

During the centenary year, commemorative coins in the memory of Netaji will be issued; a biographical film will be released; and a biography will be published and circulated. Government of India will also give financial support for bringing out the Collected Works of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.

The Government also plans to have a suitable memorial for Netaji and the INA. The memorial of Netaji can be in Cuttack, where he was born or any other suitable place. The INA memorial can be at Moirang in Manipur, the Swatantrata Sangram Sangrahalaya and Swatantrata Senani Smarak set up in the Red Fort-Salimgarh Fort Complex will be strengthened.

To ensure that the birth centenary is celebrated throughout the country, Chief Ministers of all the States and Union Territories have been requested to plan and organise suitable programmes and activities. Seminars, debates, quiz and painting competitions will be organised in schools and colleges throughout the country.

Also, since the birth centenary celebration would eventually overlap with the 50th anniversary of India's Independence, an effort would be made to integrate them in an enriching manner.

I am confident that the cooperation of all the Members of this august House shall be forthcoming in full measure in our endeavour to celebrate this birth centenary in a befitting manner...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Is 23rd January being declared as a National Holiday?  
...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI DEVE GOWDA : 23rd January is declared as a National Holiday for 1997 only.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Only for 1997. It is not being declared as a National holiday. *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : The Prime Minister also has stated that you have any suggestion, it is welcome. You can give more suggestions.

*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. UPENDRA (Vijayawada) : A war memorial in Manipur in Imphal is in a very bad shape...*(Interruptions)* The Prime Minister should take note of it...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : No.

*(Interruptions)*

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR (Barrackpore) : On the occasion of the birth centenary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, I will request the Government to release whatever documents are available with the Defence Ministry regarding the INA. That is very much pertinent and that will dispel many of the confusions that are going on...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : The Statement says that you can give suggestions, more suggestions.

*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : No. I do not think that we can finish our business like this.

*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Nitish Bharadwaj.

*(Interruptions)*

13.15 hrs.

### CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

#### Reported Stripping of a Woman in Mandya district, Karnataka leading to Suicide

*[Translation]*

SHRI NITISH BHARWAJ (Jamshedpur) : Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Minister of Home Affairs to a matter of urgent public importance with a request that he may make a statement on it...*(Interruptions)*

*[English]*

MR. SPEAKER : Nothing is going on record.

*(Interruptions)\**

*[Translation]*

SHRI NITISH BHARADWAJ : Sir, I have not spoken as yet.

*[English]*

MR. SPEAKER : No, the hon. Minister will reply first.

*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

ONE HON'BLE MEMBER : Those who had served in I.N.A., their dependents are not getting any pension. I want that on this occasion pension should be announced for them.

*[English]*

SHRI NITISH BHARDWAJ : I have not explained the incident. I have.

*[Translation]*

Sir, I have yet completed the format...*(Interruptions)*

\* Not Recorded.

[English]

I have not yet explained the incident... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

I have only said that he may make a statement. I have yet to speak further... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR SPEAKER You first draw the attention of the Minister and the hon. Minister will reply and then you can put questions.

SHRI NITISH BHARADWAJ Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Home Affairs to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:

The situation arising out of reported stripping of a woman in village Murukanahalli of Mandya district, Karnataka in front of her husband leading to suicide by the woman and steps taken by the Government in regard thereto.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA) The hon. Member of Parliament who has given the Calling Attention Notice has drawn attention to a news item appearing in *The Times of India* on 10th december, 1996 which alleges, *inter alia*, that a woman committed suicide as a result of her being stripped naked in the presence of the village panchayat. In this connection the Central Government obtained a report from the State Government. The facts of the case, as reported by the State, are as follows:

- (i) That on 4.12.1996 a complaint was lodged by one Nanjegowda, resident of Murukanahalli village, K.P. Pet Taluka, which is in Karnataka mentioning that his wife Shrimati Thayamma consumed poison and died on account of humiliation caused to her by three women of the village who removed her saree and tied her to the pillar in front of the Panchayat members of the village. This, according to the complainant, was at the instigation of a contractor who had not been given certain portion of the complainant's land. The complainant named 16 persons as responsible for the death of his wife.
- (ii) A case under Section 306 IPC was registered on the complaint, spot inspection was conducted by the police Sub-Inspector, one poison bottle was seized and body was sent for post mortem. Two accused were arrested and remanded to judicial custody. Action against the other accused is in progress. The place of incident was visited later by the senior executive and police officers

of the district. The investigations reveal that the starting point of the incident was not at the instigation of the contractor, as alleged by the husband of the deceased but on account of an altogether different reason.

