

[Sh. Satyagopal Misra]

serious problem for the transportation of betel baskets. Railways have also restricted the booking of betel baskets at Howrah station which has resulted in deterioration of the situation. The betel leaves growers under the banner of "West Bengal Pan Chesha Samiti" have organised themselves for demonstration at Howrah station on 10-8-1990.

I, therefore, urge upon the Railway Ministry to withdraw the restriction of booking of betel baskets at Howrah station. I also demand the regular supply of empty parcel vans in different trains at Macheda and Panskura stations in South Eastern Railways.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE (Panskura): Sir, I fully support him. Both the places are in our constituencies.

[Translation]

(vii) **Need to convert Shahgunj-Mahu metre gauge railway line into broad gauge**

SHRI RAM KRISHAN YADAV (Azamgarh): Sir, U.P. is a backward State of the country. Azamgarh is the most backward district of eastern U.P. For the industrial development of this district and for providing a means of transportation, the Shahgunj-Mahu metre gauge line should be converted into broad-gauge line. Many agitations have taken place for this. Speaking at a development conference in Azamgarh, the hon. Railway Minister Shri George Fernandes mentioned the conversion of the metre-gauge line into broad-gauge line. The five M.Ps from Azamgarh district have to first cover a distance of 150 kilometres before connecting with the broad-gauge line to Delhi. There is great resentment among local people due to the non-conversion of this metre-gauge line into broad-gauge line. In view of the public interest I request the Government to take immediate steps to convert the Shahgunj-Mahu metre gauge line into broad gauge line.

(viii) **Need to fix the support-price of apple and other fruits produced in Himachal Pradesh**

SHRI K. D. SULTANPURI (Shimla): Sir, Himachal Pradesh is a fruit-growing State. Other crops are grown in less quantity. In the remote hilly areas of the State apples are grown in large quantities. Vegetables and potato seed is also grown. Local farmers have grown fruit trees to prevent land erosion. The State's produce benefits the people of this country and this in turn strengthens the economic condition of the farmers.

In other parts of Himachal Pradesh like Solan, Sirmour, Kangra, Una, Hamirpur and Bilaspur people earn their livelihood by growing 'galgal', lemon, pear and off season vegetable crops. As it is a hilly area, crops like that of wheat cannot be grown there and the cash crops are fruits and vegetables. The previous Government had fixed the support price of apple at Rs. 2.75. That Government used to give support price in respect of galgal, kinoo, orange, honey, chilgoza and ginger. But the present Government has not made any declaration so far to give support price to farmers.

In view of these circumstances I request the Government to fix support price of apples at Rs. 5/-. Support price for other crops should also be fixed and necessary instructions should be issued to the State Government regarding its implementation.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Only the approved text will go on record.

15.10 hrs.

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
BILL-CONTD.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, we are taking up further discussion on the National Commission for Women Bill. I call upon Shri

Dalpat Singh Paraste to speak.

[*Translation*]

SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARASTE (Shahdol): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the National Commission for Women Bill. The fact is that the condition of women in this country is pitiable. The architects of our Constitution did their best to accord women their rightful place but the previous Government did little to alleviate the miseries of the country's women. If the previous Government had paid a little attention to women's rights their plight would not have been as bad as it is today. Unfortunately the previous Government's policies have done nothing to pull women out of the four walls of their homes. (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please do not give a general speech. Please speak on the Bill itself so that other members also get enough time to express their views on the Bill.

SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARASTE: Sir, you have asked me not to go into the details regarding the plight of women. But this is one thing that I must emphasise and this relates to granting equal rights to women of all classes. Harijan and Adivasi women living in rural areas are still illiterate. The Government should take special steps to uplift these women because these days women are at par with men in almost every field. A 'roti' is made with both hands. If man does not have one hand, he will be called handicapped. For the upliftment of women in general and Adivasi and Harijan women in particular, they must be given equal rights in the field of education and politics. For example, in this House also, the number of lady Members is much less than what it should be.

With these words I conclude.

[*English*]

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE (Panskura): Sir, I do not know whether to thank or to express a feeling of condolence because

of the great absence of men and women particularly the men in the house when we are discussing the Bill on the National Commission on Women. (*Interruptions*)

SHRISHIKIHOSEMA (Nagaland): Don't you think, there are men here?

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: There is a difference in your proportion and our proportion. (*Interruptions*)

I am not saying of the Congress Party or of the Janata Dal, but I am saying in general. The point is, it is really a sad situation. In my opinion, this is a reflection of the state of affairs with regard to women in the society today. It speaks hundred times more powerfully than any other instance of either economic discrimination or social atrocities, on which we shall have a discussion on the 16th I would also like to tell you that the same situation prevailed earlier also. On the last day of the last session in a nearly empty house many important Bills on women were passed. Therefore, I register a protest and want that the society be more conscious and its own representatives sitting here across the parties must pay more attention to the question of women.

Having said this I will go over to the discussion proper. First of all as everyone knows the Status of Women Committee in 1971 recommended the formation of National Commission on Women. Incidentally this Committee was chaired by Dr. Phulrenu Guha, a confirmed Congressite, and this Committee's Member-Secretary was Smt. Vina Majumdar whose opinions are leftist. But that did not deter them from coming to a conclusion unanimously that the country needs a National Commission on Women. This is very important to note that given the will we can unite on this issue.

One may ask why this Commission was needed? That Committee felt rightly that neither the constitutional commitment to women's equality the best of laws are able to improve women's lot unless there is a permanent machinery at the national level which

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can monitor the implementation and can be an effective watch-dog in this respect, with proper autonomy and with adequate powers. This was the reason why the formation of such a Commission was particularly recommended.

In the present Bill it is true that there might be some more scope for improvement. But I would say without any reservation that I must congratulate my dear friend Mr. Paswan who is in the other House I believe and also my dear sister Usha who is present here.

SHRI S. B. SIDNAL (Belgaum): You can congratulate all the Members who are absent here.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: Please don't interrupt. When I am in the Chair I ask you not to do that and I do the same now.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You need not reply to all these things.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: You are now protecting me Sir. I sincerely congratulate both these Ministers: for bringing this Bill. I say that this Bill is a very good beginning. I say in Sanskrit: *Ay am Arambh Shubhay bhavatu*. We should take this Bill in that spirit. With this I appeal to the Members of the Opposition to let it be passed today itself with necessary amendments as far as can be seen now. There may be more in the future, that is another thing. I make a fervent appeal to them to cooperate in this respect.

In this connection I have the responsibility though I do not like it, yet I am bound to—to respond to the criticism made by Shrimati Uma Gajapathi Raju of Congress (I) who is not present here today. She raised the question of the propriety and the right of this Government to bring this Bill which will protect the right of women with having a Minister in its Government who supported Sati in Deorala.

As far as I am concerned, I would like to make it clear that it is upto the Minister to reply. If the Minister named had done it, then either he should renounce his position or he should quit. Let it be clear. That is my opinion.

So far as we are concerned—we, I mean, most of the people and particularly the women—we want that some machinery with enough powers to catch anyone, who-soever he may be, who violates the equal status of women, granted by our Constitution. We want that it is to be done without fear or favour. This is our attitude, I am making it clear. From that point of view, I shall make my submission for improvement.

Before that, I have to ask some questions to Shrimati Uma Gajapathi Raju, who is not here, because I feel that those are pertinent. One is this, Why the Congress Government did not pass any such Bill in the last nine years? It is almost a decade. (*Interruptions*) The question should be squarely answered and has to be answered. If it was not done and if this Government has brought this Bill, then, definitely this is a good beginning, for which I congratulate them.

I would like to ask another question. This Bill was brought in a hurry. Yes, doubtlessly. But, after that, on our request all the women organisations and all the women MPs were invited for consultations. Here, may I ask what was the reason and why even a single Congress woman MP was not present on that day, except Shrimati Pratiba Patil, who also left in a hurry? They never gave any suggestion. They should have been present there. (*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI BASAVA RAJESWARI (Bellary): We have given our suggestions. (*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: I do not know. We were there, but none of you were there. If you have given suggestion, then, it is all right. But can you say, 'I was present'? (*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI BASAVA RAJESWARI: We have given our suggestions and indirectly we were present. (*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: They were not present on that day. That was the day on which everyone spoke from different organisations, from different parties. There were many Congress women, belonging to voluntary organisations. They also gave their suggestions and those suggestions were also discussed. (*Interruptions*)

PROF. N. G. RANGA (Guntur): Were they invited for the consultation?

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: Of course. They were very much invited. With all this background, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, please permit me to be a little harsh.

In this allegation of political gimmick, the boot is on the other leg, other than where it was ascribed to by Shrimati Uma Gajapati Raju. It is not from this side that the gimmick is being made now. But it is being made, lock, stock and barrel, by the Opposition. I again appeal to you all, not to go in for any gimmick in the cause of women, which is a very serious thing.

I need not go into proving the necessity of this Bill, because that is evident, in the beginning itself I said that. As the Bill now stands, I have said that there are certain areas for improvement. I will quickly go over to those areas and finish my speech. One is an amendment moved by Shri Yuvraj and another by Shrimati Malini Bhattacharya, about the composition number of members in the Commission. The suggestion by Shri Yuvraj, is to make it to 9; and the suggestion by Shrimati Malini is to make it to 11. At the moment, it is 5. I would request the Minister to consider that if Prof. Malini Bhattacharya's amendments can be taken up, we shall be the happiest. If not, at least the one from Mr. Yuvraj be taken up for acceptance.

There are some amendments by Prof. Malini herself. I am not going into these

because she will come and explain. But these generally pertain to more autonomy and more power. I would request the Minister to consider-if not today, in future-how this can be further improved through the functioning of the Commission itself. Since Prof. Malini herself will take up her amendments, I am not going in for their explanation.

I straightaway come to my own amendments. Which I will at the appropriate time now. I better read out my amendments to make my submission as quickly as possible. It pertains to the question of the Members of the Commission. Who should be the Members of the Commission? There is one clause which says that the Commission may appoint committees from time to time to consider if they feel it expedient. They can form committees, and members of those committees, at that time, we be attending the meetings of the Commission. My suggestion in this regard is that it should not be like this: that it is left to the Commissions at the sweetwill to form any committee from time to time.

I would suggest that it should be like this:

"8.(1) The Commission shall appoint committees to deal with the following issues, namely:-

- a) atrocities against women;
- b) equalities of status of women in family and society;
- c) matters dealing with opening up greater avenues of employment for women and ending discrimination against them;
- d) matters dealing with greater participation of women in political field;
- e) advancement of women's education;
- f) protection of women's health

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particularly in the fields of maternity and child care;

- g) implementation and improvement of laws concerning welfare of women;

and such other committees as may be necessary from time to time to assist the Commission in carrying out their functions."

That means, I want these committees to be permanent committees to advise on the Commission different aspects of women's problem.

My next amendment is:

- "(1a) The members of these committees shall include representatives of women's organisations of and all India character with the right of attending the Commission meetings without right to vote and receipt of salaries and allowances."

So that the Government is not burdened with the salaries and allowances.

AN HON. MEMBER: Allowances must be there.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: If they would agree, I have no objection. We are ready to work without allowances. I know the financial conditions. I know the necessity of this kind of committees. *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Benjamin, you are unnecessarily interrupting. You please take a hint.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If you want to speak, I will give you time to speak. But please don't get up every now and then.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: Why have I brought this amendment? It is because my experience shows that the best of laws, the best of constitution cannot really help improving the situation. Even a commission itself will not be able to do anything unless there is a big social movement all over the country and all such forces join in really improving the situation. That's why this amendment has been brought by me so that all opinions on an all-India scale can be represented. I want State level commissions and also commissions at lower levels. There also should be such committees of appropriate level. I had a talk already with the Minister for Welfare and also with the Deputy Minister. They had assured me earlier that this will be in the Rules. If that assurance is given today on the Floor of this House that it will be definitely in the rules, then I shall withdraw the amendment which I will be moving.

PROF. N. G. RANGA (Guntur): Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, I am sure that we are all in favour of protecting our women, promoting their interests and ensure that they come to enjoy equality with men in every sphere of life. But yet, that is only in a profession. Throughout our history, we have always held women with great respect but at the same time, in actual practice, we have not fulfilled either our prayers or our professions. Women have always suffered in our country as in the rest of the world also. I am now concerned particularly with what happens in our own country. I do not wish that politics should be introduced in the consideration of this Bill. But unfortunately, it has been introduced. But I can assure my hon. friends that we are in favour of the establishment of this Commission. But I wish to know as to why our friends, who claim to be wiser and more progressive than Congress people, have not taken a leaf from their earlier experience in giving Statutory status to the Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. We established it by law but we have found that that Commission did not have sufficient because of that alone. So, we wanted to give it a Constitutional status. Our friends themselves had brought forward that Bill and we

had passed it. Having done that, they could have extended that experience and given the benefit of it for this Commission. Instead of having merely given a Statutory status, they could have thought of giving Constitutional status also. But anyhow, I hope that in future, an opportunity would be taken by future Governments—not necessarily this Government but any Government—to give Constitutional status to the Commission for Women, for protection and promotion of their redress. Having said that Sir, they have pursued a queer legislative procedure. In earlier times, whenever any important Bill like this came to be introduced, the House used to be given the opportunity of either sending it in circulation or sending it to the Select Committee, either of one House or both the Houses. That procedure does not seem to be very popular with either this Government or with the previous Government also. I hope this Government will take note of this criticism. Sir, what would happen otherwise? My hon. friend, Smt. Geeta Mukherjee has said that they have sent for women representatives or representatives of various women organisations, including our lady Members of Parliament, for special consideration and some of them did not choose to come. That is a different matter. Why have they found it necessary to have that kind of a consultation? It was good. I am glad that they have done it. But they should have pursued the earlier procedures of sending the Bill for circulation or sending the Bill to a Select Committee. Then it would have been possible not only for women Members of Parliament here, but also other members to join hands with the Government and the sponsors of the Bill and make their contribution to the improvement of this Bill. This is a very strange procedure which they have followed, though good in itself.

Then, there is another strange thing. One Bill is introduced in the name of one Minister and a set of amendments were given notice of in the name of another Minister. And later on, this final Bill. This is not a right procedure.

Now, coming to the powers and func-

tions that are to be cast upon this Commission, I feel inclined to support Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee's amendment except for this that the poor ladies who would be appointed as members of those various Committees that are suggested to be appointed by my hon. friend, should be provided with allowance like travelling allowances. We, Members of Parliament, draw our allowance. Except for that, I am in favour of the amendments suggested by her.

