

12.14 hrs.

SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS FOR
GRANTS (GENERAL), 1988-89

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI B.K. GADHVI): I beg to present a statement (Hindi and English versions) showing the Supplementary Demands for Grants in respect of the Budget (General) for 1988-89.

12.14 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

[*English*]

- (i) **Demand to save the independent character of Kerala's daily Mathrubhumi, lately in danger of being restrained owing to a big business house concerning the share of the daily**

SHRI VAKKOM PURUSHOTHAMAN (Alleppey): The *Mathrubhumi* is one of the most widely circulated and influential papers of Kerala. It has its influence not only in that State but all over the country. It was started by the freedom fighters who took great pains to spread the message of the great leaders to the general public. There were occasions when the freedom fighters themselves circulated this paper amongst the public to spread the message of independence. It played a leading role in the freedom struggle of our country. The path shown by founders of this paper has been consistently and assiduously followed and thus this great Daily has

been able to maintain its independent character all these years.

Now, efforts are being made by a big business houses controlling a chain of newspapers and magazines in the country to corner the shares of this Daily which would certainly curb its independent character.

We are all for curbing the monopoly press as it is against the healthy development of press in the country. I hope the Government of India will take a note of this development and help in keeping the independent character of this paper.

[*Translation*]

- (ii) **Demand for declaring the Chhota Nagpur area of Bihar a drought affected area**

SHRI YOGESHWAR PRASAD YOGESH (Chatra): The Chhota Nagpur region in Bihar comprising of Palamau, Hazaribagh and Plateau of Gaya district has been affected by drought. The paddy crop has been destroyed and now the rabi crop has also been ruined. Poverty has driven the people of this area to cities. Due to acute drought conditions, the problem of drinking water and irrigation has become very serious. The people of this area have lost their strength to save their lives and the lives of their livestock. The above problems should be taken seriously under the democratic and socialistic provision.

Under the above condition of acute crisis and natural calamity I would like to make an appeal to the Central Government that in view of the seriousness of the situation they should conduct an inspection by an expert committee and declare the Chhota Nagpur plateau comprising of Gaya, Palamau, Hazaribagh as a drought affected area.