

also has been gravely affected and that thousands of acres are not being irrigated now? May I know also whether they are contemplating the institution of a committee to avoid such recurring famines in those areas? Since 1951, it has become a regular feature, namely, this famine, in those parts of the country. There is also scarcity of fodder.

**Shri M. V. Krishnappa:** The Rayalaseema area is one of the chronically scarcity affected areas; once in three or four years it generally occurs there, and major irrigation features like high level canals and others are built there to avoid difficulties. But it takes a long time. Especially in the districts of Chittoor and Anantapur, there is no major irrigation. The only remedy is to take up more minor irrigation, digging of wells, desilting of tanks, restoration of tanks, etc. Also, some industries could be started, and alternative employment should be provided to the people. As far as I am concerned, I am prepared to help them by diverting more funds for minor irrigation to that area.

**Shri Thirumala Rao:** The hon. Minister was pleased to say that there were some rains recently. In spite of the rains, Vizagapatam district and some parts of Rayalaseema suffered from want of good seedings. Has the attention of the Government been drawn to the fact that there was no seedling, and that there is no possibility of renewing the agricultural operations even when there are rains? There are no seedlings for transplantation.

**Shri M. V. Krishnappa:** The State Government is there. It will try to arrange whatever is needed. If they want anything more from us, as regards food supplies or any financial arrangements, I might point out that every State is expected to have some emergency relief fund, and I think they are having it and doing the things necessary. The Andhra Government have Rs. 75 lakhs at their disposal

immediately to go ahead with immediate relief works. Over and above Rs. 75 lakhs, if the expenditure goes above that, then they can come to the Central Government for relief. We are prepared to help them.

12.14 hrs.

MOTION RE. SITUATION IN ASSAM  
—contd.

**Mr. Speaker:** The House will now take up further discussion of the following motion moved yesterday by the Prime Minister, namely:

"That the situation in Assam and the Report of the Parliamentary Delegation thereon presented to the House on the 30th August, 1960, be taken into consideration."

Shri Jaipal Singh, who was in possession of the House, may continue his speech.

**Shri Mahanty (Dhenkanal):** Sir, on a point of order. It is this. On the 30th August, you have been pleased to observe, while winding up the inconclusive discussion on the point of order raised by Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri and others, as follows:

"I shall put off further discussion of this until the actual motion comes up here".

I did not want to raise the point of order yesterday because I did not want to thwart the discussion on the motion. (Laughter). But now that it has raised grave constitutional issues, and.....

**Mr. Speaker:** What is the meaning of keeping quiet so far and raising it now? Half of it was over yesterday.

**Shri Mahanty:** I did not raise it and I did not want to raise it because it might thwart the discussion on the motion.

**Mr. Speaker:** Let him wait till the discussion closes. Let the whole debate go on. There is no meaning in raising the point of order now. What is the meaning of the point of order?

**Shri Mahanty:** The point of order is about the grave issues.....

**Mr. Speaker:** Why should I hear the point of order now? Half of the discussion is over. If the point of order had been raised earlier before the proceedings began, it would have been one thing. Of course, the hon. Prime Minister moved the motion. He made a speech. It was then time for the hon. Members to say, "Do not proceed further. The amendments are there and we will throw out," and all that. It is too late now to raise the point of order. Half the discussion about the Assam motion is over. Half of it is published; half of it is in the proceedings. Why should the hon. Member be particularly prejudiced against other hon. Members? Let others also speak now.

**Shri Mahanty:** No, Sir. It is not a question of prejudicing the debate or any such thing.\*\*

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Members must have some control over themselves. \*\* I was telling them in all seriousness that a point of order does not arise. Such matters should be raised immediately, then and there. If it had been done, it could have stopped further discussion. He got up once or twice that day also. I am really sorry. I am not going to allow this point of order at this stage\*\* So far as the point of order is concerned, I do not allow such points of order to be raised hereafter. It is too late to be raised. Every point of order is a brake. It ought to be raised immediately before further proceedings take place.

**Shri Jaipal Singh (Ranchi West—Reserved—Sch. Tribes):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, yesterday I was making a reference to my meeting the Chief Minister in Shillong. Apart from him, I met also some high officers, for example, the

head of the police. Where I was staying, I found a number of Congress leaders, and it became very clear to me—I had heard about this before—that the Congress Party, either in the Ministry or as a party in the State of Assam was not a happily united family. A great deal of what went wrong subsequently may be attributed to this particular fact.

May I add my own personal compliment to the Chief Minister of Assam more or less in the words of the Leader of the House expressed yesterday? I think considering the difficulties he had, whether he was well or unwell, he tried to pull his weight as much as he could. I am rather surprised that the Congress President has not ordered a probe into the Congress Party's internal affairs, particularly during this time of the riots. It is, I know, not my business to tell the Congress how to conduct itself. But I think in fairness to the Assam administration, it will be a very healthy thing if all the parties that are in action there—I would say the same to the Praja Socialist Party, the Communist Party and of course to the Congress Party who are enthroned there—I think that if a probe were to be made as to why things went wrong, the revelation will be something staggering and startling.

While we talk of the riot, I think most Members have forgotten the fact that there could have been much more bloodshed. The top officials were mostly Bengalees, and with their might and their power, they could have moved down the violent rioters if they wanted to. They did not. They used considerable restraint and we have to compliment them, because most of the attack was against this particular community. It is something that ought to be endorsed by the House as a whole, because I feel there has been a slant against the Bengalis for refusing to integrate themselves in Assam and the like. The amount of

\*\*Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

literature that has been distributed to all of us here and throughout the country is emphasising more or less the mathematics of the Assam demography. I have very little faith in our census organisation. I have said this time and again in this House. For example, you have the case of the tribal population—how a whole community of about 10 million suddenly disappeared from the list, because of the false enumeration, just because one particular community wants to increase its numbers or the number of reserved seats has to be reduced or not given at all, and that type of thing. I would lay no stress whatever on the question of statistics that may be produced. Assam is a polyglot State and I do not think there is any particular community in an overwhelming majority. I say in regard to the census because in the census also, you get this linguistic enumeration.

Overnight if you were to make me a census superintendent of Assam, I would see to it that everybody spoke Mundari in Assam. I say that because if you go to Matgherita area, beyond Tinsukia, you will find everybody speaks Mundari. There is a very large tea plantation labour that has emigrated from the Chota Nagpur plateau and settled there permanently. Even the shopkeepers speak Mundari there. Of course, they are gradually beginning to learn Assamese also. Take Tinsukia, for example. Last year, when I was there, there was a deputation from the Biharis. The Biharis are not very advanced there; they are mostly rickshaw-pullers and the like, who are like the Adivasis from Chota Nagpur. There they had a problem to present to me. They said they had great difficulty in opening a Hindi school. They came from a Hindi-Speaking area and they wanted that their children should be educated in Hindi. Like that, you can go right round the five hills.

Unless this linguistic co-existence business is satisfactorily settled, the

consequences in Assam will be disastrous. They are not only in Assam; you will have this virus spreading to other parts of the country. What about Dandakaranya? Do you think that the people who have been removed from that area and settled elsewhere are going to take things lying down, as the expression is used by Shri Mukerjee? You go right round. We have had it in Bihar—this Bihari-Bengali controversy. We must be very careful about the language we use, particularly about the slogans we use. In Bihar, it was a disgraceful spectacle when there was this linguistic fight going on, how the Press in Patna and the Press in Calcutta were equally so mean in their language. For example, the Calcutta Press was calling the Biharis in Bengal as *darwans* and *sattukhoris*. I need not repeat what the other fallows said; I do not think it is quite dignified to repeat that.

**Shri C. K. Bhattacharya** (West Dinajpur): As a representative of the Calcutta Press I object to what Shri Jaipal Singh said about the Calcutta Press. We had never called Biharis *darbans* and *sattukhoris*.

**Shri B. Das Gupta** (Purulia): I would ask the hon. Member to give a single instance—a single writing—in any Calcutta paper where they have condemned the Biharis in such language.

**Shri Jaipal Singh**: I should be very happy to produce evidence and editorials written on that. I am not saying that the Calcutta Press were more honourable or less honourable than the Patna Press. I am saying this about both sides. You inflame passion. Something like that is happening in the State of Assam, I do not know whether the House would like me to tell them one story I heard when I was in Shillong. This is the story; I do not know whether it is true. There were these “sattukhoris” talks in a drawing room sort of meeting and it was said: “Assamese? What Assamese? Assamese is the language of the asses.”

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it not desirable to allow the people to forget it?

**Shri Jaipal Singh:** This is how things have got inflamed, apart from the economic reasons, which will be dealt with by other Members. What I am saying is that stupid foolish language has done untold harm in this particular matter.

So, I feel that there should be a commission of inquiry at another level, apart from the inquiries which will be and should be carried out no doubt by the various political parties. That would help not only Assam, but this whole problem of linguistic co-existence which obtains practically in every State. I think this is something very very deep. We must not look at this problem as merely a particular community in the State of Assam has been affected. We have been affected everywhere. I do not wish to make a list of the various linguistic groups that are affected. If there is anyone who has got a complaint in Parliament, it is me. There is not a single tribal language that is acknowledged in the Constitution, although there are millions speaking them. These tribal languages were here long before the other languages came into this country. What protection is given to them? Everywhere a deliberate attempt is being made to kill these beautiful languages. You have a futile protection in the Constitution. The words are there, but nobody is implementing them.

In my own State, in the Santhal Parganas, we had the Roman alphabet with diacritical marks, so that the correct pronunciation of the Santhal language could be produced. Within a month of independence, that was abolished and the devanagari character, which does not reproduce the exact sound of Santhali has been forced on us. I am not against devanagari, as you know. I think I am as fond of Hindi as any of my Hindi friends. The point is, this linguistic

business is going to do a lot of harm; it is the bane of this country and it is about time we thought seriously of having a neutral language, maybe English; I do not know. It has to be neutral. Unless we become mature and we begin to respect the other man's tongue, I do not see any future at all. This is going on. We have it in Bengal. We have it in Assam and in Bihar, it is very much in evidence.

**Shri Raghunath Singh (Varanasi):** Not now; it is all finished; it is old story.

**Shri Jaipal Singh:** I am afraid Shri Raghunath Singh does not know Bihar; he had better revisit Bihar and find out for himself as to how things are being conducted there. So, the big problem of linguistic co-existence, I think, is what arises out of this particular debate. Because it is a nationwide, country-wide problem, I feel a commission of inquiry is very very necessary.

I know there is a resolution coming from the treasury benches. But I do not like the word 'appropriate'. To me it savours of a certain amount of evasion, procrastination. When will the appropriate time come? It is open to question. You may say, three years hence. In my view, the inquiry should be immediate. After all, what is our motto? सत्यमेव जयते **Are** we frightened of truth? Who is frightened of truth? Maybe it is the Bengalis who will be condemned; maybe it may be somebody else who may be condemned; maybe I will be condemned, because I was roaming about there. But let the truth come out. We should not be frightened of inquiries. Again and again, when there are firings and the like, Government seem to be frightened of facing facts. I think we should not run away from facts.

As to the other alternative that we must preach friendship to them, I am reminded of a sloka:

पयःपानम् भुजंगानाम् केवलम् विषवर्धनम्  
उपदेशोहि मूर्खानाम् प्रकोपाय न शास्त्रये

That is what is going on here.

I do not want to say much more, but there is one thing I will say. About 35 years back, I met a Cambridge Don. We discussed the Indian languages. He was a great linguist himself, and he said there were two languages in India. I said: "What do you mean? I think there are about 300 languages." He said "No, no, there are only two languages in India, and one of them is English". I asked: "What is the other language?". He said "Bengali".

**Shri A. P. Jain (Saharanpur):** Mr. Speaker, I was of a somewhat divided mind whether I should participate in this debate.

**Mr. Speaker:** If I have called him wrongly, he need not speak.

**Shri Tyagi (Dehra Dun):** Now he made up his mind.

**Shri A. P. Jain:** I was afraid that as the report of the delegation is under discussion, what I may say here may look as something by way of self-defence but, after giving a little more thought to this question, I felt that I owe a duty to you, Sir, and to this House to explain as to why we have made the recommendation, which has been the cause of the main controversy here and elsewhere.

**Dr. M. S. Aney (Nagpur):** May I say, Sir, that you took a wise decision?

**Shri A. P. Jain:** The hon. Member, Shri Atulya Ghosh has said that there is enough of material in this Report which warrants an immediate enquiry. I would respectfully submit that there is and there is not, because our decision will depend upon whether we view the thing from a narrow

angle or from a larger angle. Now, why have we made the recommendation that no immediate enquiry should be held? Is it out of fear or is it because we wanted to please somebody? In the lobby and elsewhere all kinds of reasons are being given. Now, the House has heard the Prime Minister, who said that his general line of thinking was towards having an enquiry. So far as the Congress organisation is concerned, well whoever may be the President, it is Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in his personal capacity—not the Prime Minister of India but Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru—who wields the real authority in the Congress. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has himself declared to be in favour of the enquiry. Therefore, if we wanted to please him or were afraid of him we would rather have towed in line with his line of thinking and would have said that some enquiry was necessary, though not an immediate enquiry.

**Shri Tyagi:** That is what you have also stated.

**Shri A. P. Jain:** Now, I have got some of my best friends among the Bengalis. My friend, Shri Atulya Ghosh, is in favour of an enquiry. Some other friends of Bengal are in favour of an enquiry. Shri B. C. Roy is in favour of an enquiry. Unless I had felt very strongly that an immediate enquiry will not be for the good of the Bengali-speaking people living in Assam, unless I had felt that it would not be good for Assam, unless I had felt that it was not good for Bengal and unless I have felt that it was not good for India, I would have never recommended against an immediate enquiry.

**Shri Ranga:** I suppose it was a decision of a committee consisting of a number of people.

**Acharya Kripalani (Sitamarhi):** Nobody is challenging your honesty.

**Shri A. P. Jain:** Let us have a look into the conditions of Assam as at

[Shri A. P. Jain].

present. Who are the sufferers in the present language controversy? It is the Bengalis living in the Brahmaputra valley, the six districts of the Brahmaputra valley. These people have never objected to Assamese being declared as the official language. It was the Bengalis living in the districts of Cachar who had objected to Assamese being declared as the official language. It is not the Bengalis in Cachar who have suffered. In fact, if at all, in Cachar a few houses of the Assamese have been burnt, but it is the Bengalis living in the valley of Brahmaputra who are the real sufferers.

**The Deputy Minister of Rehabilitation (Shri N. C. Laskar):** Not a single house of the Assamese people was burnt in Cachar district.

**Shri A. P. Jain:** Therefore, it is not the sinner who has suffered. I do not mean that the Cachar people are the sinners, in the religious sense because they wanted Bengali to be declared as the official language or they have objected to Assamese. What I mean is it is not really the people who had objected, but it is the people who had not objected that have suffered in this controversy.

Again, about more than 90 per cent of the people who have suffered come from the villages. We went to a large number of villages.

**Acharya Kripalani:** When innocent people are killed, is it not a matter for an enquiry?

12.36 hrs.

[SHRIMATI RENU CHAKRAVARTY in the Chair]

**Shri A. P. Jain:** Do not be impatient. We have heard the hon. Member very patiently and we expect him to accord us the same treatment.

We asked them, and they said "We are not concerned with Assamese or Bengali, we do not read any language; so, there is no question of our being on one side or the other because of the language controversy." Again, it is these persons, people who were not concerned with the language controversy, that have suffered.

Madam, I want to relate to you what I saw at one of the worst affected place Simli Tola, when I and other members of the delegation went there. Women old and young and children clustered round us, and they did not ask for any help; they did not ask for money; they did not ask for corrugated iron sheets; they did not even complain that their houses had been burnt down. They only said "We want Abhayadan" that is, fearlessness in their hearts. The other members of the Delegation were all present and they will bear me out that when we went there they said "We want Abhayadan".

Even today a fairly large number of people are leaving their hearths and homes. There is no danger of outbreak, there are no disturbances, but they are coming out of fear. This is the condition of Assam today. What will an enquiry, an immediate enquiry mean, the type of enquiry which my hon. friend, Acharya Kripalani wants, the type of enquiry which Shri Hiren Mukerjee wants mean? I have gone through their speeches. They want an enquiry, so that (1) the culprits may be apprehended and, (2) so that the political miscreants, that is, those politicians who have misbehaved may be spotted out. These are the two reasons they have suggested.

**Acharya Kripalani:** May I point out.....

**Shri A. P. Jain:** It is in the debate.

**Acharya Kripalani:** I have said only one kind of enquiry into those who are fundamentally and primarily responsible for this tragedy and I have

declared very clearly that they are political cliques. And I have not asked for an enquiry into the details of the wrongs, who killed whom.

**Shri A. P. Jain:** Fortunately, Acharya Kripalani's speeches are reported. I will read out the extracts from his speeches and the House may decide for itself what interpretation can be given to it. Acharya Kripalani says. . .

**Acharya Kripalani:** Will you please give the page No.?

**Shri A. P. Jain:** 9,464. He says:

"a high-power enquiry is necessary which need not go into the details, which should only be asked to find out who created that thing."

That is No. 1. Then, No. 2 is

"it is now widely believed that the riots were engineered by a political party. If that is so—and it is also said that my party was also involved in it—I do not care whether the Congress wants to see that its people are cleared or not. But, if I belong to a party, I certainly want to know what my party people did." (*Interruptions*)

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, order. Let the hon. Member continue. His own arguments will either prove or disprove his case.

**Shri A. P. Jain:** These are the two objectives. What the hon. Prime Minister had in mind is something different. He does not want to go into the individual cases. The hon. Prime Minister has said:

"An enquiry that would have to go into deeper matters, into causes, etc., and then suggest a remedy . . .".

These are two quite different kinds of enquiries. One is for spotting the offenders and for laying the responsibility on the political parties and the other is to find out the deeper causes.

**Shri Ranga:** Why do you not read our amendment which is there before you?

**Shri Raghunath Singh:** We have read that.

**Shri A. P. Jain:** What is this enquiry commission going to do? Will it find out the offenders? That is the business of the Police. That is not the business of a commission. Nowhere has such a work been entrusted to a commission, whether presided over by a Supreme Court Judge or otherwise.

About the other thing, that is, political parties my hon. friend, Shri Jaipal Singh, has just now said something about political parties. Have you ever known of a judicial commission . . .

**Shri Ranga:** What judicial commission? He did not suggest that the judicial commission should do all this.

**Shri Raghunath Singh:** There is no question of a judicial commission.

**Shri A. P. Jain:** Have you ever heard of a judicial body ever trying to probe into the policies of the political parties or into the working of the political parties? I submit with all respect that it is the function of the political parties to do the internal probe.

**Acharya Kripalani:** May I submit that political parties may be interested in covering the faults of party man and an impartial enquiry will not cover these people?

**Shri Atulya Ghosh (Asansol):** On a point of clarification. Is Shri Jain explaining his own report or is he explaining the speeches of the hon. Prime Minister and Acharya Kripalani?

**Mr. Chairman:** The speaker has full right to refer to any of the speeches that have been made earlier and put forward his point of view regarding them.

