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Title: Regarding freedom of media in Karnataka.

SHRI PRATAP SIMHA (MYSORE): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, shocking incidents relating to freedom of media are happening in my State of Karnataka. The ruling Government in the State is trying to muzzle the media. The leading Karnataka news channel TV9 Kannada and a Bangalore centric English news channel by the same group, NEWS9 went off air abruptly on Monday evening. The cable operators did that under severe pressure from the State Government.

This is not an isolated incident and I am not blaming any one particular party or Government. Ruling parties are becoming intolerant. A few months back, Times Now was blocked out in Uttar Pradesh for being critical about Akhilesh Government. Recently, Telangana Chief Minister threatened to block out TV9 channel. Karnataka is the latest example....(*Interruptions*)

If the Government has any issues with the media, it can go to court. But, suppressing their voice by forcing the cable operators not to show a particular TV channel is highly condemnable.

The blocking out of the channels is perhaps a serious threat to freedom of speech and we must protest its muzzling. Such incidents should not happen again.

Sir, through you, I request the Centre to direct all State Governments to respect freedom of Press and freedom of expression to uphold the basic spirits of our Constitution. Thank you....(*Interruptions*)

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will go through it. If any objectionable thing is there, it will be expunged.

...(*Interruptions*)

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Pralhad Joshi is allowed to associate with the issue raised by Shri Pratap Simha.