

people of Ladakh

*Reported Disconnection of Electricity
to Thompson Press, Faridabad*

1989-90. [Placed in Library. See
No. LT—1901/91]

- (6) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Coir Board for the year 1989-90 under section 19 of the Coir Industry Act, 1953.

- (ii) A statement (Hindi and English versions) regarding Review by the Government on the working of the Coir Board, Cochin, for the year 1989-90. [Placed in Library. See No. LT—1902/91]

- (7) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission for the year 1989-90 under sub-section (3) of section 24 of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act, 1956.

- (ii) A statement (Hindi and English versions) regarding Review by the Government on the working of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission for the year 1989-90. [Placed in Library. See No. LT—1903/91]

- (8) A copy of the Lakshadweep Khadi and Village Industries Board Regulation, 1990 (Hindi and English versions) (No. 4 of 1990) promulgated by the President on the 5th October, 1990, issued under *article 240* of the Constitution. [Placed in Library. See No. LT—1904/91]

12.00 hrs.

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

Sixteenth Report and Minutes

[English]

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (Jodhpur): I

beg to present the Sixteenth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Estimates Committee on the Ministry of Urban Development—Hostel Accommodation for MPs in Delhi and Minutes of the sittings of the Committee relating thereto.

12.02 1/2 hrs.

PETITION RE: THE PROBLEMS OF THE
PEOPLE OF LADAKH

[English]

PROF. PREM KUMAR DHUMAL (Hamirpur): I beg to present a petition signed by Shri Rigzin Jora, General Secretary, Ladakh Buddhist Association, Leh and two others regarding the problems of the people of Ladakh.

12.02 3/4 hrs.

PETITION RE. THE PROBLEMS OF THE
PEOPLE OF JAMMU REGION

[English]

PROF. RAMGANESH KAPSE (Thane): I beg to present a petition signed by Shri Chaman Lal Gupta, President, Jammu & Kashmir BJP, Jammu and two others regarding the problems of the people of Jammu region.

12.03 hrs.

RE. REPORTED DISCONNECTION OF
ELECTRICITY TO THOMSON PRESS IN
FARIDABAD AND ALLEGED ATTEMPT TO
CURB FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

[English]

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to bring

to your notice that according to Article 19 of the Constitution, Fundamental Right of Expression which includes Freedom of the Press is guaranteed by the Constitution in Part III of the Fundamental Rights.

Unfortunately, what is happening today is that this fundamental freedom of expression of the press is stopped, stifled and destroyed. I wish to bring to your notice and through you, to the House, that *India Today* and its allied organisation *News Track* which have taken certain critical attitudes and have brought out certain writings strongly condemning the freedom of the electorates and also trying to bring to the notice of the readers some of the atrocities that were committed not only against the voters but also against some of the workers of the Thomson Press which is affiliated to HMS Union, a lot of violence is going on, attack is taking place, firing is taking place and on the top of it all, to throttle the voice of *India Today* and *News Track*, on 4th of this month, the electric supply of Thomson press from where *India Today* is being published, that supply has also been stopped. The HMS workers are attacked. Violence is taking place. Firing is taking place. The HMS Union in the Thomson Press, which has 95 per cent of the Membership is sought to be attacked by a rival Union, which is sponsored by the ruling party in Haryana. As a result of that, a lot of discontent is there. HMS, AITUC, CITU are all organizing an indefinite strike in protest against what is being done to *India Today*, what is done to Thomson Press, what is done to the HMS-affiliated union, and repression against the workers.