Then, my hon. friends who spoke from my side were right in saying that this Commission should have been given powers, more positive powers, more authority and they were entitled in making that suggestion. But so far it goes, it is good enough, but it is not good enough in order to fulfil the objectives that are placed before it. And, therefore, another Bill would be necessary, another effort would have to be made to give more powers, to put more teeth in the Bill if it were. It is entitled to conduct enquiries into the various acts of atrocities, injustice and violence caused towards women. Everyday we get reports in the newspapers how so many of our sisters are being ill-treated in a horrible manner. We have passed so many legislations. Some Member has said: What is it that the Congress has done? Has not the Congress established the welfare fund, the welfare organization with a network all over the country? Does it not stand to the credit of that great lady, whether she belonged to Congress or not, it does not matter, Durgabai Deshmukh who founded this welfare organization with a network? So much good work has been done, but it was not enough. It should have been very much more if there had been a Commission at that time, but then it was up to the women Members of our House to make that suggestion at that time. They did not. They should have introduced a Private Members' Bill. It was not done. It is the fault of all of us, so many of us, people like me who are seniors, who have been in Parliament year after year, and also those who have come in now. I wish to congratulate not the Government alone, but more so, the present day Members of Parliament in this House for getting this Bill and placing

[Prof. N.G. Ranga]

this proposal before us. And it is a great day today, the 9th August. We paid our tributes to our national martyrs today. On this sacred day, I hope this House would have the opportunity of passing this Bill and laying the foundation for the betterment of our women in a more true and effective manner than had been the case till now. Although, we have had so many social reformers to stand up for women; to speak for them and to work for them but at the same time they have not been fortunate enough to keep company with the present day women Members of this House.

One word more about the quality of sexes with regard to our profession. What did we say when we went to the polls last time? All political parties said that so much reservation is going to be given for the women. But what happened? When they set up their candidates they could not live up to their promises. In some constituencies various political parties even tried to set up male candidates against the women candidates and got them defeated. We all are a party to that kind of crime. What is the use of accusing each other? Let us, at least now with this new beginning, go ahead in future with better preparation and better practice.

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE (Jhalawar): I rise today to support and welcome this historic Bill. I was going to start in a manner in which I could get the attention of the House but the wind has been taken out of my sail by respected Prof. Ranga's speech. He began by first saying that he was not too happy with the Bill but ended as I expected he would saying that his Party's full support would be behind the Bill. there can be no two arguments about the position taken by the whole House. After years of struggle the end of the road is near and I congratulate the Government for having come forward with this Bill. Little-little holes will be certainly picked in it but the bare structure is going to be a treat to all of us. Fleshing it out will take some time but with the good wishes; with the feeling that we have to go out and do it, I think

we will be able to achieve what we have today set out to do.

Sir, for five years I have represented a constituency which was famous I would say rather infamous for sale of women. In 1981 it hit the headlines with an article by Mr. Ashwani Sareen all the members sitting here would probably remember- 'Sale of Kamla'. Putting it in his words:

[*Translation*]

The sale was made in Dholpur, the goods were delivered in Morena.

[*English*]

From 1981 till today I think we have come a long way. We had Anshu Saxena *kand*, the Ulhasnagar *kand*, a *kand* in which three young girls hung themselves because they felt their parents would not be able to afford their marriages. Parents connived very recently to kill their four young girls. Such a wide gamut of emotion and all because of our social structure. This particular thing that took place in Dholpur was backed definitely by elements which have political overtones. We fought with the Government for five years but came to anught. Shortly after that in the Rajasthan Assembly there was a big furore and I think my friends in the opposition benches are very well versed with it where for 60 years no *baraat* arrived in a special village of a particular political person in Bayana. Investigations were made and it was discovered that all female girl children born in the family were throttled to death. This had happened not even one and a half years ago. With a situation like this, it is imperative that we take the kind of steps that we are going to take today.

yesterday Mrs. Uma Gajapathi Raju made a very spirited attack on the Government. I do not think she really meant it. Because I am sure she feels as strongly as all of us seated here today feel. She spoke about Indira Mahila Rozgar Yojana, Indira Mahila Awas Yojana. I have just toured my constituency. I had been to many other places

in Rajasthan. *Awas* is certainly put up. But in the *adivasi* areas that I visited I saw that the *Seharias* are built just outside this particular Indira *Awas* Yojana. I asked them: Why they were doing this? They said: It was the Government who had done this. But we built our huts outside and we put storage inside because God knows when the structure will cave in. I realise today that what the Government aims to do will go much further being than election stunts and gimmicks. In this, I think we are all one. Certain amendments will have to be made. But having spoken to both the Ministers, I am assured of the fact that, there will be teeth to this particular body and I am assured of the fact that this body will be able to take care independently of things which get politicised and which sometimes even do not see the light of the day.

There is a particular Bangladeshi Transit Camp in Dholpur. The women are brought there but I do not think that anybody here or in India knows about their existence. They have been raped in that area by the police personnel and you would not believe it that the Inquiries have been headed over to the are done by the police. In a situation like this where can you expect fairplay. I do realise that today, we have taken a historic step and in this no politics should prevail. In this, I think, both sides are going to be one and I feel that if we rise above all these political considerations and lend our shoulders to this, then there will be many a home that will be happy this evening and many a home will be happy tomorrow after reading about it in the newspapers. I have yet to think of all those who tried to oppose this Bill. Today, they have to go to their homes and have to face their wives, their daughters and all other lady members.....

SHRISONTOSH MOHANDDEV (Tripura West): Girl friends also!

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: I won't say anything about that.

On behalf of my party, I do support this Bill and I hope to see that this particular Commission do a lot for the upliftment of

women in times to come.

[Translation]

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA (Jaipur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the National Commission for Women Bill which has been presented in the House by the National Front Government, is undoubtedly a commendable step. But through you, I would like to submit that this Bill should be uniformly applicable to the women of all sections, castes and religions residing in India. The condition of women in India has been really very pitiable. It has been said:

"Abla jeevan hai Teri yahi kahani
Anchal mein hai doodh aankhon mein
pani".

However, now the situation has changed and now there is an awareness among them which has found an expression in the following lines:

"Hum Bharat ki naari hein
Phool nahin chingari hein

The environment has totally changed and fortunately the current year is being observed as an International Women Year and the United Nations is also celebrating it as the International Girl Child Year. In the 25 report of the United Nations it has been suggested that this year should be celebrated as the International Girl Child Year in this regard. I would like to submit that women should be respected in India. Here she has been called 'Ardhnareeshwar'. However the ratio of men and women in India is 1000:933 which amply symbolises the atrocities being committed on women. Their role as a house wife and their busy household routine is generally undermined. I would like to submit that as compared to twenty three crore employed male there is only four and a half crore employed women and out of them four crore women are working in unorganised sector. As regards the payment of wages, they are not treated at par with men. India is the land of Goddess Durga' and 'Saraswati'.....

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Bhargavaji, there is a large number of members who want to speak. It will be very difficult, if you start delivering a general speech.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA: I will not deliver a general speech, rather I would give suggestions.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Kindly speak on the provisions of the Bill.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA: My only submission is that it is the land of Sita Savitri and Ahilya. Here I would like to make certain points and wish that the hon. Minister should take them as suggestions.

My first suggestion is that obscene posters displaying body organs and vulgar postures of women for the purpose of publicity, should be banned. Women should be shown gracefully dressed in sarees. My second suggestion is that the laws dealing with the killing and burning of new born girl infants and foeticide etc. should be strictly implemented and provision of death penalty should be there for those who violate such laws. My third submission is that law demanding equal pay for equal work should also be implemented strictly. Besides, that in view of the detailed inquiry in respect of the exploitation in the widow Ashrams at Vrindavan, Varanasi and Puri and the religious sentiments of the people, there should be adequate provision of boarding and lodging at these places by the Government. Another submission is that a defiant share of the salary of the husband should be kept reserved for his wife in case she is undertaking the household routine and it should be exempted from income tax. Similarly, as a sixth suggestion I would like to submit that a provision should be made to protect the salary of the working women from being squandered by their idle husbands. In the same way, emphasis should be laid on more recruitment of women in the police and thus more women police-stations should be set up. Moreover, a definite per-centage of seats in Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha and Legislative Assemblies should be reserved for women

candidates. I would also like to submit that a women should have a definite share in the property of her husband or in laws.

In the end I would like to submit through you that proper attention is not being paid to the health of women particularly in rural areas. It should also be taken care of with that submission. Now I move to place the Bill to elicit public opinion of all sections, communities and religions in respect of the National Commission for Women. I hope that the hon. Minister would take all these creative suggestions into consideration.

[English]

SHRIMATI BASAVA RAJESWARI (Bellary): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir: I welcome the National Commission for Women Bill. According to me, this is a beginning, and a small piece of legislation. This Bill was brought very hurriedly during the fag-end of the last Session; and there was criticism from the other side that the Congress members were not interested in this measure. I do not agree with it. I was present on that day.

Another charge was made by my friend Mrs. Geeta Mukherjee today that no Congress MP had participated in the discussion which took place under the chairmanship of the hon. Sabyasachi Mukherjee. Even though we were not present, we did give our valuable suggestions.

The problem differs from State to State, from family to family and from person to person. By enacting this Bill, I don't think we are going to solve the age-old problems, even atrocities on women and so many other things which are being practised as on today.

The hon. Minister of Broadcasting is here. I would like to put a straight question to him. Are you satisfied with the way the advertisements are being given on the TV? Is it our culture? Do you want to encourage such types of advertisements-ladies who are naked? Another type of advertisement is

being given with a cigarette. You are giving this advertisement when the whole world is prohibiting smoking because it amounts to cancer. There is an advertisement of a lady with a cigar. Is it our culture? I think you have not seen such kind of advertisements. Do you want to see an advertisement where an Indian lady should smoke? Is it not shameful on our part not to have prohibited such advertisements? You have not done it.

The Congress people also had not arrested such things. The Father of the Nation, Gandhiji, had given us equal status. I think you have forgotten that. Nobody has mentioned his name. I am very unfortunate today. I thought some of my friends will remember him for having given us equal status. Because of him only we are here today. Otherwise, I do not know where we would have been.

There was a great reformer in Karnataka. I think Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra people know him very well. He was a great reformer in the 12th century. His name was Basava. He had given equal opportunities to women. He had asked women to participate in parliamentary elections. He had written vachanas in regional languages. He was the first person to introduce social reforms, untouchability, equality and other things. Our women are not coward. They participated in the freedom movement. There are women like Rani Jhansi, Laxmibai and Chennamma who fought against the Britishers. We are not for reservation. But you have to find out ways and means how to remove atrocities on women.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: One minute. I have got a long list with me.

SHRIMATI BASAVA RAJESWARI: Please don't disturb me. There are many laws passed by the Parliament on child marriage, re-marriage, suppression of immoral traffic in women and so on. How far are they effective? How many people know about those laws? Is the child marriage not being practised now and so on? How many dowry deaths are taking place every day? Now I will

read the written reply given by the hon. Minister with regard to the increase in the dowry deaths. I am not pleading for this Government or the previous government. But the point is that the dowry deaths are increasing every day. You have to realise about it. In a written reply, he said as follows:

"7,767 rape cases were reported in 1987, 8,706 in 1988 and 8,207 in 1989. The number of kidnappings was 9,016 in 1987, 9,633 in 1988 and 9,202 in 1989.

The number of molestations totalled 16,292 in 1987, 17,836 in 1988 and 18,437 in 1989, while dowry deaths numbered 1,912 in 1987, 2,209 in 1988 and 3,829 in 1989..."

These figures were given by the hon. Minister in the Rajya Sabha. It shows that there is an increase in the number of dowry deaths in spite of our enactment of the Bill. Therefore, what I mean to say is that these Bills or enactments which are passed are not going to solve the problem.

16.00 hrs.

This piece of legislation provides for only five members.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have taken ten minutes already. Please conclude.

SHRIMATI BASAVA RAJESWARI: Do you mean to say that five members sitting will understand the problems of various States? I will mention my own State and Maharashtra. I do not know why the Deputy Speaker is not so kind enough. I am referring to his State, Maharashtra. The Devadasi system is prevalent there also. If I give the number, I think he will be surprised. I think that in the Northern States this system is not there. It is there in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu. It is a very very predominant system. If necessary, I will give the paper cutting. In Belgaum it is there, near his constituency. There are 4700 families which are involved in this Devadasi system and in Bijapore 4600 families are

[Smt. Basava Rajeswari]

there. In my constituency, in one village 60 per cent of the families are adopting this Devadasi system. In Dharwar and other places there are some thousands. Girls who have been taken away at the ages of four and 20 years, to be made Devadases, number 3000. Are we not ashamed of this, that in this society such things are happening? All these things should be taken up. Therefore, I have said in the beginning that the problems differ from State to State.

There is one community where at the time of delivery the ladies are thrown into the desert. They are kept in a hut, with nobody to look after her, nobody to give her food. Food will be thrown from outside. Only after ten days she will be seen. That is the fate of a lady even now-a-days.

If you go to Tamil Nadu, we find that the moment a girl is born the mother is asked to murder her by putting poison or throwing some paddy seeds in her mouth because of the dowry problem. Therefore, I said that the problems differ from State to State.

16.02 hrs.

[DR. THAMBI DURAI *in the Chair*]

My suggestion will be that we must constitute an expert body, drawn from the Members of both the Houses, which should go from State to State, find out the problems, collect statistics and assess the amount which is required to rehabilitate such families. Unless we rehabilitate them we are not going to do anything through this piece of legislation. Two crores of rupees which you have provided in this Bill will not be sufficient. In Karnataka there is a rehabilitation programme for Devdasi. How far is it going to success, we cannot say. If you say that 25 ladies are to be looked after, what is the idea? Who is going to look after their families? Who is going to look after their children? How are you going to rehabilitate those families? How are you going to make them economically forward? All these things are to be looked

after. Therefore, we should try to constitute an expert committee which should go from State to State, meet the voluntary organisations, collect data and find out how much money is required to rehabilitate them or for such programmes. How are you going to eradicate such evils of our society? How are you going to eradicate such atrocities on women? What about legal aid? There are courts but who will listen to the problems of the women? Nobody will listen.

Yesterday, my sister told that it is a man-made society. Yes, it is a man-made society because nobody will come forward to look after the women, no legal aid will come forward. Even if it comes, will it be for those people who need it?

Yesterday our Prime Minister was kind enough to intervene. I was just listening to him hoping that he will announce that while according to the Mandal Commission Report reservations were going to be given for backward classes, for women 5 per cent reservation will be there.

There are so many ladies who are unemployed. Many of them are educated. Why do they not get jobs? Make them independent, Madam Minister, so that we should not every time obey the men. If women become independent they will have the voice to plead their case. We should give them good environment. As I told you, they are, in the beginning, the *Gurus*. The nation has to be brought up by them. Children have to be taught. What is the environment which you are creating? If you go to the villages you will find the husband beating the women for getting money to drink. That is the environment which is there so far. That is the environment which we do not want to continue. I do not think we should allow that environment to be continued. What is happening? The women are suffering for want of the proper environment. Therefore, I would suggest that each State should have a representative and there should be a district committee at the grassroots level, and committees should be set up for this purpose. And on that, the representatives from

various institutions like the women's organisations should be represented.

