

MR. SPEAKER : What is the reason for the delay in regard to Item No. 7 ?

SHRI JAGBIR SINGH : There was delay.

MR. SPEAKER : I will send it to the Committee to look into it.

MESSAGE FROM RAJYA SABHA

SECRETARY : Sir, I have to report the following message received from the Secretary-General of Rajya Sabha:—

"I am directed to inform the Lok Sabha that the Special Courts Bill, 1979, which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 9th March, 1979 has been passed by the Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 21st March, 1979, with the following amendments:—

Preamble

1. That at page 1, after line 17, the following be inserted, namely :—

"And Whereas all powers being a trust, and holders of high public or political offices are accountable for the exercise of their powers in all cases where Commissions of Inquiry appointed under the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952 or investigations conducted by Government through its agencies disclose offences committed by such holders:

Clause 3

2. That at page 2, for lines 27 to 29, the following be substituted, namely :—

"(a) A Special Court shall consist of a sitting Judge of a High Court nominated by the Chief Justice of the High Court within the local limits of whose jurisdiction the Special Court is situated, with the concurrence of the Chief Justice of India.

Explanation.—Any reference to a High Court or to the Chief Justice or Judge of a High Court shall, in relation to a Union territory having a Court of the Judicial Commissioner, be construed as a reference to the said Court of the Judicial Commissioner or to the Judicial Commissioner or any Additional Judicial Commissioner, as the case may be."

Clause 5

3. That at page 2, line 34, the words "during the period mentioned in the Preamble hereto" be deleted.

Clause 11

4. That at page 4,—

(i) in line 2, for the words "judgement or order" the words "judgment, sentence or order, not being inerolocutory order" be substituted;

(ii) in line 5, for the words "judgment or order" the words "judgment, sentence or order" be substituted; and

(iii) after sub-clause (a), the following sub-clause be inserted, namely :—

"(3) Every appeal under this section shall be preferred within a period of thirty days from the date of any judgment, sentence or order of a Special Court :

I provided that the Supreme Court may entertain an appeal after the expiry of the said period of thirty days if it is satisfied that the appellant had sufficient cause for not preferring the appeal within the period of thirty days."

I am, therefore, to return herewith the said Bill in accordance with the provisions of rule 128 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha with the request that the concurrence of the Lok Sabha to the said amendments be communicated to this House.

SPECIAL COURTS BILL

RETURNED BY RAJYA SABHA WITH AMENDMENTS

SECRETARY : Sir, I lay on the Table of the House the Special Courts Bill 1979 which has been returned by Rajya Sabha with amendments.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Reported serious situation arising out of demolition of Churches, etc. by the Authorities in Arunachal Pradesh

MR. SPEAKER : Calling Attention.

SHRI RINCHING KHANDU KHRIME (Arunachal West) : This Calling Attention is not necessary. Firstly no recent incident of demolition of churches

[Shri Rinching Khandu Khrame]

or other places of worship has happened. Secondly, in view of the tense situation prevailing in northeastern India, especially after the 5th January incident on the Nagaland border, this particular calling attention will not help ease tension, but provokes it further. The state Governments are trying to ease the tension by reaching some agreement and on the 20th March, the two Chief Ministers reached an agreement to ease the tension. Thirdly this is not the proper forum because the Arunachal Pradesh Assembly is in session where it can be taken up. The charges are false and malicious.

MR. SPEAKER: This is not a point of order. You are replying to the Calling Attention. It is the Minister who should reply. Because you are a new member, I gave you an opportunity. It is not a point of order. Shri Sudheeran.

SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN (Alleppey) Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Home Affairs to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:—

The reported serious situation arising out of the demolition of churches and other places of worship by the authorities in Arunachal Pradesh.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI DHANIK LAL MANDAL): Sir, the Arunachal Pradesh Government, on being informed of this, has replied in categorical terms that no church or place of worship has been demolished by any District Authority in Arunachal Pradesh. There is, however, one report about the demolition of one kucha church building in Tirap District, and that demolition was not by any authority but by a group of local Tangsa tribals who had been converted to Christianity and who had decided in a body to revert to their traditional Tangsa faith. There has been no incident of any harassment of Christians in Arunachal Pradesh.

SHRI V. M. SUDHEERAN: I have carefully gone through the statement made by the hon. Minister. But I am sorry to say that the hon. Minister has been misguided or misinformed by the bureaucrats in Arunachal Pradesh. It is obvious that the bureaucracy is taking advantage of the fact that Arunachal Pradesh is a north-eastern most corner of the country and, comparatively, inaccessible and where communications are very poor. There is a reign of terror in Arunachal Pradesh..

SHRI RINCHING KHANDU KHRIME (Arunachal West): On a point of order, Sir. He says, there is a reign of terror. But there is no law and order problem even there....

MR. SPEAKER: There is a no point of order. Please sit down. The Minister will reply.

SHRI RINCHING KHANDU KHRIME: He says, there is a reign of terror. Why should he use the expression "reign of terror" when there is no law and order problem in Arunachal Pradesh?

MR. SPEAKER: It is not a point of order. Please sit down; don't get excited.

SHRI V. M. SUDHEERAN: The administration in Arunachal Pradesh is always raising a bogey of "foreign missionaries". It is well known to the Minister that there is not a single foreign missionary in Arunachal Pradesh.

I would like to know from the hon. Minister if being a Christian is a crime. There are recent instances where churches were demolished in Sanking village in Miso sub-division and in Zira village in Subanziri district and there are innumerable instances where even the religious services of Christian community are banned and prevented. Is it the freedom of faith?