In all these matters, I feel that the Centre has not intervened, and it has not protected the fundamental right of expression, fundamental right of expression of the Press; and, therefore, I had given an adjournment motion to draw the attention of this House to the failure of the Government in protecting the fundamental right of expression of the Press. I would like you to take notice of it. I would like the Prime Minister to take notice of this. We

do not want to make this a party issue. This is an issue in which all those who had fought for the freedom of the Press and civil liberties are parties. The Prime Minister himself was a participant in the battle against suppression of civil liberties during the Emergency of 1975. Therefore, I am sure that when the attention of the House is drawn to the attack on the working class and also attack on the freedom of the Press, when there is an organized effort to see that *India Today's* voice is suppressed and *Newstrack* is suppressed, I want you to take notice of it; and I would particularly request the Prime Minister to take note of that. The notice of adjournment motion is only to draw the attention of the House and of the Prime Minister to this failure. Thank you. (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI L.K. ADVANI (New Delhi): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to request the hon. Prime Minister not to treat it as a State subject. It is a very serious matter. The best way to throttle democracy is to throttle freedom of the press. This is a case of rivalry between two unions. This group of news magazines has been exposing the shortcomings, especially that of the State Government, as and when any such thing came to its notice. That is why it incurred the wrath of the State Government. Since freedom of the press is in jeopardy in this case, intervention by the Central Government in the matter is absolutely necessary. I would like to lay stress on this point. (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Now Mr. Gujral.

(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

KUMARI MAYAWATI (Bijnore): Mr. Speaker, Sir, communal riots take place in Bijnore on account of Rath Yatra and communal tension still prevails there. (*Interruptions*)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat. I did not permit you to speak. Whatever you say will not go on record.

(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Kumari Mayawati ji, please go to your seat. I am not permitting you. I have asked Mr. Gujral to speak. Nothing of what you say goes on record. Nothing will go on record.

(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Mayawati ji, please take your seat. I am not permitting you to speak. First of all you go to your seat and then only I will permit you to speak. You should not rise like this and start speaking without permission of the Speaker.

(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Mayawati ji, please resume your seat. You cannot dictate to the Speaker like that. Please take your seat.

12.09 hrs.

At this stage, Kumari Mayawati came and stood on the floor near the Table

(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You take your seat. No; no.

(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Mayawati ji, please speak after being permitted. Please go to your seat.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please go to your seat so that business of the House may proceed properly. Please listen to me.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please go to your seat. I am not hearing you.

(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I will permit you if you go to your seat, I am not hearing you.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: It is Parliament. You should not speak like this. Please go to your seat.

(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This is not the way. I am very sorry.

At this stage-Kumari Mayawati went back to her seat

SHRI I.K. GUJRAL (Jalandhar): This morning I had notified to your office my intention to move an Adjournment Motion regarding the issue of Thomson Press. It is unfortunately a fact that even today in the modern times some people in politics assume for themselves the power to silence the Press. It is more than a month now that this type of *goondaism* has been prevailing outside Thomson press and the Press has been regularly reporting it. From the 4th of this month, the electricity connection had

been disconnected. And when the Electricity Board and the local authority were approached, they said, "You know the reason. Don't ask us." This is something which should cause a great deal of concern to all of us. I would request you to admit my Adjournment Motion particularly because the action has been taken primarily because *India Today* and the *Newstrack* reported on the Meham incident. It concerns all of us and we are all worried about it. This type of election malpractice can be undertaken by some people. It is the same gentleman who was responsible for Meham who had been there on the spot, and photographs are available in the Press. He is addressing people, ordering the authority not to take any action. The local authorities are paralysed. *Goondaism* is continuing.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Gujral, I have to find out the facts.

MR. I.K. GUJRAL: I suggest and request you and through you to the House that the Adjournment Motion be admitted and we discuss this very grave violation of the fundamental rights of the people.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Saifuddin Choudhury.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOUDHURY (Katwa): I support this..... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: No cross talks please.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOUDHURY: I cannot silence anybody in this House. It is for you to deal with the Members. I support this Adjournment Motion. You have heard already what a serious situation has developed there. It is a direct attack on the freedom of the Press. It is necessary that we take up an issue to rectify it. Again what is most important is to find out who are the people behind this

kind of action taken against the *India Today* and the *Press* there by cutting electricity connection. This is very important. Now if people in politics behave like this and if their mind works in this particular manner that they try to muzzle the Press in this manner then it is very unfortunate and it is a blot on our democracy. The Prime Minister is here. He must stand up and clarify the situation and also give an assurance that action will be taken against those who are behind it. For that, I support this Adjournment Motion and I request you to allow it.

