

12.00 hrs.

English

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

Atrocities on Women and Problems Faced by them - Contd.

MR. SPEAKER: I think the hon. Members have some important issues to raise and they will be allowed to raise those issues one after the other. Shri Ram Vilas Paswan Ji and other Members from Andhra also want to raise their issues.

But yesterday, we were sitting very late, upto 8.00 p.m. in the night. Some Members and Ministers were sitting and it was decided that the Reply to the Discussion on atrocities and problems of women should be given immediately after the Question Hour. After the Reply is given, I will allow these issues also to be raised and you will have full time to discuss those things. We will not abruptly get up.

"Now, the Minister may please reply".

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P.M.SAYEED): Mr. Speaker, Sir, yesterday we had this subject to discuss for about four hours and as we have rightly pointed out, this was a subject which has been taken up by our esteemed colleagues, senior and distinguished Members.

Therefore, at the outset, I must thank the hon. Members of Parliament for raising this important issue of atrocities on women and the need to empower them so that they are able to fight against such atrocities.

Sir, this issue is in two sub-heads -first, 'the atrocities on women' and second, 'the problem faced by them'. As far as my Ministry is concerned, 'the atrocities committed on women' is dealt by us and therefore, I will be confining myself to that extent, and 'the problem faced by them' will be dealt with by my esteemed colleague of the HRD Ministry. She will be also speaking.

Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee and other hon. Members have also been drawing the attention of this House to these issues from time to time. Mr. Charles reminded us yesterday that Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee was raising this matter in the form of a Resolution some five to six years back and I must admire her for consistently taking up the matter. We appreciate her courage and conviction. We are all with her in fighting this menace.

In addition to the suggestions, I will be mentioning some of the actions that we have taken.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: (Midnapur) Are atrocities increasing or going down?

SHRI P.M.SAYEED: I will tell you that during the course of my speech.

The suggestions which the hon. Members made in yesterday's debate, are from strengthening of existing institutions of enforcement and making them accountable, creation of district level women's

Commission, empowerment of women, strengthening of existing legislations and their proper implementation, education of women etc.

We have also noted the experience of working of various schemes in Rajasthan and other places. Yesterday's debate has indeed been most useful in providing guidance for action by all concerned.

Before I comment on the concerns so expressed, I would like to clarify that the issues relating to women are many and important. They are particularly so when women constitute half of the population. They cover wide ranging aspects concerning their status in the society and their overall development. Of several such issues, those which come under the overall ambit of human rights, crime against women happens to be the worst form. While no country is free from such crimes, it is essential that those perpetrated against women are viewed more seriously as also mentioned by several hon. Members during yesterday's debate. This calls for concerted steps to identify the causes and prevent them. In a country like India, termed as a sub-continent by its size, with second largest population in the world, this task assumes titanic proportions.

Unfortunately, women in India are mostly unaware of their rights because of illiteracy and oppressive tradition. The suffering of women increases out of ignorance of law and lack of awareness of their rights. Hon. Members have correctly pointed out that social awareness must arise from within. I would like to reiterate the remarks of Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan. Yesterday, while speaking on the subject, she has stated that social awareness should start first among ourselves. You must have been the poor presence of Members in the House yesterday while this important topic was being discussed. So, we must first and foremost, ask ourselves whether in our own House here, we have such awareness.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Nirmal Kanti Chatterjee also said the same thing.

SHRI P.M. SAYEED. With due respect to all, I would like to stress this aspect of awareness among Members including myself. When such important issues were being discussed, how many were present in the House?

MR. SPEAKER: This point was mentioned by many other Members including Shri Nirmal Kanti Chatterjee

SHRI P.M. SAYEED: Shrimati Mahajan has dwelt on this aspect in depth.

For this, all of us must consider measures whereby existing machinery is strengthened, culprits are punished, and incentives and training are given to meet the issues of not only women but also other weaker sections of society. I assure the hon. Members that the Government shall endeavour to do its best to foster such awareness in women so that they are able to stand up for their own rights.

As Members are aware, as per the constitutional, provisions police and public order are State subjects. Therefore, registration, investigation, detection as well as prevention of crimes including those against women

are the responsibility of the State Governments and the Union Territories' Administration. Even so, Government of India has not absolved itself of its responsibilities. We, in conjunction with the Ministry of Welfare and other Ministries, are constantly taking various steps and we do interact regularly to contain the increasing incidence of crime against women. The Government of India maintains close liaison with the concerned State Governments regarding atrocities on women and also monitors the trend of various crimes perpetrated thereof. The Government of India has also written periodically to the State Government to take effective measures under the existing laws. Such letters have been addressed to all States since 1989 at the level of Home Minister as well as senior officers of the Home Ministry.

Our endeavour has always been that justice is ensured to the victims and timely relief given. The Members present here are also aware of the fact that the Government has been making from time to time suo motu statements on individual incidence of crime in this House which is reflective of our concern, in the context of the role of the Central Government. Members will appreciate that the present federal structure provided in the Constitution provides the role of control of crime to the States and though views have been expressed about the federal policing the workability of such a proposition is debatable. While adequate legal provisions exist in the Indian Penal Code, Criminal Procedure Code and the Indian Evidence Act, the Government is alive to the needs of the changing society in this respect and has been continuously modifying and amending the legislation with a view to making such laws more stringent and of punitive nature. The hon Members have also drawn attention to this aspect.

We have been often hearing of incidents of molestation of women, rape in police custody, excesses committed on general public as well as women and certain incidents were mentioned by hon. Members yesterday and all these touch the heart of a common man in the society and leads to soul-searching as to what the Government is doing to contain these crimes. I would like to inform the House that the data on crimes against women and other weaker sections is analysed very closely by the Government, both to keep a check on crimes as well as to enable more meaningful advice to the States. From a recent analysis of crime trends between 1990 to 1994, it was seen that there is a steadily increasing trend of crimes against women. This, today constitutes about 4.5 per cent of the total crime in India 47 per cent of this crime against women, according to reported data, was committed in just three States of Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. There is a high level of rape, molestation, dowry deaths and eve teasing cases in Uttar Pradesh, while rape and molestation cases are predominant in Madhya Pradesh. Maharashtra, on the other hand, has a very high incidence of dowry deaths and torture cases. Most of this crime is committed in Meerut, Bulandsahar, Lucknow, Hardoi, Ghaziabad, Kanpur, Moradabad, Agra,

Allahabad and Aligarh districts of U.P. In Madhya Pradesh, the districts were Raipur, Durg, Sagar, Bilaspur, Guna, Vidisha, Sarguja, Jhabua, Dhar and Indore, while in Maharashtra the highest incidence of crimes against women was in Bombay, Nagpur, Amravati, Bhandara and Pune.