We are forgetting the women who are working in the fields. About 80 per cent of the ladies who are working in the fields are not represented here. They are not getting equal wages. What are you going to do with those ladies who are not getting equal wages even after they do equal work as men?

They are accusing Congress-I and saying that Congress-I have not done anything. Who has given this perspective plan for women? Is it not going to economically benefit the women? Who has nationalised the banks? Are our ladies not getting loans from the banks under IRDP because of the nationalisation? Are they not purchasing machines, cows, bulls, etc.? They are doing many things. Are you not happy about that? Our ex-Prime Minister has brought Panchayati Raj Bill. Did he not give reservation for ladies? Does it not show that we want to involve ladies at the grassroot level? We wanted to bring them in the mainstream.

By bringing this piece of legislation and constituting a Commission with five members, do you mean to say that our rural ladies will get the benefits? They will not get the benefits

With all these remarks, I welcome the Bill. It is only a beginning. I hope that the hon. Minister will take suitable measures.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Kumari Uma Bharati

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI HARISH RAWAT (Almora): Sir, I am on a point of information.

[*Translation*]

Treasury benches are completely vacant.

[*English*]

I want to know from the Parliamentary

Affairs Minister whether his Members have gone to attend the Kisan rally... (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

KUMARI MAYAWATI (Bijnor): Mr. Chairman, Sir, today at about 2.00 P.M. i.e. just after the lunch hours was over, I met the Hon'ble Speaker and I submitted to him that yesterday, at 4.00 P.M. a discussion was held on atrocities which was left incomplete and even in today's list of business it has been placed in the end. He said that yesterday it was taken at 4.00 P.M. so today also the time of discussion on it will be the same. Now at what time the matter will be taken up. It is a very serious matter and you propose to take it up in the last. It should be given priority. (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We are taking the items according to the Agenda. We will consider your request after this Bill. You should have raised this issue in the morning itself.

[*Translation*]

(*Interruptions*)

KUMARI MAYAWATI: Mr. Speaker had assured that it would be the first item in today's Agenda. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI R N RAKESH (Chail). Mr. Chairman, Sir, we would like to know as to when the matter of atrocities will be taken up. (*Interruptions*)

KUMARI MAYAWATI: It is such an important issue. I have met the speaker at about 2.00 P.M.... (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Madam, I do not know what has transpired between you and the Speaker. I am going according to the Agenda. If all of you feel that after finishing this

Bill this discussion can be taken up I have no objection.

[*Translation*]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT: The Bill being discussed is also very important. Discussion on SC and ST is being held under Rule 193. Our Members want that the discussion of SC and ST should have its effect even outside this House. Hon'ble members feel that if the discussion takes place after 6.00 P.M. it wouldn't have its effect outside. So the discussion should take place at proper time and it should be given priority in the list of Business. That is my contention. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI JAG PAL SINGH (Hardwar): We have already asserted that the discussion should be held at 2.00 P.M., but it was listed for 4.00 P.M. (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: Yesterday, these Members did not want to sit till late at night which was necessary to complete the discussion on atrocities on SC and STs. Therefore, I do insist that the discussion on the National Commission for Women Bill must be completed today and pass the Bill today... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR (Barackpore): They have taken a decision not to allow any Bill to be passed. (*Interruptions*)

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. UPENDRA): The discussion under rule 193 regarding atrocities on SC and ST in the country is very important. That is why when the demand was made, we immediately agreed for it. The Business Advisory Committee allotted time and it started yesterday itself. (*Interruptions*)

In fact I made a fervent appeal yesterday that we should sit late and finish the discussion yesterday on atrocities on Sched-

uled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the country. But the Members opposite refused to sit late yesterday. And today, as you know, the rules are there that only on the completion of the Government Business you can sit late and finish the discussions on atrocities on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. I am not refusing that we should not take up. This is a very important Bill and even after three days we have not been able to complete one legislation. I appeal to the hon. Members to complete the discussion on this Bill... (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

KUMARI MAYAWATI: Yesterday we had agreed not to continue discussion on it after 6.00 P.M., then why is it being taken up to day in the evening. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI R.N. RAKESH: You may get the discussion initiated on atrocities on Harijans just now and direct to conclude it by 6.00 P.M. After that we will be ready to discuss all the matters on the List of Business.

KUMARI MAYAWATI: We are ready to take the National Commission for women Bill after 6.00 P.M. and will sit late night to pass it.

SHRI JAG PAL SINGH: Due to this only we did not take it after 6.00 P.M. Mr. Speaker had assured us to take it today.

[*English*]

You can take up the Government Business after 6.0' clock.

[*Translation*]

He said that he will think over it and the discussion can be allowed after 2 O'clock. We had raised the same objection yesterday that discussion on such an important issue cannot take place at night.

SHRI P. UPENDRA: This has not been done deliberately. This is the rule. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAM LAL RAHI (Misrikh): It is an important matter. So it should not continue after 6 O' clock. If it is to be taken up after 6 O'clock, we should have finished it, yesterday. (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRIMATIGEETA MUKHERJEE: The Bill on National Commission for Women must be passed today. Among the Harijan women those belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are the most oppressed. Therefore, we want that both the items should be taken. But, we want that this Bill should be passed and then the next item should be taken up.

[*Translation*]

KUMARI MAYAWATI: The women were molested in Agra, is it not sort of atrocity?

SHRI JAG PAL SINGH: We are ready to cooperate to cover all the items on the list of Business if the Hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs assures us that it will be taken up tomorrow after the lunch hour. We do not have any objection to that.

[*English*]

SHRI P. UPENDRA: Sir, I have no objection to his suggestions. But, what I want to say is that still I do not know how many speakers are left. There are two alternatives as he suggests. We can finish the Government Business today and tomorrow we can immediately take up the discussion on the atrocities on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the country.

SHRI JAG PAL SINGH: We agree.

[*Translation*]

KUMARI MAYAWATI: Please reply in Yes or No. It will not be so as well think it (*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAM LAL RAHI: Tomorrow it is

day of Private Members' Business. May be that it is not taken up even tomorrow.

[*English*]

SHRI P. UPENDRA: Sir, two alternatives are there. A few Members are there to speak. We can take the vote on this Bill at Five O' Clock and start the discussion on this immediately after that and we can go on with this. Discussion or whatever they want we can do. That is one way. I do not know how many speakers are there. (*Interruptions*) Sir, one minute. At Five O'clock we will take the vote on this Bill. After that for one hour or one-and-a-half hours or two hours of whatever they want, we can discuss this. (*Interruptions*) Only two hours are left now. This will be over by Five O' clock.

SHRI P. KUMARAMANGALAM (Salem): You see the time now.

SHRI P. UPENDRA: You don't see the time. You see the Bulletin. Only two hours are allotted for the discussion on this Bill today. Two hours will be over by Five O' clock we are entitled to take the vote at Five O' clock. If it is not over and if they want more time for discussion on this, I have no objection, let it continue. After Six O'clock take the vote or whatever it is. Then tomorrow we can continue discussion on atrocities on Scheduled Castes and Tribes. You decide it, Sir.

[*Translation*]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT: As the hon. Minister has stated here, we also want that this Bill which is under discussion should be passed today itself. In view of the significance of this Bill many of our lady members and other hon. Members of this House want to participate in it. Their desire should not be curbed. I would like to suggest you to restrain your Members from participation in it if you want to pass this Bill immediately. You may ask them not to participate in the discussion although we want them to participate in it. But since you are in a hurry, so we shall cooperate with you in getting it passed. However to give this impression that the

[Sh. Harish Rawat]

Congress Party did not like to sit or to talk on it yesterday, is not justified, as we wanted to pass it yesterday so do we want to day. (*Interruptions*)

We had pointed out even yesterday that we not only wanted a discussion on atrocities on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes but also wanted the public outside this House know about it through media, so that it may have its pact on them. That is why we wanted the discussion on it at a proper time so that the media may cover it and give it its due weightage to it. In this regard we had suggested that it should be given priority on the List of Business which has not been hitherto given. Hon. Minister... (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI P. UPENDRA: That is the rule, we accept it and we have been doing that.

[*Translation*]

SHRI JAG PAL SINGH: Upendra Ji as per our traditions there should be a discussion on atrocities on the Harijans for four hours but it has not been there.

SHRI P. UPENDRA: We shall do that.

[*English*]

I am prepared for that. We have not refused it.

[*Translation*]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT: In the case of the S.C. and S.T. it is its importance instead of the tradition that is kept in view of the time of allocation of time for discussion and that can be decided through a mutual agreement by the House. But the list of Business is prepared with your advice and the business conducted accordingly. So you have put this item in the last to which Kumari Mayawati and the Members of our party had objected. I would therefore like to request you to give

priority to this matter as a via media and to allow our hon'ble lady Members to participate in the ongoing discussion on it. But tomorrow it should be given priority in the list of business.

SHRI P. UPENDRA: But the Bill on women has to be finished today itself.

SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Please do not look at it from a political angle and leave your habit of blaming others. You are the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and you want our cooperation so you should realise it that it would be very difficult for the Congress Party to tolerate it if you continue to blame us in all matters all the time.

SHRI JAG PAL SINGH: But the cases of atrocities will have to be taken... (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI LOKANATH CHOUDHARY (Jagatsinghpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, generally when a discussion takes place under rule 193 its duration is two hours and yesterday two hours were given. But when many Members wanted to speak, it is this side which wanted that they should be given time. On that condition also it was felt that it will be taken up today after 6 p.m. They also said like that. (*Interruptions*). By shouting you are only obstructing the proceedings of the House. (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT: You may be an advocate but try to behave in such a way as to help your clients but you are causing harm to them instead. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI (Kota): Yesterday only the six Members of the Congress Party were present at the time of discussion on this subject in this House. It proves that the Congress Party is not serious about it. (*Interruptions*)

KUMARI MAYAWATI: As some of the

responsible Members sitting beside me have just pointed out that under rule 193 there should have been a discussion only for two hours on the atrocities on Harijans but more than two hours have been fixed for the same. I would like to tell the hon. Members that the day... (*Interruptions*) Please listen to me first. (*Interruptions*) On the 7th itself i.e. on the first day of the current session of the House, I had requested the hon. Speaker to allow a discussion on this important issue in the House and ask the Hon'ble Prime Minister of the Home Minister to come out with a statement on this incident in the House. I had stressed on taking up this issue on the 7th itself. Even at the time of two-hours discussion on this issue the BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY was completely ignored yesterday. Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you I would tell Shri P. Upendra if he makes a promise after consulting his supporting parties of passing the Bill on the Commission for Women at 5 O' clock exactly today as he has just stated himself... (*Interruptions*)... Please just listen... (*Interruptions*) This Bill on the Commission for women may be taken up tomorrow if passing this Bill at 5 O' Clock is not possible because of the liking of your supporting parties for a longer discussion on it. I would, therefore, request you first to take up for discussion the issue of the atrocities on the Harijans as it is comparatively more serious and important nature because even today in this rainy season thousands of persons having left their villages are lying in open under the sky on the outskirts of Agra city. (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have already listened to you. Do not waste the time. Please take your seat.

(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI R.N. RAKESH: Mr. Chairman, These hon. Members who are of the view that there is a provision only for a two hours the discussion on atrocities on Harijans

should come to realise that matter of atrocities on Harijans is not an ordinary issue. The Harijans have remained a suppressed class in this country for centuries. They will never get justice in this country if they continue to be ridiculed by a few persons of this country particularly those belonging to the majority community. We have come to this House with the sole objective of providing justice to all sections of the society. We have to understand the problems of the Harijans to find a solution to those problems. I hope that our friends will not adopt such an attitude on this issue.

[*English*]

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE (Dumdum): Sir, if we accept Shri Harish Rawat's argument for catching the eyes and ears of the media, from tomorrow Parliament will not sit beyond 2.00 p.m. because after that the media is not available. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA (Dhandhuka): The atrocities on the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is a matter of great sorrow but instead of expression of our grief on it an atmosphere of making fun of it has been created. Yesterday at the time of discussion on the Price rise the Congress Party Members remained sitting till eight p.m. but a discussion on atrocities on Harijans was yet to start, they got the House adjourned while we requested them for holding a discussion on the atrocities on the Harijans.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do not waste the time of the House.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please, order.

May I request the Members to cooperate with the Chair? If you go on discussing like this, I cannot conduct the proceedings of the House smoothly.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VERMA: The atrocities of the SCs and STs is a matter of great sorrow but instead of explosion of our grief on it, here on atmosphere of making fun of it has been created. Yesterday, the time of discussion on the price rise the Congress Party Members remained sitting till eight P.M., but when a discussion on atrocities on Harijans was yet to start they got the House adjourned while we requested them to hold a discussion on the atrocities on Harijans.

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will not allow anybody except the Minister.

SHRI P. UPENDRA: I have already announced that we would give prominence to this item tomorrow and let the National Commission for Women Bill be passed today. That is my request again.

[*Translation*]

KUMARI MAYAWATI: Please tell us at what time it will begin tomorrow.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It will be given priority tomorrow. The Minister has also said about it. The hon. Members have already accepted it.

[*Translation*]

KUMARI MAYAWATI: I would like to suggest that it should be started at 2 O' clock. If they do not start it at 2 O' clock, we will not allow the business of the House to run. (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat.

Kumari Uma Bharati.

