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Title: Issue regarding depicting wrong and distorted facts and using defamatory language on the life and character of Shri Aurobindo by a foreign author.

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (CUTTACK): Madam Speaker, with anguish I rise here today to raise a very important issue – I would like to draw the attention of all the hon. Members specially through you, Madam – relating to a queer case, which is troubling not only me but many devotees and many people who have high regards on Yogi Aurobindo, whom we all know.

It seems that there is a design which is going on for the last many years to discredit, to defame our modern thinkers specially those who came and framed our mind in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

A book was published by the Columbia University Press by Peter Heehs, and that book's name is 'The lives of Shri Aurobindo'. This book is full of defamatory language and full of falsehood. This book depicts wrong and distorted facts on the life and character of Shri Aurobindo, which is clearly blasphemous.

Shri Sharad ji I would like you to hear me for a few minutes. I would also like the respective leaders of different Parties also to think of the malicious design that is being created by certain mischievous Western so-called writers. This book contains absurd, irrelevant and self-made stories, which do not have any scriptural support and has caused widespread indignation amongst the devotees. The writings portrayed in the book have seriously hurt the sentiments of the apostle of Shri Aurobindo, and the said book, with deliberate and malicious intention, has insulted the religious beliefs of millions. The said book narrates so many things. But I need not quote what has been narrated. But I would only confine myself to this aspect that after this book was released at different levels, it came to the notice of the devotees that there was so many defamatory things, a case was registered in the Orissa High Court. The Government of Orissa also intervened in the matter. It also approached the court. The court has banned the said book. So, there was a decision of the Orissa High Court. I think, the Government of Tamil Nadu also has written to the Ministry of Home Affairs in this regard. This book is not in circulation in India, in a printed form. But that is not the end of the issue. The issue is that this book is in circulation in international book stores. Anybody who goes aboard can get that book. Moreover, it is also prevalent in the internet and anybody can have access to that book.

At one point of time, one Mr. Jeffrey Kripal, had also published a book on Ramakrishna Paramahansa. At that time The Ramakrishna Mission had not objected to it.

But in this case, relating to Sri Aurobindo, the Ashramites have objected to it. Looking at the peculiarity of the situation, I was hoping that the representative from Puducherry, the hon. Minister, Mr. Narayanasamy – who was here and has just left – could react to that. I have no issue relating to the politics, which is happening in Puducherry Ashram. But here is a case where there is a malicious design by certain writers in the Western countries, who have taken upon themselves to deride our modern thinkers, to deride Indian thinkers, who have made dramatic changes in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. And, now, these writers have vilified Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa; they have vilified Sri Aurobindo; and they have also vilified Paramahansa Yogananda. They have also written many passages on our Hindu Deities. They have not stopped there only. They have also vilified Jesus Christ, which is a tragic thing.

Madam, therefore, my point to the Government of India here is that once this book has been banned yet that book is in circulation outside the country, and this person is getting visa! He is in India today. Repeated complaints have gone against him, but the Government is allowing his visa! He has violated his visa rules; he has published a book defaming our modern thinker, the person who has brought a tremendous change -- Sri Aurobindo -- who is revered in this country by millions of people. Similarly, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa is revered in this country by millions and millions of people. But if some person of western civilisation tries to vilify them, there should be a serious attempt to stop those people to come to this country.

I would, therefore, request the Government of India – and I would also request all the hon. Members to ventilate their views – that these types of people should not be given visa to come to India. Their visas should be cancelled immediately.

I would request, Madam, that this House should take a decision on it.

MADAM SPEAKER: Thank you so much.

Now, Shri Kirti Azad.

...(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: Those who want to associate on this issue may send the slips at the Table writing their names, and their names will be associated.

The names of

Dr. Ratna Dey,

Dr. Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar,

Shri P.L. Punia,

Shrimati Botcha Jhansi Lakshmi,

Shri S. S. Ramasubbu and Shri Mahendrasinh P. Chauhan will be associated on this issue.

श्री कीर्ति आजाद, बहुत संक्षेप में बोलिए।