

Prosecution of 'Indian Observer'

3954. SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU:
Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of times during the last 10 years the 'INDIAN OBSERVER' an English Weekly published from New Delhi, and its owners and editor were prosecuted;

(b) on what specific charges they were prosecuted on each occasion;

(c) how many charges were withdrawn against them during the same period; and

(d) the reasons for withdrawal of each charge with date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI DHANIK LAL MANDAL):
(a) Eighteen.

(b) Eight prosecutions were under section 292-IPC and ten under section 16-A of the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867.

(c) None.

(d) Does not arise.

Congress Workers arrested following the arrest of Former Prime Minister

3955. SHRI K. LAKKAPPA:
DR. HENRY AUSTIN:
SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN:
SHRI B. RACHAIAH:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Union Home Ministry has asked the State Governments the report on the total number of Congress workers who have been arrested in the month of October, 1977 following the arrest of the former Prime Minister of India;

(b) if so, total arrests made in the country;

(c) whether it is also a fact that some of the Congress workers in various States died in the jails;

(d) if so, how many such deaths have been reported and what were their causes; and

(e) whether these workers were treated very badly in jails by the authorities concerned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI DHANIK LAL MANDAL):

(a) to (e). According to information received from State Governments, 8,464 Congress workers were arrested in connection with the agitation following the arrest of the former Prime Minister. Of these 8,343 persons were subsequently released. One Congress worker aged 85 years died in district jail Moradabad on 22-10-1977. The postmortem examination has revealed the cause of death as cerebral thrombosis. The State Government have reported that these workers were not treated badly in jails. However, there was an incident of indiscipline and violation of law and order by Congress agitators in district jail Meerut on 12-10-1977 in which 24 jail officials and 16 agitators were injured. A magisterial enquiry is being conducted into this incident.

The information relating to the States of Bihar, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu is not yet available.