MR. SPEAKER: I am hearing what you are saying. But I have not permitted the Adjournment Motion.

(Interruptions)

SHRI P.V. NARASIMHARAO (Ramtek): This matter does impinge on the freedom of the Press. It is serious and we also like to support it. (Interruptions) We would also like to associate ourselves with the demand that the Government should think about taking early action on this. This should not be left festering for a long time. It is high time that the Government takes action on this and something needs to be done because it concerns on the freedom of the Press.

SHRI SAMARENDRA KUNDU (Balasore): With great sorrow I would like to bring to your notice that for the last two months a concerted effort is being made to kill our workers in Faridabad of Escorts and Thomson Press. The only union that is there, is HMS union.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur): Ninety-five per cent.

SHRI SAMARENDRA KUNDU: Not 95, 99 per cent, Professor Sahib are our people elected to the union there and * through some sort of LMS union, wants to see that the back of our union is broken and particularly because of his failure to stop the Thomson Press. (Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: You should not take their name.

(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM DHAN (Lalganj): He was removed from the Chief Ministership and his name was referred to in the House.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You should not refer him by name.

SHRI SAMARENDRA KUNDU: I have gone there. I held a meeting. I have spoken to the Collector, I have spoken to the SP and I told them not to create another Punjab there. Now, they told me—let me tell you what they say—and I have also spoken to the Chief Minister of Haryana that even with a slight majority, he should not try to impose it on the Press. It has no sanction and he should not try to create trouble. But the result is that they could not stop our workers. Because *India Today* brought out some write-up against certain persons who are in the ruling party and those who are in Haryana Government. It is critical of the Haryana Government, especially critical about the Meham incident which spoiled the name of India. As you have heard, electricity has been cut off completely. In spite of that with a generator, with the help of the workers the Press is going on and I tell you, whatever may happen, the Press workers will run the Press, they will not allow this Government to muzzle the freedom of the Press. Let a discussion be there. We can go to any extent to stop this sort of terrorism. Today this morning I have received a telephone call. Three jeeps full of goondas have come. I do not know what for. I have also talked to the Home Minister. He is not here now. They say that they may create some trouble. I request the Home Minister and the Prime Minister who is here to take action.

DR. THAMBI DURAI (Karur): I also join our colleagues and try to bring to the notice

of our Prime Minister through you, the suppression of the freedom of Press in our country, especially not only in Haryana but also in Tamil Nadu. We know how the DMK Government, which is a part of the National Front, have suppressed the freedom of the press in Tamil Nadu... (Interruptions) The DMK Government suppressed the newspapers like *Indian Express*, *Dinamalar* in the last three or four months by way of giving a lot of trouble including cutting Government advertisements to these papers. When these newspapers highlighted some events of agitation in the country, the DMK Government Tamil Nadu suppressed them and did not allow their vans which carry newspapers and deliver them to the people in Tamil Nadu, by encouraging goondas to stop these vans and burn copies. Once our leader Miss Jayalalitha visited MGR Samiti to pay respect on his death anniversary. One press reporter of *Tharasu* found out one Sri Lankan militant with weapon to kill our leader. Instead of taking action against the culprit, they arrested the press reporter and filed certain cases against him. So, we should not only discuss the Haryana issue but also the Tamil Nadu issue.

SHRICHITTABASU (Barasat): Sir, this issue has been raised by all sections of the House. All sections of the House have made it clear that there has been a specific violation of the fundamental right, the freedom of the press. It has also been mentioned and I also do that there has been an unnecessary intervention by the Government in the trade union activities of a particular trade union... (Interruptions)

SHRISONTOSH MOHANDEV (Tripura West): What about *Anand Bazar Patrika* in Calcutta?... (Interruptions)