[*Translation*]

KUMARI UMA BHARATI (Khajuraho):

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to welcome the Women Commission Bill which has been brought forward by the new Government. Here I would like to make one thing clear that India should be developed in a way in which there should not be any need to make special provision for anybody by way of reservation as has been done for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes or setting up a Women Commission or implementing the Mandal Commission report. When we feel the need of such a Commission, it is indicative of the fact that somewhere or the other this section is being exploited in the society and in order to remove these disparities these special methods are being adopted. While expressing my support to the Bill, I would never like to agree that by setting up of a Women Commission, any obligation is being done to the women. Rather, it is an atonement of the offence or mistake committed for centuries to underestimate the women strength, due to mental deformation. No new power is being conferred on the women through this Bill. The women are themselves the source of power. Of course, due to some social conditions they have not been able to assess their own strength. On the other hand people's psyche has taken a shape in which women strength has been underestimated. Otherwise, even today though not physically, the women are far superior to men in terms of their mental strength and emotional values. I would like to cite an example... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA (South Delhi): We saw it in Mayawatiji... (*Interruptions*)

KUMARI MAYAWATI: I would like to thank Madan Lal Khuranaji who recognised my power... (*Interruptions*)

AN HON MEMBER: He saw the "Shakti" and not the 'Maya'... (*Interruptions*)

KUMARI UMA BHARATI: I would like to tell the hon. Members that there is no harms in making amusement during the course of a discussion on any of the subjects, whether it is on Scheduled Castes or Schedule Tribes

or Woman Commission and sense of humour is treated as a good trait under the Parliamentary etiquettes. But this should not cross the limit beyond such an extent which it reduces the gravity of the subject under discussion. I have been observing this thing since yesterday when the discussion on Women's Bill was started. Yesterday also, during the course of discussion on this Bill I found that amusement among the Members reached such a stage that I was totally stunned by that. I was surprised to see this tendency in the members. What do the hon. Members want to prove by this type of humour? Do they have a parochial and deformed culture about women? I would like to make an appeal to all the hon. Members... (Interruptions)... Please let me make my speech in brief and conclude... (Interruptions)... As regards making amusements, we can find some other time for this. You can also go to the outer Lobby, cut jokes and laugh at them. I was going to submit that even today the women are more stronger than men emotionally and intellectually, excepting the physical strength. In terms of physical strength, he who is physically stronger, will be regarded strong. But this happens in animal world. It is not applicable to men. In human society, who is stronger, intellectually and emotionally, will be regarded stronger and this thing can be noticed in women. For example, when a woman becomes a widow, we can see her bravely fighting her agony and earning her livelihood, but when a man becomes a widower, everybody knows, how pitiable becomes his condition. It needs no elucidation... (Interruptions)

SHRI JAG PAL SINGH: There is no need for you to say about both... (Interruptions)

KUMARI UMA BHARATI: Let me make it clear to you. There are medicines for various diseases like headache, cancer and fever etc. in the Chemist's shop. But it is not binding that the Chemist should also experience these ailments. There is no need for him to undergo these experiments. I was making a submission that through this Bill

the women would be given some opportunities so that they could realise their inner strength. But this Bill will not give any benefit to woman as long as uneducated women living in the villages do not come to know about the introduction of such a Bill for their welfare. I would like to tell the hon. Minister who introduced this Bill to chalk out such a programme or revolve such a scheme through which this message could be reached to the uneducated women living in the villages that the new Government has given them so much of rights. Because, they are the women who are actually being exploited. They have no knowledge of their rights. After the introduction of this Bill in the Parliament, some women expressed their apprehension to me that even after the passing of this Bill, it will take time for the Indian women to come at par with the women of the U.S.A. In this connection, I would like to tell the people that even before the Bill was not brought forward, India is the only country in the world where, I can say with pride, the women were given the highest respect in the society. The respect an Indian women enjoyed as mother, as sister and as daughter cannot be seen anywhere else in the world. Women in our society have all along been commanding high respect. For example, Lord Ram's birth day is celebrated only once in a year. The 'Janmashtami' is also observed only once in a year. Similarly, 'Shivratri' is also observed only one in the year. But the 'Navratri' is celebrated for 9 long days and it is also observed twice in a year. This is the respect being given to Indian women. It is nothing new in the Indian culture.

I appears to me that with advent of Western culture in India, our women are being looked down upon with more parochial look. I also feel that with the passing of this Bill, women who have no knowledge of their power, will enjoy some rights. As for me, I am of the view that the women are not being given nay powers through this Bill, rather they are being given an opportunity to realise their inner strength. This Bill will give them respect for which they were anxious.

Finally, I would like to submit to the hon.

[Kumari Uma Bharati]

Minister that clinics have been opened in big cities like Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay, Lucknow and Kanpur where expectant mothers undergo sex-determination tests. Earlier, there was a belief that people living in villages suffer from blind beliefs and are tied with their old traditions. But what will you call the city dwellers, doctors and engineers of Delhi whose wives undergo sex determination tests in such clinics. When they come to know that the child is a female, they abort the pregnancy. I am of the view that degrees of such doctors should be snatched away. What is the use of these people being educated, I would like to make an appeal to the hon. Minister to enact stringent laws so that the clinics which are conducting sex determination tests could be given severe punishment. If this is not done, the exploitation done to women in the cities will far exceed their sisters in the villages.... (Interruptions)... I also agree to the view that the widows the cities who go for a second marriage are not looked down upon but in villages it is a reprehensible act.... (Interruptions)... The village women keep a veil and put veils over their heads. Even though they keep veil, they make their husbands work according to their wishes and also they manage the affairs of the whole household. On the contrary, the women in the cities like Calcutta arrange sex determination tests in their own houses to know whether the child is male or a female. I call these women very parochials having mean outlooks. These women are a stigma on the country. If the women do not respect the women, how can we expect that they will be respected by men.

I would, therefore, like to submit that the Bill which has been brought forward by a women Minister will give light to women living in dark. They will come to know that they have been given some rights through this Bill.

With these words I conclude.

SHRI HAMENDRA SINGH BANERA

(Bhilwara): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the National Commission for women Bill was introduced in this House on 22nd May. Thereafter, a Conference was organised by the Government on 28th July. The Conference was attended by the leading women activists representing different women organisations all over the country. This Bill was discussed in detail in this Conference and in the light of the recommendations made in the Conference, the amendments have been moved by the hon. Minister in the House. I listened to the speech delivered by hon. Shri Harish Rawat and it seems that he has not gone through the provisions of the Bill and the proposed amendments thereon moved by the Minister. Several other hon. Members have also pointed to some drawbacks in the Bill. I think that it is a revolutionary step taken by the National Front Government. Earlier, during the period of Congress rule, many Commissions and Committees had been set up for the welfare of women, but no concrete steps were taken by them. This is for the first time that the National Front Government have taken this revolutionary step by introducing this Bill in the House in pursuance of the promises made in its manifesto.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, originally a five member Commission was provided in the Bill and a provision was also made that women belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes might be co-opted in the Commission. Amendments have been moved with a view to increasing the number of members of the Commission from five to seven and ensuring inclusion of at least one member belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. As such, a concrete shape has been given to this Commission. I thank the hon. Minister for bringing this Bill which is a welcome step.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, while participating in the discussion on this Bill, the hon. Members said that constitutional status be given to this Commission as has been given to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Commission. I agree to this view, but it is still a step-stone laid by the Government, even then it is a powerful body because it has

statutory status. I would like to thank the Minister for it. Though the Central Government do not interfere in enquiry of the cases of atrocities committed on women in the States, but a provision has been made in this Bill that Commission would be empowered to make enquiry into atrocities committed on women in any State and submit report to the concerned State Government which would examine it. It would be obligatory on the part of the State Government to lay the report of the Commission on the Table of the State Legislative Assembly. This provision has enhanced the power of Commission. It has also been provided that the full report of the Commission will be laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha.

Thus this Commission is a powerful body. We should not doubt the intention of the National Front Government that this Bill has been brought to derive any political mileage.

It has been provided in the Bill that recommendations of this Commission would be kept in mind while taking major policy decision in regard to women either by the State Government or by the Central Government. Thus, a concrete shape has been given to this Commission under the Bill. I would like to urge upon the Minister to do yet one more thing. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I agree with Kumari Uma Bharati who said that women are seen in our society as a wife only. I would like to submit that woman should be seen as mother, sister and daughter also. A mother is an idol of affection in Indian culture and society. As mother, she commands high respect in the family. I fully agree with Kumari Uma Bharati that it is due to influence of western culture that women members of this august House have formed opinion that women are not respected in the Indian Society and justice is not being done to them. But you go to the village and cities, then you will feel the regard for mothers, sisters and daughters in the family. We should not blame entire men-folks in Indian society for the scuffles in the families

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to offer a

suggestion for the consideration of the hon. Minister through this august House. Whenever question of writing parentage of a child arises, only father's name is mentioned. In order to give respect to women in the society, a law should be made or the existing law should be amended so that if a persons wants to write the name of his mother in place of his father for purpose of parentage, he could do so. Once again, I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister for bringing this Bill. The massive support this Bill received in the House is an indicative of importance attached to the Bill.

SHRIMATI VIDYA CHENNUPATI (Vijaywada): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the National Commission for Women Bill. But drawbacks in the Bill should not be politicised. I listened to the submissions made in the House by several hon. Members for the last two days. This Bill has not been taken seriously. Each member wants to politicise it. But it is not proper. I want that a comprehensive Bill should be brought regarding women. The Government should seriously consider to remove the problems faced by the women for the last thousand years. Only then I shall feel that the Government is taking it seriously.

I would like to draw the attention of the House to yet another drawback in the Bill. There is no mention of any time-bound programme in the Bill. A time-bound programme should be drawn for the Commission proposed to set up. I would also like to submit that there are several religion and castes in the country. Provisions of the Bill are not applicable to all religions and castes in the country. This is a major drawback. There are different personal laws for different religions. I would like to know for whom this Bill has been brought forward in the House. All women are equal irrespective of personal laws to which they are guided. They suffer due to personal laws. I would like to submit that Muslims are allowed to have four wives under their personal law. There is no one to check them because it is permissible under their personal law. But the Hindu religion does not allow any one to have more than

[Smt. Vidya Chennupati]

one wife. Of course, there are some tribal communities whose members may have more than one wife. It is said that women have been given equal status in the society, but the fact is contrary to it. Still women are confined to home and hearth. I, therefore, request the hon. Minister to bring a comprehensive Bill. Even then, I support the Bill brought by the hon. Minister in the House as it is a very important Bill.

[English]

Irrespective of caste and creed, this Bill should be applicable for every Indian women.

[Translation]

This should be done. This should be applicable for all women citizens. There should be a Common Civil Code for all citizens of the country as all the women citizens will be benefited from it. I requested the hon. Prime Minister to do this, but no mention has been made in the Bill to this effect. I request that the Common Civil Code be included... (Interruptions) Problems of women should be taken seriously. This is all I want to submit. All women citizens of the country are alike. After independence, a Central Social Welfare Board was also set up by Shri Deshmukh. Urban as well as rural areas were much benefited from that... (Interruptions)

17.00 hrs.

A lot of work has been done for welfare of women by us and a lot is still to be done by us. We should prepare a perspective plan for development of women. A social awakening programme should be launched for those women who are confined to hearth and home and rearing children. Earlier it was Social Welfare Board which was set up to look after the welfare of women a later Welfare Ministry was formed for this purpose. A women welfare department was set up during the time of Shrimati Indira Gandhi. The year 1975 was observed as international

women year in the country. During that year a Women Finance Corporation was set up to provide financial assistance to create employment opportunity for rural women. These were the works which were done by us for welfare of women. We also got the Anti Dowry Bill and Immoral Trafficking Bill passed by the Parliament. We also got a law passed by this very House under which life imprisonment has been provided for committing rape on women. We held discussion with all welfare family organisations, volunteer organisations and other organisations related to women and sought their opinions on the matter. Under the Panchayati Raj Bill, 30 per cent reservation for women was provided. Law against glorification of Sati was passed during the Congress rule. Now you say that nothing was done for welfare of women during the Congress rule. The works referred to above were done during the Congress rule. But a lot of think is yet to be done in this direction. This is a very important subject, but the hon. Members are not taking it seriously. They are interrupting. As regards personal law, there should be a Common Civil Code. A lot of discussion has already taken place on the subject. It seems that the proposed Women Commission will have five Members. I would like to submit that all States should be given representation in the Commission. If it is not possible, this Commission should have 15 members. After that a wing of the Commission should be set up in each State so that women are benefited. To solve the problems of women each State should have a wing of the Commission. Each State should have at least one representative in the Commission. Members of the Parliament are also represented in the Central Social Welfare Board. Therefore, there must be two M.Ps—one from ruling party and other from opposition in the proposed commission. These two M.Ps can represent Lok Sabha. Therefore, I would like to request that this suggestion should also be taken into consideration. I remember that after becoming Minister Usha ji convened a meeting which we had also attended. In the said meeting she had said that one Government should not defame the other Government. It is a very serious matter and we

should think over it because many things have been said about it earlier also but nothing has been done in this direction. Indira Rozgar Yojana and Indira Awas Yojana were introduced for women and it was also said to follow the principle of equal wages to equal work. Besides, in the field of Industry some other programmes relating to women were also formulated. Therefore, it is a programme for social change through law. The Chairman of the National Commission for women should have the power to make appointments or send a person to any state for enquiry, otherwise there will be no use of the commission.

Therefore, I would request the Government to make full endeavour for the welfare of the women. I support this Bill and request the Government to include my suggestion in the Bill.

[English]

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA (Ponnani): Mr. Chairman, Sir, there can be no two opinions on the importance of a Commission for Women.... (Interruptions)... During the last Lok Sabha also, I myself had introduced a Bill in this House for setting up a Commission for Women. The Committee for Private Members' Bills and Resolutions was kind enough to place my Bill in Category 'A' But, unfortunately, despite 'A' classification, the Bill could not come up for discussion. I am sure and I hope that the Commission will have a deep understanding of our society. It is most unfortunate that there is no dearth of such people and there are sections of people who consider it to be a course to be a women. Unfortunately, there is no dearth of such people and there are sections of people who believe that when a person commits an unaccountable number of sins, he is reborn as a women. Most unfortunately, such beliefs are held and that speaks about the status and the need for the improvement in the status of women. It has already been said in the House that medical tests are used to know the gender of the child in the womb of the mother and then there are abortions. In 1982 a survey was conducted in Bombay

and it was found that among 8000 abortions, 7991 were those of the female foetus. Such, therefore, is the nature. And, look at the stark ignorance that we have about the status of women among the various sections of the society, and that is why I say there is need to study the question of status of women in our society.

An hon. Member just before me even went to the extent of referring to the Muslim law, the status of Muslim women in the Muslim law, pointing out that it is regrettable law and so on. That shows the ignorance of the entire situation. The heights to which the Muslim law, the heights to which a women is taken by the Muslim law has been unattained anywhere in the civilized world even today. Let there be a study. I, therefore, come forward to say that let there be a Commission. We will sit down to have a study and Inshaallah, there would be light on every aspect of the subject to dispel the darkness of ignorance.

I am afraid our hapless women are given this hapless Commission, a Commission without any powers. This Commission is expected to investigate even matters concerning atrocities on women. A good thing But, then what a light-hearted and what a reluctant measures it is. The Commission is asked to investigate matters concerning atrocities on women, but then, the rights under the Commission of Inquiry Act are not given to the Commission. A hapless and crippled Commission is being given. That is the grouse, the grievance that I have. We have the experience of the Minority Commission. What a hapless Minority Commission we have! It writes a letter to a Department of the Government and they do not bother to reply and they have said so in their Annual Reports which have been laid on the Table of the House. Let there be a genuine Commission that can redress the grievances of women. The Commission must also have powers itself to take up projects rather than merely study, investigate and give reports. It must be able to take up projects itself for the welfare of women. We have the question of deserted

[Sh. G.M. Banatwalla]

women in our society. We have the question of low level of literacy among our women. The Commission may itself be given power to take up projects for the welfare of our women.

