

13.30 hrs.

MATTER UNDER RULE 377

NEED FOR HUMANE TREATMENT AND GRANT OF POLITICAL PRISONERS' STATUS TO PERSONS DETAINED IN WEST BENGAL AND OTHER STATES.

SHRI H. N. MUKERJEE (Calcutta-North-East): Sir, with your kind indulgence, I wish under rule 377 to draw the attention of the House, and particularly of the Home Minister and the Prime Minister, to a statement recently issued over the signature of hundreds of well-known academics of the United States, Canada and Sweden, including most of the better known Indian scholars residing in those countries, under the leadership of a very eminent intellectual, Professor Paul Sweezy of Harvard, which has appeared in the *Monthly Review* of New York, in which they have asked the Indian Government to grant political prisoners the status of political detenus and cease to practise torture and certain other malpractices, which have been widely reported and to which some of us have also given testimony. In West Bengal alone, according to Government estimates, there are 10,000 political prisoners, and 30,000 according to other non-official estimates, who are detained without trial, or under trial or conviction, and there have been many cases of unspeakable atrocities reported to have been perpetrated on women prisoners, some of whom have been interviewed by our colleague in this House. Shri Indrajit Gupta, and letters have been sent to the Prime Minister about it, because all that sort of thing is reminiscent of Nazi barbarity. I see also the hand-cuffing in court of political prisoners, political arrestees like Shri Gopal Mazumdar, Editor, *Weekly Deshabrati*, and also the well-known Andhra writers Varavara Rao and Chalabanda Raju, who were taken before the court in hand-cuffs.

In West Bengal and Andhra, particularly in Andhra under the leadership of the Viplav Sahitya Gosthi,

with which such well-known writers as Sri Sri are associated, statements have been made, alleging torture in jail and that sort of thing.

I remember in 1949 when in West Bengal there was a long hunger strike in jail, in which I myself participated, and there had been shoutings in the streets when the wife of our colleague Dr. Ranen Sen was shot dead, at that particular point of time Dr. B. C. Roy had given an assurance, which was implemented at that time, that all those people arrested in connection with the popular movement would have the status of political prisoners.

Now on account of whatever despotism is prevailing, and perhaps because of the activities which we are unaware of, the undisclosed role and activities of the Research and Analysis Wing of the Government of India, this country is being accused of treating political prisoners in the most barbarous fashion, and academics whose number run to more than several hundreds, including Indian intellectuals residing abroad, have come together to protest to Government about it. This is slurring the image of our country, and it would be with good reason if all these things are true, and we can vouchsafe for it that much of it is true.

Therefore, I wish very urgently this matter is communicated to the Prime Minister. I am sorry to notice that none of the Ministers concerned is here, but I suppose the Deputy Minister of Parliamentary Affairs—I suppose he is holding that sort of portfolio—will make it a special point to convey it to the Prime Minister that this kind of thing appearing in the international press and this kind of scandalising of our country should not be allowed to pass muster, that we should have a defence, and in regard to the allegations that we ourselves have tried to convey to the Prime Minister about torture practised on political prisoners in jail as well as after arrest, this practice should be put an end to immediately without any kind of equivocation whatsoever.

13.35 hours

[Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

SOME HON. MEMBERS rose—

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I find only the name of Shri Mukerjee here under rule 377 but so many of you are standing up. I really do not know what you all want to say.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI (Chirayinkil): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House and the Home Minister to what happened yesterday in Lucknow. The report says that hundreds and thousands of students went on a rampage, looting and stopping buses.....

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: How does it come in here?

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Because the railway property also is involved.

After attending the Jayaprakash Narayan meeting, they went on a rampage. The transport workers went on strike. There was an attack on transport workers. They asked the bus conductors and drivers to take buses in the direction in which they wanted. One conductor was assaulted. He is in the hospital. This act of students' violence and rampage took place after attending the Jayaprakash Narayan meeting. They even attacked the railway property. That is why I have raised this issue in the House.

श्री मनु लिनये (बांका) : मैं प्रोफेसर हीरेन मुखर्जी को बधाई देना चाहता हूँ कि एक बहुत ही महत्वपूर्ण सवाल की ओर .

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I do not want this to go into a debate. You cannot refer to this. If you have any new point to make, you mention it. But you are referring to the same thing.

