

is entering into the 21st Century.

With these words, I conclude.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before we proceed, it is now 4 O' clock and I have here with me listed for 4 P.M. a "Discussion under Rule 193". Before I call, the Mover of that discussion, I call upon the hon'ble Minister for Parliamentary Affairs to say something.

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. UPENDRA): We are awaiting some details about this incident. The Home Minister also is likely to visit the place. If the House agrees, we can postpone the discussion.

[Translation]

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA(South Delhi): My submission is that if the Home Minister makes a statement in the House on the incident in Punjab, we can have discussion on it tomorrow.

.....(Interruptions).....

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: One at a time please.

(Interruptions)

16.00 hrs.

SHRI MADANLAL KHURANA(South Delhi): The supplementary List of Business says: A discussion on the situation arising out of killing of several persons in bomb blast.

[Translation]

Mr. Chairman, Sir, my submission is that such a tragic incident has taken place in Punjab and the people of the country want to know about it. The Parliament is a supreme body and the Home Minister should make a

statement here on the incident. The House should be informed about the present situation and after that the discussion on the situation can be held tomorrow.

.....(Interruptions).....

[English]

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA(Ponnani): Mr. Chairman, Sir, a mere statement or a mere discussion is not appropriate to the gravity of the situation. You will also see that on your left most of the benches are empty. Their point of view should also be considered. We may have the discussion tomorrow. There is no objection to that. But then the discussion should be on the Motion of Adjournment. I would request that the Motion of Adjournment, the notice of which had already been given, should be reconsidered. It has been disapproved by the Speaker. It should be reconsidered and it should be allowed. And then the discussion on that Adjournment Motion can be taken up tomorrow. That would be according to the gravity of the situation, which must be realised, as also the sentiments of most of those in the Opposition. At the same time, I had also said earlier that there should be a statement from the Home Minister regarding the communal violence in Gujarat especially where violence is spreading in Districts over there. So, there must be a statement on that also. The statement may come tomorrow. But we should know what steps are being taken for the protection when so much of arson, looting, and everything is going on...(Interruptions)

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA(Midnapore): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon'ble Minister for Parliamentary Affairs has proposed that this discussion be postponed till tomorrow. I do not think anybody objects to that. That is hardly the point which is at stake. Whether it is held under Rule 193 or whether it is held in the form of an Adjournment Motion, personally I have no objection. But in either case, I agree with Mr. Khurana. It should be preceded by a statement by the Home Minister. If he cannot make it today, he can make it

[Sh. Indrajit Gupta]

(Interruptions)

early tomorrow. But we should also know from the Government whatever facts are there at their disposal and what is the latest situation. Otherwise, I am afraid, a discussion on an issue like this, of course, will generate a lot of heat, how much light it will generate, I do not know. And the clappings and applause which was manifested had rather a partisan kind of a tinge to it. I do not like it because it is a question of so many innocent people being killed. It is not a question of applause. So, we should in all gravity discuss this matter seriously and I propose that he should make a statement tomorrow if he cannot make it today... *(Interruptions)* There should be a commitment that he will make a statement. This is a very serious matter... *(Interruptions)* It is for the Speaker to decide whether it will be under Rule 193 or whether it will be in the form of an Adjournment Motion. But I hope this is not an attempt to blackmail. I am sorry to use this word. But this appears to me to be a crude attempt to blackmail the Speaker. And in that case, I prefer that we go in for elections in Punjab. Why should we go through all this? Let us have elections in Punjab... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA: It is not blackmail. It is an expression of their deep sentiments. It is an expression of the gravity of the situation. It is an expression for the censure of this particular Government... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Other people also have sentiments, not only they... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA: I take serious objection to it. I ask you and request you, Sir, that the word 'blackmail' be expunged from the proceedings. They are expressing their sentiments. They are responding according to the gravity of the situation... *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: kindly resume your seat.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, let me conduct the proceedings of the House.

[English]

The word 'blackmail' shall remain on record.

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA : It is very unfortunate, Sir.

