

[Chaudhuri Charan Singh]

jerked himself free of the chain tied to the policeman's belt. He is said to have run towards the river. In the early hours of the morning of 25th November, 1976, the police found his body and took it to the hospital where he was declared dead. An inquest into his death was conducted by a magistrate. The post-mortem was conducted by Dr. Vishnu Kumar of the Maulana Azad College, New Delhi.

The C.B.I. has been asked to enquire into the death of Shri Sunder Singh. Necessary instructions in this regard were issued on 30-3-1977. The allegation made in certain quarters that the sister of Shri Sunder Singh had earlier been raped or molested at a Police Station in Haryana will also be looked into.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You have a right to raise a discussion. I do not shut down discussion from any side. But the procedure must be followed. The procedure is that you write to the Speaker. We will have discussion.

The moment the statement is made. if people on one side begin getting up, the people on the other side will also get up. It may not be satisfactory.

You write to me pointing out that such and such a thing is not satisfactory, I want to have discussion on that. I will have discussion with the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs. That must be done. Therefore, don't go on like this. It is not proper. If anybody does it, I would say, don't record it. I will be helpless I will be sitting helplessly in my seat. One Member seeks clarification. If 400 members seek clarification where are we to go? You may write to the Speaker; you may ask for a debate. We shall have to proceed in an orderly way.

Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu, your point is as good as what Mr. Kalyanasundaram is saying. What I say about him applies to you also.

Nothing is being recorded. I am not allowing you. Everybody will try to copy Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu. The moment you do it, other hon. Members will try to copy you. The rule is there for everybody. The rule-book can be quoted by everybody. There will be no end to it. What I told to Mr. Kalyanasundaram applies to you also. Please write to me. If there is anything, I will look into it. When I say 'write to me' I mean, not Sanjiva Reddy, but too the Chair.

If I go on giving assurance to everybody there will be no end to it. I am not going to answer. There cannot be any discussion between the Chair and the member.
Mr. Advani.

CHAUDHURI CHARAN SINGH:
Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu was referring to a Resolution . . .

MR. SPEAKER: He was referring to something else. You will have to answer that also. You will have to answer both. Therefore, don't answer anything. (Interruptions).

Order please. Why do you shout? He has not answered anything

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI MORARJI DESAI): The proceedings of the House are to be regulated by the Chair, and not to be regulated by Members like this.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Advani to make statement.

11.52 hrs.

STATEMENT RE. FORMATION AND
FUNCTION OF SAMACHAR AND ITS
FUTURE

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI L. K. ADVANI): Sir, I consider it necessary to make a statement on the formation and functions of Sama-

char' and its future, as Hon. Members are aware that this news agency has been the subject matter of widespread criticism.

My predecessor had in his statement in the Lok Sabha on January 21, 1976 justified the formation of a single news agency and said that Government had noted it with satisfaction that the managements of PTI, UNI, Hindustan Samachar and Samachar Bharti had passed resolutions supporting the idea of a single and strong national news agency. He had also said that the managements of these agencies had proposed to merge themselves into a single agency and that Government would be prepared to assist in this process in different ways.

A Society named Samachar was registered on January 24, 1976 with 12 members of the Managing Committee including Shri G. Kasturi, Editor, 'Hindu' as its Chairman. The four erstwhile news agencies decided to accept the bye-line of Samachar with effect from February, 1, 1976 and adopted resolutions transferring their assets and liabilities as also their functions and personnel to Samachar with effect from April 2, 1976. Samachar thereupon bought the shares of the PTI, UNI, Hindustan Samachar; while the shares of Samachar Bharati which were held by the State Governments of Mysore, Gujarat, Bihar, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh were gifted to Samachar in response to the requests of Chairman of Samachar.

To bring about complete integration of the four agencies, Samachar appointed three Committees one each on (a) personnel; (b) rate structure and (c) administrative code and bye-laws. These committees were respectively headed by Shri R. P. Billimoria who is now Chairman of SAIL. Dr. Ram S. Tarneja, Associate General Manager of M/s. Bennet Coleman and Times of India, and Shri P. C. Gupta, Managing Editor, 'Jagran', Kanpur. Some of the recommendations of the committee

dealing with the integration of personnel have already been accepted by Samachar and the pay scales of its employees rationalised and made uniform with effect from July 1, 1976.