Mr. Chairman Sir, let us look at the various provisions that are there in this Bill. The Chair-person is to be appointed from a panel of eminent persons comprised by the Government in a manner that it may deem fit. Sir, the appointment of the Chairman; the composition of the National Commission is an important thing. It cannot be so easily dismissed. Certain guidelines ought to have been entered here in the Bill itself as to how that panel is going to be constituted by the Central Government. But no light has been thrown on this aspect. It is, therefore, extremely difficult to pronounce about the efficacy of the provision of the Bill when the Bill is not accompanied by the first set of rules to be framed under the Bill. The matter as to how that panel will be prepared from which Chair-person will be selected is not known; is not given in the Bill and the first set of rules are also generally as a matter of procedure not attached to the Bill. Therefore, an important areas which would determine the efficacy of the Bill is totally in darkness.

17.17 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to suggest to the House that whenever a Bill is brought in order to have a proper comprehension of the Bill the first set of rules must always be attached to the Bill. That is the general demand of all those who are interested in the success of the parliamentary democracy in our country and in the rule of law.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Sub-Clause 3 mentions that in case National Commission does not have any member for Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribes then such a member should be appointed. This is a good

provision. I would forcefully make a plea for a similar provision with respect to minorities—i.e. the Muslims the largest minority. Let us discuss their grievances in the National Commission and if there is no Muslims lady in the National Commission then one that enjoys the confidence of the community be there on the Commission. Such a provision also ought to have been there.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are talking of respect to women but this Bill does not even show scant respect for the women Commission. The services of any member of the Commission—the services of the Chair-person—can be terminated at any time by the Government. Some money is given and you march off. This is how we are going to respect the Commission which is to be appointed. We talk of respect, or raising the stature of women but the marching orders we keep with ourselves. A member may be given three months' salary and asked to quit because his or her views may not be palatable or the working may not be agreeable to the Government in power or to any of their crutches. This is not the way, this is not the respect with which the Commission should be treated.

[Translation]

SHRI KAPIL DEV SHASTRI (Sonapat): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, does Shri Banatwalla recognise the right of a wife in here husband's property or not? If he does, he should give amendment to this Bill... (*Inter-rptions*)

[English]

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA (Ponnani): I am for full discussion. I am prepared to discuss *Sati*. I am prepared to discuss the institution of *Devdasi*. I am prepared to discuss all those incidents which you are referring to.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would request Mr. Banatwalla to wait for a moment. He is speaking on this Bill. Please allow him to speak. Do not bring any extraneous mat-

ters and do not try to derail him. If you have any point to make and if you think that you must and must speak, then I will allow you to speak also. There is no point in just disturbing him.

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA: You are under some misunderstanding. They cannot derail me. They have derailed themselves. Anyway, thank you very much.

You look at Clause 5.

How many employees they will have? How many officers they will have? Let the Commission decide the strength of its own staff and let the Commission get whatever staff they want to have. Here, the Government will provide to the Commission such staff as the Government may think it necessary. What a wonderful way? This is a disrespect which we have shown to the Commission.

As I pointed out to you, the powers under the Commissions of Inquiry Act also have not been given to the Commission.

Now, you take the question of Commission making Reports on the status of women. A very causal attitude has been taken under Clause 10 (i). But we are told that the Commission may make periodical reports. Let us not dismiss the matter so lightly. Let us make it incumbent upon the Commission—National Commission for Women—that they must give at least one Report per year on the status of women in our society to this House to be able to discuss the same.

SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARYA (Jadavpur): It is there in the Report. You go through it.

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA: I am not talking about the Annual Report. Please understand the Bill before you even try to derail me. I am not derailed, it is you who are derailed. I am talking of a different Report over here as to how, in a casual manner, the whole thing has been taken up. I am afraid that such a Commission may not be able to

deliver the goods. I wish the Government would have come forward with an effective measure, with a proper concern, with certain appropriate powers to the Commission, to work for the welfare of women.

[*Translation*]

SHRI GUMAN MAL LODHA (Pali): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, "*Yatra naryastu pujiyante remante tatra devata*". Where women is worshipped, gods live there. It is a 'mahamantra' right from the Vedic period in our country. Matri Devo Bhavah Pitra Devo Bhavah—The mother was used to be worshipped as a god. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the debates on the scriptures in "*Yagya-Valkya*" shows as to how many great women were there in India and how much respect, they were enjoying in the society. But unfortunately our social values gradually deteriorated during middle ages and at the time of foreign invasion, atrocities on women were started in the name of their protection. It is most unfortunate thing for us. Even during vedic period women used to enjoy great respect in our society whereas the advanced country like America which has installed 'Statue of liberty' has also given rights to women... (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Lodha, please come to the Bill. Nobody is better qualified, probably, than you in the House, to speak about the provisions of the Bill. No general speech, please.

[*Translation*]

SHRI GUMAN MAL LODHA: Even in U.S.A., which poses itself as the champion of liberty by installing 'Statue of Liberty', women had to struggle for getting right to vote. But it is a matter of pride that in our country efforts have been made for the upliftment of the women and granting them right to vote just after independence but it is most unfortunate thing that injustice was done and atrocities were committed on women by our own society. Just two days

[Sh. Guman Mal Lodha]

ago some youngment of Bodo tribe came to me and gave a list of 66 girls between the age group of 10—16 years with whom the gangrape was committed by the soldiers of Assam Rifles. This is not a lone gangrape case but such incidents are taking place all over the country.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, it is unfortunate that justice is not done to women in any caste or tribe in our country and it is the biggest curse on our society. There are certain areas in our country where female babies are strangled to death soon after they are born. In a family in Beawar in Rajasthan no female child has survived during last 70 year because they were strangled to death immediately after their birth.

Therefore, the present National Commission for women Bill is a revolutionary step and I welcome the Bill and would like to congratulate the ruling party for taking this revolutionary step to provide justice to women in the year which is being celebrated as the year of social justice. Though it is a revolutionary Bill yet there are certain drawbacks in it towards which I would like to draw your attention. These drawbacks are from the constructive view points and not for the sake of criticism. Though it has been agreed to, as has been told to me that this Commission will be give a Constitutional status like Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Commission after making necessary amendment in the constitution, yet until it is done there are certain apprehensions about some sections of the Bill which are very much pinching. The Chairperson of such an important commission can be removed from the post after giving three months notice. Nobody can be removed today like this even under Industrial Disputes Act or under Article 311 of the constitution. It is unfortunate because even a casual labour of a mill or a temporary Government servant cannot be removed from service like this. This section should be changed. Similarly I would also say that section 16 of the Bill is dangerous one. Autonomy is a basic necessity of a

commission so that it may function without any fear or favour. But what has been provided in the Bill is that the commission is bound to follow the directives of the Government. I do not say that integrity of the Central Government is doubtful but the commission must have autonomy and section 16 of this Bill which provides for such provision should be deleted.

Sir, I would also like to say that the Chairperson of the Commission should be a woman and some executive and administrative powers should also be given to the Chairperson because mere making recommendations is not enough.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would also like to say that an effective implementation machinery should be provided to the Commission. I do not agree with the version that appointment of Administrative officers and rules prescribed by the Government will reduce the autonomy of the Commission but I certainly agree that the autonomy of the Commission can only be maintained if the power to remove them from service is not given to the Central Government.

This is another major drawback in the Bill. There are only a few union territories in the country and 95 per cent of the country is divided into different States. Therefore, there should be a provision for constituting Commissions and Sub-Commissions for the States also and they should also be given adequate powers. So long as this arrangement is not made the resolve or the political will manifestation to provide justice to women all over the country cannot be implemented.

Sir, I would like to state another point that not only the acceptance of the report of the Commission is required but also a time bound programme should be formulated for its implementation because reports of the Commission remain in almirahs only.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, an important points has been raised in this House particularly by lady Members that there should be a uniform Civil Code so that rights of women

can be safeguarded. The great founders of our constitution who had sacrificed a lot for the country and remained in the prisons, had provided for Uniform Civil Code under Directive Principles of the Constitution. Then why it happens that a women of the one community is provided maintenance allowance whereas the women of other community are left on the mercy of fate even for her basic requirements. It is stated that section 125 was not applicable on us according to our religious rules and copies of the decision of the Supreme Court on Shahbano case were burnt openly on the roads of Bombay. Just now an hon. Member Shri Banatwalla of Muslim League Party was challenging and saying that women are given maximum respect under their religious rules. If it is a fact, then I would be very happy and we would also learn something from them. But see how they give respect to women, if women go to cinema or do not remain behind purdah or sit in the House in this way, they will be lashed with whips. Is this the way of giving respect? I would like to say that if he throws any challenge, I accept his challenge with the condition that this debate may be televised and good things related to the rights of women in 60th religions should be adopted by both and lot of Indian women should be improved.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to say one more thing that it is our misfortune that our poets and literature have not done any justice to the women, Not only the writers of our country but also Shakeshpere had written in Hamlet.

[English]

"Infidelity, thy name is woman."

[Translation]

The great poet Tulsı Das had written:

Dhol, ganwar, shudra, pashu, nari, ye sab taran ke adhikari."

Shri Maithali Sharan Gupta did not consider women as bold but said:

"Abla jeevan hai tumhari yahi kahani, Aanchal mein hai doodh aur aakhon mein pani."

Similarly, Shri Jalshankar Prasad said "*Nari tum Kewal shraddha ho.*" Alongwith the woman, here rights should also be honoured. But in the case of Mathura the Supreme Court released those persons who raped a woman in prison and a movement was also organised against it in the entire country. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am one of those persons who have given death sentence to those responsible for dowry deaths and death sentence to those responsible for dowry deaths and declared custom of 'Sati' as illegal. You belong to Bombay and you know that in Ulhas Nagar...

MR. DEPUTYSPEAKER: Please speak on the issue only.

SHRI GUMAN MAL LODHA: If we do not express our agony in this House, where else can we express it.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can speak at the time of discussion on atrocities.

SHRI GUMAN MAL LODHA: An incident of pouring kerosene oil and setting on fire a girl of class Xth in broad day light occurred at a school in Ulhas Nagar, her teachers were present there and two constables were also sitting outside. But nobody could save her. I came across a statement wherein the parents of four girls connived in the murder of their daughters because they considered them as a burden unfortunately this happened at Rani in my constituency Pali. A conspiracy was hatched and they were kidnapped and even one girl was murdered, other three girls are in a very depressed state. Their father declared them as illegitimate children. I want to say that parents can be illegitimate not their children.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may please express your views about effectiveness of this Bill and present your amendment, please do not say in regard to other things. Other hon. Members have discussed

this issue and more Members want to speak on.

SHRI GUMAN MAL LODHA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the effectiveness of this Commission can be proved by ensuring the safety of the Chairperson and Members of this Commission. They must be allowed to complete their term of office as is the case of the judges of the High Court and Supreme Court so that they may not be removed from their posts at the whims of any Government or the Minister. This Commission will bring changes in the conditions of women. In addition to its appointments and rules should be made according to a procedure. The powers of appointment of Chairperson should be vested in the President. The President should appoint the Chairperson in consultation with the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and representatives of various women organisations of the country. I would like to say that this appointment should not be made in a casual manner. Suppose a Governor goes to meet the hon. Minister of Home Affairs and he declares it there and then. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, there should be security of service and constitutional status. If it happens, I believe that the National Commission for Women Bill will be written in golden letters in the history of India and all evils of the society like practice of Sati, Dowry deaths, infanticide of girls and abortion of girl babies through sex tests can be eliminated. The Hon. Prime Minister and the hon. Minister have made a declaration that one more Bill will be introduced to give it a constitutional status at the national level. When the Bill for constitutional status and amendment will be introduced. I will make my submission.

[English]

SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN (Ottapalam): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I am glad that you have conceded some rights for men also in this very important and historic Bill.

This Bill has been described as a historic beginning. I would not like to quarrel with you on this. But I would like to say that

we have had several beginnings in the re-form of our society in elevating the rights, condition of women in our country. After all, the Bill itself is primarily for safeguarding the rights given under the constitution-preventing the violation of such rights. Therefore, it is important to remember the historical fact that the founding fathers of our Constitution, and our earlier Parliaments have devoted considerable attention and given a great deal of thought to this vital subject of the status of women in our society. Jawaharlal Nehru used to say quoting Engels that the justness of a society is measured by the status of the women in that society. This was the measure he applied. But the society itself, its own weight, its own evils, its own tradition its own superstitions, had tenaciously held up the efforts of this Parliament and many Governments in implementing the constitutional rights that have been granted to our women.

Nobody can forget the fact how militant orthodoxy had defeated the attempt of Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Ambedkar to pass a Hindu Code Bill in this House. Therefore, what we are facing is not just technical problems. We are facing massive social problems of this country. Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, on this, I would like to say one or two things which may not be technically relevant to this Bill. But we need a proper social environment for the Commission to function efficiently and properly. If in our society, the forces of feudalism, the forces of communalism, the forces of casteism are rampant and aggressively successful, then, I do not think, whatever wonderful mechanism or status you may give to a Commission like this, it would make any impact at all on the actual status of women in this country. We have to search our own hearts and examine our own society where we are going, whether these forces are not in ascendance in this country today, and why are they in ascendance. I do not want to go more into that. It may be getting into politics. But I want to emphasise that this Commission would be completely ineffective if the Government and the society are not able to provide for its functioning an

environment that is a sane, not a retrogressive environment generally because the exploitation of women is not a distinct sphere at all. It is part and parcel of the exploitation of the weaker sections of humanity by the stronger section. It may be by male. I think, it is predominantly by the male section of the society. I believe that most of the ills of our society, whether it is communalism, whether it is casteism, whether it is an upsurge of feudalistic forces in this country, are integrally related to the ill treatment of women in our society. Indeed, I feel that discrimination of women is the highest and the most callous form of discrimination invented by man.

When you think a little bit of it, you would understand that this is not discriminating or illtreating another caste, another community, but it is illtreating, discriminating, doing injustice to your own flesh of your flesh, blood of your blood. If men can discriminate and ill-treat not another nationality, not another caste or another community or another religion but somebody in your own family, then you have to ask what is the psychology, what are the facts behind this discrimination. That is why, I feel that while the Commission should be strengthened in various ways it should be given one important function in coordination with the Government and the society as a whole and that is the function of rousing the conscience of the people of this country in order to deal with this injustice and this massive inequality that is practised. I know that Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee mentioned it. Unless we have a popular movement, a social movement in this country—I think it has to be done with the help of Government, political parties and social organisations—and if such a movement is not generated in order to make this commission and its various functions really effective, we would only be going back happily after passing this Bill, but nothing significant would have happened. I feel that the Commission should be strengthened in status, make it a constitutional body. It should be strengthened in terms of its functions and powers. It should have punitive powers. It should have greater status respectability. And everything, to my mind, will

depend on the kind of people who would be appointed as the members and the Chairpersons of this Commission. We have had numerous commissions in this country. Whether they will be able to act independently and strongly will depend on the persons who is chosen to head the Commission and its members. Therefore, a terrible responsibility rests upon the hon. Minister to appoint these people. I feel that he should not take it upon his own shoulders for making these selections. He should have a high power panel to select them. In this country even Vice-Chancellors are selected by such high power panels. Then why not a statutory commission like this? I believe that the success of this Commission apart from its legal and other aspects, will depend upon the kind of people you appoint as chairperson and as members. We have to rise above political considerations and all other considerations and appoint members and chairpersons who are not only distinguished but who are independent, who are challenging in their independent judgement.