- (iii) It appears that a few days before the incident, one Shrimati Lalithamma, wife of Suresh, who were neighbours of the deceased, accused Shrimati Thayamma (deceased) of having illicit relationship with her husband and there was reportedly exchange of abuses between them. Subsequently, Shrimati Thayamma (deceased) reportedly started spreading in the village that Suresh told her of his illicit relationship with three other women of the same village. The husbands of these women and Shri Nanjegowda requested the village elders to hold a Panchayat to inquire about the allegations made by Shrimati Thayamma. On 3.12.1996 the village elders and 150-200 persons gathered for the Panchayat where Suresh, Nanjegowda and his wife Thayamma were also present. On being queried by the Panchayat as to why Shrimati Thayamma was spreading rumours about other women, during the course of the meeting, accusations and counter-accusations were made and the three women who were accused of extra-marital relations held Thayamma near a pillar and in the melee, the sari of Shrimati Thayamma got removed. The Panchayatdars intervened and restored order and one Panchayatdar even gave his *panche* to Shrimati Thayamma.
- (iv) At her house Shrimati Thayamma consumed some pesticide reportedly bought by her about five back for agricultural purposes. She was taken to K.R. Pet hospital (about three kilometres) by her husband and other family members where she was declared dead at about 0700 hours on 4.12.1996. According to the investigation, the omission of the name of Suresh as an accused despite admission of his illicit relationship with Shrimati Thayamma has also created a doubt about the veracity of the complaint filed by the husband of the deceased.
- (v) As per the enquiries at the village with the family members of the deceased, the neighbour near the Panchayat Katte who claimed to have witnessed the Panchayat, neither Shrimati Thayamma or her husband were brought for the Panchayat forcibly, nor the removal of saree of Shrimati Thayamma was intentional or on the instigation of the Panchayatdars or anybody else as alleged by the deceased's husband. At

the most Shrimati Laxmamma, Shrimati Rathna, and Shrimati Vasanta who were incensed on being accused of illicit relationship, can be held responsible u/s 354 IPC for removal of saree of Shrimati Thayamma, hence, the investigating officer has been instructed to take action against them as per the law. As regards the Panchayatdars, no other case appears to have been made out because the Panchayat was held on the request of Nanjegowda (husband of the deceased) himself to settle a village matter. Instructions to complete the investigation of the case in expeditious manner have been issued.

- (vi) Besides, instructions have been issued to send more frequent police beats to Murukanahalli village and to keep close watch over the developments. The present situation is reportedly peaceful at the village.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH BHARADWAJ : Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, I am on my legs to speak about the type of atrocities being committed on women in this country. My calling attention motion is in this regard. That is why I am feeling pained and getting annoyed. The more shocking aspect is that this incident took place in our respectable Prime Minister's State.

[English]

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA) : I have understood this. With due respect to the House, I do not think that this kind of issue can be discussed on the floor of this apex institution. I am sorry, I have a new Member but there are several senior Members here. In a village if something happens, it is the lookout of the State Government. I do not want to enter into the controversy. The hon. Speaker himself has admitted this, so I bow my head but this is not the issue to be discussed in this highest institution.

MR. SPEAKER : This is a State matter actually. In any case you are entitled to put one query.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Under the Rules, you are allowed to put only one query.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH BHARADWAJ : Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, I have not made any query as yet. I have not even started my speech...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : This is not the occasion to speak, you can put a question. You go through the rules, You bring a motion without going through the rules.

SHRI NITISH BHARADWAJ : Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, five thousand years ago in this very India Drampadi was stripped and likewise now Thayamma is being stripped then would you leave this matter on the state. Do you find it justified? I am addressing this question to the respected Prime Minister who says it is a matter of state. It is not an ordinary incident. My humble request is that please listen the facts which I am going to narrate to you with seriousness and rapt attention.

Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, on 9th March, 1994 a question was raised in Rajya Sabha in which it was asked...Sir, the Hon'ble Prime Minister is not present here.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : You cannot do that. It is the Home Minister who has to reply to this. How can you ask the Prime Minister to be here?

(Interruptions)

SHRI NITISH BHARADWAJ : Sir, on the 9th March 1994, a question was raised in Rajya Sabha asking for the data under the specific head 'stripping of women' and the answer was, 'it is not compiled by the Central Government'. On the third of August, 1995, again a similar answer was given in Rajya Sabha, 'that the data under the heading stripping of women in public is not compiled by the Central Government'.

[Translation]

Even today when I asked the Parliamentary Research Centre to furnish the data for this motion, they told me that it was not available. There was stripping of a woman at a public place. This is such a crime with regard to which data should be compiled and should be discussed in the House. It seems to be a very mean instance. It should be discussed in this apex House of India. The statistics of Government pertaining to rapes, abductions, dowry deaths, cruelty by husband and relatives, harassment, molestation, Sati, immoral trafficking show that these crimes figure 74 thousands in 1991, 79 thousands in 1992 and then these increased to 81 thousands and 83 thousands.