In addition, the problem was compounded because the conviction rates in crimes against women, like rape, have been only 36 per cent, as also mentioned by hon. Members yesterday, against an average of 48 per cent for all crimes. This was mainly due to the fact that due to various societal and other pressures, in such cases witnesses turn hostile or do not present themselves in court. Moreover due to the severity of punishment in rape cases, most Courts tend to give the benefit of doubt to the accused and this further reflects on the low conviction rates. The problem is further compounded in a conservative society such as ours, where the stigma attached to crimes like rape, and the embarrassment at cross-examination, leads to most victims being unwilling to follow through the prosecution.

I personally propose to visit the States, where crimes against women are manifested most seriously, along with representatives of the concerned Ministries so as to review the reasons for the large number of crimes against women and seen as to how the Centre can help them in various ways. I would invite the hon Members, especially those representing the most seriously affected areas I spoke about earlier, to accompany me so that we could have the benefit of their wisdom.

Here, I would also like to clarify that in regard to the allegations of torture and violation of human rights by the police, instructions have been issued by the Government of India to the State Governments and the Union Territories from time to time regarding strict compliance of relevant provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code.

I would also like to inform the House that the subject of 'crimes against women' was discussed for the first time in depth in the Annual Conference of the Director Generals of Police from all over the country in July last year. Clear instructions were also given in that meeting to enforce the available laws on the subject strictly. It has also been decided to make the subject of 'crimes against women' a permanent feature of the agenda in all future annual conferences of the Director Generals of Police, which will be held by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

With a view to promote conciliation, secure speedy settlement of disputes relating to marriage and family affairs and for matters connected therewith, the Government of India has enacted Family Courts Act, 1994. After the enactment of this Act, 49 Family Courts have been set up so far in the various States. The Family Courts are essentially the civil courts. They have jurisdiction over matters relating to matrimonial relief, legitimacy, guardianship and maintenance cases.

It will be obligatory on the part of the Family Courts to endeavour, in the first instance, to effect the reconciliation or a settlement between parties to a family dispute. In the above context, I would like to mention for the information of the hon. Members that, apart from executive instructions referred to earlier, the prominent legal reforms are also as under:

Section 376 of IPC has been amended and a new offence created, namely 'rape in custody' for which a police officer shall be punished with not less than 10 years rigorous imprisonment.

A new provision in Section 304-B, IPC was introduced through dowry Prohibition (Amendment) Act, 1986. This provision created a new offence, 'Dowry Death'. If a woman is burnt to death within seven years of marriage, and it is shown that she was subjected to cruelty, then her husband or relative would be deemed to have caused her death.

A new provision, Section 498-A, IPC was introduced which makes an offence of driving a woman to commit suicide or bodily harm an act of cruelty.

Section 174, Criminal Procedure Code was amended to provide for the examination of dead bodies by civil surgeon in case of suicide committed by a woman within seven years of marriage.

Similarly, Section 113-A, 113-B, 114-A are inserted in the Indian Evidence Act to strengthen the cases of atrocities on women.

A few amendments are also under consideration of the Standing Committee of Parliament, relating to the Ministry of Home Affairs.

There are : (1) insertion of a new subsection 4 in Section 46 of the Criminal Procedure Code to prohibit arrest of women after sunset and before sunrise except in unavoidable circumstances, (2) insertion of a new section 53 (a) in the Criminal Procedure Code to provide for a detailed medical examination of a person accused of an offence of rape or an attempt to commit rape, and (3) insertion of a new section 164 (a) in the Criminal Procedure Code to provide for medical examination of a victim of rape with her consent.

Some recent incidents of alleged misbehaviour and excesses committed in certain cases were also mentioned by the hon. Members yesterday. The case of an Under Secretary of the Home Ministry was mentioned specifically. I would like to assure the House that the Government would like the strictest action against the guilty in this and other cases. Meanwhile, this case has been referred to CBI and the officer concerned has already been placed under suspension.

The Home Minister has earlier this month written to the Chief Ministers of these States suggesting various measures of creating awareness amongst the vulnerable sections of the society about their rights

and the legal recourse open to them. He had also separately addressed to the Chief Ministers of other States drawing attention to the fact the atrocities against women and other weaker sections of the society were a matter of great concern and requested them to review and institute measure to inhibit violations of their constitutional rights. Responses have been received from various States assuring the Home Minister of their concern and of the action they would take in the matter. The Home Minister had also written to all the Chief Ministers drawing their attention to the Government's concern and the support lent by it to a Private Members Resolution in the Rajya Sabha on 24th March, 1995 on the subject of atrocities against women. The Home Minister has asked the States to carry out a comprehensive review of the magnitude and the measures taken by them.

As the hon. Members would recall, the Resolution had, inter alia, stated that; (1) our laws are sensitive to the specificities of the local situation, (2) as far as possible such cases are decided locally so that people, especially women, are saved from expensive commuting to seek redressal, and (3) such cases should be decided to the extent possible within a period of six months.

Here the hon. Members have mentioned statistics that thousand of cases are pending in the trial courts. The difficulty is of time. Because of the fact that the process is taking unduly long time, it was stated in this Resolution which was passed in the Rajya Sabha unanimously and which was supported even by the Government, that the period delay should be minimised to six months. To that extent the Government is concerned about this matter.

As a result of the overall efforts of the Central Government, 12 States and three Union Territories, as per the information available, have set up special cells to deal with crime against women. Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh Government have also set up exclusive police stations manned by women police to deal with not only dowry cases crimes relating to women but also to inculcate confidence in women to approach police stations without fear or apprehension. The Delhi Police has also set up nine cells to deal with crime against women. Certain States like Maharashtra have also fixed a certain percentage recruitment to women police.

The recommendations made by the National Police Commission as well as received from the National Commission for Women in specific cases are also forwarded to the State Governments for guidance.

Further, Sir, directions have also been issued to the concerned State Governments to bring about a qualitative change in the thinking of police in their approach towards the suspects, the accused, and those detained in custody. Attempts are also being made to formalise gender-orientation training so that the thinking of police undergoes such a change.

Navertheless the role of police has been under adverse criticism in the recent past especially in recent incidents like Uttarakhand agitation and the related incidents at Muzaffarnagar. The Government has been sensitive to the complaints against women in this incident also and the matter has been handed over to CBI for investigation. Sixty-four cases have so far been registered in the designated Courts and these include seventeen cases of molestation. So far CBI has filed eight cases under Section 173 of Criminal Procedure Code before the competent Court of Jurisdiction at Dehradun.

Apart from this, the Home Ministry has also been referring certain other cases, like the recent incidents with some runs at Ghazlabad, to the National Commission for Women so that effective remedial measures can be instituted and the States advised accordingly. Members would agree with me that crime against women are wide-ranging and cannot be tackled alone by the enactment of laws. For this purpose, it is necessary also for various voluntary and non-Government organisations, the Press and other responsible members of society who can influence and educate women, to come forward and offer their assistance in the matter. About 12,000 voluntary organisations are currently operating at the grassroot's level in various parts of the country and this country-wide network of NGOs have been playing a significant role in creating awareness amongst the rural illiterate population. Government has, in the Department of Women and Child Development, in recent times published a Legal Literacy Manual which attempts to improve the levels of awareness of women in both rural and urban areas regarding the laws affecting them as well as legal procedures. I am sure, hon. Members will agree that this is a good initiative in an area of critical importance. In addition, the media campaigns undertaken by Government, from time to time, emphasise the developmental needs of women and girl children in our society, the need to empower them while attempting to sensitise them and the general public to these issues.