**Shri A. P. Jain:** So far as the political parties are concerned, I think it is for the Congress to find out the persons who have misbehaved and violated its policy and have incited others. It is for the Communist Party to find who have misbehaved in their Party. It is for the P.S.P. . . .

**Acharya Kripalani:** Would they be impartial?

**Shri A. P. Jain:** It is in the interest of the political parties that such persons should be turned out. Surely, it is not the work of a commission presided over by a Supreme Court Judge.

**Shri H. N. Mukerjee** (Calcutta—Central): May I ask a question? If a judicial enquiry can be ordered—very rightly—to find out what has happened when a student was shot in Gauhati, is not a judicial enquiry warranted when 10,000 houses are burnt, more than 40 people are killed and all kinds of suspicious circumstances are reported by Shri Jain himself?

**Shri A. P. Jain:** I am going to answer that question. Unfortunately, my hon. friend, Shri Mukerjee, has not much regard for accuracy. In his speech he has said that what we have recommended is a departmental enquiry. I will draw his attention...

**Acharya Kripalani:** Partial enquiry.

**Shri A. P. Jain:** Departmental enquiry.

**Shri Ranga:** Local enquiry.

**Shri A. P. Jain:** I will like to draw his attention to page 22 of the Report. It says:

"We understand that the State Government have already deput-

ed their Additional Chief Secretary to make an all-State survey of the recent disturbances and to fix responsibilities upon officers and men. A special enquiry has been instituted for Nowgong, where the disturbances were of the worst character. The incident of police firing near the Cotton College Students' Hostel at Gauhati is also the subject matter of a judicial enquiry."

Now, here is our recommendation.

"We have reasons to believe that the attack on Bengalese in the Ramsajhar village of Goreshwar and the area near about was pre-meditated and organised in which firearms were used and no less than eight persons were killed and others injured and some women are alleged to have been molested and raped. We consider this to be a fit case for judicial inquiry by a High Court Judge and recommend accordingly."

**Shrimati Renuka Ray** (Malda): What about Nowgong?

**Shri A. P. Jain:** We spotted one place where we thought a judicial enquiry was called for them. If there is any other case, that is not within our knowledge, where similar circumstances exist or where a judicial enquiry is called for, it cannot be ruled out because what we have said lays down a rule for making judicial enquiry. But the whole point is whether an enquiry should be held with respect to the whole State. I have before me the picture of those helpless persons in Assam who have suffered and who still have fear and apprehension in their mind. My fear is that if an omnibus type of enquiry, which has been suggested in the amendments given notice of by Acharya Kripalani and others, is held the result would be that all the progress that is being made in rehabilitation and all the progress that is being made, in restoring peaceful



conditions in Assam will come to a halt. The result would be . . .

**Shri H. N. Mukerjee:** Will peaceful conditions be restored if the culprits are let off with impunity everywhere in Assam?

**Shri A. P. Jain:** I will come to that also as a specific question has been asked.

Moreover, it will... (*Interruption*).

**Mr. Chairman:** Let the hon. Member proceed. There is too much of subdued noise in the House.

**Shri A. P. Jain:** Moreover, it will make the position of the parties rigid. It will be a sort of an enquiry into all matters and align the Assamese versus Bengalees. I am afraid that instead of soothing the feelings it will aggravate them and the state of fear which exists in the mind of some people will be further increased. It will worsen the situation rather than improve it. These are the reasons why we have said that a general enquiry of that type may not be held.

**Shri Mukerjee** has asked me the question whether conditions will improve if the culprits, particularly the ringleaders, are allowed to go scotfree. My straight answer is 'No'. Strict action must be taken against these ringleaders. But who must take action? It is the work of the Police to apprehend an offender. In the investigation produce him before court and get him convicted. This is not work which a judicial commission will do.

**Acharya Kripalani:** May I submit that we said that the Central Government and the State Government failed in their duty? Who is going to make an enquiry about that, I ask, unless it is a high power commission?

**An Hon. Member:** They want the Police to do that enquiry..... (*Interruption*).

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, order. I think a few interruptions here and there may be permitted, but there is too much noise and it is really diffi-

cult for the hon. Member to continue. So let us hear what he has to say. If there is any particular point, certainly that can be raised. But there should be no running commentary.

**Shri A. P. Jain:** The political parties and the political party which mans the Government have their masters. It is the Parliament and the people, the electorate, who are their masters. It is they who judge whether the Government has behaved or has not behaved properly. It is not a judicial court, it is not a Supreme Court Judge who can decide whether a party has misbehaved or has failed to perform its functions. Therefore, after considering all these things, we felt that it was in the interest of the Bengali-speaking people, who are living in Assam we want to instil security in their mind, we want that conditions may not be created whereunder they may feel that Assam is not safe for them that we have made our recommendation. It was in the interest of Assam because we feel that peaceful conditions in Assam must be restored quickly possible. It was in the interest of Bengal because we feel that any aggravation of situation in Assam will further worsen the feelings between Bengal and Assam. It was in the interest of India.

**Shri Atulya Ghosh:** On a point of clarification.

**Mr. Chairman:** No. No more clarifications will be allowed now. Please permit the speaker to finish his speech. Later on if there is something very important, he can make one or two points.

**Shri A. P. Jain:** It was in the interest of India because we feel that upon what we do in Assam will also depend how in future integrity and the future solidarity of India can be maintained. For these reasons we felt that under the present circumstances, it will not be in the interest of anybody, that an immediate enquiry should be held. Of course, what the Prime Minister says, has a lot of force. When conditions cool down, when normality is restored, we

[Shri A. P. Jain].

must probe into the matter and find out deeper causes. But I would like to enter a caveat. Should that enquiry be held by a High Court Judge or a Supreme Court Judge? I say it is an enquiry which must be held by the top political leadership. I think Shri Jawaharlal Nehru should constitute a single man commission to look into the policies—whether they relate to language or some other thing—which have led to these difficulties, and see how they could be controlled. Or, if another committee is to be formed, we have got sufficiently highly placed persons in whom the country has confidence. Our Home Minister is one of them who could be a member of the Committee. Acharya Kripalani, whose devotion and patriotism is unquestioned, can be a member of that committee. Dr. Bidan Chandra Roy is one of the stalwarts of the country. He can be a member of the Committee. It should be a committee of the politicians which should examine policies, which should probe into the aspiration of the people: not go purely on evidence. With all respect to them I submit, so far as the Judges are concerned, the rule is laid down by the law and they look into the facts and apply the rule of law and the principles to facts. They do not enunciate law or principles. It is only the politicians who can enunciate the principles. Certainly, it is a matter which requires probe as to why the disturbances occurred in Assam and how they could be avoided. But, it should be an enquiry by top political leaders whose integrity and patriotism is unquestioned, whose impartiality is unquestioned rather than by a Supreme Court Judge.

**Acharya Kripalani:** I have no objection if Shri Jawaharlal Nehru alone constitutes himself into a committee of enquiry.

**Mr. Chairman:** The Prime Minister would like to clarify a point.

**The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru):** Madam, I am not sure whe-

ther I am in order; but by your leave and with the indulgence of the House, perhaps, I feel I might clarify our position in a few words, because I find it is confusing. Even the speech of my colleague Shri A. P. Jain has not clearly stated our position. It is his view point.

Enquiries are being talked out. But, there appears to me to be a great deal of confusion as to the nature of the enquiry, whether there should be one enquiry or two or three. As far as I can see, there are three lines of enquiry that have been referred to. One, of course, is the enquiry to get the culprits, the malefactors and to punish them. That should be held as rapidly as possible and as effectively as possible. If, in the course of that enquiry, politicians are involved, well and good. They are punished. If, in the course of that enquiry, some light is thrown on the activities of politicians or parties, well and good. There it is. It comes out for us to judge. That is one type of enquiry.

**Shri Vajpayee (Balrampur):** Who is to conduct that enquiry?

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** May I be permitted to proceed?

That is a type of enquiry which, I think, should not be delayed. Obviously, normally speaking, it has to be probably a judicial enquiry, a high class judicial enquiry. I am not normally in favour of judicial enquiries. In many odd things, it happens, they are too long-winded. Again, that type of enquiry, if it is to be really effective, I think, should be limited. There should be several such enquiries, if you like, in Assam. Because, the moment you go in a big way in the whole of Assam, you let yourself in for a long term affair. I therefore accepted the recommendation made by Shri Jain's delegation that they should be like a Goreswar enquiry by a High Court Judge. But, have another enquiry, have two or three

simultaneous enquiries to get at the culprits, high class people conducting them, of course: normally speaking, I say judicial people sometimes may be: but must be an independent enquiry. That is one line of enquiry with which we are completely in agreement. In fact, we want to have that done. That is one thing.

The other is quite a different type of thing, an enquiry into the causes and the remedies. That is also a very important enquiry. I entirely agree with Acharya Kripalani about the importance of this. But, in the very nature of things, that is so important and requires so much of deep investigation and all that, that you cannot tie it up with the other one. If you do, both suffer. If you tie it up, the first enquiry into malefactors gets delayed, gets tied up with other matters and months pass, may be, years pass. It is not the way to do it. Therefore, that major enquiry should be a separate business.

I submit that the first enquiry or enquiries should take place as rapidly as possible to get the malefactors and others. The second type of enquiry is one which should take place somewhat later when conditions are more appropriate for it. It should be admitted that that is important, because, I honestly feel that if we do not have that enquiry some time or other, there will be a gap which we have not filled and difficulties, etc., will arise later. It is a very difficult problem. We have to consider it.

In the last words that Acharya Kripalani said, he referred to the parties and the rest. For my part, I am perfectly prepared. Naturally, parties are normally judged by individuals in the party, what they do or as a party. I do not mind any kind of an enquiry into the activities of any party there, Congress or other. It is not quite clear to me how to deal with it. I am prepared to say that this can be examined by any competent authority. To some extent, the

first enquiry, that is the search for malefactors, will cover this. Some individuals will come out. Some information may come out as to the working of groups. That is all right. We can deal with that. The second enquiry, the more comprehensive later enquiry into a wider field may also throw some light. I do not know how to deal with that. Is there a third series of enquiry of parties? For the moment, my mind is not quite clear.

Any how, to repeat, I think, the first step that we should take is to have quickly a competent high class enquiry in regions of Assam where this has occurred, one, two, three regions separately, not a whole one, because that would delay matters and they get tied up, to get at the culprits and punish them. I do not fully agree with my colleague Shri A. P. Jain that it is a pure police matter. It is something more than a police matter: much more so. Although ultimately the police will have to deal with it, this kind of thing does require another kind of an approach to begin with. We agree to that, and the second enquiry too, in principle, the deeper one, the probe. It is a difficult and long term one. Who will do this? I do not know. It is very difficulty. I suppose India can produce good enough people to deal with it. I am not quite clear at the moment who should conduct it, one, two or three persons or who they are. I am not going to rule out anybody from it, either on the one side a high class judicial authority or people of some reputation and integrity in public life. Although I cannot say immediately, I do think that the other enquiry is very necessary. But, it should be somewhat separated and isolated from this immediate enquiry of getting at the culprits which must be quickly done. It must be quickly done, and that should take place at the appropriate time. That, broadly, speaking, is the Government's position.

13 hrs.

**Shri Tyagi:** May I have a clarification?

**Mr. Chairman:** Only one minute.

**Shri Tyagi:** I cannot well understand how an enquiry commission going to Assam can find out the culprits. There is some difficulty in understanding because . . .

**Mr. Chairman:** Is it a clarification he wants from the Prime Minister, or does he want to make a speech?

**Shri Tyagi:** I will explain my difficulty. In an enquiry there are two things. One is investigation, which is generally done by the police agency. For the commission that you are sending, who will do the investigation, because it is not confined to one case, one gang or two or three persons.

**Mr. Chairman:** We are entering into a detailed discussion.

**Shri Tyagi:** I am explaining the position.

**Mr. Chairman:** The terms of reference can be settled later.

**Shri Tyagi:** It cannot work, because if it is one locality I can understand, but it is spread over. So, one central little place of enquiry will not do. It requires a regular machinery for investigation of cases. Then only they can be put before the enquiry commission.

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** I have said that I accept the Jain Committee's Report that there should be such limited enquiries. They have referred to Goreswar. Let us take Goreswar. First of all, I am thinking in terms of regions, one, two, three, four maybe, I do not know, because I want concentrated, quick work done there. And I want that enquiry to be under a competent person. He may be a Judge as he has recommended, or may be some other independent person you can get hold of. We are not going to send a somebody from here. We may be consulted, but

it is for the Assam Government to appoint such an enquiry body as they have done in Nowgong.

**Shri Ranga:** It can only be a police enquiry, if it is appointed by the Assam Government.

**Shri Tyagi:** There must be somebody to prosecute.

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** A High Court Judge has been mentioned actually for it. It may be a High Court Judge, a Sessions Court Judge the point is he must be a competent person. As for what Shri Tyagi wanted to know, . . .

**Shri Tyagi:** Investigation.

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** . . . obviously, in a sense investigation is normally done by the police. The police may not be, if you like, considered wholly impartial. That may be so. I cannot immediately say, but they will be such agencies as one can employ to find out the truth. Maybe some central agency goes to help them. I cannot say immediately, but the point is we want to get at the facts.

**Shri C. K. Bhattacharya rose—**

**Mr. Chairman:** If we allow too many interruptions, requests for clarification and interpolations, I think it becomes more difficult for the speakers. And there is very great pressure of time. So, I would request that further requests for clarification should not be made.

**Shri C. K. Bhattacharya:** But incorrect statements made should not be allowed to go uncorrected.

**Mr. Chairman:** That may be corrected by some other speakers.

**Shri C. K. Bhattacharya:** But the others may not know the facts.

**Mr. Chairman:** He has already had a chance to speak.

**Shri C. K. Bhattacharya:** I do not want to make a speech. Shri Jain stated that Assamese houses had been burnt in Cachar. That is the exact opposite of truth. I am prepared to go to Cachar with him today to find out the truth. There is absolutely no truth in that.

**Mr. Chairman:** There are statements which other Members naturally want to challenge, but if this challenging and counter-challenging is permitted, there will be no debate. Shri A. K. Sen.

**The Minister of Law (Shri A. K. Sen):** May I, at the very outset, express my happiness and my pride at the high level which was struck yesterday in the course of the debate in this House, and may I pay my tribute to our leader on the other side of the House, Acharya Kripalani, for the height he reached yesterday, completely above party prejudice and above party alignments? May I renew my hope that we shall continue to maintain that level till the conclusion of the debate, because, after all, this House has been called upon as possibly, I hope, it will never be called upon again to deal with a situation fraught with the most fearful potentialities? The potentialities have been clearly explained by the Prime Minister. They really strike at the very root of our nationalism and our unity. Therefore, we shall serve, if I may say so humbly, much better the cause which we hold dear to ourselves, if we can keep ourselves free from passions and prejudices and refrain from indulging in charges and counter-charges, and try to concentrate on the essentials which alone will give us the key for opening the door of the solution. I have been a very unhappy man.

**An Hon. Member:** Why?

**Shri A. K. Sen:** Well, like most of us, and possibly those who come from Assam and Bengal have been more unhappy than others, though I am sure this unhappiness is shared by the entire country today.

It has been difficult to get oneself above the various pulls which draw one in various directions, especially when chauvinism actually runs amuck. We have seen the worst phase of chauvinism on the soil of Assam, and the most unfortunate part of it is that the vanguard of this movement has been led by the students, about whom we have been proud, and shall continue to be proud, and who are the hope of our country for the future, for on them depends the future strength and unity of our country, as I told them wherever I met them. Everywhere, the representatives of the Students' Action Council had been good enough to call on me. There are certain virtues of the Assamese students which are not really to be found elsewhere, and they are bound to strike anyone who has eyes to notice. They are a disciplined lot. When they come in a batch, only one speaks, the rest wait. They do not speak together. When I addressed meetings, and there have been very big meetings which I addressed, they stand in a line in discipline, without uttering a single word, and standing at attention sometimes for hours in the Sun. These are virtues which can certainly be harnessed for better purposes. And yet, this lovable lot of people has been employed to purposes for which the entire country now hangs its head in shame, and tries to find a way out as to how the damage done can be repaired best.

One thing is absolutely true, and that is that no amount of strong government can repair the breach. The ultimate solution lies in making the bonds of unity between the different communities in Assam permanent and indestructible. Whatever other measures we take must be geared to that primary purpose. Strong action is certainly necessary, punishment is certainly necessary, because there have been very, very bad crimes perpetrated, and those who have perpetrated them cannot be let off without learning the lesson of their life, for the crimes have been directed not only against one commu-

[Shri A. K. Sen].

nity, whether men or women, but against the entire country.

I was very touched when our colleague Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri concluded his speech with an appeal to the entire country, when he said that if this happens when there are still the Prime Minister and Pantji to lead us, what is in store for us when, God forbid, they are not with us? For, after all, under the shelter and umbrella of these two great giants we have been feeling secure. We have been abusing them, we have been making complaints against them.

**Shri Subiman Ghose** (Burdwan): Assam has set the example.

**Shri A. K. Sen:** Let us not accuse each other. Those who have eyes to see and ears to hear know that it is not always from one particular corner unfortunately today the ripples of this chauvinism cover the entire country, from the Punjab to the NEFA. And let us not blind ourselves to this fact at all; otherwise we shall not be doing justice to ourselves or to the country. It may be that the ripples are floods in some places and trickles in other places, but the ripples exist everywhere.

As I was saying, under the shelter of these two great giants, we have been feeling secure, thinking all the time that whatever we may do, everything will be set right. And that is why when things go wrong, the first complaint comes against these two people. We have been so used to getting the protection, guidance and leadership from them that when anything goes wrong anywhere, whether it is their fault, primarily, directly or not, we blame them. It is like the child blaming the father for not being guided properly or for going astray, and yet, it is our duty to tell them what we think ought to be done, as the House fearlessly has expressed itself, irrespective of party alignments on this occasion, for, this is an issue which cuts across all party align-

ments and groups; and the House must stand up and give leadership which will endure for centuries to come, and which will decide once and for all whether this country shall survive or shall destroy itself.

Whatever might have been the accusations against those great leaders, let me, for my own self—for, I cannot speak for others—again renew the hope that they will continue to lead us during the maze and trouble of our times, and that we shall be spared, and we shall be given the good fortune of being led by them for many more years to come. I say so, because I have to acknowledge with pain some of the attacks.....

**Shri D. C. Sharma** (Gurdaspur): Nobody has accused the Prime Minister or the Home Minister.

**Shri A. K. Sen:** What did my hon. friend Shri D. C. Sharma say?

**Mr. Chairman:** I would request the hon. Minister not to yield.

**Shri A. K. Sen:** As I said, I am absolutely sure that the personal accusations against the Prime Minister and the Home Minister, which were even voiced yesterday and by responsible Members of the Opposition, whose honesty I have no reason to doubt, have been expressed, as I said, from that very sense of security which has been lulled into us, by the security that we have been enjoying ever since our Independence, notwithstanding the great crises which have overwhelmed our neighbours in Asia.