This is a letter dated 27th November, 1978 addressed to the Reverend Father, Job Appathara, Catholic Church, North Lakhampur, Assam. I quote:

"I am in receipt of your letter dated 4th October, 1978 in connection with issue of Inner Line Permits to you and Bishop Rt. Rev. Joseph Mittathangy for conducting religious services in the villages around Ziro during last week of December next.

In this connection, I am to inform you that as per Government's instruction (Resolution of the Union Cabinet of 26th May, 1953) no religious priests belonging to any community which includes Christian Missionary also are allowed to enter Arunachal Pradesh for preaching of religion. Since the proposed visit of the Bishop is for conducting religious services, it is regretted that no Inner Line Permits can be issued to him."

Sd/- B.S. Khasiyat
Deputy Commissioner,
Subanziri District, Ziro."

The situation aggravated in Arunachal Pradesh after passing the Arunachal Pradesh Freedom of Religion Bill, 1978. According to the Bill, the Government officials have issued many executive orders to demolish churches.

Here is another order issued by the Government of Arunachal Pradesh, by the Deputy Commissioner, Khonsa, dated 22nd November, 1978. I quote:

"It is learnt from reliable sources that no construction of any church/temple be taken up in your village and if any structure has meanwhile been erected, the same should be immediately demolished as per order of the Deputy Commissioner, Khonsa."

"A copy of the letter No. CA-24/78/43 dated 15th October, 1978, received from the Deputy Commissioner, Khonsa, is also enclosed herewith again for your immediate compliance."

Sd/- B. Baruah

Extra Assistant Commissioner,
Miao Sub-Division: Miao."

I now quote from a press-cutting. This is from the *Amrit Bazar Patrika* of yesterday:

"Mr. Winglat Lowangcha, General Secretary of the People's Party of Arunachal Pradesh, has said that 40 churches were burnt down at the instance of government officials."

This is a statement made by a responsible political leader of Arunachal Pradesh. This is the situation prevailing in Arunachal Pradesh. There is a growing apprehension and anxiety in the minds of the minorities of Arunachal Pradesh—not only in Arunachal Pradesh but all over the country. Unfortunately, the Bill introduced in this House by hon. Member Shri O.P. Tyagi has further increased the apprehension and anxiety of the minorities all over the country and especially in Kerala, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland etc..

AN HON. MEMBER: In Karnataka also.

SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN: In all parts of India.

The ambiguous stand taken by the Janta Party and the present Government is causing a colossal damage to the secular image of our country. I am tempted to believe that the guiding spirit behind the

attitude of government is the famous pronouncement of Guruji Gowalkar, the former RSS Chief:

"The non-Hindu people in Hindustan must adopt Hindu culture and language must learn to hold in reverence Hindu religion, must entertain no idea but those of glorification of the Hindu race and culture... (they) may stay in the country wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation claiming nothing deserving no privileges, far less any preferential treatment—not even citizen's rights."

This is the famous pronouncement by Guruji Gowalkar to which government seems to be heeding. Is it a gesture of great magnanimity on the part of the present Government to allow the Christians and the Muslims to stay in this country? Should I repeat that India is the second biggest Muslim country in the world, next only to Indonesia, perhaps more than even Pakistan and Bangladesh? The 20 million Christians in the country profess a faith which has been in existence in India for the last twenty centuries. The Christian population in India is more than the total population of many of the Christian countries in the world like Belgium and Holland. It is time that the fanatic and narrow attitude of the RSS and the Janata Government is rectified. It is time that the Prime Minister comes forward and proclaims that his Party & Government will oppose the dangerous Bill introduced by Shri O.P. Tyagi. Is the Government aware that there are massive demonstrations going on all over the country against the oppression of minorities. About 26 bishops..

SHRI RAGHAVJI (Vidisha): On a point of order. What he is saying is beyond the scope of the Call Attention..

MR. SPEAKER: It is not a point of order. Please it down. Don't record. (Interruptions)*

SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN: 26 bishops of our country have submitted a memorandum to the hon. Prime Minister. In view of the deplorable situation prevailing in the country, may I ask the hon. Home Minister to give a categorical reassurance, on the floor of the House, to the minorities that freedom of faith, freedom of worship and freedom of services will be safeguarded?

Will the Union Government itself conduct a high-level inquiry about this matter, not depending upon the State Government of Arunachal Pradesh?

* Not recorded.

MR. SPEAKER : You have said that.

SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN : One more point. Will the Government convene a conference of the Heads of various minorities including Christians and Muslims, to sort out their problems and sufferings and take immediate steps to solve their problems and see that their apprehensions and anxieties can be removed.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI H.M. PATEL) : I have listened to the hon. Member with great attention and I am very much surprised that a person who is purporting to talk in the name of secularism should have given expression to so many statements which really go counter to the spirit of secularism....

(Interruptions)

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF (Bangalore North) : What is it that he is speaking, Sir?

MR. SPEAKER : Let him develop the point.

SHRI H. M. PATEL : The hon. Member does not even have the patience. He tries to read lessons to me about democracy and freedom and freedom of speech? I cannot give expression to my views? I must listen to him—I have listened to your hon. friend with complete patience and I never interfered at all. Please listen.....

SHRI K. GOPAL (Karu) : You were sleeping.

MR. SPEAKER : Ignore those side remarks.

SHRI H. M. PATEL : Please be happy that you said so. I think you must know.

SHRI A BALA PAJANOR (Pondicherry) : It was said in good humour.

SHRI H. M. PATEL : I am not perturbed about what you say because non-sensical statements do not deserve any answer..... (Interruptions)

Sir, if you see the Call Attention, it is on "The reported serious situation arising out of the demolition of churches and other places of worship by the authorities in Arunachal Pradesh."