I would just like to say one word more. Rangaji mentioned that today is August 9 i.e. Quit India Movement was declared on this day. Today should be a kind of 'stop male domination movement' day.

I should like to end my remarks by quoting something from Mahatma Gandhi about his own understanding of women, their role in society. I really believe that he was the liberator in modern India of Indian womanhood. I would just quote a few lines which he said about women:

"Women is the companion of man and is gifted with equal mental capacities. She has the right to participate in the minutest details of activities of man and has the same right of freedom and liberty as he. By sheer force of vicious customs, even the most ignorant and worthless men have been enjoying a superiority over women which they do not deserve and ought not to have."

I hope this Commission while trying to

[Sh. K.R. Narayanan]

achieve this purpose also can make its functioning as an effective instrument. I would like to congratulate the Government for bringing this Bill. But as I said, it is not strong enough. We have to go further in strengthening this Commission and making it a kind of galvanising force in our society to eradicate the profoundest evil of our society behind which many of our other evil flourish.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: He has made an historical reference about Nehruji and Ambedkarji facing difficulties. May I inform the House that it is one last signatures collected by women's organisations and handed over to Pandit Nehru which enabled him to pass the Hindu Code Bill.

SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARYA (Jadavpur): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to support and welcome this Bill with the amendments which have been put forward by the hon. Minister, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan. In fact, I myself had placed several amendments to the Bill and I am very glad to notice that these amendments largely coincide with the one brought by the Minister. As a matter of fact, my amendments were based on the consensus which emerged out of the discussions among the different women's organisations and the discussions which these organisations had with the Government and, therefore, I am very glad that this consensus has been reflected in the Government's amendments.

There are a few minor points to which I will come later where this coincidence is not there. But, let me start by saying that we regard the passing of this Bill not as the end of the struggle, but the beginning of a new phase of the struggle for women's rights. As my friend, Shrimati Subhashini Ali, has said earlier, we don't think the Commission to have some magic formula by which it will overnight erase all the problems of women's life, but we regard it as a weapon, a weapon which can be used and which can also be allowed to gather dust. But, it is a weapon not only in the hands of the women's organisa-

tions, the women's movement, it is weapon in the hands of everybody who believes in the principle of human equality.

A lady Member on the Opposition Bench said yesterday that this Bill, when made into an Act, may lead to confrontations between the Government and the Commission. I think she is quite right. Such confrontations would be there and these confrontations would be a part of a democratic process. We are thankful to the Government that they have risen to the occasion and they have take these opportunities for discussions and confrontations... (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Member over there should not stand like that. You are just showing your back to the Chair, which is not allowed.

SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARYA: I think such confrontations are healthy confrontations, which would enable us to progress on the path of democracy and through these confrontations again and again the case of the forming of rules and regulations, in the case of appointments, in the case of the working of the Commission itself, we may be able to move outside this Parliament and constantly be engaged in discussion with the democratic forces outside.

The real acid test of this Commission, when it starts to work, will of course be, whether it remains a Centralised bureaucratized body, and how far it would be able to spread its branches to the grass-roots to the women, who need the help of such a Commission most. I am thinking of the poorest sections of the women. There could be women from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. There could be other women also, the women who live behind the *Purdahs* and whose voices are silent, who cannot reach out to the Commission. Will the Commission be able to reach out to them? That is the question that we ask. What about the women in the unorganised sector about whom it can be said, 'A man does work from sun to sun. A woman's work is never done'? These women work so hard that they do not

have the time to voice their grievances. Will the Commission be able to reach out to these women? That is the question and that can only be done provided this National level Commission is able to reach out to the State level and to the district level. Of course, we are aware that in the Bill itself this could not have been introduced because the State Commission is a matter to be instituted by the State, but whether it would be possible to announce some expenditure that will be shared by the Central Government in case the States institute such commissions, that is something which we must find out.

I think that the Government intends to take account of this. There is one clause in the Bill where it is said that where the Report concerns the State Government, it would be laid by the State Government before the State Legislature. I think that is the beginning of the process, but that process has to be carried further not only to the State level, but subsequently to the district level, to the block level also the Commission will have to stretch out its roots. And I think that the States themselves which have to deal with the problems of women at their level also will be benefited if such a Commission is there at the State level except perhaps in cases where the Ruling Party in a State does not wish or wants to obstruct the working of such a Commission where the Ruling Party turns into an attacker of women or where it supports such attacks on women as it happened in the case of Ujjain Maidan in Tripura. Apart from such cases, I think the States would be benefited. (*Interruptions*) Yes, in West Bengal also unfortunately attack on women happen but there is a difference. In the case of Tripura the State shelters and even rewards the culprits. (*Interruptions*)

AN HON. MEMBER: What happened in Kerala? (*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARYA: You can be rest assured that wherever we are, there will be discussion on it, the culprits will be apprehended, the culprits will be brought to justice, they will not be spared whatever their political affiliations may be.

Can you promise the same thing about Tripura? (*Interruptions*)

Finally, we have asked for autonomy for this Commission, but this autonomy is not an absolute autonomy, it is a relative autonomy so that the Commission can perform its allotted specific functions properly. We wanted autonomy. Now, at this level I feel that it would have been better if this Act had been granted Constitutional status, we will have to see later whether this can be done.

I also feel that the process of appointment of the Members of the Commission including the Chairperson might have been more democratic. We do have great faith in this Government. The way in which it is discussed—this Women's Bill—at every level shows that it will maintain this democratic process, but unless there is an infrastructure, there is always a fear that it might be misused.

18.00 hrs.

The demand for a larger body consisting of more than seven persons does not arise from the fact that 11 persons can represent the entire female population of the country better than seven members. That is not the point. The point is that if there had been a larger body, it would have allowed the members to represent more areas in women's life through their particular specialisations. In the list of fields in which the specialisations are required for the members of the Commission, 'women studies and research, and media' have not been included. These are two very important areas of specialisation. And also in clause 10(G) where the purview of inspection by the Commission is mentioned, I think factories and other areas of women's work should have been added, because it is not only in prisons that we find women being ill-treated, but also in their places of work. You can see in the whole problem of the inequality of women's status one important factor in it is lopsided development, development which does not take care of the human resources. We find big projects going on and as a result of that

[Smt. Malini Bhattacharya]

people become marginalised and they become invisible. That is what has happened to women most often. In one particular case, we can show how the view of the erstwhile Central Government had been prejudiced, had been jaundiced by this kind of attitude, that is with respect to the Anganwadi workers. How is it that women are asked to work for 8 to 10 hours and no regular pay is granted to them, when there is a provision in the Constitution for 'equal pay for equal work'? But only a meagre honorarium, a dishonorable honorarium is given. These insults can be done to women precisely because women have been marginalised since they are looked upon as beggars, because they are looked upon as people whose labour power has been devalued. So, this is of course one of the areas in which the Commission will have to work I will not go into this now—but what I wanted to say is that since the question arose regarding the powers that the Commission will have, three very important points have been made in the amendments. It seemed to me that some of the Members, perhaps, have not looked at these amendments properly. One is that the Commission will be given the powers of the Civil Court. This is in the amendments; then they would be involved in the planning process itself—they would be consulted at the stage of planning itself—and the 16th article where it was said that direction would be given to the Commission by the Government, has been substituted by another new article which says that the Commission would be consulted in partake of the planning process. Finally, I want to say that just as it is important to involve the Commission in the planning process, just as it is important to establish the accountability of the Government to the Parliament regarding the recommendations made to it by the Commission, similarly it has to have freedom of investigation. That is very important. Here, I will just say one or two points about some Acts which have come up here in the discussion. One is the prevention of Sati Act. One of the sections of the Prevention of Sati Act says that

Sati will be punished. You see, the victim herself has to be punished under the Act. Sati is recorded as a case of suicide rather than a case of murder. I think, those hon. Members who have been eloquent on the issue of Sati should join their voices in removing this particular section from the Act. I think, such a section could not have come in any Act, if a Commission such as this had been there. I think, what the Commission can do is to act as a bridge between the Government and the people. If the voices of women had been heard before such an Act was made, then I am sure, such a section would not have come in the statute book.

Similarly, I think, let us consider the Muslim Women Act. Who have benefited from this Act? Does the Act benefit the Muslim women? The answer is, No. Does the Act benefit the Muslim men? You think of the poor agricultural labour in West Bengal whose daughter or sister has been returned to him and has no means of livelihood. You think of the small-shop-keeper in Aligarh whose daughter or sister is returned to him, without any livelihood. It does not benefit the poor Muslim men either. So, the Act does not benefit even the majority of the minority community. Then, why is it there? It is there precisely because there has been no bridge between the Government and the people. There is a communication gap between the Government and the people.

Since the question of uniform civil code has come up, here again, it is one of the Directive Principles of State Policy of our Constitution and we the Leftists have been agitating for it for a long time. I would say, in the case of uniform civil code also, it is this principle which has to be followed. In the Hindu Code itself, many great injustices have been done to the women. Look at the Guardianship Act; look at the Child Marriage (Prohibition) Act. There are very many discriminations. Similarly, if you take the Muslim Personal Law, Christian Personal Law, Parsi Personal Law, there are discriminations. So, we have to bring together all the good points in the different personal laws in the uniform

civil code and we have to discard all the bad points, retrograde points in the different personal laws.

It is not a question of imposing the code of the majority on the minority. It has to emerge through a consensus. It has to emerge through a discussion between the Government and the people. This National Commission on Women, I hope would act as a bridge at every stage, by continuing to discuss, continuing to communicate its views to the Government, pressing its views on the Government and that pressure will also have to be created from outside Parliament.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Ram Krishan Yadav.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM KRISHAN YADAV (Azamgarh): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, there is a saying that "*Durbalta tera hi nam nari hai*" (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I hope, the House agrees to continue to work until we dispose of this Bill. I have a list of four or five Members and the Minister may reply.

I think, we will complete it.

This is an important Bill.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN (Mavelikara): Tomorrow it can be passed.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do you want me to take the vote?

PROF. P. J. KURIEN: There is no consensus.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do you want the vote?

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: We are here from 11 A.M. It is unfair. We can pass it tomorrow.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You should realise the importance of the Bill. Are you going to have consensus?

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: We do not agree.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do you want it to be put to vote?

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: That is not the convention.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Prof. Kurien, please take your seat. I would like to say it very openly that the hon. Members have maintained very high standard while discussing this Bill and specially, all the hon. Members would like to congratulate the lady hon. Members who have raised the standard to a very high level. A very good atmosphere has been created. Why should it spoil that atmosphere? Let us sit for one more hour.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN: We have got very good atmosphere and why do you want to force extension on us? We all support this Bill. We want to pass it tomorrow and we will pass it. Why do you force extension on us? We support this Bill.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is between you. If the ruling party wants to take the vote, I have no objection.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOUDHURY (Katwa): A little while ago, it was agreed in the House that this Bill should be passed today.

[*Translation*]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is just the beginning of the Session. If discussions are extended in such a way from the very beginning, how can we take up other items... (*Interruptions*) ...

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You make your point. Tomorrow, there will be some important matter.

SHRI HARISH RAWAT: From the very beginning, it is not a good practice.

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI SATYA PAL MALIK): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, not a single Bill has been passed in this entire week. They do not allow passing of Bills and we are always ready for every discussion. This Bill is going to be passed within an hour... (*Interruptions*) ...

SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I want to make one submission to the Minister of State in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs that it should be decided by the Business Advisory Committee whether it is necessary to pass this Bill today itself... (*Interruptions*)...

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is between the ruling party and you. You decide. I leave it to the House whether you want to sit for more time or you want to rise.

(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is my request to start wrong practices. If voting is allowed then voting will always be necessary for extension of period of discussion ... (*Interruptions*) ...

[*Translation*]

Don't set wrong convention. It has always been the convention that the House has been extended. If you act in this manner it would not be a good convention. (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

We are always trying to help you. But this is not a good practice.

(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Prof. Kurien, when I am standing you should sit. That is the convention. I will appeal to the Members of the different parties not to create an atmosphere in which the importance of the Bill would, in any way, appear to have been reduced. If you sit for one hour, it is not going to affect you. Also, I appeal to all the Members that if you want to decide between yourselves, let the Government and the Opposition decide the issue.

(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Is this way to seek our cooperation. Is it a proper way to seek our cooperation? Will they be able to suppress our voice in this manner, we cannot be suppress in this way. Kindly teach the members of your own party the way of speaking.

[*English*]

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, you have rightly observed that there is a good atmosphere and we are all supporting the Bill. As the Members on the other side, the Members on our side also want to pass this Bill. But extension of time is a question of consensus. That is what I want to say. For the last 10 years I have been a Member here. Never extension was done unilaterally. (*Interruptions*) Please let me complete what I have to say. (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please sit down. In this House all the Members are

respectable and have considerable understanding. Let them speak.

[*English*]

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: I again repeat that we all support this Bill and we want to pass it. We will support it; we will vote for it. This is a commitment. (*Interruptions*)

What else you want? But extension of the Hours till now is a question of consensus. The House is never extended after 6.00 P.M. without the unanimous consensus. You asked for extension. We have our own reasons. We are sitting here, we may have to go out. We have other engagements. Due to our own reasons we said that we did not agree for extension. For that you attributed ulterior motives. I take strong objection to that. If we want to oppose it we will oppose the Bill. We are not afraid of you. We can oppose this. (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You address me.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Since the Deputy-Speaker has announced it here and it is his desire also that it may be extended, we are prepared to oblige and agree to it. But on one condition that this should not be a precedent. Hereafter extension should be as per the convention and consensus. I am agreeing to the suggestion and the directive of the Deputy-Speaker only on that condition. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE (Dumdum): That means, you have agreed for today. (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI SATYAPAL MALIK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to thank Shri Kurien.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have thanked him, I would also like to thank him and tell him that it is not a matter of a condition or a precedent, proceedings will continue as per the conventions and rules. I

am grateful to you for showing wisdom.

