

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) Government is aware of the allegations of violations of Human Rights by Uttar Pradesh Government at Muzzafarnagar on October 2, 1994 which received widespread coverage in the media all over the country.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) & (d) Does not arise.

12.00 hrs.

RE: ACCIDENT INVOLVING FORMER PRESIDENT OF INDIA, GIANI ZAIL SINGH

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Buta Singhji, you were on your legs yesterday.

SHRI BUTA SINGH (Jalore): Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the 30th of November the whole country received a shocking news about a serious road accident in which our former President of India, Giani Zail Singhji was involved in his earlier constituency wherefrom he was elected as the Member of the Legislative Assembly. He had been a Member of this House also.

Sir, the accident took place soon after he came back from Sri Anandpur Sahib after paying his homage to the holy Gurudwara. When he was coming back from Sri Anandpur Sahib, all of a sudden his motorcade became the victim of an accident which, according to press reports, seems to be a deliberate attempt on the life of the former President of India, Giani Zail Singhji. As reported in the Hindustan Times the next day, it has been given out that the truck driver hit the car of the former President of India not once, but twice. First he hit while crossing and then he turned his truck back and from the left side he hit the car very badly for the second time. In the same report it is mentioned that after Gianiji's car was hit for the first time the driver of the car took the car off the road and the car was in the *Kaccha* path. But the truck driver came back turning his truck and hit the car again while it was no more on the road. The car is badly damaged. It is also mentioned in that report that but for the car being a bullet-proof one, Gianiji would have been finished on the spot with the family. Therefore, this accident is not a simple accident.

Sir, the most disturbing point in the whole episode is, the enquiry has been ordered to be conducted by a junior most officer of the district which is a matter of shame. Therefore, the House is entitled to know the state of health of the former President of India. The reports about his health are coming in drips. Nobody knows the correct position. Sometimes it is given out that he is stable. Sometimes we are told that he is progressing. Today we are told that he is critical. The next day after the accident took place I tried to call on him, but I was not even allowed to enter the hospital. When I went there for the second time, with great difficulty I was able to find my way up to the ward and I met some of the family member of Gianiji.

Sir, our association with the great patriot of India, a freedom fighter, a former Chief Minister, a former Union Home Minister and a former President of India is life-long and most of my hon. colleagues on both sides of the

House will bear it out with me that he is a versatile person and a great man of this country who has suffered a very long imprisonment as a solitary confinement during the freedom movement. He is the one who has given a new shape to the whole of Punjab when he was the Chief Minister and the contribution made by him is known to almost everybody in the country and abroad. Therefore, his life is very precious to the country, as a whole.

Sir, we are told that he was not provided even the customary assistance which is provided to every 'Z' Category security risk person. When we go to other States we are given full security cover. We are given full security equipment along with the ambulance whereas the former President of India was escorted by a junior most officer, perhaps a Head Constable and a very small contingent. The car that was escorting him, according to the family member, was nowhere in sight.

Therefore, Sir, the whole affair looks murky and the Press itself has reported 'mystery surrounds the mishap' which means it is not an ordinary road accident in which the life of the former President of India and the greatest freedom fighter is involved. The House, I am sure, will be one with me in expressing our serious concern about what has happened to Gianiji. Now, his health is a subject matter of concern of every citizen of India.

Sir, my humble request through you to the Government of India is that this accident must be probed by the CBI. We must know the facts leading to this serious accident which involves the life of our former President. We are also told that there are serious lapses which are major cause for concern. No ambulance was provided and no follow car was made available to the former President of India and the police that was following his car was of a very junior rank. No responsible officer was there. When he and his family members were injured they were brought to the hospital by their own family members. There was no body to assist them.

Under these circumstances, we are left with no other alternative except to request the Government of India to kindly send a team of senior CBI officials to find out the causes and fix the responsibility for the lapses during the tour of the former President. I would also request the Government to send a team of senior doctors. If possible he should be brought to Delhi and proper medical care should be provided to Gianiji before it is too late.

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE (Lucknow): Mr. Speaker, Sir, you would remember that before the commencement of this session, I got an opportunity to see you. At that time I had referred to the apprehensions being expressed in regard to the seriousness of the injury caused to former President of India, Giani Zail Singh in the car accident. Today, my colleague Shri Buta Singh had given voice to such apprehensions in this House. The Government should seriously think over the discussion which is going on here. Further, the Government should assure the people that it was actually an accident and there was no conspiracy to kill Gianiji.