Government treats the issue of crimes against women as a series of crimes against society, an impediment to social peace, the maintenance of which is essential for creating conditions conducive to individual and societal development and to the empowerment of women. I would like to assure the hon. Members of the House that the Central Government will continue to remain alive to this issue and will keep it as important part of its national agenda to this and will keep it as an important part of its national agenda of action.

SHRI GUMAN MAL LODHA(Pali) Shri, I want to know only one thing. After 8 p.m. women are arrested

MR SPEAKER: We are at a different level. Please sit down.

*(Interruptions)**

* Not Recorded

MR SPEAKER: This is not going on record.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI BASAVA RAJESHWARI): I thank the hon. Member, Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee for having brought this Motion before this House. About 14 Members had participated in the discussion, mostly women and men also had participated. I congratulate them on the floor of the House for having given such constructive suggestions. I also thank you, Sir, because this is the appropriate time when I could get suggestions in this House and also else where. Since we are going to have a World Conference at Beijing these suggestions will help us in a long way for the preparation of the final draft. Therefore, I take these suggestions into consideration and then wherever necessary I will put forth these suggestions in my final drafting by the end of July.

Apart from suggestions, there were also some policy decisions which has been put forth by hon. Members like Shrimati Suseela Gopalan and others regarding Uniform Civil Code, reservations of seats in the Parliament as well as in the State Legislatures and also uniform job reservations. That can be discussed at the appropriate time.

Now I will come to my subject. the Motion before the House is, 'Atrocities against women and the problems thereof'. I think regarding the atrocities against women my friend has given a detailed report about the atrocities. As per the statistics, crimes against women are more than crimes committed against the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and the general crimes.

Let me begin by saying that the Government not only shares the concern and indignation of this House over atrocities against women but we consider them a blot on our collective conscience not just as a nation but as civilized human beings. Sir, thanks to you, we have had the privilege of listening to Members cutting across party lines and gender divides giving valuable and concrete suggestions about countering this menace. I will refer to the major suggestions and points made yesterday and will try outline the Government response. I am not going to give individual replies but collectively I am going to give the replies.

Members have spoken of the need to change attitudes and create awareness among women and men. Sir, we are carrying out multi-media campaigns and we are involving NGOs in programmes aimed at education work for prevention of atrocities. Innovative programmes like WDP, Mahila Samakhya and the Lok Jumbish all aim at change in societal attitudes. Through the Central Social Welfare Board, we are running awareness generation camps under which over 2,000 camps have been organised every year.

Members have spoken about the attitude and approach of police. Sir, we have started gender sensitization programmes for the enforcement machinery

through the National Police Academy and the State training schools. We are trying our best to institutionalise this.

Sir, Members have spoken of making women aware of their rights. We are trying this through a concerted legal literacy programme. We have brought out a set of 10 legal literacy manuals and are disseminating them through NGOs and Government's programmes. Sir, in the final analysis, the ultimate solution to gender atrocities is to change attitudes, a change which is slow and comes through a concerted and long-drawn process. This is the responsibility of both Central and State Governments...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: May I request the Member to take his seat? The Minister is replying. You can meet the Minister later.

SHRIMATI BASAVA RAJESWARI . This is the responsibility of both Central and State Government on one hand and the wider sections of the society makers on the other. I believe the rising trend of gender violence is also an indicator of increased awareness among women and their families to report and register such crimes. The issue must no longer be a hidden one and in communities, families and individuals this must become a priority issue of concern and action

Sir, a unanimous view expressed in the House yesterday related to the empowerment of women through economic interventions and conferment of equal property rights, enforcement of labour views, creating valous reservations in favour of women etc.

I would like to inform the House that the economic empowerment of women in the country has been attempted massively, through IRDP, where there is 40 per cent reservation for women, DWCR, STEP, NORAD, SEP, various urban development programmes and bankable schemes. In schools, polytechnics and ITIs, the vocationalisation of courses has expended tremendously. This is already showing some results through an increase in the work participation rate of women in the economy which has gone up from 16 per cent in 1981 to 23 per cent in 1991. Under programmes, like STEP, RMK and SEP attempts are being made to mobilise women, a sentiment which many Members had expressed yesterday. I would also like to inform the House that under the Mahila Samridhi Yojana, 88.15 lakh accounts have been opened in rural areas and deposit of Rs. 88.54 crore already have been mobilised. Here Tamil Nadu has accounted first in mobilising the accounts; Andhra Pradesh is second and Goa is third. We have also given award for this.

On the subject of reservations, many concrete suggestions have come and we welcome them. As you know, Sir, our Constitution itself provides for affirmative action in favour of women and many of these suggestions are with Government and serious thought is being given to them. However, there is still need for

wider debate and discussion on some of them before finalisation. We welcome the general sentiments of the House.

On the question of equal property rights, the Government is seized of the matter and the National Commission for Women is also examining the problem. We are going to reconstitute the National Commission of Women as early as possible. It is under the examination of the Government. In fact, some State Governments have already affected amendments in the Hindu Succession Act to confer equal rights in coparcenary property. As Members are aware, the question of property right is a complex one and with a large number of traditional property systems in the country, there is considerable variation in the need for legal reform. The setting up of increasing number of State Commissions for Women and announcement of State Policies for Women by many States would, I am sure, lead to a greater awareness and action at State levels and for legal reforms in this matter. We also run a network of support services and are continuously expanding them. We have sanctioned total number of 740 Working Women Hostels and we also have a National Creche Fund under ICDS Programme which is the largest in the country.

On the specific question of atrocities, I would like to supplement the reply of my colleague from the Home Ministry briefly. In our view, there are six major problems faced by victims of gender atrocities. I have already spoken about the first problem of lack of awareness of rights and procedures. Specific campaigns against child marriage have also been carried out and in Rajasthan, 714 child marriages were prevented in 1994.

The second problem of police insensitivity is sought to be tackled through gender sensitization programmes at all levels of the police force as I have already described. Thirdly, Sir, since most atrocities start from within the family, Government has set up Family Courts to meet the need of a formal mechanism to resolve conflicts before an atrocity occurs. Simultaneously Sir, the Government has created a network of over 300 Family Counselling Centres which play an effective role in advising and counselling women who face family discord.

Next, Sir, the need for shelter for women victims in situations where they have to leave their marital homes and are unable to receive the support of their parental homes, has been sought to be met by setting up a network of around 300 Short Stay Homes through NGOs. Both the schemes of Short Stay Homes and Family Counselling Centres are to be expanded in the coming years to reach the various corners of this country.