13.13 hrs.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

As I said, we have every right to tell them what we think should be done, as we have the duty to acknowledge the great debt we owe to them for the great leadership which we have received from them. Even Shri Atulya Ghose speaking yesterday said that it is the Prime Minister who has

taught us to differ from him. It is a great lesson that has been learnt, for, he has not been a despot but a democrat every inch. And that is why I have come, not so much as a Minister of the Central Government but, to speak as an individual, feeling deeply in the matter, possibly more so because I happen to come from a State which has been most affected next to Assam by this holocaust, because after all, the streams of refugees coming in have not only upset normal life in West Bengal but have roused such passions and sympathies in an acute form in the hearts of men at the sight of suffering humanity, that we have really found it difficult to rise above these and to see a clear picture for forming a good judgment and a correct judgment.

Before I went to Assam, there were hundreds, literally hundreds of telegrams and letters, which came to me. Why, I do not know. Little do they know that after all, I am a very weak member of the Central Cabinet, a very junior member of the Central Cabinet, though possibly I may try to do as much as I can; but, possibly, they think that my voice has some influence on those in whose charge the country's destiny is placed.

In the month of June, I remember, before Pantji went to Naini Tal, I had told him about the grave happenings. I was amazed to find the amount of information which he had and the judgment he had already formed. People think that he has been very ignorant about the happenings. I have asked him, I do not know whether he will keep my request or not, to lay some of the letters, or at least to read out some of the letters which he had addressed to the Assam Government, before the troubles, during the troubles and in the month of June. Some of the letters, indeed, looking back in retrospect, appear to be prophetic. I think Shri Lal Bahadur Shastriji had also an occasion to look into the letter.

It is not the time to apportion blames,—nor should we try to do so—

between the Assam Government and the Central Government. I do not want to do it, but it is my duty to ask Pantji to inform the House as to what he had done, because most of the accusations from the other side have come against him.

**Shri Aurobindo Ghosal** (Uluberia): What he has done or what he has failed to do? What is your experience? We want to hear that.

**Shri A. K. Sen:** As everyone knows, I had gone to Assam in the first week of August, after the holocaust had already taken place over six districts, and after a good deal of passion had been roused in West Bengal and possibly in the rest of the country. In fact, at one time, the repercussions appeared to have been so acute that all of us had been living more or less in a state of nervousness.

**Acharya Kripalani:** Shall the House have the benefit of your report?

**Shri A. K. Sen:** Acharya Kripalani knows very well that every report cannot be made public, but I shall certainly try to say something, as much as I ought to tell the House. In fact, with the permission of the Home Minister, I had already discussed some of the major things that I had the occasion to suggest, with the leaders of the Opposition including Dada Kripalani, and I am very glad to say that my suggestions, broad ones, which can be disclosed to the House, met with ready acceptance from Dada, from Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri, and from the other leaders of the Opposition with whom I had a chance to discuss.

I was coming to the tour of mine, which I undertook in the first week of August. I went round all the six districts and I say almost every area affected by the riots. I was amazed to see the extent of the damage. Never have I seen such extensive damage, in my life. The damage to almost was extensive, and one has to see it to believe it.

[Shri A. K. Sen]

Village after village has been destroyed. Thousands of people have been rendered homeless. And it has been rightly pointed out by all the speakers that the victims have been unfortunately poor peasants, potters, fishermen, artisans and small traders living far away from the towns, where the linguistic passions were the highest and the most acute. In some places, people had not even heard that there was quarrel going on in the towns over the language issue. I remember particularly the village of some fishermen, about 62 families, living right on the Brahmaputra, Shri P. C. Borooah was with me along with others. These people had come away from Pakistan after the Partition, and settled themselves well. They were catching fish fairly successfully; they were amazed for the first time when their village was attacked, and they fled away. They told me that they never knew before, that there was any quarrel going on over the language issue. Their children were going to Assamese schools and were learning Assamese without any protest. Everywhere, in the Brahmaputra Valley, we heard the same story. Not a single Bengali-speaking man or woman had opposed the introduction of Assamese as the official language. And yet the most unfortunate thing is that these very people were struck down and became the sufferers.

There was another thing absolutely obvious to the naked eye, and that was that it was done in a fairly planned manner. The Delegation presided over by our colleague, Shri A.P. Jain, has said so. The pattern was uniform everywhere and the methods adopted were uniform, and it is quite clear that the violence was not meant so much against the lives of the people as against their property, because in most cases people were given warning before hand to get away; in fact, they were given sufficient time to flee. Then came young men in buses and trucks with various implements marking out the houses to be destroyed or set fire to. It was carried out, more or less,

in a semi-military fashion. This planned method cannot deceive anybody's eye. In fact, I was struck from the very first day I saw the way in which things had been done that it could not have been sporadic; nor could it have been a language riot. If it was a language riot, it should have happened in places where the controversy was going on, not in places where the controversy had not even been communicated.

I agree with Acharya Kripalani that the miscreants belonged to the so-called educated classes. That is the most unfortunate thing about it; yet I deem it a hopeful sign that, by and large, the man in the village, the ordinary common man, felt shocked at these atrocities. If he did not feel shocked, we would have lost hope in our nation. The sign of this sense of shock and sorrow roused in the mind of the common Assamese was patent everywhere except in Goreswar. Everywhere it was apparent that the people, by and large, had dissociated themselves from actively participating in it. About their secret sympathies, God alone knows, as one great Judge has rightly said, 'The Devil knoweth not what is in the mind of man'. But actively there was dissociation in most of the places affected.

It was the act of these organised young men moving about in buses and trucks which actually resulted in these grim happenings. In fact, in many places we visited, there were Pressmen with us—one or two of them I had seen on the Gallery yesterday—who had accompanied us for the first time during the riots. The Pressmen went round and saw all the affected areas. They were also struck by this fact that most of those people affected were sheltered in the villages nearby by neighbours who were Assamese; otherwise, most of them would have been either killed or maimed. They were kept and fed for days until they could return to their homes. It was only in Goreswar that the local population *en masse* joined the riot.



It appears there is a peculiar problem there, the land problem, into which we need not go, because after all, the whole thing will come out when an inquiry is made into the incidents.

But as I said, though the participation of the educated classes is a most unfortunate feature of this entire episode, there is at the same time and the other hopeful feature, because it showed that the common man was against these atrocities committed on innocent villagers who had nothing to do with the language controversy. In fact, in every place—in some places in larger numbers and in other places in smaller numbers—we saw public participation in the rebuilding of houses. I am sure Shri Jain has seen it and Shrimati Sucheta Kripalani has seen it too. When I was in Goreshwar, public participation was still in its infancy. I understand that it had just started; one or two days before I had gone there. But in Tezpur, in places in Nowgong, it was visible without any mistake. In fact, we were really pleased to see large numbers of volunteers, most of them from the Youth Congress, throwing themselves with the refugees in rebuilding the houses. We saw actually absolutely complete houses in many places—the Pressmen also saw them.

In one place, I shall never forget our experience, because not only I but everyone who went with me, including the Pressmen, was moved. We went to a village right on the Brahmaputra in the district of Tezpur. It is called Vishwanath. It is an old town. It does not look like a town, but it was a very ancient town during the time of the Ahom Kings and the old temples built by them are still there, preserved under the Ancient Monuments Act. There right on the banks of the Brahmaputra, study fishermen from the district of Pabna in East Bengal had after partition come and settled.

One thing is unmistakable in all these districts we saw. The refugees from East Bengal who came were sturdy people, fearless people, who settled there with hard work and

sweat and brawn, and did well. They were people who were honest, hard-working, who never believed in quarrelling with their neighbours and who were doing fairly well. These sturdy fishermen soon caught fish in quantities which were unthinkable in that area, and started exporting it all over the places. I understand the local fishermen felt pinched. It is alleged that many of them together with others came and completely burnt this village of fishermen. When we went there, men, women and children, women with babes in arms, lined the streets, fell at our feet and would not leave our feet. The collective wall was such that it was impossible to keep one's balance. In fact, by that time I had become so full up to my throat that my mind refused to entertain any further vistas of suffering humanity. I think that happens to everyone. When I went to one village after another, there was nothing but human suffering, wailings and weepings, of children, of women in distress.

**Shri Tyagi:** What a shame!

**Shri A. K. Sen:** Everyone felt so overwhelmed and asked, 'Why should man fear man?' They speak a language which is an East Bengal dialect which is so near to Assamese that every Assamese also knew it. But the most happy feature was that a group of Youth Congress boys had come under the leadership of one of the most capable Youth Congress leaders of that district. Tezpur, as you know, is known as the 'Wardha of Assam'. It is the strongest hold of the Congress, and they were very sorry that in this stronghold of the Congress these things happened on a large scale. This is the district where I saw the largest number of Congress workers coming out and doing work for the refugees and these sufferers.

Now, there was a big meeting organised in which nearly 5,000 people from the surrounding villages had come, including many Muslims, Muslims who had possibly migrated ear-

[Shri A. K. Sen].

lier from East Pakistan long ago. There was a meeting. I addressed it.

I forgot to tell you that most of the houses were already built in a sort of ramshackle manner so that people could live under them pending the arrival of this. This was done by local people in co-operation with these fishermen. They are fearless people. I saw their work at the site with bamboos and other things. We went there on the 12th August. These things happened on the 10th July. Within a month, almost all the houses were rebuilt in a ramshackle way, not in a permanent way.

After the meeting, I appealed for help, financial help, stating that mere help in kind—bamboos, tins and all those things—would not be enough and people must come forward with money. Within 20 minutes, Rs. 820 were collected, including, of course, Rs. 100 of mine. Rs. 820 were collected, including Rs. 30 from the Press representatives and the rest were all contributed by the local people. They came with Rs. 2, Rs. 5, 10 and 20 or Re. 1. And the sight was so overwhelming that the correspondent of the *Statesman* sent in a marvellous article touching on the prospects of rehabilitation inherent in that situation. This was the physical aspect of what I saw.

Coming back, I felt that several things were necessary to bring back normal life in Assam. I could not agree with those who felt that normal life had returned. I still think it will take a long time for normal life to return in the sense of social relations reviving normal occupations, trade and other things being revived and normal life being restored. We should not confuse normal life with pure law and order. Law and order has now returned. In fact after every five miles there is an armed police picket and there is constant patrolling of the affected areas. So long as that continued there will be no breach of law and order in a large scale. There

may be stray incidents here and there. But by no means normal life had returned nor will it return unless several things have happened in the meantime.

I felt that first of all the work of rehabilitation depended not merely on the physical aspects of the work of rehabilitation but on the psychological aspects very much. Unless a sense of security had returned in these areas and unless these people felt that they can carry on their lives as before, no amount of rehabilitation work can bring about real rehabilitation. And for that several things were necessary. Some of the decisions were taken immediately by the Government of Assam. I must say frankly that they did so without any demand or protest and in very good cheer. I said openly and also in my private conversations with those who were in authority in Assam that unless the people knew that the officers who were guilty either of negligence or connivance at these happenings were brought to the book, we will never be able to inspire confidence in the minds of the minorities. A decision was taken and it was announced immediately in all the meetings that Mr. Kidwai, the Additional Chief Secretary would enquire first about officers in Nowgong and that he would take up later on district by district and deal with the officers who would be found negligent or would be found to have participated in the riots.

The hon. Members will bear this in mind that so far as the officers are concerned, whether of the police or of the civil service, we can only take steps against them in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and the civil service rules, namely, each has to be given a chance and he has to be heard and each would be entitled to cite witnesses and to cross-examine the witnesses cited against them. Therefore a general enquiry charged with the task of finding out the deeper causes and remedies would not be suited to tackle the case of

each individual officer. If one judicial officer is entrusted with the job, it will take years for that one man to do it because each individual officer against whom there is a charge either of negligence or of participation has to be given a separate charge-sheet and he has to be heard and his witnesses are to be heard separately. I personally think that a civil servant who is fearless, who knows what administration is and who is not very much obsessed with the ideas of the benefit of doubt or things of that sort would be much more effective in finding out guilty officers and in punishing them than a Judge who is naturally fettered by the limitations of his own procedure. And if we are really concerned with achieving the objective of finding out the guilty officers and in punishing them, we should not be wedded to dogmas about particular types of enquiries. Generally, as you know, a guilty officer is proceeded with not by a High Court Judge but by an Administrator who knows what his work is and how he should behave and what his functions are. It is a complicated task and I can tell you that on the books every officer has an answer.

I will give you one instance. In a particular town, there were armed police available and yet many houses had been burnt in a bad way and some murders had taken place. I asked them what the police were doing. I was told that this was done at a time when the armed police had gone 22 miles away and during their absence this happened and by that time they came back from that spot everything had happened and they could not do anything else. So, an administrator, thoroughly conversant with the intricacies of administration and the tricks of the trade, if I may use that expression, would be a better judge of negligence, malefeasance and misfeasance on the part of the officers than possibly a high-powered judicial tribunal. People think as if a general enquiry at once punishes the officers. It does not. Each officer has to be punished separately by a separate

charge-sheet. There are to be two notices, as you know. This is the law of the land; this is the Constitution.

Now the next question is this. I told them that the people who have struck terror in the minds of the minorities and who have been responsible for these ghastly devastations have to get the fear of their life in them. We must drive the fear of life into them so that they never would dare to do it again. I said for that purpose all possible opportunities must be given to accept even secret complaints and to entertain them and investigate them secretly and to arrest the people concerned without the formalities prescribed by the ordinary methods of investigation. Emergencies dictate certain deviations from normal procedures because conditions are such that many people are afraid to file complaints publicly and yet are willing to offer complaints secretly. I also suggested that punitive taxes should be imposed wherever there was a recurrence. Decisions on these lines were announced immediately by the Government without protest and I must be fair to them. They not only announced the decisions at every meeting but they announced it in the Press also, though possibly equal prominence was not given to these measures as some other matters. In this respect, I cannot compliment the publicity machinery of the Government of Assam which certainly did not function during the riots and functions not very efficiently even now.

There were still certain other steps necessary, apart from these three suggestions announced by the Government of Assam during my stay. I have written about them to the Prime Minister and sent copies to the Home Minister also. I have communicated it to some of the important leaders of the Opposition and also to hon. Members from West Bengal. As a result of the representations which I had everywhere I went—the sufferers said: let there be someone from the Centre at least to see that

[Shri A. K. Sen].

there is no lapse in the work of rehabilitation. I am a firm believer in preserving the authority of every State because the Centre cannot and should not take the responsibility for every State in every matter. I firmly believe that the duty of rehabilitation and the executive responsibility of rehabilitation is that of the Government of Assam. The Centre cannot, either as a matter of principle or as a matter of expediency, take over the duty of rehabilitation wherever riots occur; it should not. It is not possible for the Centre to do it, because if rehabilitation is to be effective it must be done by the local officers with the co-operation of the local people. But I was of the view that the presence from time to time of someone from the Centre would give confidence and also, possibly, his very physical presence would be a factor against lapses on the part of the rehabilitation machinery. It has been my experience there that though the policy adopted by the Government of Assam to start with was not a bad one, yet those who were administering that policy were rather stingy in their administration. Rs. 20, Rs. 30 and Rs. 40 were being paid. I felt that it was having the effect of continuing those people as beggars rather than helping them to stand on their feet as quickly as possible. I made it quite known, and it was agreed to by the Finance Minister who was with me most of the time, that such stingy instalments would not really carry out the work of rehabilitation. I was very glad to find from the recommendations of my colleague, Shri Jain, that he feels the same way. It has to be liberal. It has to be quick. You must put the people on their feet again—the small traders on their trade, the agriculturists on their agricultural operations, the artisans on their occupations—so that their lives as beggars come to a speedy end. That is the whole purpose.

The longer you keep them as beggars the more you prolong their

agony and the less becomes their sense of security psychologically, because a man without a job, without an occupation, who finds that all that he had built up for the last ten years have been lost and destroyed and he cannot get them back quickly, loses the sense of purpose, and soon develops a sense of frustration. And, along with that sense of insecurity comes an urge to go to West Bengal and find something better. Most of the people who have gone to West Bengal have gone there, certainly as a result of panic but mostly because their normal occupations have gone and the poor persons have nothing to do excepting to roam about in the villages as beggars. Therefore, after some time, after a few days of idle life, a few days of pensive mood, the urge comes to go to West Bengal and find better prospects. Little do they know that there is no better prospect awaiting them in West Bengal, where we have not been able to clear two lakhs of refugees yet who came from East Pakistan as far back as 1950. Yet that urge comes, and that explains why there are 50,000 refugees now from Assam in West Bengal. I made that suggestion to the Prime Minister. It is for the hon. Home Minister to announce the policies on the report of Shri Jain and on the suggestions that I have made. He will no doubt do so.

**Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri** (Berhampore): Will the hon. Minister care to explain one thing? Rehabilitation being a concurrent subject is there any bar to the Centre supervising, looking into and taking charge of rehabilitation?

**Shri A. K. Sen:** The word "supervision" means nothing. I think it is co-operation more than supervision. It is mutual assistance. We are now undertaking the supreme human task of rehabilitating thousands of people who have been uprooted from their homes. There is no question of prestige involved. There is no question

of legal complications involved. It is a question of co-operative effort, a question of mutual assistance. So far as I am concerned, I am willing to go there as an ordinary citizen—I told the Prime Minister—and work there until rehabilitation is completed.

**Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri:** My idea was that there is no bar in the Centre sending somebody to do these things.

**Shri A. K. Sen:** No bar. The Constitution does not prevent anyone from going there. That is a different matter. We are not talking about law now. But I have no doubt that the Assam Government will not object to anyone going from the Centre. This talk of supervision, taking over and all those things create complications. Let it not be forgotten there is a public in Assam, there is a Government in Assam and they are endowed with the same sentiments, the same feelings as we have. So things which can be done more smoothly should not be sought to be done in a manner which arouses opposition because, after all, it is the object of all of us to facilitate rehabilitation as well as we can. Then these legal squibbles, status and comparative importance are of no consequence. So far as the Centre is concerned, the Home Minister has been writing all the time: "My assistance is at your disposal."

**Shri N. R. Ghosh** (Cooch-Behār): Will it not bring the sense of security more quickly and make it more effective?

**Shri A. K. Sen:** I said that the mere presence of a representative from the Centre, apart from the legal status, would bring a sense of security. That is what the sufferers said. After all, they have a voice in the matter. If they feel that somebody representing the Centre should be near them even at least for communicating certain things, that certainly is a factor worth heeding to.

The next point which I thought was of importance was that the army should give as much help as it can in the work of rebuilding the houses. First of all, Sir, they are a disciplined community. They work well. Their presence in these affected areas in helping the refugees to build their houses not only symbolises that the whole country is behind the sufferers but also, possibly, expresses the stern determination of the Centre to deal quite firmly with the law-breakers.

Well, the Centre has certainly taken that decision. I think the Army has already started working on those lines. The next matter on which I felt that the Centre ought to assist was in helping the work of rehabilitation financially because, after all, though the financial responsibility, again, is that of the Government of Assam primarily, yet, in such a task of gigantic proportions the Centre should certainly assist the State—the quantum is a thing to be worked out by mutual consultation.