Now, a categorical reply has been given at not a single church has been demolished in Arunachal Pradesh by the authorities..... (Interruptions)

SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF : What is this?

MR. SPEAKER : Why don't you allow him to answer?

SHRI V. M. SUDHEERAN : The Minister is making an incorrect statement—a totally incorrect statement?

SHRI H. M. PATEL : On what basis? I am prepared to look into any single instance they say they have knowledge of and which I do not know.....

SHRI V. M. SUDHEERAN : This is a clear order.

SHRI H. M. PATEL : I will tell you about the order. What is the order—I will tell you that also. Please listen to the whole thing. This is a simple matter. (Interruptions) Your language and your shouts are democratic and what I say is undemocratic?..... (Interruptions)

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI (Chirayinkil) I am a Congressman. What is wrong? You go to Guru Golwalkar.... (Interruptions)

SHRI H. M. PATEL : I said—let the hon. Member give me the authority on the basis of which he says that churches are being demolished....

MR. SPEAKER : You inquire into it.

SHRI H. M. PATEL : He read out from some letters which said that information has been received that a church is being erected against the orders issued and that should be, therefore, not proceeded with. Now, that order, if you see, was issued some 10 years ago... (Interruptions). Wait a minute. I am not depending on anything.

What for? It said simply this—'Having regard to the fact that it is a tribal area... It does not say 'Don't construct Churches or don't construct any temples.' It refers to all religions. Of course, these hon. Members seem to take it that it refers only to Churches. It does not. It refers to all religions. They say any religion wanting to erect a place of worship shall do so only with the prior permission of the authority. (Interruptions) You may hold your own opinion. I am telling you what the policy is in Arunachal Pradesh.

SHRI C.M. STEPHEN (Idukki) : That is what we question.

SHRI H. M. PATEL : You may question that. Who are you to question that? (Interruptions)

SHRI C.M. STEPHEN : What is the attitude of the Government of India to that policy that churches and temples can be erected only with the permission of the Executive? What is the attitude to that is our question. (*Interruptions*).

MR. SPEAKER : Why everybody is standing up. I cannot understand that. This is a Call Attention. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI H.M. PATEL : I think the hon. Members forget that this is a tribal area. (*Interruptions*). You have no respects for the tribals. I do not mind; you can say so. But, so far as we are concerned, we consider that their rights must be respected: their feelings must be respected. (*Interruptions*). We have information also that all these Christian Missions in the North-Eastern areas are receiving crores of rupees and their object is to do precisely what I say. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI V. M. SUDHEERAN : Here not Patel but Golwalkar is speaking!

SHRI H.M. PATEL : I can give you. Why are you getting excited? You can make fantastic charges against the Government and the authorities that they are pursuing a policy of harassing minorities. Have minorities been harassed? He gave figures about the total number of Christians in this country. I would really like to know whether the Christians in this country have been harassed and whether the churches and temples constructed in any part of this country have been destroyed?

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: Not so far. But they are doing it. (*Interruptions*).

MR. SPEAKER: You take it up at higher level.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: I am really disappointed at the Leader of the Opposition when he says 'not so far'. What does he purport to hit? He considers that he is justified but has no basis whatsoever to say that the Government has intention of demolishing churches in this country—how can you say that? Without any sense of fairness and decency, can you make a remark of that kind?

Sir, there is no truth whatsoever in these hints, charges and suggestions that

the Government wants to harass Christianity, the Christian religion, in any part of the country—certainly not in Arunachal Pradesh. (*Interruptions*)

MR.SPEAKER : If you want a debate, that is a different matter.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: Sir, I only pointed out to say that because the hon. Member referred to Mr. Tyagi's Bill. What is the objection to that? It is a private member's Bill. You referred to the Private Member's Bill. And in turn you say that by inference that it is also accepted by Government. That is the objection. The private Member has a right to pilot a Private Member's Bill. Now he says that that Bill shows there is hostility towards minorities, Christianity and other religions. How do you read and where do you read that? What does it say?

Even that Bill says (*Interruptions*), I am only trying to say that even that Bill says—here I think Mr. Quereshi should listen to the word 'even'... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: This is a calling Attention.

(*Interruptions*)**

MR. SPEAKER: Don't record.

SHRI H.M. PATEL: I only say that conversion, etc. shall not be by force or something of that type. It does not say that. It does not prevent conversion.

MR. SPEAKER: We are not on that Bill now.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: I would only like to say that if they can give any definite information which they may have, I shall certainly have that fully looked into. A mere sweeping statement cannot really be accepted, particularly, when the State Government has sent a categorical reply that there has been no incidence of any demolition of the existing churches.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI A. C. GEORGE (Mukandapuram): Sir, here is a very interesting Home Minister who has told this House—and was swearing on the word of decency and fairness—that not only Christianity but every religion is prevented from com-

[Shri A.C. George]

ing there. Here is a circular issued by the Lt. Governor's Secretariat, Itanagar:

"From

Shri T.P. Khaund
Secretary to Lt. Governor,
Itanagar.

To

The Secretary
Supply and Transport,
Government of AP, Shillong.

Sir,

I am directed to enclose herewith a copy of an application from Shri Samchom Ngemu, General Secretary, Tangsa Sinpho Cultural Society, P.O. Namchik, Tirap District, Arunachal Pradesh about release of 600 bags of cement required for construction of a Buddhist temple at Kharsang.

2. The Buddhist temple at Kharsang is very important project and has to be completed expeditiously.."

What is the difference between Buddhist religion and Christianity. The Secretary to the Lt. Governor is saying that the Buddhist temple project is very important but the Christianity has to be pushed aside.