श्री मनु लिनये : मैं एक नई बात जोड़ रहा हूँ। मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि ऐमनेस्टी इंटरनेशनल ने हिन्दुस्तान की जेलों में जो हालत है उस के बारे में सरकार के लिये बहुत

ही डेमॉन्स्ट्रेशन रिपोर्ट तैयार की है। तो ऐसी हालत में माननीय मुखर्जी ने जिन बातों की ओर ध्यान दिलाया है उस पर सरकार का वक्तव्य आना चाहिये।

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE (Kanpur): The particular subject that has been raised by Mr. H. N. Mukerjee.....

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I do not want a discussion on this. So, you support him!

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: You direct the Minister concerned to make a statement.... (Interruptions).

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You kindly sit down. Mr. H. N. Mukerjee is a very senior and highly respected Member of this House. He seldom intervenes unless and until he feels very deeply about the matter. He has made a direct request—unfortunately, no Minister of that Ministry is present here—to the Deputy Minister of Parliamentary Affairs to very faithfully report to the Prime Minister what he has said.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी (ग्वालियर) :
उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, कुछ समाचार-पत्रों में यह रिपोर्ट छपी है कि आस्ट्रेलिया के बैंकों ने स्ट्रेट्टोडिंग कारपोरेशन को बैंक लिस्ट कर दिया है। और यह इसलिये किया है कि आस्ट्रेलिया से भारत में ऊन आयात करने के लिये स्ट्रेट्टोडिंग कारपोरेशन ऐसे तरीके अपना रहा है जिन्हें वहाँ के बैंक अन्विजनेस लाइक मानते हैं। मैं चाहूँगा मंत्री महोदय, इस बारे में बयान दें।

SHRI P. G. MAVALANKAR (Ahmedabad): Sir, this question of torture of political prisoners is very serious. . .

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I do not want a discussion on that. Anyway, you also support him.

SHRI P. G. MAVALANKAR: There was a Conference of Amnesty International in Paris last year in which the main theme discussed was the

toriture of political prisoners all over the world, and I understand that the Government of India's practising of torture of political prisoners was also condemned at this Conference. I would like the Prime Minister to make a statement on that as early as possible.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA (Contai): Sir, I had written to the hon. Speaker....

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I have not seen it.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: I will not resume my seat.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Just a minute. I have gone out of my way to allow every Member to have his say. Before you mention the thing, you are in full fury and say, "I will not resume my seat." I do not understand this. If you take advantage in this way, then I cannot allow you. In that case, I will have to stop here. I have gone out of my way to allow every body to have his say. Without even saying the thing, you are in full fury and say that you are not going to resume your seat. You kindly mention what you want to say. That would go on record. But, for the time being, try to cool and calm yourself. You know my attitude to the members. I am as responsive and accommodating as possible. This is not the way how to behave.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: If you have taken it otherwise, I have no word to convey my apologies to you; I do not mean any reflection on the Chair.

What I want to say is this. Perhaps you will remember, and this House also will remember, that about ten or 15 days ago I drew the attention of the Government to the fact that the Khosla Commission, the Netaji Inquiry Commission, had submitted its report. At that time Shri Uma Shankar Dikshit said that four or five days before the conclusion of the Session, the report would be placed on the Table of the House; he had made the infructuous plea that the Hindi translation

had not been made and for that reason they could not place the report on the Table of the House. Today you have seen, Sir, that many reports have been laid on the Table of the House without their Hindi translation. As I have pointed out according to the statement made by Shri Uma Shankar Dikshit, the report was to be placed on the Table of the House four or five days before the conclusion of the Session. When he made that statement, the schedule of this Session was upto 30th August, 1974. Today is 26th and as per his statement, he should have placed the report on the Table of the House today. It was not known to him at that time that the Session would be extended by a week....

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: If you have finished, I have some information to give you on this matter.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: I am concluding by saying that I have many ugly reports that a conspiracy is being hatched to declare the greatest revolutionary of our freedom struggle as dead, although there is irrefutable proof that he did not die in the plane crash. The report must be placed on the Table of the House as early as possible so that we can get an opportunity to expose that conspiracy, to expose the ugly manipulations that had happened behind this Inquiry Commission. If that is not done, then I would be left with no other alternative, as I have written to Speaker, but to act according to the dictates of my conscience: and whatever may be the price, I will be ready to pay for that.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Since this matter has figured in the House more than once and in view of the very strong feelings of our colleague, Shri Samar Guha.....

