House. And, we had objected saying, the Members of the other House cannot have an opportunity to