[Translation]

SHRI VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, it hardly matters whether it is held in the form of an Adjournment Motion or whether it is held under Rule 193. We are prepared for both, Adjournment Motion and discussion under Rule 193. Massacre of many innocent people have taken place in Punjab, so the hon. Home Minister should have made a Suo Motu Statement in the House and whatever information available with him should have been given to the House. Such suggestion was given to the Home Minister earlier also when an incident took place in Kashmir. A bomb was thrown on Ramnavami's procession in which 50-60 people were killed in Punjab. Tomorrow, Punjab, Delhi and several other parts of the country are observing bandh in protest against the incident. Tomorrow, almost entire country will observe bandh, so people want to know as what the hon. Home Minister has said about it in Lok Sabha and what assurance has been given by him. Why the hon. Home Minister is not making suo Motu statement on such incidents? Therefore, I would like to say that you should direct the hon. Home Minister to make a statement. Tomorrow, it may be discussed in the form of Adjournment Motion or under Rule 193, that would yield nothing. Punjab situation has been discussed here twice or thrice so let it be discussed once again, but that would not save the lives of the people in Punjab. The Home Minister should have made suo motu statement earlier and now again whatever

information available with the Government should be given to the House. People should know as to how much information are available with the Government. It has surprised me that till now the Home Minister has not paid attention towards it. Sir, you may please direct him that whatever information he has and whatever he want to say, must inform the House today itself.

[English]

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ (Baramulla): There is no question of having discussion under rule 193 because a large number of Members in this House have demanded discussion under adjournment motion. Earlier I supported that and later I had desired that it should be done gracefully. At that time Banatwallaji supported me because these benches are empty. But I raise another question. I invite your attention to rule 60 second para. It is a case where Speaker did not consent to moving this adjournment motion. Even so, Speaker has very wide powers and we should be conscious of that. We must respect the Chair and his decision. But the Speaker must also give some reason.

Here you will appreciate that it says that if the Speaker does not give consent, he has to give some reason. He may say that he has not got the full facts. Now I plead with you that there should be discussion under adjournment motion as demanded by a large number of Members here. Since the earlier notice has lapsed after the Speaker has given his ruling, maybe, they may move another adjournment motion and that may come up tomorrow. So we should postpone this discussion for tomorrow under adjournment motion and in no case the discussion should be held under rule 193 because we cannot insult the Members like this. (*Interruption*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would you also gracefully sit down please and not interrupt the next speaker?

SHRI INDER JIT (Darjeeling): I think,

the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs has made a reasonable request. And I also think that the request made by Mr. Khurana is equally reasonable. I think, that in any discussion under rule 193 or in whatever manner, we should first have the statement from the Home Minister in regard to the facts of what happened at Batala. The situation, undoubtedly, is grave and I learn from the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs that the Home Minister is on his way to Batala and by tomorrow morning he will have the facts. So, if he can make a statement today, well and good. But this is unlikely from what I gather. In that situation, I think we should have patience until tomorrow and the discussion could follow the statement by the Home Minister.

One other point I would like to make is this. There has been a big argument between my two good friends Mr. Banatwalla and Mr. Indrajit Gupta. I do think that the use of the expression 'blackmail' by Mr. Gupta is a little unfortunate. But it is not unparliamentary. Mr. Gupta is entitled to his view. However, I do know that the Congress(I) benches feel very strongly on this particular matter. They prefer a Adjournment Motion instead of a discussion under rule 193, for one simple reason... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): Everybody feels strongly about the situation.

SHRI INDER JIT: The simple reason is because the Adjournment Motion is supposed to have an element of censure... (*Interruptions*).

AN HON. MEMBER: Yes, we understand that.

SHRI INDER JIT: We all understand that. Therefore, the Congress—I friends feel strongly on this question. Hence suggest that the Speaker might possibly reconsider his decision in regard to the Adjournment Motion. I learn that a fresh notice or a fresh request for the Adjournment Motion is being made for tomorrow morning... (*interruptions*).

AN HON. MEMBER: It has been made.

SHRI INDER JIT: Well, it can be considered only tomorrow. But so far as discussion under rule 193 is concerned, I do feel that it ought to be reasonably postponed until tomorrow, by which time the Home Minister will be in a position to make a statement.

PROF. RAM GANESH KAPSE (Thane): Sir, as regards the statement, now the Home Minister has already come in the House and it is a collective responsibility also... (*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are repeating the same point.

PROF. RAM GANESH KAPSE: He is available now. So, we would like to listen from him... (*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have made the point. This point has been made by various other previous hon. Members. Please take you seat.

SHRI RAM NAIK (Bombay North): Sir, it was being told up to this time that the Home Minister has gone to Punjab. Now we see the Home Minister here. So, the statement should be made today.