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: We also have very strong feelings.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I agree, you and many others have strong feelings on this. I am referring to what he has expressed in the House. I would like to pass on to him this information that the Speaker today has received a letter from Shri Uma Shankar Dikshit. The letter was received today at 1.40 p.m. Now it is 1.45 p.m. It was received just five minutes ago. The letter is dated 24th August, i.e., last Saturday.....

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur): It was received as soon as you came to the Chair.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I do not know whether it is a compliment or a reprimand.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: It cannot be a reprimand.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The letter reads as follows:—

“This is with reference to Shri Samar Guha's letter to you dated August 24, 1974, a copy of which has been brought to my notice. The hon. Member has referred to my statement in the House earlier during the Session that copies of the report of the Netaji Inquiry Commission were under print and that as soon as they were available to Government, the report will be placed on the Table of the House.

... We expect to receive today (that is last Saturday) the English copies of the report. The Hindi copies have not yet become available and it may not be possible to prepare copies in Hindi before the conclusion of the current session of the Parliament. Also the report is yet to be considered by the Government and, therefore, it would not be possible for us to report to the House the action taken by the Government on the

report if the report were to be submitted to the House during this session. Keeping these aspects in view, I shall comply with such direction as you may be pleased to give in respect, of this matter. If you were to give your permission, I will lay the report on the Table of the House on the 28th August, 1974.”

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: You give him the permission.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: That is for the Speaker.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE (Kanpur): I would only submit that since the question has been raised in this House by Shri Samar Guha and we have also supported him every time and something has come out in the papers, naturally we wanted that the report should be laid on the Table of the House. I would only request you to convey to the hon. Speaker the feelings of the House on this matter. Now, Mr. Uma Shankar Dikshit would possibly take shelter under this—that the report has not been considered by the Government. We will not allow it. The report should be submitted to the Parliament.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I have passed on this information to the House and in this letter the Home Minister has expressed his readiness. Now I think it is a mere formality for the Speaker to give his permission and it will be laid.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: I want to make a small submission. There is one sentence where the Government have said that they cannot indicate now what action they will take about the report, even if the report is placed. It is not necessary. Many reports have been placed on the Table of the House. About the action the Government may take in regard to the report the Government may take enough time to consider the matter. Therefore, it does not necessarily mean that

placing a report on the Table of the House should be immediately followed by action on the part of the Government. I would, therefore, strongly urge that the report should be placed on the Table of the House on the 28th.

श्री धनशाह प्रधान (शहडोल) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, मेरे निर्वाचन क्षेत्र में शहडोल, सीधा और रीवा के बोर्डर पर ऐसी हालत हो गई है कि वहां गरीब लोग पत्ती खा-खा कर अपना पेट भर रहे हैं और यह बात इस 'हिन्दुस्तान' पत्र में भी प्रकाशित हुई है। मैं 377 के अन्तर्गत इस को उठा रहा हूँ।

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I am not allowing under Rule 377.

श्री धनशाह प्रधान : मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि मेरे क्षेत्र में शहडोल, सीधा और रीवा के बोर्डर पर वहाँ की फ़सल ख़राब होने के कारण गरीब लोग घास, पत्ती खा कर अपना जीवन व्यतीत कर रहे हैं और यह ख़बर इस 'हिन्दुस्तान' अख़बार में भी निकली है जिस को मैं पढ़ देना चाहता हूँ।

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You do not have to read the paper. That is enough.

श्री धनशाह प्रधान : मैं यही निवेदन करना चाहता हूँ कि मंत्री महोदय इस क्षेत्र में ग़ल्ला भेजें जिस से लोगों को खाने को कुछ मिले। यही मेरी आप से प्रार्थना है।

SHRI AJIT KUMAR SAHA (Vishnupur): A severe famine situation is prevailing in Bankura-Purulia districts of West Bengal where millions of people are starving and facing starvation deaths. Abnormal prices of foodgrains in the black-market, non-availability of foodgrains in the fair price shops—all these make these people's lives miserable.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Not a long detailed speech. A bare statement of a difficult situation in Purulia and other places is enough.