It is incomprehensible that how could an accident occur under such circumstances despite so tight security? The Government's tacitness in this matter is not proper. As this matter has now been raised in the house, I would like that the Government should first of all, make a statement in the House to allay the apprehensions from the minds of the people. There is a need of such an arrangement through which the people would continue to get the information about the health of Gianiji. If it is necessary to bring him here, I do not think the Government will create any hurdle. I had contacted Chandigarh and today, the workers of our party in Punjab have also come here. They too have said that the doctors have advised against shifting Gianiji from there. If that is true, it should also be clarified. The Government should take the house and the people into confidence and make a statement here in this regard.

It is not the time to refer to the services rendered by Gianiji. He adorned the office of the President of India. We wish for his long life and proper care. The Government should make all out efforts to allay the apprehensions of the masses and make it clear that it was a mere accident and there was no conspiracy behind it.

SHRI SHARAD YADAV (Madhepura): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank Shri Buta Singh for raising this issue here. The whole nation is discussing about it and apprehensions are being expressed in various newspapers and magazines whether if it was an accident or some conspiracy was behind this. There are serious apprehensions in the minds of the people also. Gianiji has led an idealistic life. I would not like to speak much about him. He has adorned the highest office of the nation before serving on various important portfolios. He is a cheerful person and I have affectionate relations with him. The Government should come out with a statement in this regard and clarify the position. Why is he not being shifted elsewhere from Chandigarh? I feel that the Government should immediately bring the facts to the fore. It should honestly make statement in the House regarding the lapses in the security and the circumstances under which this accident took place so as to allay the apprehensions among his well-wishers. It would further put a stop on the speculations being spread in this regard.

Keeping in view the services rendered by Gianiji, it become our duty to bring out the whole truth before the people and the House.

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): Speaker, Sir, I fully associate myself with what Sardar Buta Singh and our friends have said here. I need not repeat it except to show our greatest concern to what was happened and I wish him complete and speedy recovery.

I would only like to emphasise that the Government of India should see that the people of this country are satisfied that utmost steps are being taken for his proper treatment and there is no lapse even in the investigation now. Sufficient materials are there to have not only a suspicion but also a conviction that it was more than an accident. Therefore, it is high time that the people of this country are taken into confidence as to what has happened because it would give a wrong signal, namely if person of

that eminence and under such protection and security cover can be treated in this fashion, then the question of security is also very much involved. Unfortunately, some of our leaders in this country do need this protection still. Therefore, people should realise that nobody can get away by violating in this brazen-faced manner.

From what has been reported and what is seen in the Press, there seems to have been greatest security lapse unless it was also deliberately engineered. Therefore, I do not wish to say further except again to convey our very best wishes for his complete and speedy recovery. I hope that all possible steps would be taken by the Government.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA (Basirhat): I just wish to add my support to the request and demand that has been made that the Government should come out with a comprehensive statement on this whole incident.

One aspect, of course, is Gianiji's treatment which is now going on. We all hope very much that he will be able to recover though there are some reports which indicate that he is a very precarious condition. I do not know whether it is correct. The Government should find out and make a comprehensive statement here.

The other aspect is regarding the circumstance surrounding this incident. I do not know whether the CBI or any other investigating agency has been brought into the scene or not. From what I have heard, there are circumstances of highly suspicious nature which do require that there should be proper and expert investigation.

And the driver collided the vehicle with Giani's car not once, but twice. It collided once and went away, then came back and collided again. This is a fact. And I am told that he has been injured seriously and his ribs have been broken on both sides of this chest. It is a matter which calls for a very thorough going probe and investigation, and if any further evidence or anything is available, it should be reported to this House.

And we all wish Gianiji a speedy recovery and hope that the whole matter will be brought to light so that there is no cause for any unnecessary suspicion to remain.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRA JEET YADAV (Azamgarh): Mr. Speaker, Sir, first of all, I would wish for an early recovery of Gianiji. I tried my best to see him personally there but I was told by the hospital authorities that nobody was being allowed to see him. Further, one of his family relatives told me on telephone that there is no use of meeting him. There is a great anxiety among the family members that it was not a mere accident but was a deliberate act. Who are behind this act? His car was tumbled two times. There was another vehicle ahead of Gianiji's car. When the truck had come from front side, it should have collided with the first vehicle. But, it collided with Gianiji's car two times.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Let us get those facts.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRA JEET YADAV: I do not know if the hon. Minister would make a statement in this regard. After all, our former President has met with an accident and he is recuperating in a hospital far way from Delhi. Has any of

our Ministers gone to see him? I have come to know from the newspapers that only two doctors have been sent there. Whether, specialists from All India Institute of Medical Sciences have been sent there? Has the Government sought the help of any foreign doctor for him? The statement of the Chief Minister of Punjab proves this fact that there is a conspiracy behind this accident. Today the whole country is concerned about it. Through you, I demand that to free the people from this concern, at least the Government should give a statement to this effect that a senior officer would enquire into the matter and one Minister will look into the whole affair. It would be the best possible arrangement. We can also take help for his treatment from foreign country also.

