

She was a passionate nationalist and always expressed her views in a forthright manner

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The Vice President of India, Shri M Venkaiah Naidu today advised other nations, including those in the neighbourhood, to refrain from commenting on India's internal matters and asserted that the abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir was taken in the larger interest to protect the unity, integrity safety and sovereignty of the country.

Delivering the first Smt. Sushma Swaraj Memorial Lecture, organised by the Panjab University on the first death anniversary of the former external affairs minister, the Vice President, pointed out that India was a parliamentary democracy and the decision to abrogate Article 370 was taken after detailed discussion in the Parliament and with the support of majority of the members.

Shri Naidu wanted other nations to mind their own issues rather than interfering in the affairs of other countries.

Referring to the feelings expressed by Smt. Sushma Swaraj on Article 370 before she passed away, the Vice President said that as the External Affairs Minister, she used to articulate India's position quite efficiently and in a sweet and sober manner. But at the same time, she used to convey the stand of the country in a firm manner.

Paying glowing tributes to Smt. Sushma Swaraj, he described her as an ideal Indian woman. She was an able administrator who left an indelible imprint on every position she had held.

Urging young politicians to look up to her as a role model and emulate her qualities, Shri Naidu said Smt. Sushma Ji was a wonderful human being, who was always considerate and prompt in her response for any request, be it friends, supporters or people at large. "The fact that she was elected to the Lok Sabha on seven occasions and to the Assembly thrice shows how immensely popular she was with the people," he added.

Referring to her qualities, he said her wit, humane nature and promptness in responding to any problem were in full display on the social media when she was the External Affairs Minister. The Vice President said

she was loved by millions of countrymen and was one of the most popular Indian foreign ministers in recent times.

The Vice President said Smt. Swaraj was a brilliant orator and recalled the effective manner in which she described 'Bharatiyata' during a debate in Lok Sabha in 1996. The purity of language, choice of words and clarity of thought were some of the factors that made her a popular speaker.

The Vice President said that she was a passionate nationalist and always expressed her views in a forthright manner.

Describing Smt. Swaraj as an epitome of Indian culture, the Vice President said that she was a blend of modern thinking and traditional values. He said Smt. Sushma Swaraj used to be like a family member and recalled how she used to visit their residence and tie Rakhi on his wrist for Raksha Bandhan. "Remembering our cherished bonding, I became emotional when the country celebrated the festival a few days ago," he added.

Commending Panjab University Alumni Association and the Department of Laws for deciding to organize a memorial lecture in honour of Smt. Sushma Swaraj every year, the Vice President reminded that memorial lectures or commemorative events were not just for paying tributes but also meant to inspire the younger generation to emulate the qualities of great men and women.

The Vice Chancellor of Panjab University, Raj Kumar, Ms. Bansuri Swaraj, daughter of Smt. Sushma Swaraj and others were present on the occasion.

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