Here is another example. He said about a decade back. His concept of history and calculation of years is absolutely funny. He must have stopped the time he retired from ICS. Here is another circular from Office of the Extra Assistant Commissioner, Miao dated 22nd November, 1978 wherein it is mentioned:

"It is to remind you that construction of any religious temple/church other than those of indigenous faith has strictly been prohibited as per the order of the Deputy Commissioner, Khonsa..... the same should be immediately demolished as per order of the Deputy Commissioner, Khonsa."

Is Christianity not an indigenous faith? Is Christianity foreign! When the great fathers of Europeans and foreigners were eating grass Christianity was here in 52 AD. Is it not an indigenous faith? Is it a foreign religion?

Here again there is another interesting thing. (*Interruptions*) May I tell the honorable Home Minister that his bogey

of foreign missionaries has to be shattered because I will quote from a very interesting letter in respect of Rt. Rev. Joseph Mittathany. He is not a foreigner. He is a Keralite. He is related to me. You are confused of names. You know what, that great Bishop wanted to do harm in the border area. He wanted to go there for Christmas service during the last week of December. Christmas is a universal celebration. Here is a letter from Shri D.B. Kharayat, Deputy Commissioner, Subansiri District, Ziro and I quote:

"I am in receipt of your letter dated 4th October, 1978 in connection with issue of Inner Line Permits to you and to Bishop Rt. Rev. Joseph Mittathany for conducting religious services in the villages around Ziro during last week of December next.

". Since the proposed visit of the Bishop is for conducting religious services, it is regretted that no Inner Line Permits can be issued to him."

This is the case. Since the proposed visit of the Bishop is for conducting religious Services, it is very dangerous for the border and it is regretted that no Inner Line Permits can be issued to him.

Then, Sir, they are frankly admitting that a kucha church has been demolished. They are taking advantage of lack of communication. It is far off north-eastern border and so the bureaucracy was able to tell him. I do not question his bonafides. But God is not bothered about a kucha church or a puera church. It is common knowledge, Sir, that it is in the smallest temple that the God lives.

श्री लालजी भाई (सलूमबर) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, व्यवस्था का प्रश्न है ... (अव्यक्त) व्यवस्था का प्रश्न तो सुना जाता है

अध्यक्ष महोदय : इसमें कोई व्यवस्था का प्रश्न नहीं है ।

श्री लालजी भाई : व्यवस्था का प्रश्न है ।

MR. SPEAKER: I am on my legs. Before you say, point of order, please tell me which is the rule which is reached.

श्री लालजी भाई : अध्यक्ष महोदय, व्यवस्था का प्रश्न है या नहीं, वह बेरे कहने से पहले आपको कैसे मालूम हो जायगा ?

MR. SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

श्री लाक्ष्मी झाई : प्राप अनुमति देंगे तब मैं कहूंगा ।

मालनीय सदस्य अरुणाचल प्रदेश से सम्बन्धित बात कह रहे हैं लेकिन अधिकार राज्यो में क्या हो रहा है, जैसे राजस्थान राज्य के बारे में मैं प्राप की बताता हूँ, वहाँ पर जो इशाराओं के प्रतिनिधि हैं वह धादिवासियों में जाकर के उनको बहका कर (अरुणाचल) .

MR. SPEAKER: You must tell me under which rule.

श्री लाक्ष्मी झाई : वहाँ पर निर्वाचन बनाया जा रहा है **

MR. SPEAKER : Don't record.
**Nothing will go on record.

SHRI A. C. GEORGE: I do not want to go into the details of Mr. O.P. Tyagi's Bill.

(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: This is not a point of order. Don't record.

(Interruptions)**

SHRI A. C. GEORGE: I do not want to mention anything about Mr. O.P. Tyagi's Bill. There is mention in the definition of 'force' about some kind of threat of divine displeasure and such things. This is the danger about it. I do not want to go into 'inducement' and all those things which are also important.

MR. SPEAKER: Everything can be discussed when the Bill comes up for discussion.

SHRI A. C. GEORGE: I am summing up. The Home Minister—I am sure you would have been convinced now—was trying to take the House particularly you, for a ride. What has happened? On the 9th March, you admitted the Notice under Rule 377 pertaining to the murder of the noble priest the jesuit father, on the 24th February. But what is the result of your allowing me to raise it?

MR. SPEAKER: What? My allowing it led to murder?

SHRI A. C. GEORGE: No Sir. You allowed me to mention the point regarding the murder of a jesuit father of Mokameh. This happened on the 24th of February. Shooting happened. So many other people were attacked. The Minister of State, who, I understand, comes from Bihar, wrote to me on the 20th March, that he is still trying to understand what the situation is, from the Government of Bihar. From here to Patna why should it take so much time? You can book STD call and you can do it freely.

MR. SPEAKER: Please come to the question.

SHRI A. C. GEORGE: Sir, this is the type of the Home Ministry which we are having. You must be able to differentiate between foreign missionaries and Indian missionaries. In this House among the Janata members, who can speak on behalf of the Lokpal Bill? Are all these people absolutely innocent? There may be a stray case this side or that side. I don't want to go into the question of crores and so on. These people are spending the money for noble purposes; they are spending for humanitarian purposes, on hospitals, educational institutions, and so on and so forth. I don't deny that there may be a stray case of misuse here and there. My hon. lady friend knows about the good work done in Bombay which she represents. She was agitated when you mentioned crores and all that. Don't make a sweeping remark. You have to differentiate. If a Bishop comes from Kerala, he is as much an Indian, as a Gujarati is.

A differentiation has to be made between the bogey of foreign missionaries and Christian faith. We have in India the freedom of worship. The hon. Minister said that it was a decade. I have proved before you that it was not even one year.