I have mentioned earlier that my predecessor had stated in this House that Government would be prepared to assist the managements of the four erstwhile news agencies in the process of merger in different ways. Besides making *ad-hoc* grants-in-aid of Rs. 50 lakhs in two instalments to enable Samachar to tide over its unsatisfactory financial situation, Government had persuaded the State Governments to gift their shares of Samachar Bharati to Samachar. Government had also guided the Managing Committee of Samachar in taking policy decisions. To this extent, the autonomy of the Society was severely limited and, therefore, the criticisms about the functioning of Samachar are valid.

I want to assure the House that the present Government is committed to ensuring freedom of the Press which naturally includes freedom and autonomy of a news agency. I have, therefore, decided to constitute a committee of experts to examine and report on the future of Samachar within one month. The constitution of such a committee has been considered necessary, as pre-emptive dissolution of Samachar and its reversion to the erstwhile four news agencies are likely to create some problems, particularly in regard to the personnel who have been brought on a uniformity higher scales of pay and emoluments. Hon'ble Members will agree with me that the interests of the employees have to be protected while ensuring complete freedom of news agencies from Government influence or control.

As Hon'ble Members are aware, Samachar in its capacity as the single news-agency has become a member of the News Agencies Pool of the non-aligned countries

[Shri L. K. Advani]

and entered into bilateral arrangements with a number of news agencies of the non-aligned countries for mutual exchange of news. Also, India was elected as the Chairman of the Coordination Committee of the News Agencies Pool of the non-aligned countries at the Conference of the Information Ministers of non-aligned countries held in Delhi in July 1976. This post was held by Shri Mohammad Yunus in his capacity as a member of the Managing Committee of the Samachar. He has since resigned from the Managing Committee. The Committee of experts will examine how India will continue to function as the Chairman of the Coordination Committee and in what manner arrangements will be made with foreign news-agencies for exchange of information.

Today, Samachar enjoys total monopoly of collection and dissemination of news within the country and abroad. The Committee of Experts will review this position and make suitable recommendations in the light of Government's policy as briefly outlined above.

12.00 hrs.

STATEMENT RE: ALLOTMENT OF ACCOMMODATION TO MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

PANDIT D. N. TIWARY: (Gopalganj): Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the election for the Sixth Lok Sabha more than 400 new Members have been elected. The Lok Sabha Secretariat had made arrangements for temporarily accommodating the new Members of Lok Sabha in Vithalbhai Patel House, Western Court Hostel, Lodhi and Ranjit Hotels, besides in various State Guest Houses located in Delhi, as most of the Members Pool accommodation continued in the occupation of ex-Members. Besides, the Directorate of Estates had also placed a few residential units temporarily at the disposal of the Secretariat and the House Committee on request for temporary allotment to

Members. As soon as some flats became vacant, the House Committee decided to allot these houses on the basis of the following priorities:—

1. Members residing in Hotels.
2. Members residing in far off places.
3. Those sharing accommodation with other allottees in Vithalbhai Patel House.

Accordingly, available accommodation was offered to Members on 2nd April 1977 with the request to convey their acceptance by 4th instant (A.N.), so that in case of their non-acceptance these could be offered to other Members. Out of 84 Members who were temporarily offered accommodation placed at the disposal of this Secretariat, only 60 have collected occupation slips till date. Allotments were also made to other Members of the aforesaid category in temporary accommodation made available by Government viz. Pataudi House Suites, D-II Flats in Kidwai Nagar and Type IV accommodation in Pandara Road and other areas, but the same were not acceptable to Members on account of their being not furnished/not in good condition besides being situated far away from Parliament House. About 95 Members have been accommodated in Vithalbhai Patel House and Western Court Hostel.

As in the past, the House Committee met and placed bungalows, twin-flats and three bed-roomed flats both 'vacant' and 'To be vacated' at the disposal of various Parties/Groups in Parliament on the basis of their strength for recommending the names of Members of their respective parties to whom they would like to allot bigger type of accommodation.

The Accommodation Sub-Committees has been constituted and it would consider the allotment of two bed-roomed flats etc., to the remaining Members on vacation basis. But the Committee is facing difficulties as some of the new Members have gone into the residential units before they