

# Unparliamentarily Speech and Conduct

August 10, 2020

The members of Parliament are expected to uphold, maintain and foster the dignity and traditions of, Parliament by using parliamentary language and to abide by certain norms of parliamentary propriety in regard to the language which they use, so as to maintain the high level of Parliamentary debates.

## Rules regarding unparliamentarily expression

- Article 105 (2) of the Constitution of India provides that no member of Parliament shall be liable to any proceedings in any court in respect of anything said by the member in Parliament or any committee thereof.
- However what they say is subject to the discipline of the Rules of Parliament, the good sense of the members and the control of proceedings by the Speaker. Freedom of speech does not give unrestricted freedom to a member to say anything against any individual or to use defamatory or indecent or undignified or unparliamentarily words.
- Under Rule 380 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, the Speaker/the Chairperson is vested with the power to order expunction of words which, in the opinion of him, are defamatory/indecent/unparliamentarily/undignified from the proceedings of the House. Similarly, he may order expunction of words which are defamatory or insinuatory in nature or level allegation against a high dignitary or authority or organization.
- The effect in law of an order of the Speaker/the Chairperson expunging words, remarks or a portion of the proceedings is as if those words/remarks or that portion

of the proceedings had not been spoken. Publication of expunged portions by the press may involve a question of breach of privilege of the House or contempt of the House arising out of such publication.

- There are phrases and words, literally in thousands, both in English and in other Indian languages that are “unparliamentarily”. For reference of presiding officers, the Lok Sabha Secretariat has brought out a bulky tome titled ‘Unparliamentarily Expressions’.

### **Unparliamentarily Conduct**

- There are certain established parliamentary customs, conventions, etiquette and rules which are required to be observed by members, both inside the House as well as outside. These are based not only on Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business and Rulings and Observations by the Chair but
- Also on past practices, customs and conventions and precedents and traditions of Parliament, which a member comes to know through his/her personal experience in Parliament. All these are,

What is technically known as parliamentary etiquette?

### **Rules about Parliamentary Conduct**

- The various customs, conventions, etc. are mentioned in the Handbook for Members published by the Secretariat from time to time. Information about the parliamentary customs and etiquette is also published in the Parliamentary Bulletin prior to the commencement of every session.
- What precisely constitutes an unbecoming or unworthy conduct has not been exhaustively defined. It is within the powers of the House to determine each case.
- The House has the right to punish its members for their misconduct in the House or outside. In cases of

misconduct or contempt committed by the members, the House can impose punishment in the form of admonition, reprimand, and withdrawal from the House, suspension from the service of the House, imprisonment and expulsion from the House.