MR. SPEAKER: Please come to the question now.

SHRI A. C. GEORGE: Will the hon. Minister take measures to see that a round-table conference is called and a cosmopolitan deputation of M.Ps is sent to the North-Eastern areas so that the people regain their confidence that their grievances will be suitable redressed and this type of wrong information would not be given to this Parliament. This team would be able to study the real problems of these areas, because at present, a smoke-screen is being created.

SRI H. M. PATEL : The hon. Member has raised a number of bogeys and then tried to demolish them or he wants me to demolish them. He repeatedly referred to the expression of decade used by me and thought that I knew nothing what a decade means.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Please come to the point.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: Why do you start making these points and when I am trying to answer them, you say, answer her point. I am coming to that precisely.

He says that I referred to an order that was issued many years ago. Under that order, naturally further orders are going to be issued. The general order only says that this should be the policy in regard to the erection of new churches. That is what I meant. Then, he says that on the one hand, I say that there was no demolition and then I said, that there was demolition of a kacha church, which was the house of God and how somebody dared to destroy it. Who destroyed it? It were not the authorities. It was destroyed by the very people for whom the church had been erected. This was done by those people on re-conversion to their tribal religion, not to any other religion ... (Interruptions).

MR. SPEAKER: An orderly debate is always very helpful. Order, please.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: It seems, there is a concerted attempt at spreading stories in regard to this matter all over the country. In today's Indian Express, there are a large number of letters—six all from Ahmedabad. And what do they say? All stories like this. This is something which is incredible. On the one hand, I have this report that there is no case of demolition. This is what one letter says:

"We Christian women have been deeply hurt and disturbed by report of atrocities committed against Christian women in Arunachal Pradesh."

The expression used is—Christian women in Arunachal Pradesh.

"...and that in the name of freedom of religion, we feel ashamed and affronted when we read the shocking reports that have found their way out of Arunachal..."

As if there is censorship there.

"...describing scenes of utter destruction..."

SHRI A. BALA PAJANOR: What is the relevance?

SHRI H. M. PATEL: You have raised certain points... (Interruptions)

SHRI K. GOPAL: The Home Minister should answer, not Goenka. This is the way you are running the Ministry. It is shame on you... (Interruptions).

SHRI H. M. PATEL: Where has this come from? These stories are being spread and I want to know why these are being spread.

SHRI K. GOPAL: What is your report?

SHRI H. M. PATEL: My report is that it is utterly untrue, completely baseless and that is why I was trying to point out to you that here are these stories being spread all over the country. Why are you spreading them? ... (Interruptions). Therefore, I said, you give me further details about this and I will certainly go into this matter.

SHRI A. BALA PAJANOR: Actually, when this Calling Attention was raised in this House, I had a great hope that the hon. Home Minister would come forward with a categorical assurance to the minority communities of this country. If at all I have associated myself with this Calling Attention, I have done it with this fond hope.

And this expectation was clearly mentioned by the Member who put the first question to the hon. Home Minister. But the reaction from the other side is highly disturbing. That Member said that there was a feeling in this country, especially after this Government took over—I say it is a feeling—that the interests of the minorities were at stake. Their rights are not properly looked after. The hon. Minister is trying to read out certain letters that he has found in to-day's Indian Express. I know from which source it is coming. I know it. If the hon. Minister is going to rely only on such reports and not on his intelligence reports, as he did earlier, I have nothing to say. But, if he is trying to answer the question that way, I can also go to the roots of the problem, have a broader vision and bring out certain things.

He referred to ghosts and bogeys. It is all right for a Member (Interruptions) to make such a statement, but it is not proper for a Home Minister of this country to make such an irresponsible statement in this august House, and add fuel to the fire and to the feelings of the people of this country. It is highly irresponsible

on the part of the Home Minister to make such a statement. Is it not a fact that for the past 200 years or even more, the Christian missionaries have given education to you and to many others in this country? Is it not a fact that all the Christians are educated here? Is it not a fact that 95% of the students in the Christian institutions are non-Christians? (interruptions) You are very much agitated about the rumours that are going about in this country—when you are in a majority there. You are coming forward and appointing the Minority Commission. Let it not be an eye-wash. Let there be some sincerity in your statement.

I am sorry to see the Home Minister is also trying to do it. I can understand the RSS friends here who are trying to harm this country (interruptions)—to which the Prime Minister is not a party. You please answer Mr Raj Narain. I am not a party to it. But you are creating such an amount of confusion and chaos. We may have a faith. Then what is the meaning of Article 25 of the Constitution? Please read it. I cannot understand you. So long as you are particular about your ideas—with vehemence and vengeance. Don't try to bog me down. (interruptions) He has taken oath under the Constitution about two years back. Let him read Articles 25, 26, 27 and 28 of the Constitution. What is their meaning? You are trying to expose this country to certain things. (interruptions)

I can understand your feeling; but you must also remember that there is another Member. The scope of the discussion has become very wide. I want a very categorical assurance. If, at all I expect anything from the Home Minister, it is that he must come forward in a dignified manner and tell this country that there would not be any atrocities.

We have documents before us. We have cited those things. And you say, 'decades back'. It is a question of 5th November 1978, 22nd November 1978, 27 November 1978 and so on. We get the information. You may ask me, "Did you visit Arunachal Pradesh?" Then I ask you, "Did you visit Arunachal Pradesh on the 24th?" It is not a matter on which we can have tit-for-tat in this House. We are presenting certain materials. Please try to answer them. If you cannot answer, tell us that you will give the information next week. But don't try to defend in this manner and create an ill-feeling in this country. We are more of Indians. You spoke that we became Christians about 200 years or 2,000 years back. Don't talk like that. Otherwise, may I

say that some of you came to this country via the Khyber Pass and are trying to dominate others in this country? May I talk like that? But I will not, because I do not want to create feelings like that. Don't try to bring in things like Mr Tyagi's bill on indigenoussisation. You are trying to measure the percentage of Indian blood. You are trying to analyse this and make out a topographical figure for us, and say how much Indian blood there is, in us.