Finally, Sir, the Government has set up the National Commission for Women to oversee the working of legal and other safeguards for women including those concerning their human rights. In my view, the

Commission has achieved some success in this regard and has made useful suggestions for legal reforms as well as intervened in exemplary cases of atrocities.

I am also happy to state that nine States have already passed laws setting up State Commissions for Women and more are in the process of doing so. Sir, the House will surely appreciate that this will create network reaching right to the grass-roots and will effectively monitor the situation regarding gender violence.

Sir, there had been suggestions yesterday about setting up Mahila Police Stations. There is now an increasing trend in various State Governments to set up such police stations and over 15 States have also set up crimes against women cells. This will create a climate of confidence in women victims to come forward and register their complaints. Concern has also been expressed regarding the winding up to the WDP programme in Rajasthan. I would like to inform you that the Government has already taken up the matter with the Rajasthan Government on this. A suggestion has also been made regarding removal of age bar for widows and divorcees in public employment. The Government has taken a note of this. Some Members had suggested that Anganwadi workers could be given more responsibilities in the area of literacy and other programmes to enable them to receive a higher remuneration. I would like to respond that the Government is also keen to effect convergence of development services and the issue is already being examined.

Sir, some Members had referred to the serious social evil of child prostitution. I would like to inform you that we are conscious of this social malaise and a Central Advisory Committee on Child Prostitution had been set up last year and they have submitted a comprehensive status and action report. I propose to distribute copies of this report amongst the Members soon. A programme of action is on the anvil to confront and eliminate this problem at the earliest. The State Governments have also been addressed on these issues and have been encouraged to set up State and District level Advisory Committees with the participation of NGOs.

Sir, the problem of crimes against women is now receiving the increasing attention of the Governments and police forces. It has now become a regular feature of discussion in the annual meetings of Director General of Police held by the Home Ministry every year. The State Governments have been addressed very often on these issues and I would like to appeal to my colleagues in the House to take the battle against atrocities against women to where it also belongs, that is the community, the family and individual...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Sir, may I just seek one clarification from the hon. Minister?

The hon. Minister here gave a list of crimes and atrocities which are committed against women. In that list, I do not know why he has committed kidnapping and abduction of women. That is a very common thing. Kidnapping and abduction of women should be included as one of the main types of crimes against women.

And what about the killing of girl child, that killing of girl child while it is still at the stage of foetus? It is not happening only in our country. It is happening in many countries and it is happening in the country where the World Congress is going to be held also. There are social reasons for the killing of girl child while it is at the lotus stage. But this also should be considered as a crime against women.

SHRI P.M. SAYEED: Sir, regarding kidnapping, last year it was menace. Even in Delhi, we have set up Cells in all the nine Districts. It is under full control and it is improving. Of course, it is also there in the Agenda of the Government to give equal importance to kidnapping, atrocities, sexual assault and all these aspects will be there in the priority agenda of the nation.

PROF. SAVITHRI LAKSHMANAN (Mukundapuram). Sir, yesterday some of us were not mentioning special references. But in the reply today, the Minister has shown a leniency that the special reference made yesterday will be getting special attention. So, my plea is that if such is the case, some of us who spoke yesterday could also be given an opportunity to give some special references in writing to him and it should be considered as if they were told on the floor of the House yesterday. That is my first submission.

My second submission is this. With full hope I had put forward yesterday a concrete suggestion regarding the job opportunities of women...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: That has been replied to. She has said that they are looking into it. The Minister has replied to it.

PROF. SAVITHRI LAKSHMANAN: What about the 50 per cent reservation?

MR. SPEAKER: The exact position has not been said but that point has been noted and they are going to take action.

SHRIMATI BASAVA RAJESWARI: This is what I said. Sir, I cannot submit it on the floor of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: You shall have to apply your mind and look at the problems from different angles because these details cannot be discussed on the floor of the House.

PROF. SAVITHRI LAKSHMANAN: Sir, one thing more I would like to ask. What about the thinking of the Government for providing one-third reservation in the Legislatures?

MR. SPEAKER: She has replied to all those points. She has said they are going to look into it. It is not

possible to respond to such suggestions at they spur of the moment without consulting the Cabinet and others also.

PROF. SAVITHRI LAKSHMANAN: Thank you very much.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE (Panskura): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity. Sir, without your intervention, it would not have been possible to have to debate at all. I also thank the Members who took part in the debate yesterday, because they gave many suggestions. I appeal to the colleagues who are present here today to go through the proceedings of yesterday's discussion because there were suggestions not only to the Government but also to the Parliamentarians as to what they should do. I also appeal to the media to co-operate with us so that we can effectively fight this menace.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, I would like to say that the debate was really very good and very good points were made by the members who spoke yesterday. The reply is also equally good. But the problem is so big that it is necessary for all of us to look into it in greater details and do something more. I would like to thank everybody concerned.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN (Rosera): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw your attention to a very serious issue related to democracy. Elections are the soul of democracy. The soul and essence of democracy starts withering away where the mechanism of elections is extirpated and this gives birth to the surge of extremism. I will not name anybody, the process of Election Commission is still going on, and from the developments of the last few days it seems that the significance of elections has been diminishing. Elections have, in a manner, turned out to be a routine work and mockery of it how many days should it take to conduct elections. With your good wishes, I have been a Member of Lok Sabha since 1977 and prior to that I have been in the Assembly since 1969. Earlier, the electoral was marked with scrutiny of papers seven days after the filing of nominations and elections came to an end within 22-25 days from the date of withdrawal of papers, but, today, electoral process continues for three old months together. In Bihar, electoral process started in December-January and it has not come to an end as yet and one can not say whether it will close on 27th of the month or go beyond that? Another thing about it is that the amount of money to be spent by a candidate for Lok Sabha as well as Assembly elections is static. At the eleventh hour of the elections, the candidate exhausts all his energy and resources. He spends away every single penny thinking that he has fulfilled his responsibility, but when he comes to know that the polling scheduled for two three days hence has further been extended to another date, he is pained. The candidate who contests elections is aware of his financial and other position and which is why one resorts to malpractices subsequently. A candidate contesting for Assembly

elections spends Rs.1.35 lakh for 20 days of electioneering and the one contesting for Parliamentary elections spends Rs.5 lakh. How extended can one manage within this limit when the polling time is extended three times. Therefore, today's elections are very important. We all are going to face Lok Sabha elections in near future. Yesterday, I had raised the Punjab issue in this very House while as some hon. friends were raising the Andhra Pradesh issue. At that time, I said that I have visited Punjab. I have seen the situation there. An akali Dal candidate was to win with a heavy margin there against his rival, a Congress candidate. I had seen three days ago and stated in a Press conference there that elections should be countermanded because a conspiracy was being hatched there. There are two parties involved. The Election Commission has charged that there has been misuse of Government machinery. There are two aspects. One is the extension of the polling date and secondly the Election Commission has advanced the plea of open misuse of Government machinery for extending date in Punjab. In this regard, my suggestion and question to the Government is that by elections are being held in Giddarbhaha in Punjab. As a whole, elections are being held at 27-28 places throughout the country. Elections are being held at one place in Orissa and Andhra Pradesh each, at four places in Bihar. I would like to say that this will be perpetual problem because the Election Commission has not been able to conduct a by-election freely and fairly within the stipulated time. What is the guarantee that the Lok Sabha elections for 542 seats will be held on scheduled date? I had said it last time also that it will not be surprising if the Election Commission extends these elections for two or even five years.