[*English*]

Since he is on his legs, I will allow him to speak and immediately after that I will call you. (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am going to give him time.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM KRISHAN YADAV (Azamgarh): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir,

[*English*]

Frailty the name is women.

[*Translation*]

In one way this definition has also been applied on the women of our country. If a society or an individual has to be emaciated woman should be deprived from all the social, economic and political rights. Taking this fact in view women of our country were also deprived of their social, political and economic rights. This was accomplished by the religions fanatics and they were responsible to bring about this degrading condition of women. The responsibility of all this goes to our religious scriptures and priests. Until our constitution was not framed, it was written in our religious scriptures:-

'Istri shoodro na dheeyatam'

Mahakavi Tulsidas also wrote:

'Dhol ganwar shoodra pashu naari, yeh sab taran ke adhikari,
Nari subhaav satya ko kehanhi, avgun aath sada ur rehanhi'.

Our society has been following all these beliefs but the maker of our Constitution Dr. Ambedkar provided women with rights equal to men. However, those who implemented the provisions of the Constitution did not do justice with women, they were not sincere.

[Sh. Ram Krishan Yadav]

My submission is that even today no political leader is sincere in providing political, social and economic rights to women. If we had clear intentions and equal status had been given to women in political sphere, the number of women members in the House would have been equal to that of men, if not equal, half the numbers or one third would certainly have been women members. But so far ~~we~~ observe the number of male ministers in the cabinet is too high whereas the number of women is just only two. In all, the number of women M.Ps is only 25. We do not have clear intentions. My submission is that merely enacting law won't do. So long as true efforts are not made women cannot be provided with equal rights, and thus neither they can make progress nor their condition can improve. Therefore politicians should work sincerely to give them proper political status. They should be elected Chief Ministers even Prime Minister or leader of the Opposition. They should be given opportunities to play significant role in social life. Thus my submission is that the recently formed Commission for Women should be chaired by a woman itself. I would like to point out that atrocities are generally committed on the women of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and if the chairman is from Scheduled Caste it would be better.

Secondly, I would like to submit that the recently formed commission is expected to be beneficial for women of upper section and not for women belonging to poor sections. Women of backward classes should also be given representation. Atrocities are committed particularly on women of minorities as of Muslim community.

They should also be given place in it. My opinion is that unless this commission is endowed with adequate powers so as to guarantee equal political, economic and social status to women, speeches will have no effect. We appeal to the leader that they should clean their intentions and provide equal rights to women.

18.27hrs.

**STATEMENT BY MINISTER
Position of Indians in Kuwait**

[English]

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, with your permission and with the permission of the House I am somewhat gratified to convey to the House about the situation in Kuwait. We have been able to contact our Ambassador and we have been told that all members of the Indian community are safe and well. There were unconfirmed reports about 5-6 casualties but the Iraqi authorities have assured him that these are not true but he has not been able to confirm this, which he is trying to do by tomorrow.

Indian national passengers on the British Airways flights are all lodged in a Kuwaiti hotel and are safe and well. There is no food shortage or shortage of water or breakdown of power. All facilities are functioning normally. Shops are open and trade is going on.

The Iraqi commanders and Kuwaitis whom our Ambassador has met are extremely polite and courteous to him and as of today there has been no incidence of any kind, barring a few incidents of looting indulged by some people.

Some local resistance is there but they are very sporadic and therefore they are of no consequence. I wanted to share this brief information with you. Contact has been established and now we are keeping the contact. More information will start coming now and I will keep on sharing it in the House. I thought I should come here because I know the anxiety that was being felt here.

SHRISONTOSH MOHANDEV (Tripura West): Congratulations for the prompt action.

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL: Because I knew the anxiety of the House and of the nation, I thought before the House rose I must come and share this with you.

18.30 hrs.

**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
BILL-CONTD.**

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shrimati Jamuna.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI J. JAMUNA (Rajamundri)
Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, the most pleasing thing is that all the Members have expressed their views on National Commission for Women Bill. Just now Km. Uma Bharati has raised a very important issue. Earlier also she spoke on it. It is regarding immunocentesis test on pregnant women. I had urged the Government to ban it in very state. But I don't know what measures were taken in this regard. Km. Uma Bharati has referred to it and I do agree with her. She submitted that in urban areas educated women commit foeticide. I read in India today that there is a place in Tamil Nadu where village women give poison to newborn girl infants. Some way should be found out to prevent them from doing so. They should be educated. It is a very serious matter. All the women should join to find out some solution. In the first place the Government should think over it and ban it in all the states. Just now Shrimati Malini pointed out that charges were levelled against some women. It was said that when the meeting was called no women participant from the Congress was there. At that time we were touring our constituencies. But that does not mean that we are least concerned about this Bill. When Shrimati Gandhi was alive she took effective measures to take women ahead. When the discussion was going on in the House I informed Shri Kurien before leaving. It is a serious allegation. It does not mean that we are not interested in it. We support the National Commission for Women Bill.

[English]

Respected Deputy Speaker, Sir, while welcoming the initiative of the Government in introducing the National Commission on Women Bill, it remains to be seen how effectively it will be implemented.

We have seen, Sir, a frightening increase in the atrocities committed on women over the last few months. The National Front Government sadly, has been unable to do anything to even remotely convince the

Women of our country that there is still hope.

The statement of objects of the Bill states that the commission will study, investigate and review all matters relating to the safeguards provided for women in the Constitution and other laws and make recommendations about the steps to be taken by the Government for effective implementation of safeguards. Non-implementation of laws enacted for the welfare of women would be reviewed by the commission.

All these objectives convey one and the same meaning. The previous Congress regimes also enacted many welfare measures for the Indian women. Among them, the most important one is the 1956 Hindu Code Amendment Bill which confers an absolute right on the childless widowed woman to adopt a son or a daughter of her choice and to alienate all the property in favour of the adopted. Prior to 1956, childless widowed women were subjected to all sorts of degradation and ill-treatment and this change in law brought a ray of hope for them. The 20—point programme enunciated by late Mrs. Indira Gandhi provided several welfare measures for the women.

There must be a committed Government machinery to implement the safeguards provided for women in the Constitution. And it is time for the Government to step beyond rhetoric and show concrete results for the Indian women.

Then, I request the Government to enact a uniform code bill. You know, the Criminal Procedure Code is for all. Why should not have a common Civil Code for women also? For women also, we should have Civil Code. One uniform Code is better for women's progress. I thank you for giving me this opportunity.

SHRI PALAI K.M. MATHEW (Idukki):
Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, first of all, I thank you for giving me this opportunity. Since you are very strict about the time, I will be very brief. I will omit all my introduction and I will

[Sh. Palai K.M. Mathew]

not repeat anything which has already been said here.

The basic and ultimate aim of any programme for women in a developing country like India should be the total emancipation by providing a greater participation to women in the nation-building activities. The question is: What is the slavery from which women are to be emancipated now? Their low status in all walks of life, in all institutions of society is the main slavery. I mean, the economic dependence, the social inequality and educational backwardness, cultural lag and also political inequality. In order to emancipate them from this, first of all, we have to increase literacy. We have to give them education. From there, we have to go to employment. Then, we have to provide them help with more income. In order to overcome these difficulties or dependence, first, we have to educate them and then give them employment and thereby income also.

I am making this introduction in order to convey the idea that the Bill is not very serious about these things. An analysis of the status, the powers, the functions and the composition of the commission will bear ample testimony to what I am stating. I will be giving a few examples. And with that, I will cut short. First, I come to the status and the composition. It has already been stated here that it should be made a statutory body with autonomy and powers to take even the Government to task for their acts of omission and commission.

It is the Government which nominates the Members and the Government can terminate their services at their own good will. This means that these Members depend on the good will of the Government for their assistance and funds and so on. So, in order to avoid this, we have to make this body autonomous like that of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission or the Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The whole thing should be recast in a slightly different way.

I would like to say something about the powers and functions of the Commission. As has already been suggested here, the Commission should be able to act as a watch dog on the interest and rights of women and protect them. In this regard, this Bill is very inadequate. Perhaps, this is worse than inadequate. It is just an appendage of the Government as it is not autonomous in any way. If the Bill is passed in this way, without any amendments or changes, then this will surely annihilate what the women's organisations and movements have gained during the last 15 to 20 years. This is what I fear.

This Commission should be able to prevent violation of Constitutional rights and other laws and point out the laws or give their suggestions while making reforms and policies. The Commission should be able to prevent violation of laws and court judgement and restore respect for laws on women. It should have power to investigate and reviews and pursue cases of violation, non-implementation and inadequacies in laws. All these points are not shown in the Bill. The Commission must have full power to get information from Government agencies and it should be consulted by them as and when policies and laws, related to women, are formulated. The Commission should have power to recommend policies to Government. All these points have not been clearly stated in the Bill. It must also have power to move the courts for violation of laws and demand action by the concerned agencies. It should have power to ensure representation of women in all spheres of social life. It should be able to question non-compliance of laws, policies and programmes. It must have the power to identify factors impeding their progress such as lack of housing, drudgery, health hazards, etc. And after identification, the Commission must be able to get help from all the concerned including the Government for implementing them. In short, as has already been stated and repeated by many Members, women are the most vulnerable ones in the family and in the society.

Their low status is due to their dependence. Voluntary organisations also have a

role to play which the Commission must be able to direct. These are the points which I would like to make.

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND WELFARE (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir... (*Interruptions*) ...

SHRI RAMESHWAR PRASAD (Arrah): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I too had expressed my desire to speak on this issue and my name was there in the list submitted by my party, but you have not given me an opportunity to speak so far.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The time allotted to your party is already over as such it is not possible to accommodate you. It is not possible to allow each and every person.

SHRI RAMESHWAR PRASAD: When so many people have been allowed to speak, I too would like to give some important suggestions on this Bill. I may also be given an opportunity to speak.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may speak on some other subject. It is necessary that you should speak on each and every subject.

SHRI RAMESHWAR PRASAD: I would give in brief some important suggestions for the welfare of women.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I cannot extend the time allotted to your party. Now, you please take your seat. Small parties are not given much time, please appreciate our difficulty.

SHRI RAMESHWAR PRASAD: I am also an elected representative of the House. I want to give only two or three important suggestions on this Bill. If you do not allow me to speak, it would be a violation of my right.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am allowing you only on this condition that you should put

forward only new points and should not repeat points already made in the House.

[*English*]

Everybody wants me to give time, but where is the time? If there are new points, I would certainly give time, but you should not repeat the points.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAMESHWAR PRASAD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, at the moment, we are having a discussion in the House on the National Commission for women but today when we look in retrospect at the social situation, particularly the condition of women, and their status in society, we find that they are being deprived of their social, political and economic rights. Will the National Commission for women be able to play any significant role in removing those circumstances, which are responsible for these rights being deprived to women. However, we find that the commission would not be able to play such a role. In the Bill, there is a provision for removing the Members, after every three years. In this regard, I would suggest that their term of office should be extended to six years. They can be transferred after that. As far as the issue of the appointment of Members to the Commission is concerned, whether they be nominated by the Chairman or the Government, I would suggest that there should be a provision, where in the office-bearers should be elected by women's organisations. Only then, this Commission would be able to play an effective role in safeguarding the interests of women. My third suggestion would be that the commission should have branches throughout the length and breadth of the country, so that they can act as a catalysts in breaking the bondages of a patriarchal society on women. Another suggestion, I would like to make is that whenever the commission presents any report, whether before a court of law, any legislative assembly or even the Lok Sabha, a decision should be taken on its recommendations within a period of three months of the presentation of

[Sh. Rameshwar Prasad]

the report as only then this Commission would be able to play an effective role in protecting and pursuing the interests of our women folk. I sincerely wish this Commission to play a significant role in bringing about radical changes in our society and to take the lead in bringing about the collapse of the existing patriarchal system in our society.

[English]

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (Muvattupuzha): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I would only make one or two points.

Firstly, the Commission should have powers to initiate inquiries into the way in which certain cases are investigated by the authorities. So far, we were discussing about the powers which should be given to the Commission with regard to the general atrocities that are committed on women. I suggest that the Commission also must be given further powers to initiate inquiries into the cases which are being investigated even by the police. There are very many instances in India in many places. We had a recent instance, the Gajraula incident took place a few days ago. There one of the complaint was, that is there in the report of the Minister also which has been laid before the House today that the doctor to whom the nuns who were victims of rape were taken to did not look into properly. She reported that there was no sign of rape. If there is a Commission like this, will not that Commission, if it is given powers to investigate into such matters be effective enough to take action, if it so desires.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You want that the Commission should be given powers to supervise the investigation. Please come to the next point.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Power to investigate should be given. Now, you come to the next point.

SHRIP.C.THOMAS: I would rather say that the power to supervise the investigation should be given.

Then Section 16 should be deleted.

SHRIMATI SUBHASHNI ALI (Kanpur): On this an amendment has been given.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: If there is a Government amendment then it is all right, otherwise I feel this is too much.

In general I would like to say that the Commission should be given some more powers. From the Government Amendment it is seen that some provision is there regarding the power of Civil Court to investigate but I would say that the Commission should be given some broader powers.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would not be taking much time, as I have to rush to attend the cabinet meeting which is going on at the moment. I would like to whole heartedly thank the hon. Members belonging to all political parties for unanimously supporting this Bill. Regarding those friends, who did not support this Bill, I have to say only this much that they may not have gone through the contents of the Amendments, but I do not blame them for that. I do not blame them because the Bill was presented before the House only on the 22nd. As you may be aware, I am trying my level best to fulfil the responsibilities entrusted to me being in charge of this Ministry as soon as possible. Whether it be Bills concerning the Scheduled Castes and tribes, the backward classes, the minorities, the handicapped or regarding labour participation in management, construction labourers etc. or that of the Central legislation or Agriculture, we are actively working on all the points. I had said in the beginning itself that if we are not able to do this work in a years time, we will not be able to do it in the years or 100 years for that matter. The responsibility of looking after this Ministry was put on my humble shoulders in the month of May only

and on the 22nd day of that very month, Government moved this Bill in the parliament. That Bill had many drawbacks in it. At that time also, we had moved an amendment.

Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee and other hon. Members would testify to that. Our intention then was to somehow get the Bill passed by the Parliament and the defects and drawbacks can be taken care of by bringing in faster amendment in course of time. We felt that first it is necessary to move the Bill, as otherwise, we would get entangled in the whirlpool of uncertainty and in the process will land ourselves nowhere. Our intention was to present the Bill before the Parliament and then to make the necessary changes to rectify the defects and plug the loopholes on the basis of the suggestions put forward by the hon. Members. Today, we have moved in that direction of rectification. Before making changes, before bringing these Amendments, we wanted to have both formal and informal discussion with hon'ble members so that there is no difference of opinion on this issue. There are many issues on which the party viewpoint comes to the tone, but on such issues, all parties think above party considerations. In this connection, to begin with, we organised small meetings and on 28th July, our Ministry organised a National level conference. As we were not aware of the number of organisations working in this field and of their area of activity, I had given specific instructions to the Ministry to the effect that without caring for party consideration and without showing any kind of discrimination, they should invite all the women MPs and important Women's Organisations, irrespective of their party affiliations. At that meeting, we had a free and frank discussion on this subject. I can say with certainty that we had accepted 95 percent of suggestions that were made during that conference. It won't be wrong, even if, we say that we had accepted almost all the suggestions made there because 5 percent of the suggestions which were not accepted are those which cannot be accommodated here. Many additions are required to be made in the rules.