This is a very serious question. When we started, we expected that there will be an honourable assurance, and a dignified answer from an ex-ICS man. We expected some assurance, not only for this side, but for that side also. (interruptions) They are very much agitated. Let not the Minister add fuel to the fire that is burning in this country. He is very much worried about rumours there. Don't make such kind of statements. We are also responsible people. We are bound to defend the minorities in this country.

Everybody is an Indian as you are; sometimes (much better than you. (interruptions) Don't try to attribute motives. Don't try to colour us. Fortunately, Dr Subramaniam Swamy is not here. He is always noted for this shadow-cabinet, and creating misunderstandings in this country. Let him not do such kind of mischiefs. Let him have it in China or America, not in this country. This country belongs to us. We are as much Indians as you are. From Kashmir to Kanya Kumari it is our land. We will fight for it. Let him know it. It is we people who fight for it. I said the day before yesterday that the Bishops and the Christian Fathers all over the South took out a procession.

Maybe, if under misapprehension, may be due to misunderstanding created by you; you are responsible for it. Let the Home Minister come forward with a categorical assurance to us; let him answer what Sadashiv Gowalkar says, his god-father. He must answer that also. He says if you are not Hindu, you are second class citizen. In that case, what will happen to the country?

श्री राज नारायण (राय बरेली) :
मैं इन को भी डिफेन्ड कर रहा हूँ। ये जो कह रहे हैं, इन की भावनाओं की मैं कद्र करता हूँ।

SHRI H. M. PATEL: The hon. Member spoke so vigorously and violently and says that this is what I have done, I have created it. I have answered the points he raised.

SHRI A. BALA PAJANOR: This kind of word, let him not use, 'violently'.

SHRI H. M. PATEL I have never said a word.

SHRI A. BALA PAJANOR: When I approached you when Pondicherry was burning, you said: you are an opposition leader, I cannot give a statement. What is it you are talking? I am trying to behave like a leader of the opposition. Let him act like the Home Minister.

SHRI H.M. PATEL: I am here to say, I suppose the way he talks he wants me to talk I am not going to oblige him.

SHRI A. BALA PAJANOR: I know you.

SHRI H.M. PATEL: I am trying to give them reply to their points, but they do not want to listen. He began by saying: will he give an assurance. Ensuring freedom of religion, etc. are such that it does not really call for an assurance it is to be assumed; it is there. What has happened that leads to any questioning of it? Let me repeat again. You began by saying that there has been demolitions, large scale demolition of churches, etc. in Arunachal Pradesh to which I gave the reply that it is not so. There is no foundation whatsoever for such a statement there has been no demolition. Having made that statement, you said: no, there are those various things. I then explained it is also not correct, the kucha Church which was demolished was demolished by the tribals who had been converted to Christianity and who had been converted back to their own religion, not by anybody else.

श्री राज नारायण : कर्चा कच्चा हो या पक्का हो, बच गिरा है ।

प्रध्यक्ष महोदय : यह काल एटेशन है ।

श्री राज नारायण : ऐसा कह कर ये उस की इम्पोर्टेंस को मिनीमाइज करते हैं । .**

MR. SPEAKER: This is only a call attention. Please do not record.

(Interruptions)

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: I want to make a submission on this matter to you.

MR. SPEAKER: Not at this stage.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: This answer has only inflamed the feelings in this country; it has got to be assuaged. I request you to permit a full fledged discussion on this matter. It is absolutely necessary because..

MR. SPEAKER: It does not arise now. I cannot understand this.

There is a method of doing it. You could have moved a motion. You could have sent a letter to me.

SHRI A. BALA PAJANOR: From his answers, he said? What is there is the incident, and then explained in this area were any demolition made? I bring to his notice that three months back..

MR. SPEAKER: I cannot understand if leaders of parties do not give me cooperation. I am afraid that leaders of parties do not give me cooperation. There is a method if you want to debate it. There are methods to raise it. After all, we are governed by rules.

श्री राज नारायण : मेरा प्वाइन्ट फ़ाऊन आर्गुमेंट है । मेरा व्यवस्था का प्रश्न यह है कि जब अंगर कच्चा हो, तो गिरा दिया जाए और पक्का हो, तो न गिराया जाए ?

MR. SPEAKER : It is not a point of order. You are an old parliamentarian. Please do not do so, it is not a point of order; it is a point of disorder.

13 hrs.

SHRI H. M. PATEL : I have said that if they have any information about the name and place in regard to the demolition, I shall certainly have it enquired into.

SHRI A. BALA PAJANOR : He asks, is there any other instance. Three months ago in Tiruchirapalli...

MR. SPEAKER : You cannot go from Arunachal Pradesh to Tiruchirapalli such a far off distance.

SHRI H. M. PATEL : I have given the reply that there has been no demolition at all.

MR. SPEAKER : Again and again why are you repeating it ?

SHRI H. M. PATEL : Because he keeps on saying it I have also said, if you have any information, we will nevertheless go into it. I would also like to give the fullest assurance that whatever fundamental rights have been given to the minorities under the Constitution, those are definitely going to be protected. When I explained this, they say 'indigenous faith'. The indigenous faith refers to the tribals. It does not refer to any other faith at all. Whatever orders were issued, they do not apply only to Christianity; they apply to all religions.

