

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA : The constitution of Planning Boards or Planning Committees at the State-level is in no way going to affect the financial relationship between the Central Government and the State Governments.

SHRI S. RADHAKRISHNAN : In view of the fact that the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu in his press conference on March 16 has said that the D.M.K. will urge the Centre for a State Planning Board for proper economic and industrial growth of Tamil Nadu and for decentralisation of licensing powers now accumulated with the Centre, may I ask the hon. Minister whether such formation of Planning Boards at the State level will in any way affect the federal and financial relationship with the Centre and also whether any guide-lines have been laid down in this regard.

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA : The guide-lines have already been laid down according to the Report of the Administrative Reforms Commission about the machinery for planning. I do not think there will be any conflict between the Central Government and the State Governments because they are governed not by creation of Planning Boards and Planning Committees but by the provision in the Constitution.

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY : We have got the Planning Commission in Delhi at the Centre. If we are going to have another Planning Commission in Tamil Nadu, there is going to be some sort of confusion. May I know whether the Government of India will advise the Tamil Nadu Government to call their planning body either as a Planning Board or a Planning Committee. They are opposing even the Hindi version of the designations of Ministers here. Can't the Government of India advise them they should not call their planning body as the Planning Commission and that they should call it as a Planning Board or a Planning Committee ?

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA : The State Government of Tamil Nadu is absolutely within its competence to call it as a State Planning Board or a State Planning Commission or a State Planning Committee. I think, we have no right to interfere in that way.

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY : There will be two Planning Commissions then.

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA : That is a State Planning Commission; ours is a National Planning Commission.

SHRI K SURYANARAYANA : As my hon. friend, Shri S. Radhakrishnan, mentioned, the Government of Tamil Nadu requested the Government of India to approve of their appointing their own Planning Commission. If that is so, what is the reaction of the Government of India thereto ?

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA : I have stated in my reply that full details have been sought from the State Government and they are awaited.

Monopoly Hold of Big Business Houses on Newspaper

*66. **SHRI BALATHANDAYUTHAM :** Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SOOCHANA AUR PRASARAN MANTRI) be pleased to state :

(a) the extent of monopoly hold of big business houses on newspapers in the country ; and

(b) the steps, if any, taken by Government to end this monopoly ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SOOCHANA AUR PRASARAN MANTRALAYA MEN RAJYA MANTRI) (SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY) : (a) According to the Registrar of Newspapers Annual Report "Press in India" published in 1970, there were 65 common ownership units owing 222 news-interest newspapers (including 170 dailies) at the end of 1969. As against this, there were 3,739 news-interest newspapers (including 702 dailies) in existence at the end of 1969. During the year 1969, the total circulation of all newspapers and periodicals stood at about 270 lakh copies, of which 62.72 lakh copies or 23.3% was accounted for by news-interest newspapers of common ownership units.

(b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House setting out the steps taken so far by this Ministry contain the growth of monopolies in the Indian Press.

Statement

(a) Government is fully alive to the danger of concentration of ownership in the newspaper industry which may result in regimentation of thought and opinion and is anxious to prevent such developments as far as practicable. Towards this end, the following steps have been taken :—

- (i) The Press Registrar makes an annual review of the ownership of newspapers and periodicals, and studies the development of common ownership units and publishes them in a publication called "Press in India", so that the public may become aware of the facts relating to the ownership of newspapers.
- (ii) Under the Registration of Newspapers (Central) Rules, 1956 framed under the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867, it is obligatory for newspapers to publish annually in the first issue after the last day of February information, *inter alia*, relating to the individuals who own the newspaper and partners or shareholders holding more than one per cent of the total share capital. Failure to comply with this statutory obligation is an offence under the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867 which is punishable with fine which may extend to Rs. 500/-.
- (iii) Under the Newsprint Allocation Policy, additional newsprint is not issued to a group or chain of newspapers for bringing out a fresh publication.
- (iv) On the recommendation of the Diwakar Committee, of the total annual foreign exchange made available for printing and composing machinery 50% is allotted to small newspapers (up to 15,000 circulation), 35% to medium newspapers (circulation 15,000—50,000) and only 15% is allotted to big newspapers (circulation over 50,000).
- (v) Government's advertisement policy aims at staggering and releasing advertisements to newspapers in suitable rotation in

order to ensure the use of as many papers as possible so that papers with a big circulation do not get a large share of Government's advertisements. It is the policy of Government to make increasing use of small and medium newspapers, particularly those published in Indian languages.