Sir, I wish the House takes this issue seriously. We will discuss the domains of powers of the Election Commission, the Parliament and the President when you give us an opportunity. However, today it seems that the whole power has been concentrated into the hands of one individual or an institution. That very individual or institution decides whether elections will be held or not and if held, when and on what date? It also decides the period of electioneering process. The whole Parliament is a mute, helpless spectator as remains the Government. Same is the condition of the President, the constitutional head who looks desperately at the developments. Therefore, I wish that this matter should be taken seriously.

Our first demand is that the Government should on the basis of the Election Commission report tell the House why elections scheduled for 27th May are not being held in Punjab? Both the Congress and the regional party, Akali Dal have condemned this postponement of election date. I would like to know the reasons behind this extension of date. What kind of charge of misuse of the specific Government machinery has been levelled by the Commission? Our charge, too, is directed against the Government for its misuse of Government machinery but it is the duty of the Election

Commission to conduct free and fair polls. Secondly, this should not happen in future. There should not be whimsical postponement of election dates. The Government should give an assurance to this effect after holding discussions with all the parties with regard to ensuing Lok Sabha elections. Hence, free and fair polling should be held well on time. There should be no endeavour of diminishing the significance and killing the soul of democracy. With these words, I thank you for giving me an opportunity of raising such a serious matter...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: What is it that you want to raise?

SHRI M.G. REDDY (Chittoor): Sir, I have given a notice under Rule 222 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha.

MR. SPEAKER: But in your notice you have made certain statements which are not in line with facts.

SHRI. M.G. REDDY. I will explain. all the MPs who went there yesterday are here. *(Interruptions)* We Will explain.

MR. SPEAKER: Let us discuss it. But then you have said that Presiding Officer directed you to go to somewhere else.

SHRI M.G. REDDY: Yesterday, we raised this issue here. Some of the hon. Members have also suggested that we can represent to the Chief Election Commissioner.

MR. SPEAKER: In your writing you have said this thing

SHRI M.G. REDDY: It is not about the direction.

MR. SPEAKER. First of all, you should withdraw it.

SHRI. M.G. REDDY : I will withdraw it.

MR.SPEAKER: How can you make such a statement?

SHRI M.G. REDDY: Yesterday you had given a suggestion to go to the Chief Election Commissioner, Sir, and with your direction only we had gone to the Chief Election Commissioner's office

MR. SPEAKER: Even now you are repeating that it was my suggestion

SHRI M.G. REDDY: I withdraw that word, Sir Please allow me to make my submission, Sir

MR. SPEAKER. I have the record with me You have given me in writing that I directed you to go somewhere. I think such a statement should not have been made by you.

SHRI M.G. REDDY: I am sorry, Sir

Sir, on 25.5.1995, at about 1.00p m., ten Members of Parliament went to the Office of the Chief Election Commissioner, New Delhi to represent certain facts

pertaining to the bye-election scheduled to be held on 27.5.1995 at Gorantla of Anantapur district in Andhra Pradesh. We met the concerned officer at the Reception in the Chief Election Commissioner's office on the ground floor, and after due security check, we were taken into a room, next to the Chief Election Commission's chamber on the first floor. The P.A. to the Chief Election Commissioner informed us that the Chief Election Commissioner wanted a delegation of only three Members of Parliament to meet an officer and the remaining Members were asked to be seated in the same room. Accordingly. Mr Chokka Rao, M.P., Dr. Y.S. Rajasekhar Reddy, M.P. and Mr. Surendra Reddy, M.P. entered the officer's chamber. Immediately Mr. Seshan, Chief Election Commissioner, rushed into the room wherein the remaining seven of us were sitting....*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: These kind of things cannot go on record. I am sorry, it is becoming very complicated. On the one hand, something appears in the newspaper and, on the other hand, we cannot discuss it on the floor of the House...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI. M.G. REDDY. We were all Members of Parliament, Sir. We need democracy, Sir...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOBHANADREESHWARA RAO VADDE (Vijayawada). Sir, they had caused a serious security lapse...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI. M.G. REDDY: Please allow me to complete, Sir*...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: They are presenting a wrong picture, Sir...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. Let me deal with it properly....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: Please give me also an opportunity, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: No, it is not necessary....*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. Let me deal with the matter.

(Interruptions)

SHRI M.G. REDDY: Sir, it is my privilege to raise this issue...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: All that is not necessary, please.

SHRI RAMA KRISHNA KONATHALA (Anakapalli). He must withdraw that word, Sir.

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: No I am hundred per cent correct, Sir...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You proceed further now.

SHRI M.G. REDDY: Sir, Mr. Seshan, the Chief Election Commissioner rushed into the room wherein

* Expunged as ordered by the chair

the remaining seven Members were sitting* and showed the exit door....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I shall look into all those things. Only that which can go on record will go and others will not go.

SHRI M.G. REDDY: Then we tried to pacify him and told him that we came there to represent. Then Mr. Seshan, the Chief Election Commissioner said that was his office and*..... The verbatim of the language used by the Chief Election Commissioner is:*

Thus, the Chief Election Commissioner has committed a breach of privilege for the following reasons:

1. we have every right for audience before any officer in the country and the Chief Election Commissioner has no right whatsoever to deny audience.
2. It is a public office and every citizen has got the right to enter into a public office for the purpose of representing facts relating to elections. It is not a private house of Mr. Seshan. We have obtained necessary permission at the Reception and subjected ourselves to through security check and we were asked to be seated in the office by the Chief Election Commission's officials. It was not an unauthorised entry.. (Interruptions)

13.00 hrs.

MR. SPEAKER: What is this going on?
(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Let us understand the rules.

SHRI M.G. REDDY: Sir, we the Members of Parliament went to C.E.C's Office with permission. We were insulted.

MR. SPEAKER: You come to my chamber and convince me how it becomes a privilege and I will look into it.

(Interruptions)

SHRI RAMA KRISHNA KONATHALA (Anakapalli): Sir, please hear us for a minute.

SHRI M.G. REDDY: Sir, just give a minute. It is the ambition of all of us. As per protocol, M.Ps. must be given audience by any office. We are representatives of the people.