SHRI A. C. GEORGE : I showed you a clear-cut example.

SHRI H. M. PATEL : I will explain it. It does not say that none shall be permitted. It says, if you want to erect, it shall be with the permission of the authorities. This is something different from saying none shall be erected. It is a very clear-cut reply. There is absolutely no vagueness about it.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN : The point is, there is discrimination between Christianity and Buddhism. (Interruptions)

SHRI H. M. PATEL : If the hon. Member had said that an application has been made for the erection of a Christian Church, which has been refused and a Buddhist Church has been permitted, you can talk of discrimination. I do not understand it when there is no information about it. But definitely Arunachal Pradesh Government's policy has been for several years now not to allow the erection of new churches anywhere. But there is no complete ban; it says it must be done with the prior permission of the Government.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA (Tura) : At the very outset, I want to inform the Home Minister that I am a tribal coming from the north-eastern region and I am a Christian. Somehow the people here have the impression that when a tribal becomes a Christian, he is a foreigner; he ceases to be an Indian. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : He is a new member. Kindly let him speak.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : We are tribals and whether we are Christians or not, we are the true citizens of this country. Unfortunately the Christian community, specially belonging to the north-eastern region, has been looked upon with suspicion by the Government. Just now the Home Minister said, the Christian missionaries in the north-eastern region have been receiving crores of rupees. Why should the Home Minister feel jealous or suspicious about some money coming to our region ?

13.05 hrs.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

Today if I am standing here in front of you.....(Interruptions). Please allow me to develop my point. I never interfered with anybody; I do not want anybody to interrupt me. That is the tribal character. We do not interfere with anybody and we do not want anyone to interfere with us.

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY (Bombay North-East) : That is why I say I am also a tribal

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : If today we have come to a certain stage, if today we can read and write, if we go to schools, if we have some minimum medical facilities etc. It is because of the missionaries. In the north-eastern region you go and see how many missionary schools and colleges are there and how many Government schools and colleges are there. You will find that there are more of missionary colleges and hospitals run by missionaries

....(Interruptions)

SHRI RINCHING KHANDU
KHRIME (Arunachal West) : Sir, I
rise on a point of order.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please
take your seat. There is no point of order.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : Merely
because we are Christians, we do not lose
our loyalty to the country. We are citizens
of this country and we will ever be....
(Interruptions)

The information given here in the
statement is on the basis of the information
received from the Arunachal Pradesh
Government. I should remind you that
Arunachal Pradesh is not a full-fledged
State; it is a Union territory; it is a
Centrally-administered area. I am surprised
how the Home Minister could come
here and say (Interruptions) Don't you have
your own source of information?

SHRI A. BALA PAJANOR : *Indian
Express.*

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : Mr. Deputy-
Speaker, Sir, so many circulars and official
letters have been read out by my
friends; I do not want to repeat the same.
The Home Minister has said that if
some specific allegations are brought to
his notice, he would look into them. I
want to give you some specific allegations.
I have with me here the memorandum
which was submitted to the
Prime Minister of India when he was
in Itanagar, on the 3rd November 1978
I am sure, a copy of it had come to the
file of the Home Minister. It is stated
in para 4 of that Memorandum :

"102 dwelling houses and 46 churches
burnt down, one Christian member
lost his life (Tana Ekha) by the persecu-
tors. Recently, on 5-3-1978, 5
Christian students were expelled from
the Government H. S. School, Yazali.
They were told that the regular stipend
of Rs. 75,000 will not be provided
to them. On 6-9-78 Christians were
tortured, tied in the post at Chulyu
village. Animals were killed and burned
at Chulyu Baptist Church....."

These are the incidents which were
brought to the notice of the Prime Minister.
Yet, the Home Minister is saying
today in the month of March that they
have not received any specific allegation.
I wonder how the Home Ministry is functioning.
There was a reference to it
in the Amrita Bazar Patrika yesterday,
a portion of which has been read by my
friend here.

Here it says :

"...he (Mr. Wanglat Lowangcha)
was a Christian and wanted to marry a
Christian girl of his choice. The
local Government officials insisted that
he marry a girl of another faith instead.
He cited another instance, where, he
said, instigated by Government officials,
some people had stripped naked the
wife of Mr. Trainang who was on
the platform with Mr. Lowangcha
because she would not change away
from Christianity to another religion
which the officials wanted her to. She
was then hung upside down. Forty
churches, Mr. Lowangcha said, were
burnt down at the instance of Government
officials. He said that the
church in Arunachal Pradesh had been
established in 1830."

These are the instances, these are the
persecutions that are going on.

I understand that because of the latest
Bill that has been passed by the Arunachal
Pradesh Assembly and assented to by the
President, conversion from one religion
to another has been banned in Arunachal
Pradesh.

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY:
Forcible conversion.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : What is the
necessity of passing this Bill when forcible
conversion is already a crime under the
Indian Penal Code? When this Bill
was passed and sent to the President of
India for his assent, the Christian
community all over the country expressed
the apprehension that it was primarily
meant against the Christians and other
minority religions. That has been proved
now. Why is a Bishop, who is an Indian
citizen, who is a near relation of Mr.
A. C. George, not allowed to conduct the
Christmas service? Is conducting the
Christmas service forcible conversion?
When a boy wants to
marry a Christian girl of his choice, is
it forcible conversion?

These are the things which are going
on in the name of sensitive area and in
the name of the tribals. The Home
Minister was proud to announce : we
love the tribals, I say, you do not know
the tribals. I am a tribal myself, and I
say that in the name of the tribals, in the
name of sensitive area, the people in the
northeastern area have been neglected,
we have been suspected, and we have
been kept isolated from the rest of the
country.