[*Translation*]

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI (Kota): I may submit that Home Minister should have made statement suo motu. After all such a serious incident has occurred and if Home Minister makes a statement on so much prusuation by the House, it is not good. Therefore, a system should be evolved by the House that in case of a particular number of deaths, the hon. Minister should make a statement suo motu. In this manner, the entire will get the necessary information.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): The Government must make a statement in this connection. There is a 'Bandh' in Punjab and in other states tomorrow. The Members should be told about precautionary steps

being taken by the Government and about the situation in Batala.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Rasa Singh is repeating what has been stated by others.

...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: I want to provide opportunity to all.

...(*Interruptions*)...

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before I call upon the hon. Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, I would like to comment on some of the points that have been raised by the hon. Members. Firstly, on the question of a statement preceding discussion, whether it is under rule 193 or on an Adjournment Motion, a number of Members have requested the Government that the discussion must follow a statement by the Government. This is an eminently sound request by various Members and the Government would be well advised to have the statement on the killings in Batala precede any discussion, whether it is under rule 193 or on an Adjournment Motion. Hon. Banatwalla Sahib and Prof. Soz Sahib raised the question of Adjournment Motion. The admission of an Adjournment Motion is entirely the question prerogative of the Hon. Speaker. The Hon. Speaker need not assign any reason, even under rule 60. I have gone through rule 60 and you are also aware of that rule. The Speaker is not obliged to assign any reason for the decision that he takes. The Motion for Adjournment that was moved today, lapsed the minute it was rejected by the Speaker. Members are free to move a fresh motion. When they so move it, it will be for consideration for tomorrow, and indeed the Speaker will consider it.

About the views on the word 'blackmail' it is a matter of subjective interpretation

...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, I will call upon

the hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs to give his views.

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA: Sir, it is very unfortunate. The Members are responding to the gravity of the situation. (*Interruptions*)

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. UPENDRA): Sir, in the morning when the hon. Members from both the sides raised this question, I said that it was a serious incident and Government themselves are concerned about it. In fact, the Home Minister was supposed to leave for Batala for an on-the-spot study, but because of the discussion at 4 O'clock, he has been held back and, in fact, we are ready for a discussion. Sir, as you are aware, in this Session and in the earlier Session also, we have not been reluctant to face any discussion. In fact, we are welcoming discussion on any subject. But some rules have to be observed. In the morning we immediately agreed for a discussion under Rule 193. Sir, no Government will accept the adjournment motion. We have opposed that and it is essential. It is for the Speaker to decide in what form it should be. The Speaker in his wisdom had ruled out the adjournment motion and accepted it under Rule 193. It is unfortunate that instead of accepting the Speaker's verdict, the hon. Members on the Opposite had left the House. I believe they have endorsed a copy of the letter to me which was addressed to the hon. Speaker saying that they would boycott the House for the rest of the week in protest against the Speaker's ruling. I do not want to use strong words. Let the House take its own inference. Sir, it is not proper for me to say what had happened in the Speaker's chamber. I can only say that all the persuasive efforts made by the hon. Speaker have failed to convince the hon. Members. Therefore, Sir, we are ready for a discussion even now. But they have refused to participate in the discussion today. The rules do not permit when once the Speaker had rejected the motion today the adjournment motion brought

forward in this House today morning cannot be accepted today itself. Sir, tomorrow, we do not know what will happen and what the hon. Speaker will decide. As I have already said, the statement will always precede the discussion in whatever form it comes. The hon. Home Minister will make a statement.

AN.HON. MEMBER: No, no that will be incomplete.

SHRI P. UPENDRA: More details are being obtained. If he makes a statement today that will be incomplete. If necessary, tomorrow, after the Question Hour, he can make a very comprehensive statement.

[*Translation*]

SHRI VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Kindly let us have, whatever details are available.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. First, let the hon. Minister complete his statement.

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI (Kota): The House has right to know this information.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat.

[*English*]

SHRI P. UPENDRA: That is why I have said that some statement can be made today. But if they want a comprehensive statement, it can be made at 12 O'clock tomorrow and regarding the timing for the discussion tomorrow, it is left to the Chair to decide. But we wanted the Constitution Amendment Bill to take the precedence over the discussion. But the hon. Members on the Opposite wanted that this discussion should take precedence over the Constitution Amendment Bill. I will leave this matter to the Chair to decide how it can be done and in what form it should be done. Sir, now if they want the Home Minister to make some statement he can do so.

[*Translation*]

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

[*English*]

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

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

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

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

16.20 hrs.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER
BOMB BLAST INCIDENT IN BATALA

[*English*]

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

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

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

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

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

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

[*Translation*]

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

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