SHRI JAGMEET SINGH BRAR (Faridkot): Sir, I want to speak on Punjab.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, I will allow you.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: Sir, please allow me to respond.

MR. SPEAKER: Not necessary. Have you not heard what I have said to you?

(Interruptions)

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE : Sir, please hear me.

SHRI RAMA KRISHNA KONATHALA : What he is saying is not correct.....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: If you want to go on quarrelling between yourself, I have no objection.

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: Sir, I have to make my submission.

MR. SPEAKER: You need not. Please understand how you are behaving.

(Interruptions)

SHRI M.G. REDDY: The behaviour of the Chief Election Commissioner towards the Members of Parliament referred to above is an affront to the dignity and respect of the representatives of the people in this august House and it involves a breach of privilege of our rights. Thus, Shri Seshan, the C.E.C has committed a breach of privilege and he should be punished by this House in accordance with rules...(Interruptions)

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: Sir, please allow me.

MR. SPEAKER : What is it Mr. Rao that you what to say?

SHRI K.P. REDDAIAH YADAV (Machilipatnam): Sir, he cannot be allowed.

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: Sir, even before listening to me you are stopping me. Please allow me. I want to bring facts before you.

MR. SPEAKER: It is not necessary.

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: Sir, let me be heard.

SHRI RAMA KRISHNA KONATHALA: Sir, he is not* to represent the facts here. He used unparliamentary words which should not go on record. as a matter of fact, on Member of the Council of Ministers of Andhra Pradesh is involved in a landmine blast case wherein eight Congress workers, who were all members of a family, were killed. This is the fate of Congressmen in the State(Interruptions)

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE. Sir, please allow me to clarify.

MR. SPEAKER: Why do you want it?

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: Before hearing me you are saying. Please allow me for a minute.

MR. SPEAKER: You are complicating the case and getting it against yourself. If you have any sense and understanding please sit down.

(Interruptions)

* Expuged as asked by the Chair

* Expuged as asked by the Chair

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: Please hear me.

MR. SPEAKER: What is it that you what to say? What is wrong in it?

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: Even before I tell something. I am stopped by them. They are misrepresenting the Facts...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You go on. The House is yours. You can use it in any fashion you like. Yes, speak now.

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: I never do like that.

MR. SPEAKER: You are always doing like that.

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: No, Sir. I have great respect for the Chair....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI K.P. REDDAIAH YADAV: Sir, the issue is not of this party or that party. It is between Shri Seshan and ten Members of Parliament who went to his office yesterday. Shri V.S. Rao is talking like this to please *

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: Do not talk*. How can you bring the name of a person here who is not a Member of this House?*(Interruptions)*. You were elected on a T.D.P. ticket to this House and now you went and joined the Congress. If you have any* do not talk like that....*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I am allowing all sorts of things to come here because it seems that all of us have now decided to behave in this fashion. Shri Rao may speak now.

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have the greatest regard for the Chair. With due respect I want to bring to the notice of yourself and this august House that it is the Congress(I) candidate and an ex-M.L.A. who have killed ex-T.D.P. sympathiser and they are accuse in this House that T.D.P. is not allowing free and fair poll there.

SHRI RAMA KRISHNA KONATHALA: It is utterly wrong. It is not correct.

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: But, that is not the position. They gatecrashed into C.E.C.'s office and the C.E.C. has asked the Government to take all necessary steps so that such things do not occur again. He in fact, demanded an authority from the Speaker. This is what I want to submit here. What they are doing is not correct. This is causing danger to the democracy. This is all that I want to submit...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI M.G. REDDY: Sir, it is not correct...*(Interruptions)*.

MR. SPEAKER: He has not said anything at all. You should be satisfied with that.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please understand the language he has used. You are a responsible Member. You need not get agitated.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI JAGMIT SINGH BRAR(Faridkot) : Shri Ram Vilas Paswan has talked about deferring the election in Punjab. I want to speak something in this connection. Giddarbaha forms a part of my Parliamentary constituency. The Chief Election Commissioner has announced that polling will be held on 3rd and counting on 5th, but common people and voters of my constituency are apprehensive if this poll's going to be held at all. Hon. Speaker it a very important letter has been despatched on behalf of the Chief Election Commissioner asking as to why not to de-recognize the party and why the model code of conduct has been violated. Leaders belonging to various political parties are present here. I want to state that there is no way out when the Government itself under whose auspices polling is going to be held, wants the poll to be deferred. Not only this, the Chief Minister and Ministers stayed therein the rest House from 7 to 15. Sarpanches have been replaced there and more than 60 lakhs of people have been given pension. Besides, jobs were also provided and teachers all demands have been conceded to. This has given rise to misunderstanding among people that the State Government wants the poll to be postponed in connivance with the Chief Election Commissioner. I do not want to level this kind of allegation against the Government, but really this is a matter of concern among the people in Gidarbaha and Punjab. This was really a Peak season and the people of Punjab were busy sowing and reaping the harvest. All the political parties and their people, Congress Party and the people of Akali Dal have wasted their time. Now when it is the sowing season, poll has been postponed further for seven more days so that their time could be wasted. In the condition when power is concentrated at once place, the will of people of the country, the election process and democracy is not being ascertained. This is really very sad. I will like this poll to be held and atleast on 3rd polling should be held so that the verdict that the people wants to give, could be ascertained.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Well, these kinds of matters have been raised every now and then on the floor of the House. Let us please understand that we are all governed by the Constitution of India and the Constitution of India has created the Election Commission; not only that, but the Constitution of India has created the Union Government, the Union Legislature, the State Government and the State Legislature.

In the Constitution of India, they have specifically mentioned as to what subjects can be dealt with by the Union Government and what subjects can be dealt with by the State Governments. Now, the Constitution of

* Expunged as asked by the Chair

India specifically says that "all elections to the Legislature of the States, subject to the provisions of any law made by the Parliament." This is in the State List. This is a matter which has to be dealt with in the State Legislature by the State Government. The Union Government has no jurisdiction in this matter. It is only the Election Commission which has a jurisdiction in this matter. But without following the provisions in the Constitution, every now and then we are not only raising the issues relating to the State Legislatures, but we are raising the issues relating to the District Councils and the Gram Panchayats also. I do not know in what fashion this highest body which is expected to make the laws for the entire country should deal with the matters on which it is not given any jurisdiction, as to how we can discuss, as to what we can do as to what kind of conclusions we can arrive at.

I would plead with the Members to please look into this matter and at least in future to see that that which is not given to you should not be used by you. You should not try to use it.

Let us understand that if we do not follow what is given in the Constitution, then we are reaching no place, we are not getting any relief at all. The only thing is, we have the satisfaction of having ventilated our views on the floor of the House. May I very sincerely plead with the Members for future not to resort to these kinds of things please.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Sir, what has happened to my point? I have given a notice.

