

[*Translation*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat and please maintain silence. The concern being expressed by you, is shared by the entire House. I would request the hon. Home Minister that if he had got any information, he may give it in the House. Keeping in view, the sentiments expressed by the hon. Members,

[*English*]

may give some information, even though it may be incomplete one.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): It has happened in the past. (*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Finance Minister, would you like to say something?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: No, I am sorry. It was a reflex action.

16.20 hrs.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER
BOMB BLAST INCIDENT IN BATALA

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MUFTI MOHAMMAD SAYEED): Sir, I rise to inform the House of a sad and disturbing incident in Batala on the 3rd April, 1990.

According to the available information, Ramnaumi procession was being taken out in Batala City in Gurdaspur District of Punjab on Tuesday the 3rd April. Around 2.45 p.m., when the procession approached Subzi Mandi area of the city, there was a powerful explosion resulting in heavy casualties. According to reports received by us, a total of 30 persons have been killed and 55 have been injured in the explosion.

Immediate steps were taken to provide relief to the injured. Those seriously injured were shifted to Guru Teg Bahadur Hospital in Amritsar and to the local Civil Hospital. Additional forces have been deployed in the city to control the situation. Curfew was imposed by local administration.

The manner in which a religious procession has been attacked shows clearly that the intention of the perpetrators of this crime was to provoke a communal backlash. We are sure that like all previous attempts by the terrorists to drive a wedge between the major communities of Punjab, this attempt will also fail.

I am sure the Members will join me in condemning this dastardly act in the strongest possible terms and in conveying our heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved families. No effort will be spared to round up the culprits and bring them to book. The Government will also ensure provision of medical and other relief to those injured and for ex-gratia assistance to the families of the deceased.

I appeal to the Members of this House and through them to the entire nation to strengthen the hands of the Government in dealing with the attempts of the terrorists to disrupt the centuries old ties between the Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab.

[*Translation*]

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA (South Delhi): Mr. Chairman, Sir, hon. Minister has just read out the report of P.T.I. in the House. In my view, it is a pre-mature statement. Nothing is mentioned in it about the situation developed thereafter.

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, it looks as if the hon. Minister has read a news-item of a newspaper in the House. It cannot be called a statement based on the facts collected by the country's Home Minister from his sources.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seats.

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: It may help if hon. Minister tells us as to how the situation developed later on.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Home Minister made a statement on your insistence. It has clearly been stated that information is incomplete at present, he will visit the place of aforesaid incident and collect necessary information. The information available with the Government has already been given to the House.

16.23 hrs.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (GENERAL)
1990-91

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS —
CONTD.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, we will continue with the discussion on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of External Affairs.

I call upon Honourable Shri Piyare Lal Handoo to speak.

SHRI PIYARE LAL HANDOO (Anantnag): Sir, I thank you for having called me to make my submission on the Demands for Grants of the External Affairs Ministry. At the outset, I must say that I support the Grants and in fact these grants are not as much as they should have been.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just a second, Mr. Handoo. Please, let there be no conference within the House.

SHRI PIYARE LAL HANDOO: The fact that the Demands for Grants of the External Affairs Ministry have come up first, perhaps

is indicative of the high priority that the present administration has given to the matters of our external policy. Fortunately for India the broad parametres of our external affairs policy, of our relations with foreign countries, have been set not when India became free, but earlier during the course of the freedom struggle itself. Our keen desire to have friends all over the world, our keen desire not to interfere in the affairs of other countries, our keen desire to avoid war and have peace in the world, our keen desire to have development all over the world were the four main broad parametres that determined our relations with the foreign countries after 1947.

It has been so generally and on the whole, we must proudly say that we have tried to give a hint to the world in the matter of relations with foreign countries, to the people who desired peace, to the people who wanted disarmament, and to the people who wanted sovereign nations to flourish in their own territory. If we go through the history of 50s and 60s, we can find that the people of India, through their elected representatives gave the five important hallowed principles of foreign policy, 'panchsheel' to the entire universe. All along, we have noticed one thing that despite our keen desire to have friendly relations with all, despite our keen desire to determine matters which are coming before the country on merits, despite our keen desire to remain as far away from war as we can and despite our keen desire to join the struggle in the world for peace, we have so far had three wars in our own territory. The reasons thereof, for, the present Foreign Minister need not be told about. After all, foreign policy has to be determined by enlightened self-interests of the country. We cannot devolve the principles of foreign policy in a vacuum and we cannot determine our foreign policy in the absence of knowing the contents of the geographical, political and cultural backgrounds of the country. What are the enlightened interests of India today in the context of the developments in the world? We are coming to the close of the century today and around very close to the new century. The world in Europe is going through a very acute transformation. Our