

[Translation]

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA (South Delhi): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, 200 people have been killed. Where will we discuss this issue? 200 people are killed here and we cannot ask even a question here.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can choose another forum.

[Translation]

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: Please tell me about it. There is no elected body in Delhi 200 people have been killed. I have a list of 31 persons.....

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Rule is very clear.

[Translation]

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: You have the right to suspend the Rule. I will ask only two questions. Where should we ask the questions then?

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: He cannot by pass the Rule. You can ask for a discussion under Rule 193. Let us follow the well-established Rule.

[Translation]

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: Please allow a discussion on this issue.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is up to you. You can give a notice.

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: I have already given a notice.

[English]

(II) **Situation arising out of Recent Communal violence at Varanasi(U.P.)**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M.M. JACOB): According to the information received from the State Government, the communal trouble at Varanasi started in the evening of 8 November, 1991 during a traditional religious procession for immersion of Kali idols. Clashes between the two communities broke out following an accidental injury to a person of another community from the fire crackers let off during the procession. Anti-social elements took advantage of the resentment generated by this incident to start looting and arson. Rumour-mongering by these elements led to incidents of brick-batting and stabbing between the two communities. Some persons coming out of a cinema hall also fell prey to this violence. These clashes resulted in the death of eight persons; four died on the spot and four succumbed to their injuries later in the hospital. Nine persons were injured. Some shops suffered minor damage due to arson. Senior officers reached the spot on receiving information of the disturbances and brought the situation under control. Curfew was imposed in the areas of eight police stations as a precautionary measure.

The curfew was gradually relaxed from 11 November, 1991. However, violence erupted again on 13 November, 1991 when some people attacked the passengers of a tempo in Madanpura locality with knives and scissors; one woman was killed and 4 persons were injured. In Mohalla Jangabadi, a crowd belonging to one community collected and started shouting provocative slogans. In Mohalla Sunarpura and Revdi Talab, four incidents of stabbing took place. A bomb was also thrown at ADM (city) and SP (city)

due to which one Orderly was hurt. During these fresh incidents, 7 persons were killed and 11 injured. Thereafter the process of arrests and searches was intensified.

According to the State Government, the curfew was tightened and the police also undertook house to house searches to unearth illicit arms, ammunition and explosives. The police have so far arrested 617 persons of which 302 belong to one community and 315 to the other community.

In all, 17 persons lost their lives and 26 persons received injuries during this period. Of the persons killed, one person who was in police custody died in a hospital; the DM Varanasi had ordered a magisterial inquiry into this death.

Police pickets have been set up in Varanasi city and intensive patrolling continues. At present, there are 13 companies of P.A.C. and 6 companies of CRPF deployed in the city. No untoward incident has been reported since 18 November 1991. The State authorities have informed that ex-gratia grant @ Rs. 20,000/- each to the next of the kin of the persons killed in communal violence, Rs.4,000/- each to those seriously injured, and Rs.1,000/- each to those who received minor injuries is being paid.

All necessary help and assistance has been provided by the Central Government to the State. Five additional companies of CRPF were provided to the State on 15 November, 1991. The State Government have reported that situation is under control and the curfew has been gradually relaxed. Curfew passes have been given in deserving cases, including to all MPs and MLAS.

The Central Government is resolved to maintain communal peace and harmony in the country. Law & Order is a State subject; however, the Centre has from time to time issued guidelines to the States for the promotion of communal harmony. It also shares its intelligence with the States and provides central forces when necessary. In recent weeks, it has been alerting the States about

the possibility of communal violence in different places. To improve the communal climate a meeting of the National Integration Council was convened on the 2nd November, 1991 to discuss the issue of Communal Harmony in the context of the Ram Janma Bhumi-Babri Masjid issue. The NIC called upon all concerned to act with restraint and in a manner that will promote harmony and goodwill among all communities.

I have conveyed to the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh the anxiety expressed by the members over the situation in Varanasi and the manner in which it was permitted to develop. I drew his attention to the points which particularly agitated the members and requested him to furnish full information on these points. I also suggested to the Chief Minister to seriously consider the suggestion of holding a Judicial Inquiry into the incidents. I am pleased to report to the House that the Chief Minister informed me today that the State Government has ordered a Judicial Inquiry in respect to the communal incidents at Varanasi.

(iii) Gold Transactions

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH): On 18th July, 1991, I had made a suo-moto statement on gold transactions before this august House. I had explained how our Government, on taking office was faced with a Balance of Payments crisis of an unprecedented nature. I had spelt out in detail that the previous Government, had taken a decision to send abroad 20 tonnes of gold out of Government stocks with an option to repurchase it at the end of six months. The actual export of this gold took place between 21st and 31st May, 1991. I had also mentioned that the previous Government had agreed with the decision of the Reserve Bank of India to send abroad upto 15 per cent of its gold to be kept in safe custody with a Central Bank, with the intention to seek a short term loan against the pledge of gold. Because of the crisis situation on the Balance of Payments, our government endorsed this decision and RBI sent abroad the gold out of its reserves