

- (ii) Reduction in the number of Government of India holidays for 1982 and need for declaring Maharashtra, Ramanavami and Valmiki Jayanti as Gazetted holidays.

DR. KARAN SINGH (Udhampur):  
Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, it is a matter for deep regret that the Government of India has reduced the number of holidays for 1982 by deleting three major Hindu holidays—Mahashivratri, Ramanavami and Valmiki Jayanti. These festivals are sacred to crores of Hindus throughout the country, and there is no justification for the unilateral action taken by the Government. Even if it was felt that the total number of holidays needed to be reduced, it is not fair that only those holidays which are sacred in to the Hindu community should be unceremoniously dropped in this manner.

The Government has in fact gone one step further. In a circular issued by the Press Information Bureau on 19th November, 1981, it has been stated that out of the 16 closed holidays, Central Government offices located outside Delhi/New Delhi would treat only 11 of these holidays as compulsory. The House will be astounded to know that these 11 exclude every single Hindu holiday. It is thus theoretically possible for a Central Government office situated outside Delhi not to observe a single Hindu holiday throughout the year.

This is a blatant case of reverse discrimination against a community constituting 80 per cent of the population of India. While certainly minority sentiments must be respected and safeguarded, is it Government's view that the majority community are devoid of any sentiments? I would appeal to you, Sir, and through you to the Government to rectify this glaring anomaly and reinstate the deleted holidays. In particular Ramanavami is being celebrated on a big scale

in Delhi and other towns and cities with a massive procession. It would be most unfortunate if a holiday is not declared on that day, 2nd April.

- (iii) Crisis in Silk industry in Karnataka.

SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES (Udipi): The import of raw silk and increased production of Cocoons have resulted in an unprecedented crisis in the silk industry in Karnataka. With the prices of yarn crashing down to new low-levels, the weavers in Bangalore, Doddaballapur and other prominent silk-producing centres expressed their protest in the form of demonstrations and dharnas. The weavers, on Tuesday the 23-2-82, refused to take their bags of silk to the Marketing Centres for auction. For the last few days, the rates of silk yarn are crashing down steeply. Due to this trend, many merchants and weavers are not coming forward to buy the silk. The defective system of auctioning is also proving a damper to them.

The rate of 1 kg silk had reached Rs. 650 but now it has come down to Rs. 350. The demand for chiffon material has declined very much. Daily, about ten tonnes of silk would come to silk marketing centre. But now reelers are not interested to send silk to the marketing centre. At the same time, the silk exchange would not allow them to sell it outside. In Cubbonpet in Bangalore silk worth two crores of rupees was lying unsold. The main reasons for this critical situation is due to the stoppage of purchase of silk by the silk-marketing Board. According to the Board, they do not have adequate funds for the purchase of silk.

One of the Directors of Karnataka Silk Marketing Federation and the Vice-President of Reelers Union have demanded vigorously support price. Therefore, I urge the Minister to look