SHRI AJIT KUMAR SAHA: Over hundred deaths have taken place in these areas. Newspaper reports say that over 2 million people are affected. No effective measures have been taken by the Government. This is a serious matter and I want the Minister concerned to make a statement.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now you have come with a prepared speech. That is the difficulty.

श्री गेदा सिंह (पदरौना) : शुगर कमिशन की आज सदन के सामने जो रिपोर्ट आई है वह बहुत देर से आई है। करोड़ों आदिमियों की इस रिपोर्ट की ओर आशा लगी हुई थी और वे आशा लगाए बैठ थे कि शुगर कमिशन कुछ करेगा। सचमुच में उगने कुछ विषय भी है। पांच मद्रस्यों ने...

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : आप चाहते हैं कि उस पर विचार हो ?

श्री गेदा सिंह : उस पर जल्दी से जल्दी विचार होना चाहिये। जल्दी से जल्दी उस पर डिमकेशन का मौका मिलना चाहिये।

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You want a discussion. That should be considered.

SHRI JYTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): You have expressed your wish about Netaji Enquiry Commission's Report. I want to make one or two points. Mr. Iswar Chaudhury was handcuffed in Bihar, Hon. Speaker expressed his embarrassment and dissatisfaction and directed the Home Minister to come and give facts before the House. To my knowledge he has not done it so far. I have already written to the Speaker twice. This should be done. In Meghalaya the policemen have been arrested and beaten up by the Central

(SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU)

Security Forces. In Mizoram area near Aijal the security forces are committing atrocities in villages. The North Eastern Region is receiving such treatment from the Centre for a long time. All that I want is that you should make an observaion so that Government is made to come out with a statement giving facts. Otherwise it will be disaster for the whole country.

श्री कमला मिश्र 'मधुकर' (केसरिया):
पूर्वी चम्पारन जिले में भयंकर बाढ़ आई है। सात लाख से अधिक लोग उसमें प्रभावित हुए हैं। राशन की दुकानों में अन्न नहीं मिल रहा है। लोगों के सामने भूखों मरने की नीबट आ गई है? कहीं कहीं लोग भूखों मर भी रहे हैं। बिहार सरकार ने आप से गल्ले की मांग की है। आप गल्ला नहीं पहुंचाएंगे तो वहां के लोग भूखों मर जाएंगे। बिहार को आप गल्ला दें ताकि चम्पारन के लोग भूखों मरने से बच सकें, उनको भूखों मरने से बचाया जा सके।

13.53 hrs.

ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES

(AMENDMENT) BILL—Contd.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: We take up further Clause-by-clause consideration of the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill.

श्री मधु लिमये (बांका) : आप शकधर कौल साहब की किताब के पेज 917 को देखें पी आई बी के तीस अफसरों के लिए हम पास देते हैं। इन लोगों का काम है कि सदन की मेज पर जो कागज या दस्तावेज रखे जाते हैं, प्रश्नोत्तर रखे जाते हैं, इनको प्रेस कारेसपोण्डेंस को सप्लाई करना। स्पीकर साहब के सामने भी एक बार यह सवाल उठाया जा चुका है। अब नौ और दस आइटम जोकि मारुति के

वारे में है, उससे सम्बंधित कागजात आज प्रेस कारेसपोण्डेंस के बीच में सर्कुलिट नहीं किए गए हैं। अभी अभी पत्रकार बंधुओं ने मुझे यह बताया है... (श्वबधान)

श्री हुकम चन्व कछवाय : पिछले दो तीन साल से यही चल रहा है। मारुति के नाम से इनको एलजी क्यों है ?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: That has nothing to do with this.

SHRI MADHU LIMAYE: That has everything to do with this.

SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN (Kangra): A deliberate campaign is being made; this is not fair. Same issues are being raised again and again.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I thought that relates to the Essential Commodities Amendment Bill; so I allowed him. This is something different and not related to the question at the moment with which we are concerned. That is something else. You can raise this on some other occasion.

SHRI MADHU LIMAYE: In what form?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: That I do not know. (Interruptions) I am not prepared to hear on this because, first of all, hear me, that this is not a point of order relating to this particular business.

SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, may I be permitted.....

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Mahajan, if you want to deal with them, do so. I shall give you five minutes to deal with them.

SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN: Sir, I want to submit that this a deliberate campaign which they are carrying on time and again. Whatever it is, this is not related to to-day's business. That is what I want to submit.