- (vi) With a view to obtaining first-hand and detailed factual information regarding the methods of unfair competition and/or restrictive practices, if any, adopted by the larger newspapers to suppress, weaken and eliminate the smaller ones about which there are often complaints, a sub-committee, set up by the Press Council, invited specific information and instances by a letter addressed to newspapers and periodicals in all languages having a paid circulation of 5,000 copies and above. In reply, only ten dailies and four weeklies mentioned specific cases of what they considered restrictive practices indulged in by bigger papers. The Council is currently pursuing the enquiry by collecting further information regarding instances of restrictive practices.
- (vii) Government are considering the question of setting up a Newspaper Finance Corporation to give financial assistance to small and medium newspapers and not to big newspapers, to help the healthy growth of the former.
- (viii) (a) Government are of the view that but for the steps taken by the Government so far the growth of big chain newspapers would have been more than what it has been. It is not, however, possible to estimate the extent to which steps already taken by Government have been effective. Government believe that the best way to check the growth of big chain newspapers is to foster the growth of small and medium newspapers which are managed on healthy lines

and follow an enlightened editorial policy keeping the national interests in view. Government are confident that the steps already taken and the further steps to be taken in the matter will effectively foster the growth of small and medium newspapers and thereby check the growth of big chain newspapers.

- (viii) (b) As recommended by the Diwaker Committee on Small Newspapers, Government have started a slow speed news bulletin over the All India Radio which purveys important news, particularly for use by small and medium newspapers who, due to financial reasons, are not in a position to subscribe to the service of news agencies.

A departmental study of the ownership pattern of the companies publishing newspapers has been instituted by the Department of Company Affairs.

SHRI BALATHANDAYUTHAM : Is the Government aware that the Press Commission report was given in 1954 and in 1956 a price page schedule was ordered and that Supreme Court struck it down and there were the other two recommendations namely diffusion of ownership, and to make Public Corporations of PTI and UNI ? If the Government is aware of all these things, will the Government let us know as to why they dropped the same like not potatoes and on what grounds ? Further, I want to know whether the Government consider the steps they have detailed in the statement as adequate to deal with this kind of monopoly ? Are they going to give milk to the snake which has bitten them recently ?

SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY : I admit that the steps taken by the Government to restrain the monopoly in the Press are not adequate. Even then we believe that we should help the small newspapers and that is, in a positive way, restraining the monopoly of the big newspapers. Moreover a departmental study of the ownership pattern of the companies publishing newspapers has been instituted by the Department of Company Affairs.

SHRI BALATHANDAYUTHAM : Is the Government considering any structural change in the monopoly ownership of newspapers ? Are they contemplating anything in this regard, since they think that the steps are not adequate ? I want an assurance.

SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY : This is under the study of the Department of Company Affairs and we are expecting their recommendations. Only after that can we take some decision about this.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH : Is the Government aware of the fact that many of the restrictions imposed by the Government in order to curb the monopoly in the chain of newspapers are sought to be circumvented by resorting to acquire large number of advertisements at the cost of small news papers and also trying to starve the small newspapers with such unhealthy competition ? If so, I want to know whether the Government proposes to set up a Newspaper Finance Corporation so as to give the necessary help to the small newspapers and the language newspapers and also see that the advertisements will not unduly be given for the benefit of the big newspapers.

SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY : Government is contemplating to bring in this Newspaper Finance Corporation Bill during this session. The advertisement policy of the Government is under review.

SHRIMATI LAKSHMIKANTHAMMA : May I know whether the Sookhna and Prasaran Mantri is aware that apart from the Monopoly Commission's report, even late Panditji was very much perturbed at the way that the monopoly hold was going on the newspapers in the country, which was detrimental and dangerous to the functioning of democracy ? May I know whether Government have noticed the way that there papers mislead the public and give wrong information during all these days ? If so, may I know whether Government contemplate to have partial control or socialisation of the press ?

SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY : Government are quite aware of the role of the press, and as I have already mentioned, we are studying the common ownership pattern.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : अध्यक्ष महोदय, समाचार पत्रों पर एकाधिकार को समाप्त करने के साथ-साथ क्या सरकार प्राल इडिया रेडियो पर जो उस का एकाधिकार है उस को समाप्त करने के बारे में भी विचार करेगी ? ..(ब्यवधान)...

SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSI : This is not relevant to the main question. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI PILOO MODY : Sensitive consciences will always react.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : अध्यक्ष महोदय, आप को स्मरण होगा...(ब्यवधान)...

MR. SPEAKER : The hon. Member may ask a separate question on it.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : समाचार पत्र भी खबरें देते हैं, जनता तक पहुंचते हैं, जनता के दिमाग बनाते हैं, और इन की मोनोपली को कंट्रोल करने का उद्देश्य यही है कि एक तरह की खबरें लोगों के पास न पहुंचे और उन के दृष्टिकोण को विकृत न किया जाय ।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आप अलग प्रश्न इस के लिए पूछ लें ।

SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSI : One leading newspaper in West Bengal, namely the *Dainik Basumati* has been completely closed and the employees are already having a life of starvation. May I know whether any memorandum has been received by the Government from the employees of "*Basumati*" and if so, the measures taken by Government in this regard ?

SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY : That is not related to the main question. I would require separate notice of that question.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : I am the president of the PTI Federation, and so, I would like to ask this question. In reply to an earlier question, an assurance was given

by the then Minister in this Ministry, namely Shri I. K. Gujral that necessary steps would be taken after a proper investigation and on the basis of the Press Commission's report to convert the PTI into a public corporation. I would like to know what has happened to that, and why it is not being done ? The PTI is also controlled by the same press magnates as other newspapers.

MR. SPEAKER : The main question relates only to newspapers and not to news agencies.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : The PTI is also a news agency controlled by the monopoly press.

MR. SPEAKER : The main question relates only to newspapers and not to news agencies.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : After all, what is the PTI ? ..

MR. SPEAKER : If I disallow Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee's question, then I have to disallow the hon. Member's question also.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : He had shifted his question to AIR. but I am still with the press only ..

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : You may be pleased to allow both the supplementary questions.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : You may disallow both the questions.

SHRI PILOO MODY : I notice that this bogey of monopoly in the press is being raised from time to time with a very sinister purpose. If you are even a casual reader of the Indian press, you will find that the only monopoly that is exercised in the press is exercised by the Prime Minister because nearly 80 per cent of the press is singing her praises day in and day out...

MR. SPEAKER : The hon. Member may please be relevant to the main question.

SHRI PILOO MODY : I was under the impression that we were discussing the question of monopoly in the press.

MR. SPEAKER : We are not discussing anything. The hon. Member has only to ask a question.

SHRI PILOO MODY : Therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whose title or designation I cannot conceivably pronounce, what steps Government will take to separate the press and re-establish its independence from the various governmental organisations which have taken a stifle-hold over the entire press and particularly the journalists.

SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY : The press in this country is absolutely free and Government has no control over it. Whenever the press seeks any help from Government, the Government is there to help it, but it is wrong to say that Government has got any hold over the press or is influencing it in any way.

SHRI ANANTRAO PATIL : During the last four years, Government has not taken any concrete steps to curb monopoly in the press. Now the Minister has replied by saying that by giving help to small and medium-size newspapers, we will be able to contain monopolistic tendencies. But experience has been quite the contrary. By merely giving help to small and medium-size newspapers, we are not going to curtail monopolistic tendencies which are on the increase. Does Government contemplate the appointment of a Commission to inquire into monopolistic tendencies in the press ?

SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY : I have replied to this ; I have said that the matter is under study by the Company Affairs Department.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE : Does Government accept that notwithstanding these steps, the pernicious and malicious stranglehold of monopoly in Indian newspapers continues unabashed ? If so, and if the public trust form of management and ownership for the Indian press is accepted, what prevents Government from bringing forward legislation to curb outright and once for all, the stranglehold of monopoly on the Indian press ?

SHRI PILOO MODY : Nationalise the press.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE : To effect this, there is already provision in the Companies Act. All that is needed is to improve the Companies Act in that respect. Why is that

not being done and we are proceeding in an extremely lamentably slow manner in this direction ?

SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY : When the whole question is under Government's study, I do not like to comment on that.