Then, the most important thing I felt was that those who incited the mob or incited the young boys—good material—into such despicable action ought not to go unpunished. It was represented to me that many of the cases registered had failed to touch the really guilty persons. There had been these 4,500 arrests corresponding to so many cases registered. It was represented that apart from these there were others who were guilty and who were not yet caught. The only way by which you can find out who are these others is what the Prime Minister has said. Set up local investigations—judicial—and work quickly to find out who in each area are the guilty persons who have not yet been caught.

There is some misunderstanding on this point. Neither the Government nor an Enquiry Commission can punish the guilty. As you know—it does not require any knowledge of law to understand it—a man if ultimately after investigation is found to

[Shri A. K. Sen]

be *prima facie* guilty, he has to be prosecuted in a court of law. Then he has to be convicted on proper evidence.

**Shri Tyagi:** What will be your investigating machinery?

**Shri A. K. Sen:** We need not commit ourselves to anything, nor does the House want us to mention that machinery straightaway. It is enough to say that there should be an impartial and independent machinery charged with this duty in several zones, because if you lump the six districts the tribunal will take years. First of all, the problems are different in different districts. As I said in Goreswar public participation was less than others. In other areas it was different. Though the pattern of the riots was the same, for quick work and finding out the guilty you should not lump them together. I had discussion with the Prime Minister several times apart from what I had written to him, and he has deeply thought about this matter. We were trying to think out how quickly we could achieve the purpose, because a lengthy enquiry into the deep-rooted causes and finding out remedies would take a long time. We thought that if each individual case in each individual area was tackled on it would take years for a judicial tribunal to conclude its work and by the time that tribunal finds out who the others are who are guilty the evidences will disappear. Therefore, consistent with the objective we had—to punish the guilty—we thought it was better to set up judicial machineries in different areas simultaneously and that would achieve the object of finding out who the others were who had not yet been proceeded against in a court of law—whether they are politicians, student leaders, Congressmen or non-Congressmen, P.S.P. men or non-P.S.P. men, it does not matter. This is a national issue.

**Acharya Kripalani:** May I point out one thing to the hon. Law Minister?

I have moved an amendment for an enquiry committee. An enquiry committee is being confused with so many things. I assert that such an enquiry committee does not go into the details, the individual cases, of what the administrators here or there did. It goes into the causes of what has happened. I am not thinking in terms of punishment even. We must know where we stand.

**Shri A. K. Sen:** I agree with him entirely. I was going to say so. Acharya Kripalani was perfectly right when he said that the primary function and object of such an enquiry is to go into the deeprooted causes and to find a remedy, and not to go into individual cases. That was the purport of what Acharya Kripalani said yesterday and today. I agree with it entirely. So does the Prime Minister. Because, if we go into individual cases, there may be thousands, and we shall be bogged into the details of those individual cases, and an enquiry committee is not really suited for these individual cases as Acharya Kripalani said. I entirely agree with him, with respect I entirely agree with him that this enquiry is absolutely necessary, namely, to go into the deepseated causes and the remedies and other circumstances connected with them, because, without them, our future policies would only be uncertain and vague. But yet, there is the primary necessity of bringing the guilty to book and finding out who are the big or the small fries responsible in each local area in inciting the troubles, and it is also the duty of the Government to act by setting up a quick machinery. I personally think,—with which the Prime Minister has agreed—that a judicial machinery in different zones, not only in Goreswar as suggested by Shri A. P. Jain in the report, may be set up. Assam may be divided into different zones, so that the machinery may proceed with the work as quickly as possible.

Acharya Kripalani has done a real service to the nation by elaborating clearly what the purpose of an enquiry is. It is in the minds of many people including thousands of people in West Bengal that an enquiry committee will find out each and every individual malefactor. That is not so, as Acharya Kripalani says. Then that is not the enquiry we want. For that, a bigger enquiry, as the Prime Minister said should be set up. I personally think that it must be set up. But yet, by the very nature of the circumstances, it cannot function now. How can it function now? Where are the witnesses? Where are the people? If it was to be done tomorrow, there would be nothing achieved by it. Therefore, the enquiry committee or judicial investigation—I should rather prefer to call it an investigating committee functioning judicially with judicial officers charged with the duty of finding out the guilty, the malefactors, in each area—should start working immediately. That is necessary. About the other thing, I am sure—and I personally feel—that it must come. I agree with Acharya Kripalani on that point but I fail to agree with him that it should start tomorrow. It cannot. It must be left to the Government to choose the appropriate time as to when it should be set up. It is difficult to define the appropriate time when things are so abnormal everywhere from district to district, from place to place. It may be six months, eight months, ten months or even one year. It is so difficult to specify any time. It depends upon human behaviour.

I have talked to each individual leader of the Bengali-speaking community in every town. I asked them the simple question: "If there is an enquiry committee tomorrow, will you be able to put up your case?" They said: "Certainly not now." But all of them said that an enquiry committee should be set up, because a permanent solution has to be found.

So, Sir, these are my submissions.

I know that many hon. Members are exercised as to what I have said in my report to the Prime Minister. I have said as briefly as I could, and yet as clearly as I could, my own views in the matter. I personally feel that it is the duty of every democracy, to set up an investigating machinery, when a holocaust like the one in Assam overtakes us, because that gives confidence in our democratic machinery and the processes through which we function. One of the essential ingredients of democratic Government is that nobody is above law, however big he may be and to whichever party he may belong. If anybody offends the law and the Constitution of the country he must be struck down with the arm of law. The arm of law is long enough to reach everyone. Therefore, judicial investigation and punishment of the guilty are written into the very texture of our democratic Government, and there is no question of the Government trying to shirk it. I say so because some have expressed the view and have even challenged the *bona fides* of the Government in suggesting that the Government is interested in suppressing the guilty. Nothing could be further from the truth than this allegation. To find the guilty and to punish them, the Government should certainly be depended upon to set up the processes which will work quickly and effectively. As the Prime Minister said, it may be four or five places, simultaneously, instead of one big enquiry connected with each individual case. Even Acharya Kripalani said openly that he does not want an enquiry into these individual cases of guilty persons and that it should not get mixed up. He said so rightly.

I say, speaking only for myself, that I believe that not only must the guilty be found by these zonal enquiries but there should also be an overall investigation by a judicial authority into the causes and the remedies of these riots. After all, it is only by that that we shall be able to shape our course for the future.

[Shri A. K. Sen]

Before I resume my seat, may I make an appeal? This appeal is meant both to the Assamese and the non-Assamese in Assam. I have appealed to all the leaders of the political parties individually, to Acharya Kripalani, to Shri Hem Barua, and to all the leaders of all parties in Assam individually. I have told them individually, some names, which had been mentioned to me,—belonging to their parties. I have told them that this is the supreme task of the nation in which all the parties must throw themselves. I have said the same to Shri Goray who has been there the other day. It is not the work of the Congress alone, not the work of the Government alone....

**Shri Hem Barua:** No names were given to me. If the names were given, we would take strict disciplinary action.

**Mr. Speaker:** Let him finish.

**Shri A. K. Sen:** I have not given it to you. But I have mentioned some names to Acharya Kripalani. It is not my business in fact to mention names, because it would arouse more passion, but I certainly appeal to them that all of them must go back to Assam and join together so that the minorities feel that they are not terrorized any more but are in the hands of people who are worthy to discharge the trust which the nation has imposed upon them. It is the supreme task which the nation demands of them and I have no doubt that they will not fail in their duty.

**Shri Hem Barua (Gauhati):** As a humble representative from the State of Assam, may I tell you and through you the whole country, how deeply sorry we are because we have become of late the source of agony and sorrow to the whole nation? May I also tell you that the simple people of Assam who lack sophistication, are spontaneous and sincere in their contritions as they are in their infrequent moments of explosion?

Now, there is no use trying to gloss over the incidents there. But then, there are certain facts. Our sense of news is being warped and harrowing tales are blazoned forth, while the little acts of sympathy and understanding—real action—between the communities are relegated to the dry limbo of neglect. That is what we find. There are Members who have spoken about blood and tears in this House. I just want to tell you there are instances of people even during these hectic days who came forward to give shelter and protection to these people. These little acts of goodness and kindness are not recorded in history and are not recorded in newspapers as well. I have seen people in the midst of flaming passions giving shelter and protection.

14 hrs.

I have seen with my own eyes heart-warming scenes of our people coming to the evacuee camps and asking the people there to trust them and to come back to their hearth and home, promising to build up their houses and promising to do everything for them. One thing pains me most. When there is emphasis put on certain aspect of things, in the heat of passion, all this is forgotten. This is the most unkindest cut of all. This is the most agonising experience of history.

About the students, the entire student community is sought to be tarred with the same brush. How stupid it is to tar the entire student community of Assam with the same brush! There might be some misguided elements who joined up the fray; I do not deny that. But to say that the entire student community was involved in it is the height of folly, because I know personally, student leaders came to me personally. I know how sorry they were for the disturbances and how much acute and keen they were for establishing peace. They went to the corners of the villages and other places to bring back sanity to the people. If there is indiscipline among the students in Assam, I would say that in-



discipline conforms to the pattern of indiscipline in this country, in the educational institutions in the whole of India. Therefore, to single out the students of Assam and blame the entire student community there is wrong.

Sir, nobody will deny the importance of mutual trust, goodwill, confidence and co-operation. But can you have an atmosphere of goodwill, confidence and co-operation, without the people and the students of Assam being in it? Let us for once try to build up the fabric of Indian unity and make it seamless. That is what I feel.

About the partition victims, my profound sympathy goes to these victims. But at the same time, we must not forget that these are the people—the Assamese—who offered shelter, home and hearth and hospitality to those people coming from East Pakistan—six lakhs of them were offered shelter. Why should we forget that aspect of the matter? What about the peasants? There are about 1½ million landless indigenous peasants. In spite of that, six lakhs of people coming from East Pakistan have been offered shelter and hospitality, home and hearth. We must not forget that aspect of things.

It is true that partition left deep wounds on West Bengal. But partition has left deep scars on the face of Assam also. Geographically speaking, the link that unites Assam with the rest of India is tenuous—it is only a corridor of 45 miles. But emotionally speaking, the link that binds Assam with the rest of India is much stronger. We must remember that. It is this consideration that makes me refrain from making charges and allegations, even though I can make charges and allegations—if I want, I have a galore of them—but it is this consideration that makes me refrain from making charges and allegations, if not to vindicate ourselves, at least to explain our position. That is why, though I have found people unburden themselves in the white heat of indignation, I have chosen to be quiet and subdued. There has been profuse mis-

understanding and there is misinterpretation of our motives and aspirations. But then, I am confident about one thing, that the rest of India will see the light in the correct perspective and not with a pair of jaundiced eyes. That is why I am not indulging in the sort of speeches that I have been hearing since yesterday.

On the opening day of Parliament, while speaking on the adjournment motion, I referred to certain deep-rooted causes that led to this holocaust. I do not want to refer to the past events or the genesis of the lost sources of history. But I can certainly say about the factors and forces that shape the psychology of modern Assam and provide the warp-and-wool of social life there. It took Britain 90 years to conquer India and Assam was the last to come within the ambit of the British empire. We were one of the most intractable people in getting ourselves accommodated and reconciled to the ways of our imperial masters. That is one of the primary reasons why, naturally enough, the progress of education in that State is slow and sluggish. Now, during these years of freedom, there has been an expansion of educational facilities and educational avenues. As a result of that, there is a new renaissance in Assam.

But it pains me to see that there is a feeling in us—we feel we are constantly elbowed out at the crowded table of the opportunities of life. When there is a feeling like that, a persistent feeling that we are constantly elbowed out at the crowded table of the opportunities of life, it is quite natural for us to lose our self-control. In this holocaust, I would rather say that it is this sense of accumulated anger, this persistent feeling of the people that they have been neglected, that dominated the passions of everybody. In the context of that, passions overpowered reasons and mob-frenzy overpowered the organised will of the people.

**Acharya Kripalani:** You yourself said that it was not the language question.

**Shri Hem Barua:** I am not saying like that. My friends here and Dr. B. C. Roy have also said that this movement was a pre-planned movement on the part of the Assamese. May I draw your attention to the fact that in as many as 8 places, where lethal weapons, acid-bulbs and unlicensed guns have so far been discovered, none of these places belongs to the Assamese. Who organised it? Who pre-planned it?

**Shrimati Benuka Ray (Malda):** The Bengalis organised it. That is your argument.

**Shri Hem Barua:** I do not know, Madam. You know better.

While I am sorry because of the sorry incidents, I do not have any reasons to be ashamed for demanding that the official language of Assam should be Assamese. I would tell you, in almost all the sister States, this question has been settled. But what about Assam? It is hanging fire for a long time. This demand for the recognition of the Assamese language is made by almost all the political parties—the Congress, Communist and P.S.P. This has exercised the minds of the people for a long time and the people have tolerated the shelving of this issue all these years.

**Shri Bimal Ghose (Barrackpore):** Shelving by whom?

**Shri Hem Barua:** By the people. In the Assam State Assembly, there are 105 members, out of whom 75 are Assamese-speaking. Have they not shown commendable forbearance by not trying to force the issue on the legislative anvil? They have not done it. Is it not something reasonable? I am sorry to say that reasons are an anathema to some people. Why should the Bengali language be apprehensive of the Assamese language? Bengali language is considered to be one of the most well-developed languages in the world. Even the mighty English language had to bow before it and absorb some of its beauty and adornments. I do not know why they are

unhappy about it. I do not know why they should be apprehensive about it.

**An Hon. Member:** Where is the apprehension?

**Shri Hem Barua:** There is apprehension. Then, Sir, how could the candle-flame of the Assamese language sustain itself against the clandestine light of the Bengali language, if the Bengali language is also made one of the official languages of the State of Assam?

Then we have been arraigned for the census figures of 1951. I have gone through the census reports from 1891 to 1941, and all these reports are prepared by alien hands. These reports did not anticipate the present controversies, but decades after decades officers in charge of the census have stated that out of apathy and ignorance the census figures were deflated so far as the Assamese-speaking people are concerned and inflated, so far as the Bengali-speaking people are concerned. I have with me extracts from these reports. This, I say not in a spirit of acrimony but only with a view to put the records straight.

I have here a suggestion to make so far as the next census is concerned. I want the Government not to economise. They can send out enumerators in pairs, three if necessary, Assamese-speaking, Bengali-speaking and Hindi-speaking, if you can spare one, in order to count the heads. I am confident that the census of 1951 will stand the most scrupulous scrutiny of 1961. I have no doubt about it.

Here I want to pay a tribute to the Leader of the House. Even in the midst of frenzy, in the midst of the atmosphere surcharged with passion and emotion, he has maintained an enviable standard of fairness and sympathy for those who do not have eloquent articulations at their command or do not have a powerful publicity apparatus with them. I just want to say that the Prime Minister has scattered on the lacerated limbs of Assam not the acids of despair but he has

applied the ointment of understanding.

I want to warmly congratulate Shri Jain also, because he has taken a lot of trouble with his colleagues to visit Assam, and I am happy to say that he has, after ten days of investigation, come at the conclusions which the Prime Minister arrived at on the morrow of the frenzy.

Now, about the leader of my party, I listened to him with deep respect. In ancient times, in order to ward off national calamity the wisest of the community used to sacrifice his own son, or offer his own son into the sacrificial fire. Now, possibly in order to prevent disunity and in order to arouse the conscience of the nation, he wants to offer us, me and my party comrades in Assam into this sacrificial fire. I would have liked it very much, if he would have considered us really worthy of that. We would have been happy to be the sacrificial offerings.

**Acharya Kripalani:** May I inform this good son of mine that whenever I have gone to Assam I have warned the Assamese that they are living on a volcano, they must settle their quarrels with the Bengalis and with the hill people. And I again tell them today, "if you do not do it, you will suffer, the province will suffer and India will suffer". Have I said this or not?

**Shri Hem Barua:** Oh, yes.

**Acharya Kripalani:** A father can only tell his son. He cannot make him do it, if he is a grown up son.

**Shri Hem Barua:** But while he makes this sacrificial offering, he must have confidence in the innocence and integrity of the offer, which alone would make the sacrifice meaningful. He and the Chairman of my party, **Shri Asoka Mehta**, have tabled an amendment to the main resolution demanding the judicial enquiry. I welcome a judicial enquiry wholeheartedly. I know there is nothing against it in Assam. We do not have anything

to fear, we do not have anything to hide. I throw the gauntlet; let it be taken up whoever wants to take it up. That is why I say, Sir, we stand rock-like behind this demand for a judicial enquiry. And it pains us, while demanding a judicial enquiry, simultaneously *Dada* has passed a verdict against us. These two things cannot go together.

Now, there are other allegations made against us, about our political complications and all that. I can tell you, our party colleagues in Assam enjoy sufficient goodwill of the people. If we have hankered after political power, possibly the people would have been too glad to give it to us, provided we are ready to pay the price for it. But since our political comrades hold the principles dearer to their hearts, dearer than political power or pelf, they continue to be where they are.

There are some people from West Bengal who speak of a conspiracy. Yes, Sir, I say there is a conspiracy, a web of conspiracy has settled on the soil of Assam for generations and its threads and tentacles are spread beyond the borders of the State of Assam. I say of the web of this conspiracy the spinning spider resides nowhere in the Brahmaputra valley.

**Shri Tyagi:** India knows how to meet it, and it shall be met.

**Shri Hem Barua:** Yes, that is true. Thank you very much.

There is a conspiracy, so far as the top police bureaucracy is concerned in Shillong. Would you imagine that the top police bureaucracy at Shillong gave out official secrets to the press and to the people? Would you believe it? I can give you instances galore.

Now, the shooting down of a student within the college campus is also a part of the conspiracy. There is a huge conspiracy going on in Assam and possibly **Shri Jain** got a scent of it. I heard, Sir, that the circular which was referred to by **Shri Jain** yesterday on the floor of this House, which was

[Shri Hem Barua].

issued on the 1st of June, was handed over to him, not when the I.G met him in the deputation, not at the dinner where he promised it, but it was handed over to him afterwards. Then, I asked a Minister in Assam and he said: we have ransacked all the files, there was no circular like that.

Now the fair valley of Assam was plunged into tears and turmoil only after the incident of 4th July. It is this incident from which the orgy of violence sparked off. But, Sir, President's rule was being demanded by a certain section of the people as early as the 13th of June. Why should it be like that, if the announcement of the Chief Minister of Assam on the 23rd of June was a sufficient indication of a satisfactory solution of the language problem? What was the sense in demanding the President's rule in season and out of season, I cannot understand.

I would request you, Sir, and the members of this House: let not the integrity of the people of Assam be doubted; let not the integrity of the chosen representatives of Assam be doubted. I want to make a humble appeal to you. If the salt is drained of its savour, wherewith will it be salted?

Now, rehabilitation must be the top most thing in our mind, and I say that all roads must lead to the Rome of Rehabilitation. In the context of that, I would request my friends from West Bengal not to create more tensions. There is tension in the atmosphere, and that tension must be minimised. And we make an appeal to the Government of India to be generous in its help.

