

की रिपोर्ट पर जब जब भी संसद में चर्चा हुई है उस सम्बन्ध में सदस्यों ने चिन्ता व्यक्त की है कि मध्यप्रदेश के पहाड़ी और जंगली प्रदेशों में ईसाई प्रचारक बलाम धर्म-परिवर्तन कर रहे हैं या सरकार ने इस सम्बन्ध में कोई रिपोर्ट जानने का यत्न किया है कि इस बात में कहां तक सच्चाई है ?

**Shri Datar:** Whenever any complaints are received either on the floor of this House or the other or when any representations are received independently, Government make enquiries into them and satisfy themselves that nothing wrong has been done.

**Some Hon. Members rose—**

**Mr. Speaker:** This is becoming a discussion.

**Shri Basumatari:** In spite of the fact that Government has begun many developmental activities in the tribal areas, how is it that the tribal people are tempted to convert themselves to the Christian faith? I want to know the reason:

**Shri Datar:** I could not follow his question.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. Member says that it is the special responsibility of the Central Government under the Constitution to take care of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes. The question is: why should they allow the Christian missionaries to go there and arrange for their social welfare and so on and incidentally begin to convert them and why not the Central Government themselves do all that is necessary for them?

**Shri Datar:** I have already replied to this question. Whenever any complaints are received of forcible conversions from this area, full enquiries are made. (Interruptions).

**Mr. Speaker:** It is not a question of punitive measure. Hon. Members want to ask about the preventive measures. Why should you not remove those inconveniences under which the

tribals are labouring and make it impossible for them to convert. They do not come to us to convert. Why should they go to them to convert? That is exactly the question the hon. Member asks; he comes from that area. Why should they be in such a position as to be tempted to be converted and the missionaries think that it is proper ground for them to go and convert? Why not they come to Delhi and do so? That is the question of the hon. Member.

**The Minister of Home Affairs (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri):** I think the Government is doing many things developmental activities and social welfare activities—in those areas. The pace may not be so rapid. Yet every day we are going ahead with our programme of activities and I think it has done considerable good to the Scheduled Tribes, especially of the Madhya Pradesh area.

As regards the Christian missionaries, I do not think that we should restrict their activities in so far as they confine themselves to social activities and if they open a dispensary or a hospital, we cannot and should not prevent them. But if there is forcible conversion, of course it is to be prevented. Much more than the Government, it is for the social welfare workers and the Members of Parliament to create the necessary atmosphere and climate in which, for small temptations and for other things, the Scheduled Tribes brethren do not agree to convert themselves or accept any other religion.

**Some Hon. Members rose—**

**Mr. Speaker:** The Question Hour is over. We shall take up the Short Notice question.

#### SHORT NOTICE QUESTION

#### Recognition of Political Parties

**Shri B. C. Kamble:** Will the Minister of Law be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that very recently Election Commission of India

held a conference of different political parties and groups to consider, among other election matters, the question of according recognition to political parties; and

(b) the details of—

- (i) suggestions made and the reaction thereto of the Election Commission of the said question of recognition of parties;
- (ii) the stage at which the matter stands;
- (iii) when the decision on 'recognition' would be finalised and the steps (of giving opportunities to the concerned groups and parties) proposed before finalising the decision of recognition of parties and groups?

**The Minister of Law (Shri Asoke K. Sen):** (a) and (b). The Chief Election Commissioner recently met representatives of the different political parties and groups and informally discussed with them various election matters. The principles adopted by the Election Commission for recognising certain political parties for the purpose of allotting symbols exclusively to their candidates were reviewed. In particular, the basis on which newly formed parties should or could be recognised by the Election Commission was discussed. In regard to parties recognised only in two or three States, suggestions were made that their candidates at elections in other States should have a preferential claim over independent candidates to the party symbol. The Election Commission is considering all these suggestions and expects to issue very soon a revised order under rule 5 of the Conduct of Elections Rules regarding the reservation of particular symbols for candidates sponsored by recognised parties at parliamentary and assembly elections.

12.10 hrs.