MR. SPEAKER: If you want to discuss the entire election activities, you come before the House in a proper fashion. We will see as to how it can be fitted into the rules and then rules and then we will discuss it. But if you expect us to discuss each and every election for State Legislatures or the Gram Panchayat elections or the District Council elections, I do not know as to how we are going to discuss them. The jurisdiction for this purpose is given to the State Government and to the State Legislatures very clearly, without any ambiguity in the Constitution and even then if we, who have been making the laws for the entire country, are not following the law, it is not really good for us.

I plead, I request you to please look into these matters and at least in future see that it is not done.

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA (Cuttack): Sir, it is true. But the question is that when the model code of conduct is being violated and the Election Commission is totally keeping quiet and if he becomes partial then what Parliament...

MR. SPEAKER: I need not explain to Mr. Jena who is a very knowledgeable person that whenever any law is violated or any code of conduct is violated, you have the Courts where you can go and get the relief. This Parliament is not sitting here as a Judge, hearing both sides and giving the judgement. We got the versions

from you, we got the versions from them but we have no authority to decide. That is why, the law has decided, the Constitution has decided that there is a law, there is a code and if it is violated, there are forums created for that instead of coming to Parliament where you are expected to make policy, where you are expected to supervise the implementation of the policies and where you are expected to hold the Government accountable and if you take on yourself the jurisdiction of deciding who is wrong and who is right without being able to hear what actually happened, it will lead us to nowhere. So, please let us understand this Mr. Jena and you come to my Chamber I will discuss it with you, not here.

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA: Sir, I can discuss it with you...

MR. SPEAKER: Now, I am not going to enter into arguments with you.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (Muvattupuzha): Sir, the Union Government, three days back, had declared the support price for coconut. The coconut farmers were in great difficulty as the price at which the Government was obtaining the coconut was very low. However, though the declaration has come, it is a matter of protest that the support price is not adequate enough to satisfy the farmers and to get a reasonable price for their produce. Only Rs.150, per quintal has been raised.

13.12 hrs

(Mr. Deputy-Speaker in the Chair)

Now, another issue has arisen. Now that the support price has been given, the Government should come forward to procure coconut and copra at the price which they have declared. But there is a difficulty which has come between the NAFED and the Government. The NAFED, the agency who is supposed to procure, has not started procuring in spite of the fact that the support price has been declared. This is because the NAFED claims that they had incurred loss in the last procurement and there is an agreement by which Rs.25 crore has to be given by the Government of India to NAFED. Now, this issue is between the Government of India and the NAFED. But the poor farmers are in difficulty because even after the declaration of the support price, the procurement is being delayed which will only benefit the middleman.

So, I urge upon the Government to make an earnest effort to start the procurement immediately on the basis of the price which has been declared.

[Translation]

SHRI HARPAL PAWAR: Hon. Deputy Speaker Sir, India's predominantly an agricultural country and its majority of the people are engaged in cultivation. More than 65 crore people are dependent on agriculture for their livelihood but today the agonies and plights of farmers have considerably increased. Even so long

after independence, despite trumpeting a number of subsidies for them, farmers are unhappy today even. Agriculture is still faced with problems which have not received adequate attention for some time.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir. Really India is called predominantly an agricultural country but the reality is otherwise and if we call it predominantly an industrial country on the basis of the concessions and facilities it deems fit. A farmer cannot transport his crops from one state to another one. They have not got any storage facility, electricity is not available for him. If they do get then for some hours only and that too at higher rates only. They get fertilizers and other things at costlier rates. That is how the agriculture has become fully unremunerative. Their entire family their children and even their females are found engaged, toiling hard in the field and yet our agriculturists in our loss only.

The agriculturists of India are incurring loss. I want to state through you that the concessions that are being given to industry must be given to our agriculture as well. I want to demand through you from the Government of India that the institutions like IDBI and ICICI which give loans to industries, must provide the same facility to Indian agriculture as well. But this kind of facility is not being extended. You should issue such instruction that this is being talked about for so long, so we must give our agriculture the status of an industry. Farmers are very unhappy, their plight is increasing manifold, so the farmers must be given these facilities. I express my gratitude for giving me time enough for speaking.

[English]

SHRI DWARAKA NATH DAS(Karimgan): Sir, as per the Ministry of Power, Government of India, the number of unelectrified villages in Assam is only 494 which is not correct because when only poles are set up and tension of wire done across the village or villages, the REC takes them as electrified although no electricity has been supplied to the households then.

Till today 50 per cent villages have actually been electrified in Assam and large number of SC/ST villages is yet to be electrified. Moreover, now heavy load shedding is going on in Southern Assam which is not less than 15 to 17 hours in a day.

So, I should request the Government of India to improve the Situation in Assam as regards rural electrification and to lessen present severe load shedding in Southern Assam. Thank you.

[Translation]

SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES(Udupi): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the Government of Karnataka has waived the recovery of interest from the farmers which was due to them. This revolutionary step has come as a boon to the farmers of my state.

[English]

ONE HON'BLE MEMBER. In which language are you speaking.

[Translation]

Translation of the speech originally delivered in Kannada.

SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES: This is Kannada. Sir, as a result of this, NABARD has stopped its loan facility to the farmers. NABARD was helping the farmers through State Co-operative Sector and all of a sudden it has stopped this loan facility. This has come as a sudden shock to the farmers. The rainy season has started and the farmers have to make preparations for the new crop. They need financial assistance for buying fertilizers, seeds and other inputs.

The farmers have to repay at least 90% of the loan. Hence a new situation has arisen in the State. I, therefore, urge upon the Centre to continue the loan facility to farmers of Karnataka through Co-operative Sector. The Centre should understand the predicament of farmers if this facility is stopped. They should also make it clear how long they will stop this facility.

I request the Centre once again to continue the loan facility and to save the farmers of Karnataka.

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT: Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, today India is an independent and self-esteeming, an upright nation. So to say, defence preparedness cannot be overlooked in the country like India. Today, when Pakistan is waging a Proxy War and with the help of I.S.I and foreign mercenaries it is aiding and abetting anti-national and subversive forces, then it becomes expedient that we must make efforts in order to strengthen our nuclear defence policy.

Today, China is our other immediate neighbour and it is also engaged in incessant nuclear bomb tests and indeed it has achieved a nuclear capability. On the other hand Pakistan claims that this does have a nuclear bomb. The powers like America and Russia have already hoarded piles of weapons and are engaged in incessant tests. China went ahead with nuclear tests despite America and Chinese ban. In this extraordinary kind of situation, I demand from the Government of India that it must frame a sound nuclear defence policy for reposing confidence among the people of India so that the enemies of this nation could be demoralised and dispirited and the nation's confidence could be boosted and bolstered up.

[English]

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (Uluberia): I would like to draw your attention to the serious problem faced by the people of Andaman & Nicobar. They are living separated from the mainland and they have to go through many difficulties regarding communication, transportation, regular non-supply of daily necessities and many other problems.