SHRICHITTABASU: Sir, Similar events have also occurred during the emergency. In the emergency, we found that electricity connection was disconnected to certain presses. The hon. Prime Minister will agree that there is no emergency in our country. If that kind of thing happens, where there is no emergency, where there is a Government,

where there are civil liberties, where there is fundamental right guaranteed by the Constitution and if some State Government in that particular case tries to muzzle and silence the press, then it will be a sad day for the country. Therefore, Sir, I think, the hon. Prime Minister should respond to it. It is not limited to the State Government's sphere. It is a matter which relates directly to the fundamental right of the Constitution. It relates to the freedom of the press. Therefore, the Prime Minister should respond to it... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI BHOGENDRAJHA (Madhubani): Sir, in our country again and again the issue of interference with the freedom of the press has come. One important source of this is that whichever party or individual or group is in Government has got some influence, wrong influence, over the press through advertisement or the denial of it. So I feel that the House will agree that all official advertisements should go through the official gazette and the public sector advertisements should go through their own publications and thus leave the free press entirely free without any interference from the Government. I hope, the press will pick up the courage to choose this for its own freedom. But I do not know if the press will have the guts and the courage to publish even what I am saying because I feel that the official All India Gazette and the State Governments Gazettes should publish the advertisements of the Government and the public money should not be utilised to wrongly influence the press in any way. That is my submission before the House and the Government for their consideration. (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI KAPIL DEV SHASTRI (Sonapat): I should also be given an opportunity to speak.

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down, I will call you.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Chavda, if you sit down, I will call you as well. But you have to sit down.

(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI INDER JIT (Darjeeling): As one who belongs to the world of media I strongly support the demand for admission of the adjournment motion. In fact, I will go a step further. The House needs to discuss the entire issue not merely in Haryana but elsewhere also. During the last one year the Press has been under brazen wanton assault in various parts of the country. I therefore, think it is not enough for this House to discuss the affairs in Faridabad which, of course, must be considered immediately. But there should also be a general discussion on the subject because the freedom of the Press is under grave threat..... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not interrupt. Take your seat please.

SHRI INDER JIT: I request the hon. Prime Minister to respond to this particular matter. (*Interruptions*)

KUMARI MAYAWATI: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes. What is your point of order.

KUMARI MAYAWATI: My point of order is that during zero hour we.....

MR. SPEAKER: Please come to the point and behave in an orderly manner. Whenever you speak you come to the well of the House. That is not proper.

KUMARI MAYAWATI: I have been elected to the Lok Sabha for the first time. You had observed during the meeting of party leaders-which I attended as leader of my party-that all the parties should get an opportunity to speak on important issues, which they wanted to raise during zero hour.

[Kumari Mayawati]

But it appears that you intend to pass off the Zero Hour by allowing big parties to raise just one issue.

MR. SPEAKER: This is no point of order. Please resume your seat.

(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is going on record.

(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Mayawati, this is not good. You are the leader of your party. You should not behave like this. Please go back to your seat. This is Parliament. I will call you only when you resume your seat.....

(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: She is not going on record...

(Interruptions)*

SHRI S. BENJAMIN (Bapatla): You must hear her also, Sir. For half-an-hour she has been waiting to be called. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Benjamin, will you please take your seat?...

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR): Mr. Speaker, Sir, considerable time has been wasted. Mayawati please take your seat. You will be

heard. Please listen to me. You will certainly be heard.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Prime Minister you know, I have already told her.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to point out to Mayawati that it is for the hon. Speaker to decide whom to give time and when. I have also other engagements. I had to make a statement at 12 O'clock I am also waiting.

MR. SPEAKER: Mayawati, please go back to your seat.

[English]

I order you to go to your seat. Yes, Mr. Sontosh Mohan Dev.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHANDEV: Sir, we fully share the views expressed by all the Members of this House on what has happened regarding *India Today*. But, at the same time, we urge upon you that if you allow any discussion, it should cover the entire gamut of the feudal attack on the Press which is happening in the country. It has happened in West Bengal in respect of *Ananda Bazar* and *Telegraph* where a Press photographer Mr. Tarapat Banerjee was also beaten up by CPI (M) cadres, who had almost died. Mr. Arun Shourie, the Editor of Indian Express was also sacked at the instance of the V.P. Singh Government. So, all these things should be discussed, not only what happened in *India Today*... (Interruptions) Then only we will support it... (Interruptions)

SHRI VAKKOM PURUSHOTHAMAN (Alleppey): Sir, I also support what Mr. Sontosh Mohan Dev has said. It has happened in Kerala also. The freedom of the Press is being curtailed there... (Interruptions) The Press photographers in Kerala are beaten up. When the VIPs come, the Kerala Government puts up ropes to tie the

pressmen. 'Malayala Manorama' was attacked by Marxist goondas in Kerala.