All the amendments brought forward by Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee, relate to rules. She has also asked about the formation of the committee, I would like to tell her that we would definitely constitute the committee. Many hon. Members have suggested for the setting up of similar commissions in the States as well. We too are firmly of this view but we cannot put pressure on the States in this regard. In this connection, I have written letters to the Chief Ministers advising them to set up similar commissions in their respective States. Apart from that, I would like to clarify here that some of the doubts expressed here have absolutely no ground and there is nothing to worry about them.

A question was raised about the appointment of the Chairman. Earlier, it was decided to appoint the Chairman on the recommendations of a panel. Now it has been decided that panel will not play any role in this. The appointment shall be made directly by the Government. The issue of presenting certain qualifications for the post of Chairman, also came up before us, but we decided to give more weightage to dedication to work rather than presenting educational qualifications etc. for this purpose. Appointing a person with high educational qualifications including PH. D. but with no relevant experience or knowledge of social work would prove to be an exercise in futility.

So far as the question of the S.C. and S.T. commission is concerned, earlier the provision was to grant powers to those belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, even if they were not appointed Members of the Commission. Now we have done away with that system. We have decided to involve persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in this Commission. It has been decided to increase the membership fee from the existing rupees five to rupees seven. Women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes would be definitely be taken in this commission.

Earlier, there was a provision under which Members or office-bearers could be

[Sh. Ram Vilas Paswan]

removed by giving them three months notice but Women's organisations were deadly against any such move. Now the procedure giving three months notice has been discontinued. The rules and regulations in force in other service commissions will apply to this commission also. The rules are very strict. It is not easy to terminate the services of any Member or Chairman. The provision of giving three months notice in advance has been done away with. This Commission will also have same powers and authority, as those visited with the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Commission. The Commission also has full investigative powers, similar to that of Civil Courts. The Commission would be actively involved in the schemes and programmes meant for the social and economic betterment of women and will submit its recommendation in this regard. It would also evaluate the progress made by women, in various union territories and states, as a result of the various programmes and schemes launched by these bodies. Anybody who chooses to ignore the recommendations of the Commission will have to furnish an explanation for that. In addition to this such issues would be taken up for discussion in the Parliament and the recommendations accepted by the Government would be made public.

The Central Government shall seek the advice of the Commission on all important policy matters concerning women. The issue of directions was also raised here. Regarding that, I would like to say that it would be issuing directives from time to time and the Centre will name no interference in that the Commission will work as an independent organisation. Reports in respect of matter pertaining to different states Government will be submitted to the respective states. The Governments by the Commission, the State Assembly can have a discussion on that report. All these powers have been given to the Commission.

I also heard the views of Shri P.C. Thomas, Shrimati Malini Bhattacharya and

Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee. If one goes through the Bill carefully and deeply, it would be seen that all the amendments brought forward by the hon. Members have already been incorporated in the Bill. As far as the remaining points are concerned, we will, definitely, include them in the rules.

A reference has also been made to the question of decentralisation. I have written to the State Chief Ministers in this connection. The Commission will be empowered to constitute committees. It can carry on its functions by constituting expert committees for different regions. These people cannot be denied the rights which have been granted to them in various articles of the constitution.

The hon. Members have drawn my attention to Anganwadi. Though it is not concerned with the present subject, it is definitely a serious matter. We are taking it seriously. I would also like to tell that we do not have adequate resources. Personally, I feel that no person should be paid less wages than what has been fixed in the Minimum Wages Act.

19.00 hrs.

It is unfortunate that women workers of Anganwadi and helpers have not been recognised as Government servants. At the time of engaging them they were informed in writing that they were not Government servants. The Anganwadi being treated as a Voluntary organisation and its workers as volunteers. But I would like to assure that as far as I can do, I would definitely look into the problems of women employees and helpers of the Anganwadi, I would also like to assure that the Ministries under my control in the Government...

SHRI RAM DHAN (Lalganj): All money goes in corruption.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: What he is saying is correct.

Shri Ram Dhan ji's charges are correct. Most of the funds sanctioned for this purpose

go waste in corruption. We will look into both the aspects. While we will sanction funds to them, we will ensure the monitoring thereof and would see that the purposes for which these funds are sanctioned are fulfilled. I would like to assure the august House that we are dedicated and determined for this. Whatever we could do, we are definitely determined to do for the weaker sections and the downtrodden people.

As such, while I appreciate the sentiments expressed by the hon. Members, I would like to request them to withdraw all the amendments they have moved in this connection and pass the Bill unanimously. As far as the remaining points are concerned, we will incorporate them in the rules and see that nothing goes wrong. I express my thanks to the hon. Members

SHRIMATI VIDYA CHENNUPATI (Vijayawada): Through you, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he wants to ensure that the workers of the Anganwadi are paid wages as per the provisions of the Minimum Wages Act.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: This does not come under the preview of this Bill.

SHRIMATI VIDYA CHENNUPATI: Secondly, what will you do if the Personal law poses a hurdle in the way of the Commission for women you are going to constitute?

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: It is about the Women Commission and doesn't attract the personal law

SHRIMATI VIDAYA CHENNUPATI: What will be the functions of the Commission?

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is an amendment moved by Shri Girdharilal Bhargava, to the Motion for Consideration. He is not here in the House. I will put it to the vote of the House. The question is:

"That the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 31st August, 1990."

The motion was negated

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill to constitute a National Commission for Women and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will now take up Clause-by Clause consideration of the Bill.

Clause-2

Amendment made.

Page 2 lines 2 and 3, *omit*" and a Member co-opted under sub-section (3) of section 3" (19)

(Shri Ram Vilas Paswan)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is.

"That Clause 2, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted

Clause 2, as amended, was added to the Bill"

Clause 3

Constitution of the National Commission for women

Amendment made:

Page 2, for lines 10 to 39, *substitute*

"(2)The Commission shall consist of-

- (a) A Chairperson, committed to the cause of women, to be nominated by the Central Government;
- (b) Five Members to be nominated by the Central Government from amongst persons of ability, integrity and standing who have had experience in law or legislation, trade unionism, management of an industry or organisation committed to increasing the employment potential of women, women's voluntary organisations (including women activists), administration, economic development, health, education or social welfare;

Provided that atleast one Member each shall be from amongst persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes respectively;

(c) one Member-Secretary to be nominated by the Central Government, who shall be-

- (i) an expert in the field of management, organisational structure or sociological movement, or
- (ii) an officer who is a member of a civil service of the Union or of an all-India service or holds a civil post under the Union with appropriate experience." (20)

(Shri Ram Vilas Paswan)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Shrimati Malini are you Moving your amendments?

SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARYA (Jadavpur): No.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: There are amendments given by Shri Ramesh Chennithala. He is not present here.

Are you moving your amendments?

[*Translation*]

SHRI R.L.P. VERMA (Koderma): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to point out that though it is—a Bill for women, yet the women are going to be deprived of their rights by this Bill. There is a proposal in the Bill that a Harijan and a Adivasi will be taken as Member of the Commission, but I feel that in their place a woman should be taken as a member, otherwise it will tantamount to exploitation of women. Instead of taking participation of male member, women should be involved in the Commission. With this I hereby withdraw the amendment. I had moved.

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Yuvraj Are you moving your amendments?

SHRI YUVRAJ (Katihar): No.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That Clause 3, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted

Clause 3, as amended, was added to the Bill

Clause—4

Service of Chairperson and members

Amendment made :

Page 3, for lines 4 to 12, substitute

"(2) The Chairperson or a Member (other than the Member-Secretary who is a member of a civil service of the Union or of an all-India service or holds a civil post under the Union) may, by writing and addressed to the Central Government, resign from the office of Chairperson, or, as the case may be, of the Member at any time.

(3) The Central Government shall remove a person from the office of Chairperson or a Member referred to in sub-section (2) if that person—

- (a) becomes an undischarged insolvent;
- (b) gets convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for an offence which in the opinion of the Central Government involves moral turpitude;
- (c) becomes of unsound mind and stands so declared by a competent court;
- (d) refuses to act or becomes incapable of acting; or
- (e) is, without obtaining leave of absence from the Commission, absent from three consecutive meetings of the Commission; or
- (f) in the opinion of the Central Government has so abused the position of Chairperson or Member as to render that person's continuance in office detrimental to the public interest:

Provided that no person shall be removed under this clause until that person has been given a reasonable opportunity of being heard in the matter." (21)

(Shri Ram Vilas Paswan)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Shrimati Malini are you moving amendment?

SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARYA:
No:

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: There are

amendments given by Shri Ramesh Chennithala. He is not present here.

The question is:

"That Clause 4, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted

Clause 4, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 5-

Officers and Other Employees of the Commission

Amendment made:

Page 3, line 22, for "employees of ", substitute "employees appointed for the purpose of" (22)

(Shri Ram Vilas Paswan)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That Clause 5, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted

Clause 5, as amended, was added to the Bill

Clause 6

Salaries and allowances to be paid out of grants

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: There is an amendment, No. 23 by the hon. Minister.

Amendment made:

Page 3, for clause 6, substitute

Salaries and allowances to be paid out of grants.

"6. The salaries and allowances payable to the Chairperson and Members and the administrative expenses, including salaries, allowances and pensions payable to the officers and other employees referred to in section 5, shall be paid out of the grants referred to in sub-section (1) of section 11." (23)

(Shri Ram Vilas Paswan)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That Clause 6 as amended stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted

Clause 6, as amended, was added to the Bill

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no amendment to Clause-7

The question is:

"That clause 7 stand part of the Bill.

The motion was adopted

Clause 7 was added to the Bill

Clause 8

Committee of the Commission

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: There is an amendment by Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee, to Clause 8.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE (Panskura): In view of the assurance given by the hon. Minister I am not moving my amendment. I hope that the rules will be forthcoming along with the Act as per the assurance.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That Clause 8 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted

Clause 8 was added to the Bill

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now Clause 9. The question is:

That clause 9 Stand part of the Bill.

The motion was adopted

Clause 9 was added to the Bill

Clause 10

Functions of the Commission

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: To Clause 10 there are four amendments Nos. 24, 25, 26 and 27 by the hon. Minister. The rest of the amendments are not being moved.

Amendments made:

Page 4, line 13, for "10", substitute "10. (1)" (24)

Page 4, for lines 15 to 19, substitute

"(a) investigate and examine all matters relating to the safeguards provided for women under the Constitution and other laws;

(aa) present to the Central Government, annually and at such other times as the Commission may deem fit, reports upon the working of those safeguards;

(aaa) make in such reports recommendations for the effective implementation of those safeguards for improving the conditions of women by the Union or any State;" (25)

Page 5; after line 4, insert

"(ff) participate and advise on the planning process of socio-economic development of women;

(fff) evaluate the progress of the development of women under the Union and any State ;"(26)

Page 5, after line 14 insert

"(2) The Central Government shall cause all the reports referred to in clause (aa) of sub-section (1) to be laid before each House of Parliament along with a memorandum explaining the action taken or proposed to be taken on the recommendations relating to the Union and the reasons for the non-acceptance, if any, of any of such recommendations

(3) Where any such report or any part thereof relates to any matter with which any State Government is concerned, the Commission shall forward a copy of such report or part to such State Government who shall cause it to be laid before the Legislature of the State along with a memorandum explaining the action taken or proposed to be taken on the recommendations relating to the State and the reasons for the non-acceptance, if any, of any of such recommendations.

(4) The Commission shall, while investigating any matter referred to in clause (a) or sub-clause (i) of clause (d) of sub-section (1), have all the powers of a civil court trying a suit and, in particular, in respect of the following matters, namely:-

(a) summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person from any part of India and examining him on oath;

(b) requiring the discovery and production of any document;

(c) receiving evidence on affidavits;

(d) requisitioning any public record or copy thereof from any court or office;

(e) issuing commissions for the examination of witnesses and documents; and

(f) any other matter which may be prescribed."(27)

(Shri Ram Vilas paswan)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is

"That Clause 10, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted

Clause 10, as amended, was added to the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are no amendments to clauses 11 to 14.

The question is:

"That Clauses 11 to 14 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted

Clauses 11 to 14 were added to the Bill

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I will take up Amendment No. 18 by Shrimati Malini Bhattacharya proposing insertion of Clause 14A (New) Are you moving your Amendment?

SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARYA: I am not moving.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That Clause 15 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted

Clause 15 was added to the Bill

Clause 16

Central Government to Consult Commission

Amendment made:

Page 6, for clause 16, substitute

Central Government to consult Commission

"16. The Central Government shall consult the Commission on all major policy matters affecting women."(28)

(Shri Ram Vilas Paswan)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That Clause 16, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted

Clause 16, as amended, was added to the Bill

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now I take up Amendment No. 4 by Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee proposing insertion of Clause 16A (New). Are you moving your Amendment?

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE (Panskura): I am not moving.

Clause-17

Power to make rules

Amendments made

Page 6, omit lines 24 and 25. (29)

Page 6, lines 27 and 28, for " sub-

section (4)", substitute "sub-section (5)". (30)

Page 6, after line 31, insert

' (cc) other matter under clause (f) of sub-section (4) of section 10;"(31)

(Shri Ram Vilas Paswan)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That Clause 17, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted

Clause 17, as amended, was added to the Bill

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now I will take up Clause 1. There is an Amendment No. 7 by Shrimati Malini Bhattacharya. Are you moving your Amendment?

SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARYA: I am not moving.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

"That Clause 1, the Enacting Formula, and the Long Title stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula, and the Long Title were added to the Bill

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister may now move that the Bill, as amended be passed.

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND WELFARE (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): I beg to move:

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

[*Translation*]

I wholeheartedly thank all the hon'ble Members.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF WELFARE (SHRIMATI USHA SINGH): First of all I would like to express my thanks to hon' Paswan Ji who moved the amendments impressively. I would also like to thank all the hon' Members especially the hon' lady Members, who in total disregard of their party affiliations, expressed their views and co-operated in the process of passing of this

Bill. Today is an historical day, as a very important Bill is being passed.

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed.

The motion was adopted

19.20 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, August 10, 1990/ Sravana 19, 1912 (Saka)