SHRI PILOO MODY : Nationalise the press.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD : Socialise it.

SHRI S. A. MURUGANANTHAM : Why is it that Government is not implementing the Report of the Newspaper Monopolies Commission of 1954 ?

SHRI PILOO MODY : That was before her time.

SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY : There is was no Monopoly Commission on the Press.

SHRI RAMAVATAR SHASTRI : He means the Press Commission.

SHRI R. K. SINHA : Is Government aware that the working journalists in their conference in Ahmedabad came out with certain formulations for an independent, free press in India ? The monopoly press in India has become a branch of bigger industry in the country. Will Government really free the press from this stranglehold of the monopoly press ? The poison gas that was generated during the days of the split in the Indian National Congress, at the time of the Presidential election and at the time of the nationalisation of the banking industry should open the eyes of Government and it should come out with autonomous press corporations controlled by the people of India and not by the strangulating monopolists.

THE PRIME MINISTER, MINISTER OF ATOMIC ENERGY, MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (PRADHAN MANTRI, PARAMANU URJA MANTRI, GRIH MANTRI TATHA SOOCHANA AUR PRASARAN MANTRI) (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI) : The hon. Member has pointed out how the press

behaved. But we should also be aware of the reaction of the public to such behaviour.

**Advertisements by Foreign Countries
in Indian Newspapers**

*68. SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SOOCHANA AUR PRASARAN MANTRI) be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have any control over the advertisements given by foreign countries to the Indian newspapers ; and

(b) the amount spent by foreign countries on advertisements in the Indian newspapers in 1969 and 1970 ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SOOCHANA AUR PRASARAN MANTRALAYA MEN RAJYA MANTRI) (SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY) : (a) The Government of India has framed rules under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1961, laying down norms for the issue of publicity material by foreign missions in India. There is, however, no law or regulation preventing a foreign mission or a foreign country from giving an advertisement in an Indian newspaper.

(b) The information is not available.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA : Would the Government be pleased to say whether they keep track of the advertisements given by foreign agencies or foreign Governments to the Indian newspapers, whether they have any means of keeping track of the advertisements that are being given to the Indian newspapers ?

SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHI : As far as this Ministry is concerned, we do not have any means to find out from the foreign Embassies what advertisements they give the Indian papers.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA : Then, may I ask as a corollary, whether Government does not think that it might well constitute a threat to the internal security of the country as it did in Ceylon an extent, and also it might amount to an interference in the internal affairs of the

country through identification with certain political parties which these advertisements seek to help.

SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHI : In fact, the External Affairs Ministry keep track, and whenever there is any advertisement which is against the interests of the country, they call the particular Embassy people and launch a protest.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : अध्यक्ष जी, यह प्रश्न पहले भी उठा था और यह सुझाव दिया गया था कि सभी विदेशी दूतावासों से कहा जाये कि उन्हें समाचार-पत्रों को जो विज्ञापन देने हों वह इन्फार्मेशन एण्ड ब्रॉडकास्टिंग मिनिस्ट्री के थ्रू जाने चाहिए । मैं जानना चाहता हूँ क्या सरकार ने इस सुझाव पर विचार किया ? अनेक विदेशी दूतावास समाचार पत्रों में भारी-भारी विज्ञापन देकर न केवल समाचार-पत्रों को प्रभावित ही कर रहे हैं बल्कि वे देश के जनमत को भी एक विशेष दिशा में मोड़ने का प्रयत्न कर रहे हैं । तो सरकार के सामने क्या कठिनाई है विदेशी दूतावासों से यह कहने में कि आपके सारे विज्ञापन इन्फार्मेशन एण्ड ब्रॉडकास्टिंग मिनिस्ट्री के जरिए जायेंगे ?

श्रीमती नन्दिनी सत्यपी : इस विषय पर विचार हो रहा है ।

**Implementation of Khosla Commission's
Report Regarding Delhi Police**

*69. SHRI DALIP SINGH : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS (GRIH MANTRI) be pleased to state :

(a) the steps Government have taken so far to implement the Khosla Commission's report in regard to the Delhi Police ; and

(b) the last target date for its implementation ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (GRIH MANTRALAYA MEN RAJYA MANTRI) (SHRI K. C. PANT) : (a) A statement showing the major recommendations and the action taken by Government, is placed on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT—183/71]