Yesterday I came to know from Port Blair one immediate problem of the people of Andaman & Nicobar. They have only a few ships for transportation of only

poor people. The number of ships is very limited. Indian Airlines flights are also very limited and poor people cannot afford to travel by air. One major ship is Mr. Akbar. It is out of order and it was sent to Hindustan Shipyard Company for renovation. After incurring an expenditure of Rs.33 crores, it came and it started carrying passengers last month. But after leaving Port Blair in the middle of sea, it developed some defects and it could be dangerous for the lives of the passengers. It came back to Port Blair and now it is lying there and the people are not able to travel from one area to another. A serious situation has arisen. The people decided to protest against this. But the highest Authority there, the Lt. Governor, resorted to repressive measures. They are threatening the people not to raise the issue and not to demonstrate. After issuing orders, the Lt. Governor, Andaman, left Andamans and the people are suffering.

I request the Government to look into the problems of the people who are living in far-flung area and to see that their transport should get priority and the repressive measures against the people who are demonstrating against such difficulties should be stopped.

[Translation]

SHRI MANJAY LAL (Samastipur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, thousands of labourers from Saharsa, Darbhanga, Trihut and Saran areas of Bihar Deoria and Gorakhpur areas of Uttar Pradesh go for work to Punjab, Haryana and Jammu Tawi.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Reading is not allowed, please speak spontaneously

SHRI MANJAY LAL: The labourers even after having the tickets have to travel on the roof top of the train due to the reserved coaches. Many of them meet with accidents. It is also complained that they are harassed by the G.R.P. and R.P.F. and their money is also looted. I would like to urge upon the Government that an unreserved train should be run between Samastipur division to Jammu Tawi. It will help labourers to go to Haryana and Punjab for job.

SHRI RAM NIHOR RAI (Robertasganj) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government, through you towards those drought prone districts of Varansi division of Uttar Pradesh, which include the hill districts like Mirzapur and Sonbhadra. There are total 20 developmental blocks, out of these, 16 development blocks come under Sonbhadra district and 8 are under Mirzapur district. 18 developmental blocks are inhabited on the Kalmoor hills. These days, these blocks are severely affected by drought and potable water crisis. The people are not getting drinking water. Animals and birds are dying due to scarcity of water. I would like to bring it to the notice to the Government. Through you that the World Bank Project of Potable Water there, is totally insufficient, unorganised and unsatisfactory. The 'Jal Nigam' has installed tube

wells there and these always remain out of order. For example, all the tubewells installed by 'Jal Nigam' in the developmental blocks of Robertasganj, Ghorawal, Rajgarh, Keorpur, Majhva and Nagwan etc. have been out of order for the last 4-5 years. People in the Robertasganj Parliamentary Constituency are not getting potable water. The handpumps and the Government machinery are fixed at a very low depth. I would like to submit that the rig machines, which were sent for the hill areas of Mirzapur and Sonbhadra by UNICEF and which have been taken away to Delhi or other places should be sent back to Sonbhadra and Mirzapur districts. My submission is that the tubewells installed in the 18 developmental blocks by the water corporation for supplying water, the Central Government should immediately issue money to these and arrangements should be made to start those tubewells there.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: By 1.30 p.m., the Zero Hour comes to an end. One more Member can be accommodated provided he cuts short your speech

[Translation]

SHRI TEJ NARAYAN SINGH (Buxar): Sir, Buxar and Bhojpur districts in Bihar are 'no industry' districts, where the number of unemployed, youths according to the Government data is around 36 thousand in Buxar and 65 thousand in Bhojpur. There is even no proper arrangement of irrigation there. The unemployed youths there include the labourers and the educated people, who go to other states in search of work. The Integrated Rural Developmental Scheme has been launched only in the 4 blocks of these districts. If the Integrated Rural Development Scheme is implemented in all the blocks then a number of unemployed youths will get work and besides it the poor labourers will also get work. This scheme has not been implemented in all the blocks.

I would like to urge upon the Government through you that in all the blocks of Buxar and Bhojpur districts of Bihar, the Integrated Rural Development Scheme should be implemented. Earlier, there was factory in Shahabad Dehri but now it has also been closed. My submission is that a big factory should be set up in Buxar district, which can provide work to at least one lakh people. It will not only provide employment to the people there but the problem of livelihood of the people will also be solved.

SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV (Shahjahanpur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw your attention towards an important issue. There is a bank Kashinath Seth Bank in Uttar Pradesh. It was set up in 1948. It has 30 branches and there are 582 employees working in it. There are around two and half lakh defaulters, in it. It is a private bank, which has been given licence by the Reserve Bank of India. For the last

20 months restrictions have been imposed on this bank under the Banking Regulation Act and on account of it no defaulter can withdraw money from the bank. The result is that various people are dying, they are unable to have treatment and even the marriages are not solemnised. Both the defaulters and the employees of the banks are worried. When I met the hon. Finance Minister in this regard, I was told that the Government is going to liquidate this bank, or going to close this bank and thus the people will lose their money. The employees are being left at their fate. My submission to the Government through you is that instead of liquidating the Kashinath Seth Bank, it should be amalgamated with some nationalised bank or its assets should be taken over by some other bank. The Government should pass such orders so that the money of the defaulters as well as the future of the employees remain safe. This is my humble submission.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Mr. Minister, would you like to respond to the query of Shri Oscar Fernandes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY): If you permit me, I can inform the hon. Member

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : If you volunteer, I have no objection.

SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member Shri Oscar Fernandes has raised an issue about the NABARD refinancing to the Karnataka cooperatives. I wish to inform the hon. Member, through you, that recently the NABARD officials discuss this issue with the officials of the Karnataka State Government. They have signed an MOU in this regard.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Now we shall take up papers to be laid on the Table.

13.31 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

[English]

Review on the working of and Annual Report of Pawan Hans Ltd., New Delhi for 1993-94 and statement showing reasons for delay in laying these papers.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM) (SHRIMATI SUKHBUN Kaur) : On behalf of Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad, I beg to lay on the Table -

(1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and

English versions) under sub-section (1) of section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956 :

- (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Pawan Hans Limited, New Delhi, for the year 1993-94.
 - (ii) Annual Report of the Pawan Hans Limited, New Delhi, for the year 1993-94, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.
- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No LT-7693/95]

Review of the working of and Annual Report of Jute Corporation of India, Calcutta for 1993-94 and Statement Showing reasons for delay in laying these papers.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS) AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MUKUL WASNIK) : On behalf of Shri G. Venkat Swamy, I beg to lay on the Table -

- (1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956
 - (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Jute Corporation of India Limited, Calcutta, for the year 1993-94.
 - (ii) Annual Report of the Jute Corporation of India Limited, Calcutta, for the year 1993-94, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.
- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No LT-7694/95]

Annual Report and Review on the working of Coffee Board for 1993-94 and Statement Showing reasons for delay in laying these papers etc.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : I beg to lay on the Table -

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Coffee Board, for the year 1993-94.