[English]

Molestation and all sorts of atrocities on women in this country are increasing everyday.

[Translation]

and then it would be said that these crimes should not be discussed in this House.

[English]

Every 23 minutes, a woman is molested. Every 45 minutes, there is a rape on a woman. Every 43 minutes, a woman is abducted. Every 22 minutes, there are

atrocities on a women by her husband. Every 50 minutes, there is eve-teasing in this country. Every 52 minutes, there is an illegal trade of ladies' flesh...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : I know that you are a new Member but you should know certain provisions of the Rules of Procedure. You cannot discuss it under this. You can only put a query, only a question.

*[Translation]*

SHRI NITISH BHARADWAJ : Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, before making any query some light would have to be thrown in this regard...*(Interruptions)*

*[English]*

MR. SPEAKER : You have to bring it under a different rule, not under this rule.

*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR (Bareilly) : Sir, even a senior Member would have given a speech on this incident.

*[English]*

SHRI ANANT KUMAR (Bangalore South) : The Prime Minister intervened and said that it was a State matter. He does not think that it is an important matter. This should be discussed at the highest forum ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI NITISH BHARADWAJ : Sir, this is an important matter. He cannot just dismiss saying that it is a State subject and walk off from the House. Why am I sitting in this House? It is a grave insult to womanhood and to the honour and dignity of women.

*[Translation]*

Whenever a point pertaining to women is raised before this Government and yesterday George Saheb also had said that Members start laughing and today also the Members sitting here are laughing. With anguish I am saying that this is an incident of atrocities on women. Now even the Prime Minister has left the House. It would be shocking if this incident is not discussed in this House. So far as stripping of a woman is concerned, my most important point is that in our scriptures it has been said...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. RITA VERMA (Dhanbad) : Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, I have to speak just for a minute.

*[English]*

MR. SPEAKER : I can allow only the Member, whose name has been listed here. No other Member is entitled to speak. Why do you not read the rules?

*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

SHRI NITISH BHARADWAJ : Please listen to me. Do not behave like Dushasan here. Sir, through you I want to draw attention of this House to some facts stated by Mr. Minister in his statement. In his statement it has been stated : She has died on account of humiliation caused to her by three women. It may be noted that her saree was removed by three women and they tied her against a pillar and then she was stripped.

In this year of 50th anniversary of independence of the country, we must reflect on incident of this type that took place five thousand years ago in this country and which led to the great war of Kurukshetra. You appreciated the serial based on it. Whether mere applauding of serial serves our purpose.

It further reads as follows.

*[English]*

...during the course of the meeting, accusations and counter-accusations were made and the three women who were accused of extra-marital relations held Thayamma near a pillar and in the melee, the saree of Shrimati Thayamma got removed. Also, the Panchayatdars intervened and restored order." When?

*[Translation]*

But when? When a woman had been dragged to a pillar, tied against that and her saree removed. Till then the Panchayat kept quite. Whether mere touching of clothes of a woman does not tantamount to disgrad to her, why the Panchayat maintained indifferent at the time. When they made advances to strip her.

*[English]*

SHRI ANANT KUMAR : Is it not abetment to crime?

SHRI NITISH BHARADWAJ : Is it allowed in the Panchayat?

*[Translation]*

Is it allowed in the Panchayat that Panch Should come in action only when a woman has already been stripped...*(Interruptions)*

Shri Nanje Gowda's report reads as follows.

*[English]*

'When I tried to cover my wife with the cloth, I was prevented from doing so.' He has very clearly said that.

*[Translation]*

Please ask them to stop laughing. One day they will also be stripped and then I will watch the

impressions on their faces...(Interruptions) whether every case of atrocity on woman would be handled by this Government in this manner...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Why are you provoking him?

SHRI ANANT KUMAR (Bangalore South) : They are taking the matter very lightly...(Interruptions) When the wife was disrobed, her husband was prevented...(Interruptions) When they go to the villages, they do not bother about this...(Interruptions)

PROF. RITA VERMA : Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, I express resentment at the behaviour of the Members of this House. This shows how much respect they have for women. While discussion is going on in this house on this sensitive issue, they are jeering and laughing. This shows how much respect the Members of the ruling party have for women...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : You cannot say that. She has been permitted. It is enough. I will make way for him.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : You have made your point

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Nothing will go on record.

(Interruptions)\*

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH BHARADWAJ : Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, I want to make two submissions to you in brief

[English]

I understand the rules

[Translation]

But you please ask them to keep quite

[English]

you know that I never speak beyond the rules

[Translation]

When two questions were raised on this issue in Rajya Sabha, in reply thereto it was stated on behalf of the Government.