There is no use trying to indulge in exaggerated statement in this context. Yesterday, it pained me when I heard Shri C. K. Bhattacharya saying something about Dulal Barua, the student leader. I do not hold any brief for him, but when he said that the student was aged forty. Now, he is barely 30, not even 30. He said that he is the father of five children.

**An Hon. Member:** Four children.

**Shri Hem Barua:** Yes, four children. May be, why four in course of time, he might have forty children. But, at the present moment he is the father of only one child, a tiny baby. Then, Shri Bhattacharya said that the student leader was an under-graduate, who was given a stipend by the Government of Assam to join a post-graduate course in Gauhati University. To say that an under-graduate can join a post-graduate class of an Indian University, I say, is a reflection on the Indian universities, is a reflection on Dr. C. D. Deshmukh, a reflection on Dr. K. L. Shrimali. Why should there be exaggerations like that, I do not understand.

**Shri Feroze Gandhi:** May I know how many criminal cases are pending against this student leader?

**Shri Hem Barua:** It is in the report I did not make any challenge and I did not say that there are no criminal cases against him. I do not hold any brief for him. I say: let the law take its course. What I say is that nothing should be exaggerated.

Yesterday, the hon. Prime Minister said about a man who was supposed to be dead and he appeared before him in flesh and blood. I say that this sort of exaggeration is going on and Shri Chapalakanta Bhattacharya added to that exaggerated stuff... (*Interruption*).

**Shri B. Das Gupta** (Purulia) rose—

**Shri Hem Barua:** I think I have almost exhausted my time. In conclusion. . . .

**Shri C. K. Bhattacharya:** I did not exaggerate. I understated. There are a number of criminal cases against this man—cases on charges like dacoity—and these cases have never gone up for hearing.

**Shri Hem Barua:** I have not denied them. I do not hold a brief for that

man. But the hon. Member was responsible for exaggerating things in the context of rehabilitation, in the context of amity and goodwill between all the communities living in Assam. I say that there must be no exaggeration. There must be coolness. There must be a correct appraisal of things....(Interruption).

**Shri B. Das Gupta** rose—

**Shri Hem Barua:** In conclusion. I make a request to you.....

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, order. The point is simple, namely, whether there has been such a serious damage done to property and men as has occurred here. Was any single Assamese molested by the Bengali-speaking people there? If that has happened one-sidedly, how to prevent it? What action should be taken? Where should we go even if there would have been some cause for some grievance between the two? Is all that justifiable?

**Shri Hem Barua:** I have enumerated the causes....(Interruption).

**Mr. Speaker:** It is likely to create an impression that to remedy those grievances anybody could take to such action as this.

**Shri Hem Barua:** I say there are causes. But I would say a hundred times that these causes do not justify the holocaust. I will say that for the nth time. But I have made an analysis of the causes. I have given a glimpse of the causes only with a view to bring about reconciliation amongst all the communities living in that State. My intention is pious. That is why, in conclusion, I would request you to come and pay a visit to Assam....(Interruption). Yes, all those people who have gone and have paid a visit to Assam have come with a balanced conclusion. That much I know....(Interruption). Yes, he also runs a danger—the danger of a black flag demonstration at Dum Dum or his effigy being burnt in Calcutta....

(Interruption). Will you please come?

**Mr. Speaker:** Oh. Yes.

**An hon. Member:** Was not there molestation of women?

**Raja Mahendra Pratap (Mathura):** There is another angle of view point... (Interruption).

**Acharya Kripalani** May I make a request that in future you will not ask any hon. Minister to speak during the lunch hour?

**Shrimati Renuka Ray:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, it was over a month ago that in this House we met for the first time during this session under the shadow of this very dark tragedy that has taken place in Assam. The tragedy that has been enacted in one part of India concerns the country as a whole. It was at the request of the Government that you agreed to their plea that a discussion should not take place just then. You did this because it was thought by the Government then that if the discussion was put off for a month then in the mean time rehabilitation would take place and that normal conditions would be brought back. More than a month has gone and the eloquent truth that normal conditions have not returned is in the fact that at that time in the camps of West Bengal we had 5,000 refugees and today we have over 40,000. That itself is proof enough of the contention, that the situation has not improved so far as normalcy is concerned. I do not wish for a moment to exaggerate a single incident that took place. In the mean time the Parliamentary Delegation has gone and come back and we have received their report. From this report, if we evince the facts they are telling enough. They give the picture of the stark naked truth in such a manner that there is certainly no need to exaggerate anything. Why should there be need to exaggerate and why should that charge be levelled?

[Shrimati Renuka Ray]

Almost every speaker has mentioned one thing but it needs reiteration, namely, that the language issue which has been made the *raison d'être* of this which has been given out as the cause of these terrible atrocities is certainly not an issue which was ever considered by those who have been victims and that the people of the Brahmaputra Valley who are Bengali-speaking Assamese are not those who raised this issue. But it was on them that this vicarious punishment took place.

Before I go on to an analysis of any other kind I would like, with your permission, to place before this House some conclusions that it was possible to derive by those who are working in the camps in West Bengal where the Bengali-speaking Assamese came. I was in the camps in Alipur Duar for the first time in third week of July. I returned from there on the 22nd July before coming here. At that time I can assure you that the only reason why any refugees had come was due to incidents which each family, not only each family but each individual, had undergone. At that time I came back to Calcutta and I said from what I had heard that it was a planned venture and that from village to village people went in lorries looting, arson and killing people. All I can comment today is that the Ajit Prasad Jain Committee upholds the same thing. Most of those refugees were from Goreshwar.

Speaking yesterday the hon. Prime Minister said that it is often found amongst refugees that because they are psychological cases they might have a tendency to see a thing in a coloured way. I want to say that it was from those refugees who came that I got this picture and placed it in Calcutta in those days. I placed it here in Delhi, not in this House, but in a place where many other hon. Members of Parliament were present. Today there is justification and confirmation from the Parliamentary Delegation on this very point.

I went a few days back on the 21st of this month to Petrapole and to Dhubulia where the new refugees have come. It has been said that they have come because of panic. Lot of things can be covered by this word 'panic'. In the first place I would like to say that all the refugees, as I said, who came before the 19th July when the hon. Prime Minister made a statement came not because of any panic. If it was panic that they came of, it was afterwards when some of the Goreshwar refugees went back and had to come back again because they were threatened both by the local people and by the refugees. I was a party to sending them back. They had not taken back their families but gone themselves. But they had to return again due to intimidations and threats. That was the position of the Goreshwar refugees who went back soon after the 19th July.

Then, in the camps in West Bengal today are a large number of persons. There are incidents after incidents—it would take too long to quote them—of persons who were in Assam camps. They went back also to their places of rehabilitation and they were driven out again. I will give you just one case of one Ashutosh Biswas who is a shopkeeper in Jorhat. He told us that he went back to his place of business from the camp when it was closed down in Assam. When he left he was not given any money. He went back and asked his neighbours who owed him money to pay up some of the dues so that even his burnt down shop he could restart. He was told, "Why have you come here? Do you not know that the Hitler of our Ahomiyas is going to visit this place soon?" And who is the Hitler of the Ahomiyas? I do not want to mention any names, but perhaps the Assam Tribune can tell us. I do not want to go into these things. I merely gave one incident of this kind. What does it avail now to recount the harrowing tales of babies being taken away from their mothers and being dashed to the

ground and killed in front of them; Is it necessary to exaggerate these things? About molestation of women the Parliamentary Committee has given some of the cases. I have seen some of the women who have come to Alipur Duar. Is it necessary to have hundreds of such cases? Are not a few sufficient? There are acts which are far more worse than murder which have been committed there. But I will not dwell any further on that aspect. I want to say one thing before I leave this matter of the camps of West Bengal. Because, I want to say that there has been a canard spread here, spread throughout the lobbies, and throughout Delhi, and maybe in other parts of the country too, that the West Bengal people and its Government are trying to attract these people to come to the camps in West Bengal. I ask you, Sir, I ask the Members of this House to go to these camps and see what those conditions are. Those people are living in tents in torrential rains in mud, filth and slush. people who had their own homes. Many of them have been refugees once. But they had established themselves, they had rehabilitated themselves. Will they come to West Bengal? A canard has been spread that Dr. B. C. Roy and the Governor have raised, in the Assam Relief Fund, one crore of rupees to rehabilitate them in West Bengal. A little while ago Shri A. K. Sen was speaking and he rightly pointed out that we have large numbers of refugees unrehabilitated in West Bengal for whom this Dandakaranya scheme has been conceived. Can it be possible that West Bengal will want this? Is this the kind of propaganda to do to minimise the serious happenings?

Sir, people are the same everywhere, whether they are the people of Assam or Bengal or the people of Maharashtra or Gujarat or people down south or up here in the north; people are not very different, not very dissimilar. There are times when their passions can be roused, and when deliberate planning takes place

such passions can be roused. And if there is no Government to keep law and order, if the leaders of the people do not try to keep law and order, then many things can happen, as has happened in Assam. The provocation was great. But did similar things happen in West Bengal? In Siliguri, in Alipur Duar where provocation was at its highest when things started, when they were stamped off, where people were killed, has any political leader of any group, quite apart from the Congress itself, said any word that two people were killed in Siliguri to save the life of an Assam leader, that others were wounded? But in a similar case in Assam we find that a student leader was killed. It was a great shame, no doubt. But because of the student leader being killed, not only long processions were taken out saying harrowing things which were not true, to provoke the people, but a judicial enquiry has been set up to find out those responsible for it.

**Shrimati Masda Ahmed (Jorhat):**

He was not a student leader. He was a sixteen-year old boy. He had passed the matriculation examination and had just joined the college. He was not a student leader.

**Shrimati Renuka Ray:** I am sorry, I accept that. I take it that he was a student. When a student was killed in Gauhati, this thing happened. When two people were killed, one of them was also a student, in Siliguri, as I said, not one, not even the members of the opposition, the leaders, said to the Government, "Why have you done this?"; because they felt that it was necessary, every party in Bengal felt on July 16th—and all honour to them; it was not the Congress alone or its Government, but every responsible party felt like that—and they came together to keep the peace on the 16th July in Calcutta. When such provocative things happen, when people come who have undergone great afflictions, great sufferings, it is not easy to keep the peace. But it was

[Shrimati Renuka Ray]

kept. Because, we wanted, every leader in West Bengal, of whatever party, was concerned and the Government itself was out in the streets from morning till evening, keeping vigil to see that not one untoward incident should take place.

I am saying all this, because I find, and I am deeply grieved to find, that there is a tendency to equate things which we cannot equate, to bring things on par which cannot be brought on par. The Prime Minister is not here now. But I would like to tell him that Bengalis have been grievously hurt by what he said on Independence Day. By implication he rather tended to bring Assam and West Bengal on the same lines when he said 'that the Governor and the Government had given up the reception in West Bengal. Had he been there, had any Member of this House been there, they would have felt the same way and they could not have held that reception. There were black flags. We condemn those black flags; certainly, they are very bad things. What is even worse that happened which we must condemn outright was that the effigies of some of the Ministers, including that of the Prime Minister, were burnt. Even worse to my mind was what Shri Atulya Ghosh mentioned. (Interruption). What was worse Sir, was that Shrimati Indira Gandhi who went to Alipur Duar on a mercy mission at our instance, because we had suggested it to her—in Cooch-Behar I mean she was going to Alipur Duar—on the way in Cooch Behar she was insulted with black flags and what not. We condemn this outright. They were done by some miscreants. No responsible political party is behind it—no matter what has been said about some other political parties, from each political party about another—it was a few miscreants who came suddenly and nobody knew that they were coming, and black flags were in their hands. But can all these incidents be equated with molestation of women; can they be equated with

burning, looting, arson, by which hundreds and thousands of people have lost their homes? Can they be equated with the atrocious things that have happened some of which do not bear mention?

This, Sir, is what has hurt us grievously. It has been done—I do not for one minute say that the Prime Minister feels that there is any kind of Party about these matters. But that statement on the 15th August, when the two places were brought together, has hurt us. He said that "India is greater than Assam and Bengal". Quite right. India is greater than Assam and Bengal; it is greater than Delhi; it is greater than everything else. Sir, we have forgotten to be Indians today. Acharya Kripalani is right. I think this was the wrong time which was chosen, and I remember speaking in this House in the days of the Constituent Assembly (Legislative) when I said "Do not have at this time States reorganisations on linguistic basis or on any basis, because, we have not yet learnt to be Indians. But the ball was set rolling. As Acharya Kripalani has also said, it is not the common man who is concerned with these things. The persons who have suffered have not got anything to do with the language question at all. Yet, they are the ones who are the victims of this ruthless behaviour that has taken place. It is not possible to go on speaking at length on the many things that have happened, on the many acts of commission and omission. But, one thing is true that the Government in Assam failed, utterly failed at that time, utterly failed to keep the law and order at that time, whatever be the reasons. I am one of those who hold in high regard the Chief Minister of Assam Shri Chaliha. It is only men like him who give us hope for the future. No matter how his Government may have failed, he is one of the men who belong to the band of the few who are Indians. Yet, it is in his State that this tragedy was



enacted. It is no use getting away from the facts.

I come now to the point of the discussion which has been just now taking place on the floor of the House as to what are the remedies. Some of the remedies I will not recount except to mention this. The A. P. Jain Committee have very rightly pointed out the need for a proper probe into the police system there. It is absolutely necessary to have police from outside and to co-ordinate them with the existing police who are not implicated in all these things, for, many of them are implicated in these things. A weeding out must be done without delay and the guilty punished.

14.42 hrs.

[SHRIMATI RENU CHAKRAVARTY in the CHAIR]

**Mr. Chairman:** The hon. Member has taken twenty minutes already. She will have to conclude.

**Shrimati Renuka Ray:** I will take only five minutes more.

**Mr. Chairman:** There is great pressure.

**Shrimati Renuka Ray:** I will try to finish.

**Shri A. K. Sen:** May I congratulate you, Madam, for your impartiality?

**Mr. Chairman:** Please do not interrupt. We are in great pressure.

**Shrimati Renuka Ray:** Madam, I want to say that the first thing that needs to be discussed in detail is the question of the judicial enquiry. The Jain Committee has not recommended it except for Goreswar. The Prime Minister has made a very welcome statement this morning that it should not be only in Goreswar, but in other places, in Nowgong, for instance, where many happenings have taken place. The Union Minister of Law has said that the worst happenings took place in Goreswar. The Jain Committee which has asked for a

judicial enquiry in Goreswar has said that the worst happenings are in Nowgong. I have no time to go into all that. The worst happened in many other places. If judicial enquiries on a zonal basis are to be held in adequate manner, I have no objection. I welcome that. At the same time, proper arrangements should be made for a judicial enquiry into the deep causes. It cannot be much later. I am sorry I cannot agree to this. I cannot agree for the simple reason that if it is to be a success, how can you much later find out the relevant evidence? The evidence will be destroyed by such time. It is not possible to keep this pending for a long time. It may be delayed for a week or two, or by a month or two: not more than that. For this, even a month or two is quite long, I should say. A month or two would be the outside limit. If it was delayed beyond that, how can evidence be collected for all the things that have happened, and how can a judicial probe at such a later stage bring the desired results?

**Mr. Chairman:** The hon. Member has already taken 25 minutes.

**Shrimati Renuka Ray:** One more point. I was speaking about the equating of things. It seemed to me very strange that the position of the newspapers of West Bengal and Assam should have been equated. I do not understand, I fail to understand this, when no acts have taken place in West Bengal, no matter whatever the provocation has been. I do not hold any brief for the newspapers. But, as a consequence of what they have said or not said, nothing has happened of any widespread scare, whereas in Assam it has happened. Surely, the Jain Committee could have taken that into consideration. I for one have to acknowledge one fact. If it had not been for the newspapers, it would have been much later that we would have come to know of this or have been able to go to Alipur Duars and arrange for

[Shrimati Renuka Ray]

non-official help for the refugees, who had come. After all, Government help meant Rs. 12 for a person to give food. We had to get many organisations together, social welfare organisations including many women's organisations together to help in the camps. We would not have known about it had the newspapers not given facts. The newspapers, as Shri Atulya Ghosh said quite rightly, were not able to give all the facts properly and correctly because there was a blanket ban. Their information machinery in Assam had failed. Many things have happened. Captions may have been wrong. I do not deny that. All the same, the two things are not on par. That is all I would like to point out.

Before concluding, I would like to say that today, to the Speaker and to the Members of Parliament has come notice of a Resolution that has been passed, I think, unanimously, in the West Bengal legislature, which has pointed out the need for many things, the most important among which are the need for a judicial enquiry and the arrangement for deputing a Member of the Central Government to organise and supervise generally all measures. Madam, I support this unanimous request of the West Bengal Assembly.

**Mr. Chairman:** Before I call upon Shri Tyagi to speak, I have a request to make. Certain Members are taking 25 minutes and 30 minutes. There are still so many speakers who desire to speak. I would request them to condense their remarks within 15 minutes. Of course, I would certainly allow them to finish what they want to say but I would request them to condense their remarks.

**An Hon. Member:** What about sitting till 6 o'clock?

**Mr. Chairman:** That would be decided a little later.

**Shri Tyagi:** Madam, the Assam troubles have focussed one important

14.48 hrs.

thing, namely, the growing disrespect for law and order. This is a very serious matter. It is not a question of Assam alone. But, it indicates the actual situation of law and order in the whole country. I think the root cause is not only language. In my opinion, the root cause is that the respect for law and order is waning. It has been a long process for years together. I think the administrators must take caution now at least and see that respect for law and order is re-established. What is happening is that. We are compromising with law and we are compromising with principles. Therefore, I warn the Government that if they want to set things right, the only cure lies in their hand. They must be firm and stick to the law. Law does not recognise or make any distinction between man and man. It remains uniform for all. I also accuse the Central Government of the lethargic manner in which the law and order situation is being maintained in the country. Likewise, I accuse the State Governments also. They too are compromising too much and the administration is going to dogs only because the officers do not know from which side and when a recommendation or letter or some type of orders might come. In criminal cases and other cases, a lot of interference from political quarters is going on. This must be stopped. The administrative machinery must be assured that so long as they are on the right path, nobody will interfere with their work, whether one is a Minister or an M.P. or an M.L.A. That is one reason why the law and order situation is today so bad. People are not quite secure. The whole basis of a State is law and order. State means that it assures every individual safety of life and property. If that is not guaranteed, the State does not exist.

A commission has been recommended, the House might consider about

it, but the real investigation requires to be made introspectively by those who are in charge of law and order. I am afraid that after such a catastrophe, there has been not even a reshuffling of the Cabinet in Assam. What is this? Law and order has failed. It is reported now by the Jain Committee in so many words that the administration had broken down altogether for some days. After that, how is it that the Government stands there as it was? Why could they not even make a reshuffle? I do not want that I should be taken as a Minister there, I cannot be taken. Therefore, I have no selfish ends, but the Cabinet should have been reshuffled. At least the Law Minister should have come forward before the nation in a mood of *prayaschitha* for his failure and should have tendered his resignation, or been transferred to some other portfolio.

