

### MATTERS RAISED WITH PERMISSION

#### Concern over alleged **threat to freedom of expression by deliberate and malicious attack on the movie 'L2: Empuraan'**

DR. JOHN BRITTAS (Kerala): Sir, unfortunate incidents are happening in this country. There is an assault on freedom of speech and expression, which is enshrined in the Indian Constitution. I would just say that a movie, which was censored and released in the theatre, was asked to go back to the Censor Board again and there have been 24 cuts resorted to because of the threats, and even the protagonists of the movies were depicted as anti-nationals. If this is the situation in this country, I fear that the freedom of speech and expression, which is granted to the people, will be in peril. So, I urge upon this House to see that such incidents do not happen. Even trolls and comedies are being despised. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: One minute; sit down. ...(*Interruptions*)... Vaikoji, you are a senior... ...(*Interruptions*)...

DR. JOHN BRITTAS: Sir, our country is fast becoming the paradise of wounded people. Anybody and everybody is getting wounded. ...(*Interruptions*)... Sir, you need to give a mark to the creativity and freedom of speech and expression, It is sacrosanct.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay; excellent. ...(*Interruptions*)... Nothing will go on record now. ...(*Interruptions*)... Shri George Kurian now. I have given him time.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS; AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING (SHRI GEORGE KURIAN): Sir, this film is against the Christian faith. It is about the sentiments of the Christian faith and the Cross and all the Christians in India. It opposes KCBC and CBCI. The communists want to insult the Christians in this country. That is what they are telling. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing else will go on record.

SHRI GEORGE KURIAN: Today, you can see that the CBCI and the KCBC have passed the resolutions against this film. I am a Christian. Do not insult me. These

communists want to insult every religion. ...(*Interruptions*)... Why are they insisting on this film?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member, Shri M. Mohamed Abdulla (Tamil Nadu) associated himself with the matter raised by the hon. Member, Dr. John Brittas.

Now, Shri Mohammed Nadimul Haque - Demand to confer Bharat Ratna to Indian origin astronaut, Sunita Williams. ...(*Interruptions*)... Only what Shri Mohammed Nadimul Haque says will go on record. ...(*Interruptions*)...

### **Demand to confer Bharat Ratna to Indian origin astronaut Sunita Williams**

SHRI MOHAMMED NADIMUL HAQUE (West Bengal): Sir, let us all welcome the safe return of Crew-9 to Earth after 286 days. They landed back on Earth on March 18<sup>th</sup>. Let me quote what the hon. C.M., Ms. Mamata Banerjee, said. I quote, "Welcome Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore back to Earth, finally and safely after so many days. Our daughter of India returns to us and we are deeply, deeply happy and elated. We are profoundly happy for Butch Wilmore also. Hail their courage, hail their return, hail human glory! I congratulate the rescue team for their overwhelming support and success."

(MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN *in the Chair.*)

A few days after she made this statement, the hon. Chief Minister of West Bengal spoke at the State Assembly where she demanded that Sunita Williams should be conferred with the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award. This would be a fitting tribute to her remarkable achievement. Looking at India from space, Sunita Williams highlighted the Himalayas' ripple effect, the fishing fleet near Mumbai and Gujarat and the network of lights visible across the country. The achievement of Sunita Williams would also make ISRO proud, which was established in 1969. Yes; Great institutions were built before 2014. The success of Sunita Williams has always been celebrated in India. Giving her Bharat Ratna would be the ultimate celebration. Sir, let me remind my fellow Parliamentarians that Sunita Williams was honoured on her visit to India in 2007. Among the many accolades she received, she was also conferred *Padma Bhushan*. I do recall the words of Sunita Williams, and, I quote, "There is one lady, I admire a lot." In fact, that lady is now with us in Rajya Sabha. Sunita Williams was referring to Shrimati Sonia Gandhi. Despite all accolades showered on Sunita Williams