

12.10 hrs.

ANNOUNCEMENT RE. REPORTING  
OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE HOUSE  
BY A.I.R.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon Members will recall that on the 21st February, 1978 when the Railway Minister commenced his Budget speech, a few members including Shri Mani Ram Bagri made submissions that the Minister might speak in Hindi. Members from the other side made counter submissions whereupon I pointed out that both the languages, Hindi and English, were permitted. At that stage the Prime Minister intervened and requested the members of the ruling Party to resume their seats and "not to create such things in this House". He also requested the members of the Opposition not to disturb the proceedings of the House.

On the 22nd February, 1978 Shri Mani Ram Bagri drew my attention to the news broadcast in Hindi at 8.45 p.m. on the 21st February, 1978 wherein it was said that the Prime Minister had pulled up the members (in Hindi the expression used was 'danta') who made the demand that the Railway Minister should speak in Hindi. The Member requested that the Minister of Information and Broadcasting should explain the position on behalf of the All India Radio and should correct and clarify it if necessary. The Minister was informed about the same.

The Minister of Information and Broadcasting in his reply dated 23rd February, 1978 has observed *inter alia* as follows:

"The Director of News Services of AIR has written to me (i.e. the Minister) to say that the AIR Parliamentary correspondent could have been more careful in the choice of words signifying the Prime Minister's intervention, but the facts that the Samachar also used the same words would show that he was only trying to give a fair picture of what happened in the House. Since there

was no intention on his part or on the part of the Editor to show disrespect to any member, it is hoped that the hon. Member will appreciate that this was a *bona fide* action on the part of the Correspondent. AIR has the highest regard for every member of the House, including the hon. Member, Shri Mani Ram Bagri. No offence was meant to him or to any member but if his feeling has been hurt, I convey my regrets.

Director of News Services has again advised all AIR Parliamentary correspondents to be more careful in reporting proceedings of this nature."

In view of the regret expressed, I think that the matter may be treated as closed. At the same time, I would like to impress that greater care should be taken by all concerned in reporting the proceedings of Lok Sabha.

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12.13 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER  
OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

REPORTED FALL IN PRICES OF GUR,  
SUGARCANE, COTTON AND MUSTARD AND  
BREACH OF AGREEMENT BY THE SUGAR  
MILL OWNERS

SHRI KANWAR LAL GUPTA (Delhi Sadar): I call the attention of the Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:

"Reported fall in prices of gur, sugar-cane, cotton and mustard in various parts of the country and especially in UP, Haryana, Bihar and Punjab and the breach of agreement by sugar mill owners by paying lower prices to sugarcane growers."

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE  
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND  
IRRIGATION (SHRI BHANU PRATAP  
SINGH): In recent months the prices  
of all the sweetening agents made from