[Translation]

SHRI BHAJAN LAL (Faridabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, this matter relates to Faridabad in Haryana. Thomson Press is situated in Haryana, the area which I represent. (*Interruptions*)

Mr. Speaker, Sir, you may be aware that Meham issue was a very serious issue and "India Today's Newstrack" brought to light many facts before the nation. That is the reason for all this trouble. If I name him, that would not be good. He is the general secretary of Janata Dal (S) and very powerful. (*Interruptions*) The Haryana Government is deliberately harassing the workers and the Press. The power connection has been snapped and they are being subjected to unending harassment. (*Interruptions*) Mr. Speaker, Sir, the entire House is convinced about it. No doubt there may be a few exceptions. Hon. Prime Minister is present here. I would request him to direct the State Government to restore peace. Workers are being harassed and victimised. Action should be taken against the guilty and nobody should be allowed to go scot-free, howsoever big gun he might be. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI KAPIL DEV SHASTRI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I agree with this that..... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Makassar, please sit down. Everybody should be heard.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI KAPIL DEV SHASTRI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I fully agree that the newspapers in the country should get all the rights and the freedom of press should not be attacked at any cost. But this does not concern Haryana alone. In Bihar also the Government and the Chief Minister harass and victimise the journalists of various newspapers. They are beaten up and even killed.

(*Interruptions*) Jyoti Basu is also doing the same thing in West Bengal. (*Interruptions*) This does not concern Haryana alone. (*Interruptions*)

[English]

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN (Bahraich): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am very grateful to you giving me this opportunity because it involves a very serious issue, i.e. freedom of expression. From the angle of law and order, it might appear to be a subject under the administrative control of the State Government, but more than that it is a question of ensuring the guarantee which has been given by the Constitution, i.e. freedom of expression. All the details have appeared in the Press; details have been given in this House. It has caused concern to all the hon. Members of the House. But I am surprised when I find that without having given any notice to your office earlier some hon. Members, Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev and Shri Shastri have raise this matter here. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I have permitted him. Please take your seats.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Do you agree with what he says?

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN: Sir, I seemed to have used some unparliamentary phrase! I am sorry for that, but I am amazed at this argument. Whatever has happened to the Thomson Press, the Government of West Bengal and other State Governments have been mentioned by them. My question is that the hon. Members who are concerned.....

SHRI HARISH RAWAT (Almora): Sir, on a point of order.

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN: Unless I complete it, there is no point of order.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. Yes. What is your point of order.

SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Shri Arif Mohammad Khan is well versed with the rules and procedure of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Which rule has been violated?

SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Just now he challenged Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev and said...

MR. SPEAKER: No. He mentioned the name of Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev with my permission.

SHRI HARISH RAWAT: He raised this matter without giving notice and thereby challenged your authority.

MR. SPEAKER: This is not a point of order. Please sit down.

SHRI HARISH RAWAT: He said about Sontosh Mohan Dev, but he himself did not give prior notice. Even if he gave notice it was submitted late. You can check it from record.

MR. SPEAKER: This is no point of order. Please sit down... (*Interruptions*) Why are you getting up again and again. Please sit down.

(*Interruptions*)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You leave it to the Chair their is no point of order.

(*Interruptions*)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Ram Dhan ji, what is your point of order?

SHRI RAM DHAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the number of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Members of Parliament in the House is 130. But the problem is that when SC/ST Members rise to speak either the mike is snapped or their voice is gagged. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Who gags them?

SHRI RAM DHAN: My point of order is that the Members belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes should be given full opportunity to speak in the House.