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY :
Why don't you say for the last 30 years

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : It is because in the north eastern area the majority of the people, tribals, are Christians. That is our crime.

The Home Minister said that nothing was going on, but we are asserting and telling the Home Minister that persecutions are going. I would like to know from him whether he would consider sending a cosmopolitan Parliamentary delegation, including Dr. Subramaniam Swamy to go to Arunachal Pradesh and have an on the spot survey and give a report.

SHRI H. M. PATEL : I do not see that the hon. Member has put any question for me to answer except he has merely said that the tribals who are Christians are being discriminated against. I do not think that there is any iota of truth in that.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI : What about the memorandum sent to the Prime Minister ?

SHRI H. M. PATEL : Whatever instances are mentioned in the memorandum we shall certainly go into them and inform them as to how much of it is correct. Whatever needs rectification, we will certainly put it right because we do believe in the secular position of this country. Unfortunately, the hon. Member has gone out of his way to say that Christians....

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour) : On a point of order. I want to seek a clarification. The Prime Minister visited Itanagar about two months ago. The Home Minister is still saying that it will be looked into. Before it is looked into, how can he draw a conclusion that there is not an iota of truth in that ?

SHRI H. M. PATEL : I have got full information. But his memorandum is really from the Christian members of Arunachal Pradesh only.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : It is signed by the President of Subansiri Baptist Christian Convention.

SHRI A. BALAJANOR : The memorandum was given three months back. There is a limit for mockery.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : If the Home Minister has lost his copy, I can give it to him.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : Let him answer my question and tell us as to what they do with the memoranda that are

collected by Ministers on tour. They just dump them in the cold storage of the Secretariat. It is most regrettable. You kindly make a trip to north-eastern region and you will see how much suffering has been inflicted upon them during the last 30 years. You go and see.

SHRI H. M. PATEL : I cannot answer what has happened in the last 32 years. If there is anything to be looked into, certainly it will be looked into. But I would definitely and categorically deny that there has been any discrimination.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI : Without making an inquiry, you say that.

SHRI H. M. PATEL : It has been looked into. I have given a categorical assurance that so far as the discrimination against Christians is concerned, there is no truth whatsoever in it.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN : I want to make a statement. After the lethargic and laconic reply given by the Home Minister, we will be doing disservice to the minorities in this country if we behave in a manner as if we are approving it or we do not protest against it.

A situation has arisen in which the facts have been placed before the House which have given an impression that the religious persecution has started. It was the duty of the Home Minister to give a categorical assurance which would have assuaged the feelings of the people who are listening to the proceedings of this House. He has not done that; he is avoiding.

SHRI H. M. PATEL : He cannot go on making a statement which is not true. I have given a complete, assurance, a categorical assurance.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN : The question was whether the Government of India approves of the position that for the construction of temples and churches, the permission must be necessary; that for performing religious services, the permission must be necessary; that for practising any religion, the permission must be necessary. What is the attitude of the Government of India in regard to that ? That was the question.

The question has not been replied to. This has given us a feeling that religious persecution has started. We protest against it. As a symbol of our protest against the laconic reply given by the Home Minister, we are walking out of the House to register our protest.

SHRI K. GOPAL : This is a very curious attitude shown by the Home Minister. The memorandum was given three months ago and yet nothing has been done about it. I do not want to add to what Mr. Stephen has said. In view of the Government's callous attitude, we are forced to walk out.

Shri C. M. Stephen and Shri K. Gopal and some other members then left the House.

13.21 hrs.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

HUNDRED AND SEVENTEENTH REPORT

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO (Hannamkonda) : I beg to present the Hundred and seventeenth Report of the Public Accounts Committee on action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in their Twenty-fourth Report on Railway Expenditure.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE—*contd.*

REPORTED SERIOUS SITUATION ARISING OUT OF DEMOLITION OF CHURCHES, ETC. BY THE AUTHORITIES IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH—*contd.*

SHRI H. M. PATEL : May I be permitted to say this in view of the remarks that Mr. Stephen, Leader of the Opposition, made as he staged the walk-out? As he led the walk-out, he made a very serious charge. He has said that the persecution of the minorities has started. He has said this on the basis of this Call Attention. The Call Attention related to drawing attention to the reported demolition of churches and other properties in Arunachal Pradesh. A categorical statement was made saying that there was no truth whatsoever in this charge. Still on that the whole tissue of lies have been built to say that it proves that there is persecution of minorities. He has said this adding 'in spite of our request that the Home Minister should give an as-

urance that the minorities' rights will be respected'. That assurance was given, not once but several times. Still they continued to say that this had not been given. I wish to put on record that this is entirely politically motivated and that there is no truth whatsoever in this suggestion that there has been any question of persecution of minorities.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Mr. Satyendra Narayan Sinha.
(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Nothing will go on record except Mr. Satyendra Narayan Sinha.

(Interruptions)*

13.24 hrs.

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

TWENTY-EIGHT REPORT

SHRI SATYENDRA NARAYAN SINHA (Aurangabad) : Sir, I beg to present the Twenty-eighth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Estimates Committee on the Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue)—Central Excise.

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC UNDERTAKINGS

TWENTY-THIRD REPORT

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour) : Sir, I beg to present the Twenty-third Report of the Committee on Public Undertakings on action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Sixth Report of the Committee on Galloping Rise in Foreign Tours and Costs thereof undertaken by Officials of the Public Undertakings.

Sir...

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : No. Nothing more will go on record. Matters under Rule 377.

(Interruptions)*