



RULING OF THE CHAIR

With reference to the Resolution moved by Senator Azam Khan Swati regarding the speech of Mr. Altaf Hussain, of the MQM, on 22nd August, 2016, while addressing his party workers on the occasion of a hunger strike by MQM workers at Karachi Press Club, whereby he raised anti Pakistan slogans and incited the workers to violence. It is a settled parliamentary practice that the statements of political party leaders made outside the Parliament during public gatherings or in the media cannot be allowed to be discussed in the House by way of any parliament tool.

On 9th February, 1987, an adjournment motion to discuss the statement of Khan Abdul Wali Khan, a political leader was taken up in the Senate which was held out of order by the then Chairman Senate Mr. Ghulam Ishaque Khan with the following observation:-

“The Constitution of the country under Article-19 guarantees all its citizens the freedom of speech and freedom of expression, subject to, of course, any reasonable restriction imposed by law. I think, there has been no allegation that any law has been infringed as far as the statement concerns. Otherwise, too these are personal views of a political leader expressed in an interview to a foreign agency and statements of political leaders expressing their personal or party views on national issue of this type which do not of course infringe or not fit subject to form the basis of an adjournment motion.”

While relying on this landmark ruling of the former Chairman Senate of Pakistan, many subsequent adjournment motions on the similar issues have been held out of order, I have refused to hold in order the adjournment motions/ privilege motions against the statements of leaders of political parties. On 22nd July, 2016 (250th session), Senator Nehal Hashmi intended to move an adjournment motion regarding a public statement made by Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Mr. Imran Khan a military coup in Pakistan will be welcomed by the people of Pakistan which was not allowed by me in the following terms:-

“In view of the earlier ruling of Chair dated 9th February, 1987, the instant Adjournment Motion is not, *prima facie*, admissible as these are personal views of a political leader which cannot form subject or basis of a parliamentary tool.”

However, the subject matter of the instant Resolution is distinguishable from the previous ones. The instant speech of Mr. Altaf Hussain is not a political statement rather it undermines the existence of the State. Therefore, notwithstanding the earlier Rulings of the Chair, the instant Resolution is admitted for moving in the House as an exception to the general rule.

This may be read in the House.

MIAN RAZA RABBANI
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CHAIRMAN

Dictated on file dated 02-09-2016