[English]

What are the policies? The question is : How is the Government trying to stop this?

[Translation]

The same thing was stated in both the replies.

\* Not Recorded

[English]

That the media is used to project the women in positive terms.

[Translation]

In this House, through you I want to ask the Government

[English]

I do not see anything which is positive in projecting the women.

[Translation]

But what is going on in the media today - Choli Ke Pichhe Kya Hai or Choli Ke Ander Kya Hai - such type of things are being shown on Doordarshan...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Why are you doing my job? I have not asked you to help me. But you are going out of context. Shri Nitish Bharadwaj, I have given you enough opportunity.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH BHARADWAJ : You please ask them to keep quiet, only then I shall be able to express my views.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I have given you enough opportunity. Please conclude now.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH BHARADWAJ : It is clearly evident from the police enquiry that Panchayat tried to depend Suresh who is a son of Panchayat Pradhan.

Here it is mentioned very clearly-

[English]

nor the removal of saree of Shrimati Thayamma was intentional.

Is it all right if it was not intentional?

[Translation]

It is my first question.

My second question is

[English]

"At the most Shrimati Laxmamma, Shrimati Rathna and Shrimati Vasanta who were incensed on being accused of illicit relationship, can be held responsible."



[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, Sir, yesterday hon'ble Indrajit Gupta, while replying to the point of Umaji said that he also has doubts over the integrity of police, therefore, he has referred this case to CBI. I want to ask whether it is not a clear issue that I express my doubt over integrity of police.

Intentionally or unintentionally no one has right to stripping a woman in this country.

I respect you Mr. Inderjit ji. You have thoughtfully expressed your views during the last six months. But it should not happen like where we talk about man, manliness workmanship and your name 'Indrajit' signifies that you have won Lord 'Indra'. You have power and utilize it in the public interest.

Jenaji, it will not be possible here.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, if every issue is taken in such a light manner... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Bhardwaj, it is enough.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Why are you worried? You have to get the answer only from the Home Minister. Why are you repeating again and again? That does not speak high of you, if you are repeating one thing ten times.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH BHARADWAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it should be ensured in the House that this matter should be referred to CBI and its report should be presented in the House on the very first day of the next session. Because intentionally or unintentionally no one has the right to disrob or dishonour woman in India. This is my submission.

[English]

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Sir, I appreciate the agitation felt by the young and a new Member of this House. There is nothing wrong in giving expression to one's concern for an incident which involves the disrobing of a woman. This is a matter of shame, a matter of deep concern to the whole House. But he has not asked any question. If he is making a suggestion that this matter should be referred to the CBI for investigation, that is a question to which I will give my mind because I am awaiting a further detailed report in this matter. The S.P. has informed us that they were continuing their investigation and that they would send us the further report.

Out of sixteen people who have been accused, only two have been arrested. The rest of them are absconding. By any means, this matter is not over. It will

continue and if we find, at any stage, that it is a case worthy of being referred to the CBI, that will also be done, though I do not personally think that all cases of these types should necessarily go to the CBI. The CBI is a very prestigious institution. The CBI is not competent to deal with all types and all manner of cases. However, he has not asked any specific question, but he has tried to link up this episode with the general question of treatment of women. We all know as to what the situation in this country is. A number of cases of atrocities, molestations, etc. are going up.

The Centre has a specific responsibility; generally it has a responsibility for all such cases of crime against women.

It has a more specific responsibility when the persons concerned are either belonging to the Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe. This is not the case in this particular instance. These were not people belonging to those communities. But that is not the point. I will only say that we are probing this case further and people who have been accused, against whom evidence is collected in the investigation will certainly be booked. We hope that the public opinion will everywhere condemn any such incident which leads to insulting and disrobing or dishonouring women in this country.

The hon. lady Member from that side has gone out now. I do not agree with her. I resent very much this kind of allegation that there is some kind of a monopoly on that side for caring about women and nobody on this side bothers about women. I resent it. Personally I resent very much this kind of charge because it is completely unfounded.

Secondly, I cannot reply to the questions of what happened in the Rajya Sabha and who said what in the Rajya Sabha. You know that very well.

MR. SPEAKER : Thank you very much.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH (Balrampur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon'ble Prime Minister has right now said that issues regarding Harijans and women cannot be held in this House... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Who said so. It's wrong to speak like this.

SHRI NITISH BHARADWAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I pay my thanks to the hon'ble Minister. I am leaving the House with heavy heart because the Prime Minister has left the House by saying that this issue is not so important. I feel sorry to have such a Prime Minister

13.42 hrs.

At this stage Shri Nitish Bharadwaj left the House.