[English]

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN (Gobichettipalayam): Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is not an ordinary road accident. So, this is a very serious matter in nature. According to Buta Singh ji, it is a deliberate attempt made on the life of the former President, Shri Zail Singh. If it is so, this kind of an incident needs to be given more attention. Sir, adequate medical assistance should be provided to save his life.

We wish for his speedy recovery. At the same time, this incident needs to be probed thoroughly to remove the suspicion in the minds of the people.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Government want to respond on this?

SHRI UMRAO SINGH (Jalandhar): Sir, I would like to add just one point. There is a report that first aid facility was not provided properly to him.

MR. SPEAKER: Let the Government reply on all those things.

SHRI UMRAO SINGH: Sir, the first aid treatment was not given properly.

MR. SPEAKER: This is exactly what we want to know from the Government.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): Mr. Speaker, sir, as soon as I heard about the accident of Gyaniji in the evening. I informed the Prime Minister that it happened while Gyaniji was returning. He is severely injured in a road accident and the accident was serious. He directed me to look into the matter personally and take action accordingly. I immediately made contact with the Punjab Government and senior Doctors of the hospital. I contacted Dr. Walia, Director of PGI. As soon as Gyaniji was brought there after getting first aid, the Chief Minister of Punjab met him. After seeing his condition, the Chief Minister informed me on telephone that Gyaniji was injured and his condition was serious. Dr. Walia was saying that his condition would be stable by evening and he permitted me to visit there by next morning.

Next day, I went there by air, the Prime Minister had directed me to get doctors be informed that every possible assistance would be given to Gyaniji by the Central Government which could be sought from anywhere. I conveyed his message to Dr. Walia at the hospital and told

him that if he had to seek the help of any Doctor or any medicine is required or if he would like to take him to Delhi or abroad, he may tell me, I will remain available to him and he may contact me at any time.

When I met Gyaniji at hospital, he was conscious. I tried to seek information from him, there was a deep wound on his eye and hips were more severely injured and were aching too much. He became very emotional when I asked him about the accident. We all have high regards for Gyaniji because he held the highest post of the country. He had personal relations with every one. I also became emotional at that time therefore, neither I could held long talks with him nor he could. The Doctor told me that we could discuss it later on. When I asked the Doctor he told me that when Gyaniji was brought to the hospital he was conscious and the Doctor was quiet hopeful that he would fully regain his conscience, by the evening. I also met with his family members. His nephew was also travelling in that vehicle. There were four persons in the vehicle, one was driver, the another one was security guard, who was sitting on the front seat, the third one was his nephew Shri Basant Singh. He was in his senses. There was a fracture in his hand I talked to him in detail. He told me that it was a very unfortunate accident. There were two pilot cars which were leading them. I could not talk in details at that time with Government as it was not an appropriate time to discuss. But the gap between Gyaniji's and Pilot cars was too much. It happens so many times in our security system. Though we always try that there should be no such wide gap but sometimes it happens when the security men try to stop the traffic of otherside and in that process they go far away and forget their duty. Same type of gap occurred between the Car of Gyaniji and Pilot cars. The Driver of Gyaniji was also unconscious. I could not talk to him but the other members told me that either in a hurry or hearing the call from the police, and a call of siren both the drivers frightened and the unfortunate accident took place.

Today hon. Member have expressed their doubts. I assure you on behalf of the Government that I am ready to place the report submitted by the State Government on the Table of the House. If after that a need is felt in the House to go deeper into it, then I am with the House and the desired action will be taken by the Central Government.

So far as the family members of Gyaniji are concerned, we called the doctor whom they wanted. Dr. Nigham and Dr. Wazir, who were with Gyaniji when he was the President, were also called as desired by his family members. We have been in constant touch with Dr. Walia. I would like to assure the House that we are praying for a speedy recovery of Gyaniji and the whole Government machinery is with him. Whatever is required will be immediately provided. We pray to God for his speedy recovery. I can assure you that Government would provide all necessary help that is required by him.

