



# ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

24, AKBAR ROAD, NEW DELHI  
COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

**Highlights of the Press briefing**

**Held at 1615 Hours 02.07.2014**

**Shri Abhishek Singhvi addressed the media today.**

Shri Abhishek Singhvi said institution building has never been the BJP - NDA's strong point. From attacks on institutions to assaults on constitutional functionaries, the nation has seen it all from the BJP. In the honorable sequence of attacks on the Election Commission to sacking, the only time in Indian history, of a serving defence services Chief, we now have a very serious assault on the independence of the judiciary. Not that it succeeded but attempt was there. The mess created by the government on the issue of a judicial appointment has extremely serious ramifications. It sits at the intersection of sacred principles of judicial independence, of vendetta politics, of intolerance of opposing viewpoints and a grave breach of constitutional norms. There is no doubt, I repeat no doubt, in the nation's mind that the sole and only sin committed by Mr. Subramaniam is his sin to act as amicus curie in a matter which led to adverse reports or reports about Mr. Modi in Gujarat. All other reasons are a fig leaf of pretences and excuses. The IB has found nothing against him and the government's actions speaks of nothing except smacks of nothing except pettiness - the pettiness to the extent - almost hilarious - an alleged swimming pool membership - never taken - and alleged tape conversation which in fact lauds and praises his independence are also being used by the by the government of the day to undermine judicial independence. Mr. Subramaniam is not the issue at all. Let us be very clear. The issue is the clear usurpation by the 'Modi Sarkar' of the right to select or refuse to select Judges. The Chief Justice of India has used the language of studied moderation in his condemnation of the government's conduct. Remember, the CJI is naturally constrained by the compulsion of his office but clearly we have here a situation where the man with the 56" chest and the elephantine memory neither forgets nor forgives. He ignores the elementary fact that any lawyer worth his name cannot refuse to accept the amicus curie appointment; he is obliged to act as amicus at the instance of the Court. Remember, we also now have the cat out of the bag - about the motivation for this rejection because we now have in full

public domain the letter written by an extremely senior Minister of the present government to the former Prime Minister protesting at Mr. Subramaniam's acting as a amicus. Clearly therefore, the executive office has been used to undermine the judicial independence. Clearly, therefore, the government of the day without giving you any specifics - the Law Minister has not spoken on it, the government speaks through sources - never officially, clearly therefore, the government of the day is acting through leaks, through innuendo, through whispers and trying to spread calumny forgetting that they are in the process undermining the supreme - one of the highest principles of our constitutional existence - the liberty of judicial independence. I also have no hesitation in saying that but for some of the hasty act of Mr. Subramaniam withdrawing his candidature, the government would have had more egg on its face that it already has and perhaps Mr. Subramaniam's hasty withdrawal has saved some embarrassment for the government.

एक प्रश्न पर कि आज नए वित्त मंत्री ने कहा है कि अगर सेवा चाहिए तो उसकी कीमत चुकानी पड़ेगी, श्री सिंघवी ने कहा कि यह तो एक सामान्य वक्तव्य है। कौन सी सेवा की कीमत अगर आप इसको सच्चाई में लें तो इसका अर्थ है कि देश में एक पैसे की कोई सब्सिडी नहीं होगी, तो पता नहीं वित्त मंत्री का क्या इरादा था, वो स्पष्ट करें। निश्चित रूप से हम समर्थन करते हैं इस बात का कि जहां तक हो, जिन लोगों की काबलियत हो, उनको सेवाओं के लिए पैसे देने चाहिए लेकिन क्या विकसित देशों में सब्सिडी नहीं होती। क्या विकसित देशों में गरीबों को सब चीजों के लिए उतने ही पैसे देने पड़ते हैं जितना कि उस सेवा की कीमत होती है। तो सब मुद्दे कोई एक वाक्य के अन्दर उनका अनुसरण नहीं हो सकता। यह चीजें बहुत गंभीर होती हैं और हम आशा और विश्वास करते हैं कि आगामी बजट में इन सब चीजों को विस्तार से रखा जाएगा। यह One fit, all generalization or quick statements of one sentence are not apposite.

On the question of the reaction of the Congress party on snooping by US, Shri Singhvi said we condemn all kinds of snooping by any sovereign nation on any other sovereign nation and indeed all other forms of snooping also but we need to know the facts, we don't accept that any particular person in the government facilitated or permitted but certainly the government would be within its rights and should take up this matter in all earnestness with the foreign power which is supposed to have snooped. At the moment we are talking of unverified reports but if the reports will suggest that this is there and if the government finds, first of all at the international bilateral level, that this is being done officially or with the permission of the foreign power, then it is extremely serious matter which must be taken up and subsequent and other comments on this must await the findings of appropriate facts.

On the question that the spokesperson has been talking about the institutions, what we are hearing now is that the BJP might go after the President after the Budget session like Governors; Shri Singhvi said there is no point reacting to what they might do. These are all speculative reports. We already know on the issue of Governors that the BJP has reflected the same amount of intolerance and the same amount of haste. It is not necessary for the BJP to say that this happened earlier. Of course, it has happened earlier. Other governments have also done it but there is a vital difference. For the last few years, at the instance of the BJP, a new 'mapdand' - new rule has been established by the Hon'ble Supreme Court which does not permit you to do this without cause. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. If you have laid down a rule which applies universally as much to me as to you and therefore, any action taken in haste without cause and reason would be subject to full judicial review.