MR. SPEAKER: All right, please sit down.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I have said that there is no point of order in what Ram Dhanji said.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I will call you also. Please take your seat.

(*Interruptions*)

[English]

SHRI PIYUS TIRAKY (Alipurduars): I want to raise a very important issue. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I have asked you to conclude.

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN: I would like to complete my submission with your permission. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: No cross-talking please. You please conclude.

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN: Sir, you can check the record. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I have given you permission to raise it. You please conclude.

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN: I must say, I am amazed when I say, an attempt is being made to safeguard the interest of the hero of Meham...

SHRI HARISH RAWAT: He was your leader. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: You please take your seat.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN: I am glad that the cat is out of the bag. Now they are defending whatever had happened in Meham. I welcome it. You please do that. I am glad that they are defending him. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I have allowed you. You please conclude.

My only point is that if whatever is happening in Faridabad and whatever is being done by the hero of Meham is comparable to the events either in West Bengal or Kerala, then why hon. Members have not given notice to the Lok Sabha Secretariat to raise and discuss that question first? (*Interruptions*)

I feel that this is a very important and basic issue. The freedom of the press is in peril. (*Interruptions*)

I would like to conclude with the remarks of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru:—

"Freedom is in peril. Defend it with all your might."

Freedom of expression is in peril and it becomes reprehensible that these attempts are made by the Government.

I would urge you with all humility to allow adjournment motion or a discussion on this subject.

[*Translation*]

KUMARI MAYAWATI (Bijnor): Mr. Speaker Sir, before I draw your attention to a grave problem being faced by the country, I would like to point out that when I wanted to raise this matter during the 'zero hour' you did not allow me to do so.

MR. SPEAKER: Mayawatiji you had not given prior notice for raising the matter. Therefore please do not raise the issue of 'zero hour' now. Please proceed as I have allowed you now.

KUMARI MAYAWATI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is unfortunate. If I violate rules, it is not good, but even when I gave notice for raising the matter during zero hour, why was my name not included?

MR. SPEAKER: Mayawatiji please come to the point.

KUMARI MAYAWATI: I fully agree with Ram Dhanji that you want to gag the voice of oppressed and exploited in the Lok Sabha by not allowing me to speak.

MR. SPEAKER: Mayawatiji please do not quote Shri Ram Dhan. Please come to the point.

KUMARI MAYAWATI: If you do not allow me the country will also be put to loss. I will stall the proceedings of the House, if I am not given an opportunity to speak and this will result in loss of precious time of the House on which lot of money is spent.

MR. SPEAKER: Kumari Mayawati please come to the point.

KUMARI MAYAWATI: Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to draw your attention to the grave problem arising out of Ram Janam Bhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute and the Communal riots that ravaged the country during VP Singh's regime. This had hardly calmed down when the Bharatiya Janata Party launched the "Asthi Kalash Yatra". It is an unfortunate event. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH (Aonla): Mr. Speaker, Sir, what is this? How can she name our party? (*Interruptions*)

KUMARI MAYAWATI: Excesses have been committed on Muslims in my constituency, Bijnor. Leaders of all political parties including Shri Rajiv Gandhi, Shri Paswan and Shri Rasheed Masood saw for themselves. An eight day programme of the Yatra is being organised in my district. I apprehend riots as a fall out of Yatra and if riots take place the responsibility will entirely be on Bharatiya Janata Party or if the Government did not stop it then it will be that of the Government.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to urge the hon. Prime Minister that those who believe in secularism and want to wipe out communalism like me had appealed to Shri V. P. Singh when he was the Prime Minister that he should stop Advanijis Rath Yatra at Somnath itself. If should have been stopped the very first day. Shri V. P. Singh did not do that and as a result thereof Muslim Community had to suffer a lot. Because of this double standards V. P. Singh's Government fell. Therefore, I would like to urge the hon. Prime Minister that this step of Advaniji and other members of BJP to organise (*Asthi Kalash Yatra*) ashes of martyrs should be stopped as it is meant to create communal tension. I would like to submit that if '*Asthi Kalash Yatra*' is not stopped, there can be large-scale communal riots at anytime. I would like to know what. Steps would be taken to stop it. While concluding, I would request the hon. Prime Minister to give a reply so that I can inform the people of Bijnor and the entire country about it. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Please Sit down. The Prime Minister has to meet the Korean Parliamentary Delegation so let him make the statement without delay.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI L. K. ADVANI (New Delhi): I would request the hon. Prime Minister to reply to

