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President Putin's stern message to Russian Muslim minorities in an address to the DUMA (Russian Parliament) received a standing ovation for nearly five minutes, as per reports. The Russian President is quoted to have sent an unambiguous message to Russian Muslim minorities as reproduced below.

"In Russia, live like Russians. Any minority, from anywhere, if it wants to live in Russia to work and eat in Russia, it should speak Russian and respect Russian laws. If they prefer Sharia Law and live the life of Muslims, then we clearly advise them to go and live in those places where that's the State law."

"Russia does not need Muslim minorities. Minorities need Russia, and we will not grant them special privileges, or try to change our laws to fit their desires, no matter how loud they yell 'discrimination'."

"We will not tolerate disrespect of our Russian culture. We had better learn from the suicides of so-called democracies---America, England, Holland and France, if we are to survive as a nation. The Muslims are taking over these countries and they will not take over Russia."

"The Russian customs and traditions are not compatible with the lack of culture or the primitive ways of Sharia Laws and Muslims."

"When this honourable legislative body thinks of creating new laws, it should have in mind the Russian national interest first, observing that Muslim minorities are not Russians."

COMMENTS

The Russian President seems to have been pushed into these stern conclusion son Muslim minorities, more specifically, going by the havoc that radicalisation of Muslim minorities in Western countries despite the fact that they were born in liberalised environments of their host countries and enjoying the fruits of liberalised societies.

Implicit in the Russian President's strong assertions is that Muslim minorities in Russia need to 'assimilate' and integrate fully into Russian culture and way of life without hoping for any special religious considerations, if they desire to live in Russia.

President Putin has come out strongly on demands that only Sharia Laws' should be applicable to Muslims.

There are strong lessons for Western democracies and also for India where in the last seven decades India's centuries-old 'existential secularism' was replaced by 'political secularism' to create captive minority banks by India's polity for electoral gains and where India's ancient culture and traditions were decried.

The Indian Constitution is supreme and no space exists for any religious minority to clamour for separate religious laws or for any political party to advocate such a recourse.

(Dr Subhash Kapila is a graduate of the Royal British Army Staff College, Camberley and combines a rich experience of Indian Army, Cabinet Secretariat, and diplomatic assignments in Bhutan, Japan, South Korea and USA. Currently, Consultant International Relations & Strategic Affairs with South Asia Analysis Group. He can be reached at drsubhashkapila.007@gmail.com [1])

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