**An Hon. Member:** You mean the Law Minister of Assam.

**Shri Tyagi:** Of course, Assam. I am not talking of Shri A. K. Sen, I mean the State Minister in charge of law and order. To the extent to which the Home Minister here is responsible, he must also confess whatever his fault is. I do not know because law and order in a State is the responsibility of the State, not of the Centre. Therefore, I am talking of the Minister in the State. At least some such changes should have been made.

It is no use your appointing any investigation commission, judicial, political or other, so long as the administrative machinery responsible for law and order remains as it is. It has slackened in its job. There should have been a reshuffle not only in the Cabinet ranks, but also in the civil service ranks. Those who are handling the law and order situation in the State should have immediately been reshuffled, and unless there is some such change effected in that State, law and order cannot improve. And that can be done by executive

orders. I hope the Government, which happens to belong to the same party as the Government in the State, will use its influence and see that something is done on this account.

No country can progress unless peace, tranquility and order are assured. And I say now it is not only the case of Assam. There are rumblings from practically all corners of India. Democracy has been damaged to a very great extent, and I do not know what is going to happen in future. There are disturbances on one account or the other. The language question is one. I hope you remember that I was the one man who definitely opposed this idea of appointing a linguistic commission. I had said then that it would bring ruin to the country. Now, religious feelings, of course, have subsided. There are no religious riots now, but the place of religion, it seems, has been taken by language, and people are expressing their fanaticism on the basis of language now.

The same question has arisen in the Punjab. Thousands and thousands of people are being arrested on the question of language. I do not know what is going on. In the South also there are such matters. Therefore, it is not a question of any judicial enquiry; it is a question of searching of the hearts not only of the Treasury Benches or the party in power, but of all the political parties. The time has now come when an appeal could go to all the political parties who have faith in democracy to come together, to put their heads together, have a round table conference, exchange views, and establish some convention whereby all the parties on this common ground might take united action.

In Assam, it was of course expected by us that congressmen would try their level best to see that there was no disturbance. But what happened? I am grateful to Acharya Kripalani, because he has inspired me to speak frankly. I must confess and confess

[Shri Tyagi]

with shame that even my Congress Party did not act properly in Assam. I should have loved if a few Congress volunteers had died or been murdered there, as Mahatma Gandhi would have liked, in an attempt to save their brethren. That would have proved our honesty of purpose, but where had the Congress Party gone there? I do not know what they have done. They at least have failed. They ought to have actively come forward to protect the Bengali-speaking people when such a sort of cruelty was being perpetrated.

It is difficult to hear the stories. A delegation of ladies also went there, and they have circulated this cyclo-styled report of theirs. It is terrible, not possible for a man who has a heart, to go through this. It mentions:

"Shrimati Radha Rani Chakravarti saw her 16-year old boy hacked to pieces and thrown to the fire by the mob."

Can any mother bear this idea—a 16-year old child being hacked to pieces in front of the eyes of the mother and being thrown into the fire? What is happening?

Not only that. I do not know how far it is true, but this is what has been reported. They say:

"We heard of the gruesome case of Shrimati Gita De of Sialpara who saw her two small sons of 5 and 7 years thrown into the fire in front of the mother."

I do not know what this is. This is something terrible. I wonder if even these things cannot move the heart of the nation. How can only a Bengalee speak for Bengalees, I cannot understand. It is the whole of India which has suffered. This is a shock to the whole nation practically, it is not a question of Bengal. A mother is not a Bengalee or anything, a mother is a mother first. Every mother's heart

will be moved. This thing is terrible.

I am very much upset. Look at the position now. I know the Chief Minister, Shri Chaliha. He must have done all his best. His health was bad, but despite that, he did his best I know.

**Shrimati Mafida Ahmed:** Shri Tyagi mentioned two names. May I know where these two incidents occurred?

**Shri Tyagi:** Many such occurrences are there.

**Shrimati Mafida Ahmed:** The particular place I want to know, the name of the particular place.

**Shri Tyagi:** Regarding the Gita Devi incident, it was in Nowgong. That is what is written here. I have not seen those places, but I shall be very happy to hear that these stories are wrong, my heart would be satisfied.

**Shrimati Mafida Ahmed:** They are false, they are baseless.

**Shri Tyagi:** I hope it is.

**Mr. Chairman:** The point is that everybody has a right to put forward whatever he has heard, seen or known. Every other Member who disputes it has a right to voice it, to object to it, to contradict it, when he has the chance. Let the hon. Member proceed.

**Shri Narasimhan (Krishnagiri):** When a fact is disputed and he is agreeable to be corrected, why not allow him to proceed?

**Shri Tyagi:** I am quoting this from a report which has been submitted by a ladies' delegation, the Joint Women's Relief Committee which had gone there. Geeta Mukherjee is the Joint Secretary, Sova Chakravarty is the Secretary. They have circulated it. If these stories are wrong, nobody will be happier than I.

**Shrimati Mafida Ahmed:** They are wrong.

**Shri Tyagi:** I hope they are. But one wants to know how it is possible for things of this nature, violence and other things committed on the same pattern, from one end to the other. I could understand a small conspiracy of a few in a town and things happening.

**Shri Amjad Ali (Dhubri):** I rise on a point of order.

**Shrimati Renuka Ray:** Are all the allegations in this report wrong?

**Mr. Chairman:** I would request of all hon. Members, every Member from Assam, every Member from West Bengal, and may be other, one thing. They may dispute everything that is stated by the others, but we cannot allow this kind of contradiction, preventing a Member from making his speech. One interruption may be allowed, but if on one side everybody intervenes, how is it possible for the debate to continue?

**Shri Tyagi:** I can understand if it were a disturbance in one town, a community at a place being affected, but if the same pattern of trouble has started from one end to the other simultaneously on the very same day, that means there was a widespread conspiracy. And I must say the Government there failed to understand what the situation was. In the first place, I feel that their Information Department was defective. Probably, they could not have the information in time, or even if they had it, at least their administrative machinery had failed. That is what the Parliamentary Delegation also says.

15 hrs.

Now, what is happening? We have heard from the Prime Minister that the number of refugees was only 23,000 or so on the day when he came back. How is it that it has now become 40,000 afterwards? How is it, 993 (Ai) LSD—7.

it became 1000 in Silchar and 3,000 in other places, in the camps there? How is it that the figure is increasing? It is obvious. Those persons who were just cringing in a camp out of fear now felt that the roads were safe, and they started coming out, despite all attempts to enable them to stay there. Here, I must congratulate Shri A. K. Sen, for, even after having annoyed quite a number of his own comrades in Calcutta, he made bold and went there. And, of course, this was his first visit to Assam, and his visit there brought some sort of solace or satisfaction to the people who were living in the camps. He has done a great service indeed, and at the cost of his own personal reputation in Bengal, because the people there started spreading all sorts of stories against him; he had to face them, and he had to face also black flag demonstrations there at the hands of his own friends. But he went to Assam, and I am sure that his visit has done a great good. After his visit, we found from the newspapers that many important Assamese had come forward to give relief, and substantial relief was given thereafter. Likewise, the visit of the Parliamentary Delegation also has done good.

It is wrong to accuse Government that they did not take immediate action. It was not possible for any Government at the Centre to take any action unless they had first-hand information. The Prime Minister himself went there; the Law Minister went there and he submitted his report. Then, the Parliamentary Delegation went there, and they have also reported. It is only on the verified reports of actual happenings that Government could take any action.

I understand that there is a proposal for some investigations, and for setting up some judicial enquiries or something like that. I am afraid a judicial enquiry will lead us nowhere. This demand has come from Calcutta; mostly, the Bengali friends and the

[Shri Tyagi]

Bengali-speaking people want a judicial enquiry. I tell them that it will be of little avail. For, so long as there is not a regular prosecution machinery to investigate and catch hold of the culprits and bring them before the judicial enquiry, what can a judge from here do? So, what I would emphasise is this. Please do not insist so much on a judicial enquiry as on an investigating machinery of some independent men.

**Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava** (Hissar): My hon. friend knows that investigation by a magistrate or any other person except a police officer is a judicial enquiry. The term 'judicial enquiry' connotes something different in the Criminal Procedure Code, than what the hon. Member means. Proceedings when evidence is taken on oath is a judicial proceeding.

**Shri A. K. Sen:** What the hon. Member Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava means is that the magistrate cannot function unless there is some machinery to help him in finding facts.

**Shri Tyagi:** I understand what judicial enquiry means. There are magistrates everywhere, and they have the judicial enquiry only when the police push forward some cases, and challan some cases. But if the officers conducting the judicial enquiry are expected to go there and do the fact-finding and then do the prosecution, and help with their own machinery and then challan the offenders, that is a different thing altogether. The challanning machinery must be different. What I am insisting on is this that there must be some such arrangement, so that no prejudices be brought into this matter. An independent impartial investigating machinery must be there, so that the culprits may be apprehended without any fear of any recommendations or any *shipharish* from anybody. That is what is most important. I would also emphasise

that this enquiry will bring a sort of satisfaction to the people, for, they will know that at least in the future they are safe, because the culprits have been apprehended. This has to be done, in order to bring some satisfaction to those people, so that they may fearlessly take to their business there, and live there. It is for that purpose that I am insisting on this.

But, actually speaking, that investigation which Acharya Kripalani has suggested is more important than even this kind of enquiry or commission headed by a judge or whatever person you like. That investigation is more important because it will give us an idea of what the parties are actually doing, and whether there are any political parties behind that. If there are any, let us know. If there are even Congress people, let that information come out. For the future also, that kind of investigation will give some clear advice, which, if followed, will ensure peace and tranquillity in the country in future. I suggest that that enquiry may not be mixed up with this enquiry. In conclusion, I would say **just one thing** more, and I have done. The case of the Bengali-speaking people in Assam is the case of the whole of India, and not merely of the Bengalis alone. I must say that some political groups in Calcutta have just prejudiced the case by overdoing the thing. Their papers have come out with all types of alarming news, and there have been black flag demonstrations and processions which have not at all been quite helpful. On the other hand, the rest of India was puzzled. While the whole sympathy of the whole of India was with the Bengali-speaking people of Assam, within about fifteen days of these papers coming out with these kinds of alarming news, people began to discuss between themselves. I would, therefore, say that that alarming attitude of the Calcutta Bengalis, a few of them, had damaged the cause of even the Bengalis; their cause

should not be misunderstood, because it is not the whole of Bengal, but only a few Bengalis who have created this alarm. I want the country to understand that the fact that a few people have created an alarm in Calcutta and elsewhere should not in any way prejudice the cause of the Bengali-speaking people in Assam.

**Shri Hynniewta** (Autonomous Districts—Reserved—Sch. Tribes): When I was first thinking of participating in this debate, I was thinking more in terms of suggesting ways and means as to how this intricate language problem of Assam can be solved. But when I heard Shri Hem Barua speaking, I saw a picture of the Assamese-speaking people who participated in those riots, who committed those crimes against humanity. He himself was speaking with heat while advocating that we should handle this problem with coolness. We saw the exhibition of the spirit of the Assamese-speaking people during those riots.

A colleague of mine yesterday was told by me that I would be speaking in the House today. He happens to be present in the House at this very minute. He expressed surprise as to why I should speak in this debate concerning between the Bengalis and the Assamese, when I am neither an Assamese nor a Bengali. But I am a citizen of the State of Assam, though I do not like that name, because it reminds me of a certain animal, but somehow or other, I am a citizen of Assam, and the oldest citizen of Assam; at that though, we are regarded as aliens. We the tribal people of Assam now feel that we have no future.

All these years, since the attainment of Independence, we have been exploited right and left; and the crimes that the Bengali people are supposed to have committed against the Assamese have been committed by these people who are holding the reins of power against the tribal people of Assam.

Assam is a creation, or rather, was a creation of the British. They wanted to create security for themselves in the eastern frontier. So, they put three different elements together, so that there would always be conflict between these three elements, and through conflict, they can maintain their stranglehold on the people of India. They put the Assamese-speaking people; they put the tribal people, and they put the Bengali people, together and the British achieved their purpose. There was never any closeness among these three sections of people. Even when Sylhet was part of Assam, there was always tension, and there was always suspicion. But today, when the Assamese-speaking people obtained power after the Partition of the country, they have come out with their true colours.

The desire to impose Assamese on the people of Assam was the motivating force which led to the exclusion of Sylhet from Assam. Now, they are in an overwhelming majority. Today we hear Shri Hem Barua saying, 'We the Assamese people are 75 in a House of 105 and yet all the time we have been restraining ourselves from declaring Assamese as the State language'. Let me tell you that even in the absence of any legislation they have printed the Gazette notification in Assamese. Even in the absence of any legislation, they painted the signboards in the Tribal areas, where the population is 90—95 per cent tribal, in Assamese. What is this? They have no regard for constitutional means. They have the majority. All right, have that majority. You can pass a law declaring Assamese as the State language. But pending the enactment of such a law, why did you do these illegal things?

They tried to compel the Garo people living in Goalpara district to learn Assamese. Those tribal schools which were willing to teach Assamese were given more handsome grants. Tribal students who were willing to learn Assamese, in order to teach the people Assamese, were given handsome stipends.

[Shri Hynniewta]

We are very backward. There is no doubt about it. We do not need to learn Assamese in order to be civilised. Yet, instead of giving us scholarships for technical education and other types of education they give us handsome scholarships to learn Assamese. Today, whereas an Assamese officer will not have to learn any tribal language before he gets confirmation and promotion, the tribal officers have to learn Assamese; if they are stationed in the plains of Assam, they have to learn Assamese. If an Assamese officer is stationed in the hills, he is encouraged to learn the tribal language and he will be given a sort of prize, an inducement for him to learn the tribal language concerned. But, mind you, it is not necessary for his promotion or confirmation.

The real motive behind this attempt to impose Assamese is not only to make us all learn Assamese, but it is deeper than that. It goes far beyond that. It is an attempt to Assamise the people of Assam, to turn them into one community at the top of which will be the original Assamese-speaking people.

This can be proved if we consider two salient facts. The Bengalis of the Brahmaputra Valley—the six districts of the Brahmaputra Valley—had never opposed the introduction of Assamese as State language. Then why did you beat them? Why did you kill them? Why did you burn their houses? They never opposed the introduction of Assamese as State language. It is we, tribal people, who oppose it. I am proud of the fact that I oppose this imposition, and I will oppose this imposition even if it cost me my life. But these people did not oppose that.

The peak of these atrocities was reached after the Chief Minister had declared that a Bill would be brought forward for the purpose of making Assamese a State language. He had bowed down before the crowd. Yet the intensity of the atrocities and the crimes increased. Why? Because in

the APCC Resolution, there is a provision which says that in the tribal districts and Cachar, Assamese will not immediately be introduced as an official language for district administration; it will be introduced only when the tribal people meet together and decide by a two-thirds majority that it should be introduced. They did not like that. The Assamese public did not like that. They wanted that the language barrier, the racial barrier and the communal barrier should be demolished so that they can be at the top. That is the reason why they had increased the tempo of their crimes against the Bengali people, especially Bengali women.

So I want to draw the attention of the House to this sinister motive. Some people whom I met in the Lobby said, 'These Bengalis must be driven out. They must be kicked out, for they are creating trouble everywhere'.

**An Hon. Member:** At least they are doing that here (*Interruptions*).

**Shri Hynniewta:** That should not be the attitude. If they are in the wrong, certainly we shall criticise them. As a matter of fact I should do justice to facts and I should be fair I should say that some Bengali people sometimes become too provincial-minded; they keep themselves away from the general population. That is true. But which community has not got faults?

**Shri Ranga:** That is true of everybody. We are all provincial-minded.

**Shri Hynniewta:** But should you take the law into your hands and say, 'Because you do not accept this imposition, therefore, you forfeit the right to reside in the State of Assam'? This involves a question of fundamental rights. Every citizen of India has been given the right to reside and settle in any part of India. But the Assamese friends will like to impose a condition, 'Yes, you will be allowed, provided you give up your mother-tongue, provided your womenfolk change their dress'. In the Report, there is a mention of that fact. They did even demand that Bengali women



should change their dress. What height of impudence?

It is against this spirit that we, the tribal people, are rising today. We have tried all these years to pull on together with them, but we found that we were never treated as a people. We found that we were treated as articles fit for exploitation and for their pleasure.

Now, it has been said in the Report and in the Assamese Press that it was the Shillong demonstration of the 21st May which was responsible for rousing communal passions on the part of the Assamese-speaking public. It was said that in that demonstration organised by the Bengalis, containing a few tribals also, objectionable slogans like calling Assamese "donkey's language" were raised. It has been stated in the Report that that meeting was mainly Bengali, with a sprinkling of tribals here and there. But that is an absolute lie. I do not know whether the word 'lie' is a parliamentary term.

**Shri A. K. Sen:** May I respectfully point out that when we are dealing with a Report, and some report which finds a place in that Report of the Delegation, it is better to use the word 'incorrect' instead of 'lie'?

**Mr. Chairman:** I think the hon. Minister should leave that to me, because I would have myself pulled him up. He himself was making that submission, whether he should not change it. 'Incorrect' is a parliamentary word. Let it be changed accordingly.

**Shri Hynniewta:** I use the word 'incorrect'. That portion of the Report reads:

"On the 21st May 1960, there was a big procession in Shillong followed by a public meeting of Bengalees and persons belonging to the Hill tribes to protest against the resolution of the APCC".

As a matter of fact that meeting was overwhelmingly tribal.

15.20 hrs.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

A few Bengal boys came and associated themselves with the public meeting. I may sound a personal note here. My old mother, who hardly attended any public meeting—she attended that procession. It was full of all Khasi men and women because they felt indeed that there was a threat to the very existence of their children and their grand-children because, language—Mr. Speaker, is known as the mother-tongue. Therefore, it is a sacred thing to us and once the right of our speaking the mother-tongue is at stake, the right of our very existence is also at stake.

Assuming for a moment that the Shilling Procession did make some objectionable remarks against the Assamese language, it is really very funny to watch the reactions of the Assamese people to it. They say the honour of the language is at stake and in order to restore its honour they outrage the honour of women, of Indian womanhood as a whole! Can any sane person in this House or outside for a moment justify such an action? Is the Assamese language so fragile, so weak so that a few remarks against it could outrage its honour? Are the Assamese people so touchy, so oversensitive that a few remarks like that is enough to drive them off their heads and make them react in a manner befitting only mad men? This is a question I am putting to them, to this House and to the country as a whole. There is absolutely no justification.

It is not only a question of declaring a certain language as the official language but also that of giving the linguistic and racial minorities in Assam their right to exist. Perhaps it may be said that some of the liberal elements among the Tribals have even tried to co-operate with them by joining the Government and a leading member of my party and his colleagues joined the Assam Government in the beginning of 1958. But we were told by him in the law conference held at

[Shri Hynniewta]

Shillong that when this language question was raised in the meeting of the Assam Provincial Congress Committee, that tribal Minister was not even invited. Many people were invited. Mere MLAs were invited but a tribal Minister representing the biggest party among the tribal people was not at all invited. This is clear proof that they want them as mere tools to silence the opposition of the tribal people. But I am proud to say that the enjoyment of power and office has not made that Minister cease to be a tribal and he is reacting to this decision as any ordinary tribal should react.