He is still in coma. His left foot had turned black yesterday, may be it was due to paralysis and his blood circulation was obstructed but we came to know at night that his blood circulation had stabilised and there was slight improvement but we are informed that his condition is critical. We cannot ask doctors technical questions as

why his condition is critical but the doctors are keeping him under strict observation. They are really working hard. The doctors of PGI have so much attachment for Gyaniji that they are sitting day and night in his room and I hope that with our best wishes and the hard work being put in by the doctors, he would certainly recover.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I think the entire House will join me in wishing him complete and speedy recovery. And, all the help which is necessary is being given. If anything more has to be done, it will certainly be done by the Government.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, we have given notice of an adjournment motion on the Nagpur incident. Please allow us. The Member is from Maharashtra. He comes from that area.

[Translation]

SHRI SHARAD YADAV (Madhepura): Please take Nagpur first. This matter is very important.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: We will take up the issues one after the other.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA (Bankura): He belongs to that area.

MR. SPEAKER: I am going to allow it. You should understand it, please.

[Translation]

SHRI RABI RAI (Kendrapada): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am going to draw your attention to a very serious matter. A question has arisen as to whether we would be able to meet our voters in our constituencies or not. I am about to mention an incident which took place on the 13th of last month. I would like to draw your attention to the happening with me and my friend Lokanath Choudhury in my constituency. My constituency Kendrapada is a rural area and Patkura Assembly also falls in my constituency where a public meeting had been convened and was to be attended by Shri Lokanath Choudhary also. The meeting was to take place at 4 o'clock in the evening. Our office had sent a letter to the Police Department in this regard that there could be a problem. I was aware that the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs who is called the Super Chief Minister belongs to that area and that is why I met the Director General of Police of Orissa. I met him and told him that any mishappening can occur. He assured me that nothing would happen. He said that since I was going there then it became his responsibility to make all necessary arrangements. We were going there accompanied by the police when two farmers from the village came and told us that some anti-social elements were sitting in ambush at a distance of 2 km. and they also had bombs. They said that we could be assaulted. We laughed it a way saying that we were only visiting our constituency. But our convoy which consisted of policemen also, was stopped after covering a distance of 2 Km. just 5 km. from Nadial village. I saw that 10-15 drunk people

marched toward us with an intention to kill us. But they could not kill us as we were escorted by the police and other youth. When they could not kill us they lay down in front of our vehicle fully armed with lethal weapons and abused us in choicest of words which I cannot reproduce here because they are of very very vulgar nature. We remained there for three hours. I had informed the police in advance but what hurt me most was the fact that a road-roller was put on the path. This path was not a highway but a river-embankment. We were informed that the Minister of Water Resources and Government officials had ordered the Road-Roller to be placed there. Sir, we remained there for three hours. Then, we told Shri Lokanath that we would tell the police that we would go to the meeting place no matter what happened. We were not aware of the attitude of the police. Actually, the attention of the police-department was diverted due to the fact that the Chief Minister of Orissa had entrusted to the Super Chief Minister then some sensitive matters to deal with during the last two years.

Sir, we had personally talked with the D.G. and the D.G. had assured us that we could proceed even then all this happened. I was going to visit my constituency where 10 thousand people were waiting for us so they should have cleared the path for us. But the Police acted as onlookers and they did nothing. After waiting for a long time we came back at 6 o'clock but our other colleagues went there and addressed the crowd of 10 thousand people.

Sir, the question is that when the police knew all those 15-20 people who did it, even then none of them has been arrested. Secondly, our Chief Minister and the Minister of Home were aware that it had been done by some miscreants even then they gave statements in their favour.

This is a serious matter. I would like to ask all the members of House that if there is a hostile Government in the State of a Member of Parliament and the local political party does not see eye to eye with him and if some of our colleagues have a dispute with the State Government then is it justified that they will stoop to getting such a thing done through miscreants or incapacitating the police. The police had the names and addresses of all those miscreants yet no arrest has been made so far. This incident had taken place on the 13th of the last month and I had briefed you on it on the 15th. I seek your guidance on this and would like to ask all the Members of Parliament that if such a thing can happen to us then God knows what will happen to ordinary people? If there is a hostile Government in a State and the Members of Parliament belonging to that particular State are obstructed from visiting their constituencies then, please tell us, what will happen? I seek guidance from you and this Parliament in this regard.