On the question of the reaction of the Congress party on the statement of Dr. Subramaniam Swamy that the case of Sunanda Pushkar should be reinvestigated in view of Dr. Gupta's allegation, Shri Singhvi said I do not know whether you are dated already very much but Dr. Subramaniam is certainly very dated but looks like you are also dated. First of all, are you aware of the official statement issued by the AIIMS - I repeat AIIMS - which is the government institution completely unequivocally roundly in every way denying each and every part of this allegation of Dr. Gupta. They have said there is no basis for it at all. Secondly, we have noted with a certain amount of satisfaction the reported statement; I am not saying I have actually heard of the present Union Health Minister saying that he does not remember that Dr. Gupta has ever raised this earlier prior to two weeks ago in a letter. Thirdly, he seems to have done it in the course of his own service promotion proceedings in CAT 6-7 months after the incident. I think everyone will draw their own conclusion but I am cautioning everyone including the person whose name you took that trigger happy reaction in the midst of sensationalism can do grave injustice.

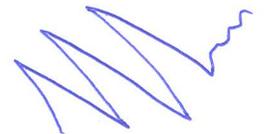
On the suo-moto statement of the spokesperson on the accidents of Mr. Modi, Shri Singhvi said I certainly think it is a very grave irreversible accident, assault but I don't want to give the luxury of saying is the first one. It is one out of many in the short span of 30-35 days.

एक अन्य प्रश्न पर कि अब नई गरीबी रेखा खींची जा रही है जहां गांवों में 32 रूपए और शहरों में 47 रूपए मापदण्ड रखा गया है, श्री सिंघवी ने कहा कि वैसे मैं आपके प्रश्न का सन्दर्भ नहीं समझ पाया हूँ आज लेकिन आपके प्रश्न का उत्तर मैं देना चाहूँगा। वो केवल इतना है कि यह तकनीकी मामले हैं, मैं इस पर अभी आपसे वार्तालाप नहीं कर सकता लेकिन इसमें एक मूल बात है। दस वर्ष जो है 2004 से

2014 के-9 वर्षों के आंकड़े हैं हमारे पास-और उसके पहले जो 6 वर्ष हैं, 6 और दस का आप एक तुलनात्मक चार्ट देख लीजिए। गरीबी को कम करना यूपीए सरकार ने पिछली सरकार से कहीं अधिक मात्रा में- करीब दो गुना किया है। दूसरे दोनों समय-यूपीए के और एनडीए के- दोनों समयों का जो तुलनात्मक चार्ट है, वो एक ही कसौटी के आधार पर है। उससे अधिक बोलने की हमको आवश्यकता नहीं है। भविष्य में कौन सी कसौटी सही होगी, विद्वान कहते हैं कि एक फलो कसौटी होना चाहिए, यह कौन तय करेगा। परन्तु तुलना के लिए आवश्यक है कि कसौटियां जो की बराबर हैं, उनके आधार पर तुलना हो रही है। उस तुलनात्मक आधार पर यूपीए ने एनडीए से ही कहीं ज्यादा गरीबी कम की है।

एक अन्य प्रश्न पर कि जब प्रवक्ता कह रहे हैं कि मोदी की हाथी की याददाश्त है, गृह मंत्रालय द्वारा सुरक्षा की समीक्षा की जा रही है तो क्या कांग्रेस के नेताओं को चिंतित होना चाहिए, श्री सिंघवी ने कहा कि मैं नहीं कह सकता कि क्या होगा। मैं समझता हूँ कि भारत के गणतांत्रिक और लोकतांत्रिक ढांचे में प्रतिशोध, जिसका आधार याददाश्त होती है लेकिन प्रतिशोध की राजनीति की कोई जगह नहीं है। याददाश्त के कई अच्छे तौर तरीके इस्तेमाल करने के होते हैं याददाश्त इस्तेमाल करने के कई बुरे तरीके भी होते हैं, यह आपकी सोच है, आप कैसे इस्तेमाल करते हैं।

On another question that in the past also during UPA's regime there were instances where the government has not accepted the collegiums' recommendations, Shri Singhvi said you are absolutely right. This is the precise manner in which the BJP is trying to digress, divert and derail the discussion. That is not the issue at all. It is no compulsory rule that when you have a list of three or four names, everybody must be appointed, you cannot segregate. That is not the point at all. The point we are making is simple that there is a statement of a Minister, there is a past history and context which establishes beyond doubt that the sole reason for the segregation is the fact that he accepted amicus appointment and a report which went against Mr. Modi. That is an unacceptable manner, reason and cause for rejecting anybody's proposal. Every other reason is a fig leaf; it is absolutely absurd and hilarious and is being done indirectly without any official statement from the government of India and no facts. So, certainly there is an attempt to mix apples with oranges.



(Tom Vadakkan)  
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