It has been said that the census figures of 1951 have been manipulated and that the percentage of the Assamese-speaking people has risen by 150 per cent. You will be surprised to know that while the Assamese-speaking people have registered an increase of 150 per cent, the tribal people have registered a decrease. (An Hon Member: By how much). That is not important. It might have been 0.00001 per cent. As far as I could see the real motive of this agitation is the fact that the next census is approaching and that fact was taken serious note of by our Assamese brethren. Shri Barua said... (An Hon. Member: He is not here). I can still criticise his speech. He said 'let us appoint three enumerators; I am all out for the truth. Let us appoint three enumerators—Assamese, Bengali and Hindi speaking enumerators.' After driving out 50,000 Bengalees, even if these enumerators are honest and do their work conscientiously, whom are they going to enumerate Many Bengali people have left the State. Only those who have the guts to remain behind are there and how many of them will dare claim that they are Bengali speaking?

Mr. Speaker, I consider it a matter of deep regret that in all your wisdom you have not found it possible to include a tribal Member in this Parlia-

mentary Delegation. The tribal people of Assam constitute about one-fifth of the population of the State of Assam.

Mr. Speaker: I am very sorry, nobody brought it to my notice.

Shri Hynniewta: I am not charging that you are doing it deliberately, Sir. It is a matter of omission, I believe. If you go through this report, you will find that most undoubtedly there is a bias against the tribal people. I will just point out one very significant fact. Whereas in the appendix you will find all the Assamese gentlemen, Bengali gentlemen and even insignificant persons who met the Commission have been named, you will find here that not a single leader of the tribals has been named. It says simply tribal leaders. There is a motive behind it. Is it because we are so backward that we do not even deserve to be mentioned by name? Who are these people who met the Commission?—M.Ps., Tribal Minister, M.L.As? Who are they? Who are the leaders? How many are they—two, three, or four? There was no mention of it. We are too backward to be mentioned by names!

Acharya Kripalani: You do not look so backward.

Shri Hynniewta: According to the Parliamentary Delegation we are too backward indeed! The motive behind this very clever omission is to detract from the representative character of the tribal leaders who met the Delegation. We are unanimous in our opposition to the declaration of Assam as the official language of the State. Even the Tribal Minister who had joined the Congress Ministry is with us as far as this question is concerned. But he has not been mentioned. The Tribal Minister of the Assam Cabinet is not an important person to be mentioned by name in the report!

**Shri Amjad Ali:** Did Capt. Williamson Sangma, the Tribal Minister meet the Delegation?

**Shri Hynniewta:** Undoubtedly. Mr. Speaker, you will find one thing more if you go through the report. You will find in paragraphs 16-17 of this report another evidence of the bias of the delegation against the tribal people. It says:

"We understand that all the valleys inhabited by the hill people run from north to south and that there is no inter-communication by road between the different hill districts of Assam."

This is another case of inaccuracy, a mere fabrication. They have not gone to any hill district. They went only to Shillong. They would have gone to the capital of Assam, in any case. It was not a special favour done to us. When they went to Assam they had to go to Shillong because Shillong happened to be the capital of Assam. They must go there anyway. But they never went to any hill district. How did they know this? Were they briefed by the Assam Government? Certainly. Who else? We did not tell them this. The Bengali people did not tell them this. Who told them? Certainly, it must have been the Assam Government and anything said by the Assam Government about us must be taken as a gospel truth. And, Sir, here you find that there is an absolute fabrication.

Certainly, some hill districts have been joined together by roads. If all the hill districts have not been joined by roads, that, Sir, is not our fault. It may be the deliberate policy of the Assam Government not to join us by roads so that in case we demand a separation they can say: "Look here, you are not joined together". I must say that to the credit of the Central Government that crores of rupees have been given to the State Government. But the position is like that. We are not joined with each other. Not only that. They say:

"The division of Assam will result in impecunious small States depending heavily on Central assistance. Such a division will have regrettable repercussions in other areas."

Sir, I do not know whether there is any member of the delegation here in this House.

**An Hon. Member:** Yes, yes.

**Shri Hynniewta:** I do not know Sir, whether they know that our economy has been ruined not by the lack of communications but by the partition of India. We have lost all our markets in East Bengal. Economically we were part of East Bengal, there is no gainsaying that fact. Though economically we were part of East Bengal we never demanded for a moment to be a part of East Pakistan. Our economy has been ruined by the partition. Our people now are suffering like anything. But, because we do not have any Press, we do not have many representatives to voice our grievances here—you have in this House only one young Member who is very very inexperienced in the affairs—

**An Hon. Member:** Very worthy.

**Shri Hynniewta:** Sir, because we do not have a powerful Press to advocate our cause, because we do not have a powerful Government to advocate our cause, every time we are neglected, we are ignored. And, in the Prime Minister's long speech yesterday we found a very very small reference. In this report also we are referred to only when our demand for separation is rejected by the Committee; otherwise, had we not made any demand for separation, I doubt very much whether we will find a place here, just as we have not been able to find a place in the appendix giving the names of persons who interviewed the delegation. We are mentioned here only in order they could throw cold water on our demand.

But, Sir, I will say with all the emphasis at my command that we

[Shri Hynniewta]

shall never accept Assamese as a State language, not because we hate Assamese—we do not hate any language, we do not believe that we should hate any language or any people—but because if we accept Assamese it will mean that we will have to go backward, we shall have to learn four or five languages. We have to learn our mother tongue—my mother tongue is very dear to me. We have to learn Hindi being the *lingua franca* of India. I have to learn English, and in addition to that I will have to learn Assamese—my own mother tongue in Roman script, Hindi in Devangari script and Assamese in Bengal script (*Interruption*). That is a fact I do not think I am wrong. It is a fact Sir, all the time of a tribal—a Khasi or a Garo etc—will be consumed in the learning of languages. You call us backward. We are backward, but in spite of our backwardness you are going to heap so many languages on us.

Sir, the delegation has nothing to say about that contention. They have passed their opinion about anything and everything. They have passed their opinion about the Shillong demonstration. But they have not passed their opinion on such an important contention, such an important demand. We placed our point before them, but they have simply said that the tribal people do not want Assamese. That is all. They have not said even a line, they have not thought even for a moment whether our demand is reasonable or not. Sir, they will mention us only in order to frustrate us, in order to disappoint us.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. Member has to conclude now.

**Shri Hynniewta:** Sir, kindly give me a few more minutes.

**Mr. Speaker:** I have already given him 30 minutes.

**Shri Hynniewta:** I beg to submit, Sir, that I very rarely take the time of the House. I feel so much on

this question because this is a question of my very existence, and, if I am allowed to place my point before the hon. Members of this House I feel, Sir, you have given some consideration to the fact that I am a backward tribal.

Coming to this delegation's report, Sir, I also want to point out that it has suppressed some important facts which are unpalatable to the Commission or to the Assam Government. Whereas they have mentioned the Shillong demonstration, they have never mentioned the fact that an apology was tendered by the organisers of that demonstration. Because the demonstrators did not want any misunderstanding to be created, they said: "In case any such objectionable remark has been made against Assamese language we beg to apologise for the same." This was unconditional. But that fact does not find a place here.

Not only that, Sir, this report is so full of mistakes that it overlooks also one very very significant fact that on the 28th May—it may be May or June, I shall check up the month—there was a meeting held at Shillong in the Central Library Hall of the Assam Government in which a resolution was passed that those areas opposing the declaration of Assamese as the official language should be struck off from the political map of India. That meeting, Sir, was organised by our progressive and advanced brothers, the Assamese-speaking people. In a hall belonging to the State Government of Assam such a reasonable resolution was passed, and that has not been given any mention by this delegation or by the Press. We should certainly take note of that. It is a very serious resolution that areas which oppose the introduction of Assamese as the official language should be struck off from the political map of India. What madness is that? What treason is that. Just because we do not want to accept Assamese, they say 'hat we are no more Indians? I am an Indian because I am a Khasi tribal. You are Indians because you

are Bengalees or Maharashtrians etc. Through our being members of these communities, we become members of the greater family, the Indian nation.

I being a member of a small community am only a small root. The Assamese people are a big branch. But, if you want me to be a part of the tree, you cannot demand that I should cease to become a root and turn into a branch. If you ask me to cease being a Khasi, I cease to become an Indian. That is a fact which I believe every one of us here will admit. These people are so parochial; they are so narrow-minded, that they could not conceive a Khasi being an Indian. The Assamese want us all to accept Assamese as a State language!

At the last conference at Shillong, we have decided unanimously—all the tribal leaders of all shades of political opinion—that rather than accept Assamese as a State language, we prefer to go out of Assam.

In this context, the words of a great poet come to my mind. He said: "Is life so dear and peace so sweet as to be purchased at the cost of slavery and chains. God forbid it. I do not know what course others will take. But as for me, give me liberty or give me death." Give me the liberty to think above all of liberties. That is the greatest liberty. When the British were ruling us, they denied us political rights, but they did not deny us the right to think. But these people are trying to deny us even that right to think through the medium of my mother-tongue, the right to think as I like, and because the Bengali people of Cachar district oppose the introduction of Assamese as a State language, the helpless Bengali people in the Brahmaputra valley must be slaughtered! They outrage the honour of women. I can find a parallel perhaps only in the case of South Africa. I cannot find a parallel elsewhere: that people who have close affinities with each other, from the point of view of their language, from

the point of view of their culture, from the point of view of racial origin, that they should be so mad as to kill each other for the minor differences in language. There are very minor differences between Bengali and Assamese. Just because of the minor differences, they will kill each other and they will outrage the honour of women! This should be seriously taken note of by this House, because it will have repercussions in other parts of the country.

I hung my head in shame when I listened to the Voice of America, and the BBC and other radio stations, when they were broadcasting the fact that we were killing each other on the language issue and that the honour of women was being outraged. I hung my head in shame. Can this House and this country allow these people to go on defaming our country like this? It is not only a question of maintaining peace, but it is a question also of maintaining the honour and reputation of our country.

Lastly, before I sit down, I would remind this House of a certain incident which took place in NEFA. That was in 1953 when a member of the tribal people of that area attacked a contingent of Indian troops. It happened in Achingmori in October, 1953; because these backward tribal dared to attack the Indian troops, immediately the Government ordered a punitive expedition comprising three columns, and immediate action was taken to send those troops to that area. They were flown by air to Daporaja airstrip in the Subansiri Division. They could not wait; immediate action must be taken because these backward tribals dared attack our troops. They never wanted to enquire whether they were under any apprehension of danger, whether they actually stood in danger of something, whether they were under any apprehension of danger. They never stopped to think. Immediately, they sent a punitive expedition there because they attacked our soldiers. But when Bengali

[Shri Hynniewta]

women were forcibly undressed in public and raped, what did the authorities do? They are very reluctant even to appoint a judicial enquiry. If these crimes are committed by tribals, I have no doubt that immediately a punitive expedition will be sent.

I am very proud of the Naga people; not proud of the rebellion against the Government, because I think that is wrong. But I am proud because though they rebelled against the Government and though they attacked the plains people in the Brahmaputra valley, they never perpetrated such a crime on our women folk. Is there a meaner thing for a man to do than to give vent to anger by outraging the honour of women?

I would beg of this House to see that when they consider this language problem in the State of Assam, they will also remember that there are such people as the tribal people in the State of Assam. Please remember that; please remember that we being a small minority, will live always under the hanging sword above us. We have to spend our lives in fighting against exploitation, one form of exploitation or another. We have to fight even for getting promotions in Government service. We have to fight even for getting appointments in Government service. We have to fight in order to protect our lands from acquisition by the Government. We have to fight every inch of our way in order that we might exist. Today, a greater threat has come to us. Our language, our existence, is at stake.

The Prime Minister, on the very first day of his arrival in Assam, without waiting to consult the tribal people and other groups, said immediately, "I am in full agreement with you—that Assamese should be the State language of Assam." At least we expected that such a broad-minded person as he would have the courtesy to consult us first.

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** What followed that statement?

**Shri Hynniewta:** Can I say what followed? So many things followed.

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** No, no. What did I say? When you are quoting me, you are quoting only half a sentence. You are not giving expression to what I said.

**Shri Hynniewta:** You mean that very statement?

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** Yes.

**Shri Hynniewta:** In that very same statement, he said that "you cannot do it by force." Of course, I cannot quote only parts of the speech which are favourable to me. He said, you cannot do it by force. If you cannot do it by force, how can you make Assamese the State language? We are not willing to accept it and you say Assamese must be the State language of Assam. It is only a question of time.

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** I did not say that.

**Shri Hynniewta:** We shall refer to the reports in the newspapers.

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** I said, for you it may be the State language, but not for others. You cannot force it on others. I did not say, for the whole of Assam.

**Shri Hynniewta:** I am very happy. I feel by this statement, the Prime Minister has allayed our fears in this respect. We are very happy. Most of us feel that the person who really takes some interest in our affairs is the Prime Minister. In this particular case thing, if we criticise him for his statement, it does not mean that we criticise every statement of his. I am very happy today. I feel I am under the temptation to resume my seat, because the Prime Minister has allayed most of our fears on his question and

has said that Assamese will be never imposed on us.

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** The hon. Member has referred to an incident in NEFA in 1953. That is an incident which is a very bright incident in the annals of our administration in NEFA, of our gentleness, of our restraint, of our patience and our success ultimately through peaceful methods. That is all I am saying. There was no war or anything. It had nothing to do with the Nagas. This is on the other frontier. A platoon was going for some normal work or something, under a Major. Then, not only unexpectedly, but with some deception, somebody, who was shaving or doing something, was massacred. In spite of this grave provocation, we set about it without any reprisals. He says, we flew troops. Of course, we flew troops. But where we flew troops was a week's march from this place. It takes two weeks for these people to get there. We wanted to save such persons as were not massacred. That is why we flew troops.

**Shrimati Renu Chakravartty** (Basirhat): That is not his point. His point is, why did you not do it as quickly in the case of Assam?

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** There is no question of flying them. Our troops were there and went there, I believe, within 24 hours.

**Shri Bhagavati** (Darrang): Mr. Speaker, Sir, yesterday, Shri Jaipal Singh reminded us that we should not bring in acrimony into this debate. I think he gave a very good piece of advice. I am, however, very much pained that today some of the speakers have said things which are liable to be contradicted in facts and which may unnecessarily rouse passions. Shri Tyagi referred to certain happenings or incidents in Nowgong area. The incidents that are mentioned may or may not be right. But I am afraid we cannot go into individual cases here in this House. If some Member gives certain individual cases here

and puts the blame on others, it is very difficult either to accept or to reject them. So, I think it is better not to go into individual cases, which have not been properly investigated or on which proper judicial verdict has not been passed.

At the very outset, I may say that what happened in Assam was a very bad thing. I am deeply aggrieved at what happened there. As a humble Congress worker, I have been trained from my childhood in the Gandhian way of doing things. I have been noticing for sometime past after independence that in this country, while the battle for independence was fought by non-violent methods, now many people have lost faith in that weapon and have begun to place reliance on violence or coercion. I consider this to be a great tragedy. Sometimes I feel that we have utterly failed to uphold those great principles for which Gandhiji fought and died. I remember to have heard Gandhiji saying that he was prepared to sacrifice even India for the sake of his principles. Now we have degraded ourselves to such an extent that we do not hesitate the sacrifice means for certain ends. That is certainly a very bad symptom.

15.58 hrs.

[DR. SUSHILA NAYAR in the Chair]

What has happened in Assam is, of course, an outward manifestation of this disease. I would appeal to all political parties and the national leaders to find out ways and means as to how to curb this tendency. If we do not curb this tendency for doing things in a violent way, then I am afraid we will lose our democracy and all the political parties will be ineffective. To a limited extent, political parties have proved ineffective in other places also and not only in Assam.

Some hon. Members have said that the political parties in Assam were not functioning properly. I admit

[Shri Bhagavati]

they could not be effective. But I would also request you to see and examine whether the same state of things prevail in other parts of India or not. In certain circumstances, in given conditions, all political leaders have failed. Even the great national leaders have failed. This is a situation which we must be conscious of. We must take a warning from all this. Now, I do not want to make any defence for the violent activities, for the atrocities committed in Assam. They have to be condemned. I do not want to put any defence for the Assam outbreak. We have to decry that and put an end to that.

16 hrs.

Yesterday, Professor Mukerjee quoted a verse, saying what India means. India means the whole country. I can quote another verse that is prevalent in Assam. That will show how the conception of India as a whole is dear and sacred for the people in that part of the country. When somebody dies in a family, there is the Shradh ceremony. In the Shradh ceremony in Assam, I suppose in other parts of the country also, the first pind is given to Bharat as an offering, and the verse is:

एति मन् विशिष्टे पुण्ये भारताक्षे भू प्रदेशे

There is a saying in Assam that a pilgrim cannot get the full benefits of his pilgrimage if he does not go to Pushkar in the west, Rameshwar Setuvandhan in the south, Badrinarayan in the north and Parasuram kund in the east. That means, the whole country is to be surveyed and seen and understood. The great Mahapursha Madaavdev, one of the foremost disciples of Shankardev, in his great Namghosa has similarly referred to India, Bharat, and not to Assam or Kamapuku. So, the idea of India nationalism was innermost in the minds of the people in that part of the country. So, it will be wrong to think

that the Assamese people think in a parochial way, in a provincial way and they do not understand or appreciate Indian nationalism. That is not correct.

Somehow or other this violence broke out. I do not know the reasons or the causes. Some hon. Members have said that language was not the cause. Some hon. Members have said economic reasons were not there. I do not know what were the causes. For every action there must be a cause. Some hon. Members have said that "Bengal Kheda" to drive out the Bengalis was the objective. But that itself is an action, not a cause. So, there must be some other cause. I do not want to go into those causes. Some hon. Members have tabled amendments demanding the institution of a judicial enquiry to find out the causes. Acharya Kripalani said that the root causes as to what lead to this must be found out. Let there be an enquiry committee, I have no objection. Personally I feel that it is better to enter into the whole matter to know the real causes.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, our Prime Minister, has said that there may be two kinds or two categories of enquiries, one local enquiries to find out the culprits and to bring them to book and another kind of enquiry, as envisaged by Acharya Kripalani, to find out the real causes. Let that be done. But I feel the first and foremost thing is the rehabilitation of the displaced persons. That we have to do first. For that, we have to maintain a proper climate. That is very important. If we cannot have a proper climate for the rehabilitation, it will not be successful.

How can we try to achieve it? For that we have to create mutual goodwill. The climate of distrust and suspicion must go. There must be confidence, and that is a very important factor for successful rehabilitation.



I went to Dibrugarh on 16th and 17th August after some incidents there on 14th and 15th. I found some people leaving that place: I tried my best to persuade them not to go out. But I found that there was some sort of suspicion and lack of confidence everywhere. So, our effort now must be to remove that suspicion from the minds of the people—mutual suspicion for petty things. Normally, when such things happen, as for instance when an Assamese boy insults a Bengali boy in a school or *vice-versa* that is not given heed to by others as it is a very small thing. But that itself becomes a very big thing if the situation is not considered normal. Now normalcy has not come. So, some people do not have that sense of security, and very small things create big tension in the minds of people.