[English]

SHRI LOKANATH CHOUDHURY (Jagatsinghpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Shri Rabi Ray has already said about it. I am not going to repeat it. I want to raise two questions. The first question I want to raise is that the police knew that something was going to happen. That is why, police escort was given. These people came and obstructed for three

hours. They threw stones. I tried to talk to them in spite of the fact that they were drunk. I was pushed. Now the question is that the police could have taken pre-emptive action. Even though the incident had taken place on the 13th yet the police so far has not taken any action against anybody.

My second point is that in the State of Orissa, virtually there is no law and order. I am telling this because one labour leader was killed and one Minister was involved in it. So there was no trace of that labour leader. His wife went to the Supreme Court. And the State Government Minister was a party to it. He made an affidavit. The Supreme Court had no faith in the State Government. It ordered the CBI to enquire into it. So the point is not just preventing the Members from reaching their constituencies.

But the point is that they are using all these methods with the knowledge of the police. This is a question where the Members can get protection. If the police do not know about it, that is a different thing. But the police was informed and the police accompanied. But, neither did they take any preventive measures nor did they take any measure after the incident had taken place. The Chief Minister says: Where shall be the road roller? It should be on the road. Yes, provided there is repair or there is some work of the road roller. When there is no work at all, a roller was put in the midst of the road. The Chief Minister of a State along with the Home Minister gives such a reply. So this shows how things are happening. We are bringing it to the notice of this august House; we are bringing it to the notice of the whole nation through you and specially the Home Minister so that he can find out the facts and tell this House what has really happened.

MR. SPEAKER: I have received many letters from the MPs informing me about their difficulties when they move in their States, in their constituencies and other areas also. We would like to know from the Government and from the House as to what can be done in this matter and what should be done. I think this is a matter to which we should apply our mind and devise some method which on the one hand will give protection to the MPs and on the other hand will allow the people also to express their views. Will the Government be interested in responding in any fashion on this?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA): Your direction will be carried out.

MR. SPEAKER: I am thankful to the Government and I think the Government should provide protection to those Members who seek the protection, if the Government also comes to the conclusion that protection should be provided.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRA JEET YADAV (Azamgarh): Mr. Speaker, Sir, we want that a committee of the House be constituted. It will be convenient to you and for us as well.

SHRI ATAL BIHAR VAJPAYEE (Lucknow) Mr. Speaker, Sir...[Interruptions]

[English]

SHRI GOVINDA CHANDRA MUNDA (Keonjhar): Sir, I am on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: I must hear Shri Munda's point of order.

SHRI GOVINDA CHANDRA MUNDA: Before my hon. Opposition Leader will start speaking in the august House, I myself express my own view and also draw the attention of the august House. We are also insulted everywhere in our constituencies. All MLAs are saying that without the permission of the MLAs no M.P. should enter into their constituencies. Then what is the problem? What have we to do now? We are hankering after people. They have cast their vote to us. We shall have to represent them in the House. They are putting obstacles. They are bringing goondas and drunkard people. How is to be solved? Why should the Home Ministry not take care of this? I draw the attention of the House.... (Interruptions) This House should consider my request.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Munda's statement was not a good point of order, but a good statement. Certainly, we will look into this and see what can be done?

SHRI MOHAMMAD ALI ASHRAF FATMI (Darbhanga):

MR. SPEAKER: You are making yourself liable for breach of privilege if you continue speaking like that.....

You will make yourself liable for breach of privilege of you continue alleging like this. It is a matter of record. Shall I send it to the Privilege Committee?

SHRI MOHAMMAD ALI ASHRAF FATMI: What did I say?

MR. SPEAKER: You do not understand where you stand. Please sit down.

12.35 hrs.

RE: Deaths of several persons due to a stampede in Nagpur as a result of Lathi charge by Police on Tribal demonstrators on 23rd November, 1994.

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE (Lucknow): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the day of 23rd November, 1994 will be remembered as a black day in the annal of our nation. What happened in Nagpur that day has disputed our claim of being a civilized society.

Death of 113 people in a stampede in front of Legislative Assembly is an event the whole country and the Government of Maharashtra should atone for. The dead included innocent and poor tribals who had come to the Legislative Assembly building with a petty demand for including them in the Scheduled Tribes category. This had been their demand for years. Earlier, they were counted among tribals. I do not want to refer to old documents but their status as tribals was done away with by an order of 1985. They demand for themselves the facilities given to tribals and recognition as tribals. However, it is not being done and in support of this demand...

MR. SPEAKER: Just a minute.

[English]

Now the microphones are very sensitive. So I will