**Shri B. C. Kamble:** May I know whether the Election Commission has collected or proposes to collect information with regard to certain re-

cognised political parties fighting the elections not in the name of their respective party-names, but as a united front, functioning before, during and after the elections, having a common programme, a common policy and a common platform within the State legislatures as well as outside, such as, for instance,—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, order. The hon. Member is making a speech. Let him put a question.

**Shri B. C. Kamble:** I am putting the question. If so, what legal steps the Election Commission has taken so far,—

**Mr. Speaker:** I thought supplementaries ought to be off-hand. The hon. Member has got his supplementaries written, and is reading them out. Where is the end of it?

**Shri B. C. Kamble:** I am putting the point.

**Mr. Speaker:** If there is a point, he must speak orally.

**Shri B. C. Kamble:** What steps have the Government taken or propose to take to see that the recognised parties fight the election in their respective recognised names and not in the name of united fronts?

**Shri A. K. Sen:** The question is in the form of a conundrum. It would be easier to answer if the actual instance is cited. (*In:erruption.*)

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, order. I can only say that I have recognised the United Front here, the UPG.

**Shri Nagi Reddy** rose—

**Shri Goray:** The Law Minister is asking for an instance, and the hon. Member is willing to give an instance.

**Shri Nath Pai:** He is ready to give one.

**Shri B. C. Kamble:** I am giving an instance. The Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti, in the State of Maharashtra, has a common programme, a common policy and a common platform within

line State legislature and outside the State legislature. Therefore, if the party's programme and platform are the same, I am asking what are the grounds and the purpose for which the Election Commission gives separate recognition for each party and allots the election symbols.

**Shri A. K. Sen:** Whether a party is a conglomeration of parties or is a single unified party is a matter of fact or is a question of fact. Certain principles are devised which would have a general application and if those principles have application to the instance or case in point, those principles will be applied; but if they do not apply, they will not be applied.

**Shri Tyagi:** May I know the names of the parties that were consulted by the Election Commission at the conference?

**Mr. Speaker:** That is a larger issue.

**Shri Tyagi:** What are the names of the parties invited? There is mention in the answer that some parties were invited for consultations. I want to know how many parties were represented at the conference, and what are their names.

**Shri A. K. Sen:** I think all the parties which are represented here in the House, including the Congress.

**Shri Nagi Reddy:** May I know whether it is a fact that the Election Commission is thinking in terms of changing the position of the all-India parties which have been accepted previously on the basis of a new criterion that they are trying to adopt before the elections are held?

**Shri A. K. Sen:** No, Sir. The only change that will be made is possible the liberalising of grants of symbols to parties.

**Shri B. C. Kamble:** In view of the fact that there political parties and also united fronts, will the Election Commission evolve certain criteria to

define a political party as distinct from a united front?

**Shri A. K. Sen:** The work of defining it should be left to Parliament rather than to the Election Commission.

**Shri Tyagi:** I want to know what will happen to those parties which although are not purely alike but are based on communal grounds, or are communal parties, like the Hindu Mahasabha, the Muslim League, the Kazhagam, the Akali Party and the rest. Are all these parties going to be recognised this time or are going to be denied recognition?

**Shri A. K. Sen:** The Hindu Mahasabha is already recognised because it satisfies the rules for recognition. So far as the Muslim League is concerned, I do not think it satisfies the test yet.

**Shri Thimmaiah:** If a recognised political party is divided into two parties, and they demand the same recognised symbols, what will the Government do?

**Mr. Speaker:** If a party is divided into two groups, generally claiming to represent the entire party, what will the Commission do? That is the question.

**Shri A. K. Sen:** The Election Commission may be depended upon to devise a proper remedy.

**Shri Hem Barua (Gauhati):** May I seek an information, Sir?

**Mr. Speaker:** Not on this question.

**Shri Hem Barua:** No, Sir. On the suggestion or advice tendered by you the other day that this House or Parliament should make 'noise', may I indulge in some noise-making regarding the adjournment motion on Master Tara Singh?

**Mr. Speaker:** No, no. I always would like the hon. Member to keep silence in this House!