So, I suppose our effort should now be to create a proper atmosphere. For creation of that atmosphere big-scale enquiries may not be advisable, as our Prime Minister has said. The Delegation has also given recommendation on that point. I think the recommendation of the Delegation and the viewpoint of the Prime Minister are quite correct, and accordingly we should take steps.

All are agreed that the wrong-doers should be brought to book and punished. For that, this local enquiry may be helpful. If the people will be satisfied if the wrong-doers are brought to book and punished, then they must be punished. There is no doubt about it. So, there should be an enquiry, there should be police investigation, there should be the courts proceedings and these people should be given proper punishment. In that way, the suspicion can be removed. But, there should also be propaganda on good lines. As a matter of fact, the quarrel is between two sections of people in Assam. Shri Bhattacharya said yesterday that the quarrel is between Assamese-speaking Assamese and Bengali-speaking Assamese. I can quite understand and ap-

preciate his viewpoint. That is so. And the West Bengal people have got a right to say something on this matter, only because there has been some pressure on them from Assam as some people have gone there from Assam.

So West Bengal has been in difficulty. They are in difficulty because so many people have come there from East Pakistan. Now they are in difficulty because so many people have gone there from Assam. Accordingly they have a right to say in this matter. We do not deny them this right. As Indians also they have got a right to say as hon. Members now have taken this matter into consideration. But, I think, in doing that we must not in any way exaggerate things or take partisan attitude. We must not say what has not happened and what is not properly investigated into. We must say that much only which is necessary to bring the facts to light. It cannot be denied that certain papers, a section of the press in Calcutta or in Assam, did not give publicity in the right way. Sometimes they try to minimise things and sometimes they exaggerate things. Both the attitudes I think, are wrong. I would appeal to the newspapers and the journalists that they should try to give publicity in a way so that the problem may be solved. We should find out solution and with that end in view we should give publicity. That is very important. The newspapers in India can do a great service for Indian nationalism and for democracy by finding out solutions for such very very difficult problems. They can do that if they examine the whole question from the national viewpoint. When there is a clash of interests between one State and another, provincial papers always try to give the provincial viewpoint. That is only natural. But I request them to see if they can have an all-India arrangement whether all newspaper editors and journalists can meet together and find out ways and means, and frame codes or rules—by which they will give guidance for the manner of pub-

[Shri Bhagavati]

licity in such circumstances. That is very important, I suppose.

Then there is the question of language in Assam. That is a very complicated matter. Shri Hoover Hynniewta has said that the Hill people in Assam are not prepared to accept Assamese. I do not want to impose Assamese on the Hill people. No right thinking Assamese will want to impose anything on the Hill people. That is not the intention. If he reads correctly the resolution of the APCC he will find that there is no question of imposition. That resolution leaves room for adjustment. I hope there is yet time to think and find out a formula which will be acceptable to the Hill people and to the Cachar people as also the Assamese people in the Brahmaputra Valley District. That is not impossible. That is possible.

Shri Hoover Hynniewta had so many complaints against the Assamese people. I only request him to think how we all the brothers in Assam can live happily, amicably and unitedly. If he thinks in terms of disintegration of the State, that, I think, will be bad for the Hill people, for the Assamese people and for Assam. That will not be good for anybody. I know there are sections of people in Assam Valley who now say that if the Hill people want to go, let them go.....

**An Hon. Member:** Assam Tribune has written to that effect.

**Shri Bhagavati:** ...if the Cachar people want to go, let them go. But that is not the proper way of looking at things. That is not a right thing to do. I think we must find out certain acceptable formula. That is not impossible. The language problem must be solved. There was a very difficult problem for the Government of India to solve—I mean the problem of Hindi. It was really a very difficult problem. I was in the Committee of Parliament on Official Language and I know how hon. Members from Mad-

ras and West Bengal felt on this subject. It was a very, very difficult problem to solve, but under the Chairmanship of Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant it was possible to arrive at a certain solution. We arrived at a solution. In that way I think we may arrive at a certain solution in the case of Assam. May I ask Mr. Hoover Hynniewta. Why should we be so angry? Why should we feel that we cannot come to a certain agreement? We can.

Certain bad things have happened. Certain violence has been done. Certain people have done wrong things. For that, we cannot condemn all the people of Assam. For that, we cannot put a halt to the progress of Assam for all time to come. That would be a wrong thing. These disturbances have caused enormous damage to Assam as a whole. Our relations with West Bengal have been deteriorating. That itself is a very bad thing. We must have good relations with West Bengal for our economic upliftment, for our business relations and other things. We must have very good relations. Calcutta depends on Assam in so many ways. I know Calcutta has so much business in Assam. If Assam's business is cut away, Calcutta will be poorer. In that way, Assam will be poorer if Assam cannot have proper business connections, industrial connection and other connection with Calcutta. That is the route through which we can come. Our students are studying there. It will be wrong to think that these bad relations should continue. I am wholly opposed to this. I think good relations with West Bengal must be restored. I would appeal to the people of West Bengal and the West Bengal leaders to see that good relations are again restored. This has to be dealt with in that way.

In Assam, things have come round. I hope everything will be all right in a short time. There was a bad time. Bad memory may linger. But I hope, if we all view things in proper way,

in a very short time, again, we will feel that we are all members of the same nation, citizens of the same country and we can pull together. That is very important.

As regards the Assam Census, so many things have been said. It has been said that certain manipulations were made in the 1931 census, because figures of Assamese-speaking people rose from about 19 lakhs to 50 lakhs. I do not think that it was a manipulation. Certain people were not shown as Assamese-speaking in the 1931 census. That mistake was corrected in 1951. So, there are no manipulations. It cannot be said that there was any manipulation. In the 1881 census, there were about 14 lakhs of Assamese-speaking people in Assam. In 1931, Assamese-speaking people became 19 lakhs. For all these years from 1881 to 1931, only about 5 lakhs of Assamese-speaking people have increased. This cannot be right. According to the census expert there is at least 10 per cent or 15 per cent natural increase. Within these years, from 1881 to 1931, the Assamese people must have been 27 lakhs or so.

**Raja Mahendra Pratap:** On a point of order, I am not going to speak, I only beg to say that the question should not be between Assam and Bengal, but between goodness and evil. There are evil men on both sides. One more point....

**Mr. Chairman:** It is not a point of order, I am sorry. The hon. Member Shri Bhagwati may conclude his remarks.

**Shri Bhagavati:** The census cannot be said to be manipulated. That allegation, I think, is not correct. Then, again, we are having another census in the near future. Why should we bother about so much about the 1951 census. I do not see. The Assamese people are in a majority in Assam, that cannot be denied. By no figures, calculation or device, can we reduce the Assamese people to a minority. It will not be good, it will not be pro-

per to think about it, and that is not the proper way of putting things. In that way, the feelings of the Assamese people are also hurt. When it is said that Assam is a multi-lingual State, that the Assamese are not in a majority, their sentiment is hurt. They say: "In our own homes we have been reduced to such a plight, we cannot claim anything, we cannot say anything." That feeling, I think, we should not raise.

Lastly, I would like to say that in Assam the historical process of assimilation of different people has been going on. The problem of India was solved to a certain extent in Assam by the historical process of assimilation of people. That process must go on. That process is beneficial to the country as a whole. Assam has given place to so many people from different parts of the country. I think that Assam's problems should be understood, and hon. Members and Government should try to understand them. That part of the country was neglected very badly in the past, in British times. The hill people were neglected. Manipur, Tripura, Cachar and Assam and even West Bengal at present in a very bad plight. They are neglected in so many ways. So, I hope Government will pay attention to these problems, try to understand and solve them.

**Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kanpur):** The time may be extended up to 6 o'clock if you agree. I think the House will agree.

**Mr. Chairman:** This will be decided later.

**Shrimati Manjula Devi (Goalpara):** I stand before you with a heavy heart, full of grief for the tragedy of Assam. I convey to the House the regrets of Assam for the misdeeds of the past. It is true that the sober section of Assam, the intellectual section, the intelligent section, the common man and the tiller of the soil of Assam are sorry for the misdeeds. I have gone with them to the places of occurrence, I have seen them shed

[Shrimati Manjula Devi]

tears and weep for the sorrows of their brothers and sisters of the neighbouring State. I have seen it myself.

It is not my intention to go into the question who did what, when and where. The Parliamentary delegation has investigated the matter, it has gone deep into the question, it has left no stone unturned. I am grateful to the Parliamentary delegation for the report which is an impartial one, and I fully support the recommendations made by the delegation. My immediate concern is rehabilitation, to bring the poor people, the victims of these riots back to their homes, to bring peace and tranquillity, and to bring security to the minds of these people. That is the sole aim and object that is before us. I seek the help of all here, especially so, the brothers and sisters from our neighbouring State, Bengal.

Before I proceed further, I want to make it very clear that I cannot bring myself to think of India in little bits, in little isolated bits of provinces or States. I think of India as one whole unit. Every person coming from any part of India, or any part of a State, is a part of this unit. As such, I proceed with my outlook of unity.

The problem that faces us is not only of Assam but of India. It is a national problem. If this problem is not solved, it may lead to international implications. I say international implications, because the situation is such that we have to go thoroughly into this question.

The responsibility of restoration of peace in Assam, of course, lies on Assam, but as Members of Parliament, it is for us all; the responsibility lies on all of us to bring a cordial atmosphere into this question. There is an imperative need for a calm atmosphere and a friendly feeling. I seek the help, may, even implore the co-operation of our Bengali friends to help us to bring about this friendly

atmosphere. I specially invite the press to help us in this matter. It is for the press to make or mar, to construct or destroy. It is for them to help us. I hope they would come forward and help in the construction of the lost homes of these poor victims. There is no end to contradictions. There is no end to the blaming of each other about this matter and that. But I beseech all to forget the differences and keep the objective in view, namely of bringing peace to the country. I want Bengal to wholeheartedly help.

There are certain speeches about enquiries, judicial and otherwise. It is not that Assam is against any enquiries. On the other hand, Assam would have appreciated and welcomed these enquiries, because Assam would like to eliminate the goonda elements.

As you know, the people of Assam are friendly, and they do not like these riots, and the entire Assam is not behind these.

Central intervention or President's rule is another suggestion made by certain Members. But how could President's rule or Central intervention solve the problem? The people have to live with us, and the refugees who have gone back, have to regain the confidence from the people of Assam. Central intervention is an external effort. It is not the external effort but it is the internal endeavour that would help in the matter. External enforcement such as a judicial enquiry would not help in the matter as much as we think it would. The Assam Government should come forward for these enquiries, and we want that the ringleaders should be rounded up, and we want that the element of rowdiness should be eliminated from Assam. Assam is not against it. We look forward to it. But this is no time for it. When a storm blows over the place, what do we do? We gather the scattered things, we build up the houses and

we keep things in place. In the same way, we should look at this situation. When the storm has blown over, the first objective is to bring back these people to their homes, to help them and try to bring back a peace and tranquillity and security to their homes.

To do that, I need the help of all of you. I have just returned from Assam, day before yesterday, I had been to those places. I met the people. Most of the agriculturists have come back, and they are trying to find a means of livelihood. The Government has been helping them with money and means. But more money is required. Certain financial assistance and material resources are urgently necessary. I hope the Centre would come forward to help Assam. I know it is Assam's duty and Assam's responsibility. But Assam cannot meet the full demand of this situation. I hope that the Centre would come forward and help.

I went to Dubapara and the rehabilitation centre there. I have seen that most of the houses have been constructed. I have seen people making mats, which are called *pa'i doi*. It is a sort of cane available in the forest. They want more supplies of that. Supplies are available in Cachar and Tinsukia. I want that the Assam Government should make it available for these people so that they can make a living out of it and tide over this period of inactivity. If this help is given for a couple of months or three months, I am sure they will be on their feet again.

With regard to the people who have left their homes and have not come back, I had talks with the local people. They are willing, not only willing, they are sorry, they are ashamed of what had happened, although they had not taken part in these riots, they had written letters to these people to come back and they have sent men for the purpose. I encountered one boy who had come back

from the camps in Bengal. I asked him whether he found everything all right. He said, 'Yes'. He was going back in a couple of days to bring back his mother. If one family comes, others would follow. For this, we must help to create confidence in these people in the camps.

Rehabilitation does not mean just giving of doles and money and forgetting all about it. Rehabilitation must mean social, economic and psychological security. This must be assured to them. It is not a question of giving away doles. On the other hand, it has a demoralising effect—just giving doles without employment. We should see that employment is there and the people are properly rehabilitated in every aspect.

I want you to give sympathetic consideration to the Assamese. I am not unholding the violence that has taken place. I only want to go into the cause and I only want a sympathetic understanding of the situation. It is a great pity, first of all—that is how I find it—that violence has been introduced to the lives of these young students. It is one calamity in Assam. When the refugees from Pakistan started flooding Assam, there was no proper planning and there was no programme of distributing the influx of refugees. The whole lot of them came there and had there been proper planning of distribution of the refugees in different parts, in other States also, then there could not have been this complete breakdown—economic breakdown. Sometimes it creeps into my mind the thought that perhaps we are responsible for these frustrations and there frustrations have caused disturbance. The Central Government is the making of this Parliament and had we given serious consideration to this matter of rehabilitation of these people, perhaps the trouble would not have arisen. They were given some doles and lethargy was introduced in them. They ate and spent away the money and there was no employment. Take

[Shrimati Manjula Devi]

the Railways, for instance. Wherever we go, we see the people of the particular region employed. But in Assam you cannot see a single Assamese in the Railway. Whose fault is it. It comes back to us again. These are the little points which we had ignored to consider and then frustration begins to show its head. I am not saying that these people were right to take to violence and do these things.

**Mr. Chairman:** You speak in such a low tone that nobody hears you.

**Shrimati Manjula Devi:** I shall take a few more minutes. As the President of the Mahila Samiti, the one women's organisation in Assam, representing all sections of women of Assam, I will be failing in my duty if I do not offer my apologies for the insults to the women. The women of Assam are deeply pained by these insults to these Bengali sisters. It does not matter whether it is a single case or a thousand cases. The insults to the Bengali sisters in an insult against us, the women of Assam. I hope that our sincere apologies would be accepted and I ask the help of the Bengali sisters to come forward and to help us in bringing confidence to these people—the refugees and poor sufferers. I want to tell our friends here that this no time for quarrel or arguments. It is for us to come together and work for the welfare of the people. I also seek the help of the hill tribes there, who so eloquently voiced their objection to these insults to the womanhood. I seek their help to come forward and rehabilitate them and bring confidence into their minds so that they may feel that they are citizens of India and citizens of Assam. It is that assurance that they want. I know the Assamese people are simple and straightforward and if some wrong elements tempted them to do the wrong, they are sorry for it . . . (Interruptions).

**Mr. Chairman:** I cannot hear you. I do not know how many are able to follow what you speak.

**Shrimati Manjula Devi:** Assam is bleeding and I must give the message

of Assam. It is crying for self-expression.

**Mr. Chairman:** But speak a little louder so that people can hear you.

**Shrimati Manjula Devi:** I want to know why in every disturbance or riot or communal trouble, our women should be insulted. Our scriptures say that women should be adored and respected. It is in the western culture also to respect the women. But why should the women bear the brunt of all these indignities? What dignity is there for our independence? Is this the dignity of our independence? It is besmeared with mud, and we are ashamed to lift our faces before the world when our women are insulted. It is not only in Assam, at every place where there is trouble, where there is rioting we see that a woman comes into the picture and that helpless being is insulted. I hope, Madam, this thing will no longer happen.

Now, before I take my seat I want to make one more point. I want the Home Minister to convene a conference in Assam immediately after this Session with the help of the Assam Members of Parliament and the members of the Legislative Assembly there to chalk out a programme of rehabilitation. We want to start district by district. Each Member of Parliament should take charge of a district. I want the Bengal Government to depute an officer to send the refugees in batches and the officers in Assam should receive them. They will be kept for a week in a transit camp and from there they will be taken to their homes. I was given an assurance that within a week's time the houses would be constructed. Then, the Deputy Commissioner's of those six districts must be of impartial mentality, they should be neither Bengalis nor Assamese.

Madam, the Assam Government's document is here. I hope all hon. Members have gone through it. If

they have not done so, I hope it will be circulated. They are taking strong steps to see that the people are given protection and no such occurrences take place. They have also said that proper action would be taken and proper rules would be framed against students. There is no time for me to go through the whole of it, but I can give this to those hon. Members who are interested to go through it. Although the Government of Assam was late in taking action, now they are determined to put an end to this nonsense.

Madam, I want that this sort of controversial agitations and linguistic troubles should end. To put an end to such troubles, if necessary we should make certain amendments to the Constitution on the language issue. If necessary, all the States should be abolished and zones should be set up. If that is the only way to do away with all this provincialism, I would welcome even such a step because we cannot go on like this, with this sort of narrow provincialism, these linguistic troubles, these outcries against each other which kill the very root of our nationalism.

**Mr. Chairman:** I have to make an announcement. The Speaker has been pleased to say that the House has been extended till 6.00 P.M. to give chance to the several speakers who wish to speak on this subject. It is at the desire of the House that this time has been extended.

16.44 hrs.

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#### BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE FIFTY-FIFTH REPORT

**Shri Rane (Buldana):** Madam Chairman, I beg to present the fifty-fifth Report of the Business Advisory Committee.

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#### MOTION RE: SITUATION IN ASSAM—contd.

**Shri Mohammed Imam (Chitaldrug):** Madam Chairman, I belong

neither to Assam nor to Bengal, and therefore I am not guided by passions or prejudices. My main concern is the unity of India, unity of the nation and the safety of the minorities. It is agreed that the recent happenings in the valley of Brahmaputra on a widespread scale constitutes a dark episode in the history of independent India. There is evidence that the people of India speaking different languages, professing different ideologies and religions, are incapable of living together and co-exist, in spite of the fact that our country has taken a lead in teaching the doctrine of co-existence to the rest of the world.

Assam and Bengal exist side by side. Assamese speaking people and the Bengali speaking people have lived together for generations. Still, they are not in a position to reconcile themselves to each other, nor are they in a position to trust each other. Provincialism and fanaticism are growing rapidly and people of one group or one section do not hesitate to indulge in large scale devastation involving loss of life and loss of property, against the other.

A Parliamentary delegation visited this area and held a *post-mortem* examination and submitted their report to Parliament. The facts mentioned therein, their narration, clearly vindicate the demand for an enquiry, an enquiry by a high court judge, a judicial enquiry. Such an enquiry is absolutely necessary to restore confidence among those who have evacuated the State which they considered till now as their home. The facts are obvious and they cannot be denied. More than 10,000 houses were either burnt or looted or destroyed. Scores of lives were lost. People ran in panic to take shelter in the forests. Law and order broke down. Government could not function, and was entirely helpless to protect the minorities. The officers, either through local prejudice or passion, could not function as effectively as they ought to have.