the points which have not only been made from this side but also by an hon. Member like Shri Bhajan Lal. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. I shall not allow you atleast not at your instance.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR): Before making a statement on SAARC summit I would like to point out only one thing regarding the freedom of Press- a point raised by hon. Dandavateji, Gujaralji and Narasingh Raoji, Shri Bhajan Lal and Shri Santosh Mohan Dev also raised it without embroiling myself into the controversy, that any attack on the freedom of Press is unfortunate and a matter of shame for us. Freedom of Press should always be protected. I would not go into allegations and counter allegations. Some hon. Members pointed to an incident which occurred recently. I would get the information from the Haryana Government and I assure the House that we would take all possible steps to protect the freedom of Press. If the House wants to discuss it and if you allow it Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think we should discuss it in detail because this is a basic issue and there should be no clarity on the part of the Government. Have I would like to point out.....(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI S. BENJAMIN (Bapatla): Sir, the Calcutta issue was also raised. He has to bear in mind that also.

[*Translation*]

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: In the last two months, at least I am not aware if I have made a complaint against any Press reporter or Editor. I have never bothered who writes in favour of the Government or against it: That is their lookout. They may do whatever they want. I believe that there should be no apprehensions about the freedom of Press and I assure the House that nothing will be done to create such an apprehension.

[English]

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am making a statement on the Fifth SAARC Summit. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SAMARENDRA KUNDU (Balasore): He should say something on the assault on the workers. (*Interruptions*)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: You may speak later
(*Interruptions*)

12.56 hrs.

STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER

Fifth SAARC Summit at Male

[English]

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR): I visited Maldives to participate in the Fifth SAARC Summit from the 21st to the 23rd November, 1990. The outcome of the Summit is incorporated in the Male Declaration and the Joint Press Release issued at the end of the Summit. Copies of these documents are laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library, See No LT — 1905/91]

During my stay in Maldives, I had bilateral discussions with former President Ershad of Bangladesh, President Gayoom of Maldives, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan and Prime Minister Wijetunga of Sri Lanka. I also had the pleasure of meeting in Male His Majesty the King of Bhutan and Prime Minister Bhattarai of Nepal, but detailed bilateral talks with them were held after their arrival in New Delhi immediately after the Summit.

India took a number of initiatives at the Summit and the meetings preceding it, all of which were accepted and are reflected in the

Male Declaration and the Joint Press Release.

At our suggestion, regional cooperation under SAARC has been extended to the field of biotechnology.

Our proposal to create a Fund for the identification and development of regional projects, to be financed by national development banks of the member-countries, was also accepted. We will host a meeting of the representatives of these banks to work out the precise modalities for the operation of the Fund.

India will also host the Second Ministerial Meeting on International Economic Issues to review the outcome of the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations and to coordinate the positions of the member-countries at the forthcoming UN Conference on Environment and Development. It was agreed that the same Ministerial meeting would also prepare a strategy for mobilising regional resources which would encourage and strengthen individual and collective self-reliance in the region.

We also suggested, and it was decided, that measures for establishing joint ventures in the field of cottage industries and handicrafts should be taken forthwith to set a stage for promoting collective self-reliance in the region.

A major decision taken at the Summit was to establish three additional regional centres, namely, the Centre for Human Resource Development in Pakistan, the SAARC Documentation Centre in India and the SAARC Tuberculosis Centre in Nepal. We are taking necessary steps expeditiously to set up the SAARC Documentation Centre in India.

There were several other significant achievements at the SAARC Summit. We agreed to increase tourism to the region. We decided to facilitate greater contacts among our newspaper federations. We announced the 1990 as the Decade of the Girl Child. We