

PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I will not take much time. All of us are interested in keeping the prestige of our ancient university, namely, the Banaras Hindu University. It is shocking to note that there is no democratic system to run this university for the last 30 years. So, it is high time the Government or the Prime Minister himself interfered with the administration of this university and ordered an election to the Academic Council, Senate and the Syndicate. This university was established as early as in 1915. It has produced very eminent administrators and scholars in the whole of the country. Now, if this university has no democratic norms to run it, then how can we train the youngsters and scholars who have to shoulder the responsibility of this great nation. Sir, the UGC is of the opinion that working of each university should be monitored both administratively and academically. The latest opinion of the UGC is that a special committee should be elected for each university which should monitor the academic and other administrative aspects. In this present scenario this old university of ours is not running in a democratic way and it is not getting its officers and managers by election. It is very shameful. So, I associate myself with the hon. Members here and request our Government to see that democratic system works there so that it reflects the aspiration of the general administration and the students because the scholars and students who are trained there have to shoulder the responsibility of the country. With these words, I associate myself with the sentiments expressed by our learned and eminent parliamentarian Mr. Pranab Mukherjee. Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): May I take the sense of the House? It is two minutes past one. Our Private Members' Business commences from 2.30 P.M. Three more Mentions are yet to be taken up. Can we sit up to 1.30 for this purpose?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

Entry of Bangladeshi citizens into the voters list of Assam

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA (Assam): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of this House and also of the Government to a very sensitive issue pertaining to the entire country and specifically to the State of Assam. Sir, the unfortunate consequences of partition led to a large-scale infiltration from Pakistan and later from Bangladesh into various States of the country. The situation in Assam in this regard is very alarming. The State of Assam had to take the burden of a

large number of refugees who had come from different parts of East Pakistan of that time. There was Nehru-Liyaqat Ali Pact 1950 and then there was Indira-Mujib Pact 1971. Through these Pacts there were a lot of national commitments and a large chunk of foreign population had to be accepted in Assam. Some of them were given citizenship certificates in terms of the Assam Accord also. There was a six-year long agitation on this particular issue because this population which had been accepted in a large number is a threat to the political identity of the Indian population who are living there since before partition. The situation has become more alarming very recently and there is a report of the Home Ministry in this regard. I want to cite it. It appeared in *The Sentinel*, which is published from Guwahati, on March 2, 2000. The heading is: "Illegal migrants constitute majority in 36 constituencies." The Report says, "The Home Ministry is extremely concerned that illegal migrants from Bangladesh constitute the majority of the voters in as many as 36 Assembly Constituencies of Assam, out of the total of 126 Constituencies, and have acquired the vantage position to determine the political lives of all sections of the indigenous people. The Ministry has already drawn up the list of these 36 Constituencies and sent it to the State Government and all other agencies concerned under it to draw their attention to this highly worrisome fact and devise appropriate measures in close consultation with each other." This is a very sensitive issue. Very gradually, with a silent invasion, the political rights of our indigenous citizens have been taken over step-by-step. If adequate steps are not taken, probably, 50 per cent of the constituencies in Assam would be influenced by the voters who have crossed over to Assam from Bangladesh, at various points of time. There is a history that we must know as to how these voters got the advantage of their names being entered in the voters' list. Sir, the Election Commission has a procedure. First, the Election Commission enumerates the population before the preparation of the voters' list. When the voters' list is under preparation, a draft roll would be published. After that, on the basis of the draft roll, if there is no objection from the local citizens, the draft roll would be published as the final list. Now, it is very difficult to enumerate or find out as to who is a Bangladeshi citizen or who is an Indian citizen. So, all the names are collected and they are scrutinised by the Electoral Registration Officer. What was the major defect? The major defect is, every Electoral Registration Officer has to scrutinise more than 15,000 to 20,000 people at a time. As per the election law, he will be given fifteen days' time to scrutinise

the citizenship status of 15,000-20,000 doubtful citizens. Suppose, if some citizens file an objection, he has to scrutinise that. He has also to scrutinise the status of those people who claim that they are also the citizens of the country. And, he will be given only 15 days' time. It is humanly impossible to hear everybody, to summon documents from everybody, and the situation is very grim because each and every Bangladeshi citizen living in Assam is now having a false citizenship certificate. They print false voters' list as reference. They used to claim, "My father's name is there in the 1966 voters' list." The 1966 original voters' list of a particular constituency is not being circulated to all over the constituencies of Assam. So, when he claims, it is very difficult for the Electoral Registration Officer to ascertain whether a particular person's father had been living in other constituencies of the State in 1966. And, the Election Commission is also not maintaining these original documents properly. That is the reason why, gradually, the political destiny of Assam has been going into the hands of the people to whom we have given shelter and to whom we have shown sympathy. The question is, the Government of India have two different views towards Bangladesh and Pakistan. Sir, Bangladesh is always treated as a friendly country, and we have some liberal view on it, towards Pakistan, it is the other way round. Through the Indo-Bangladesh border, a large-scale migration is still taking place, and, every year, and during every election, their names are entered in the voters' list. So, Sir, my humble request to the Government, and also to the Election Commission is, please find out a special mechanism for Assam, if we want to save this area from the hands of these silent invaders. Some ISI activists were arrested last year, in the month of July, in Assam, where a blueprint was detected. It was said that the ISI had a design to annex Assam, and also some parts of the other North-Eastern States, with Bangladesh in near future. They are coming very silently. It is the responsibility of the entire country not to leave this issue, as merely an issue of the Assamese community, as an issue of Assam Gana Parishad, or of All Assam Students' Union, which carried on an agitation of six long years in accordance with Gandhian principles. I hope, the Government and the Election Commission will evolve another special scrutiny procedure for Assam so that the false citizenship certificate and the false voters list which have so far been used by the illegal migrants, are not used any more, and they are properly detected, and the Electoral Registration Officer is given sufficient time so that he can apply his mind; he can identify and verify each and every document. He can

perform his functions judiciously to verify the citizenship status of every citizen in Assam. If the normal procedure is followed, this problem can never be solved. Therefore, I request that special attention may be given on this particular issue. Thank you, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR): Thank you, Dr. Sarma. If I have understood you properly, what you mean to say is, the fate of Assam and the Indian State will now be decided by those who are foreigners, namely, non-Indians. Is that what you are trying to say? Are you aware of the Supreme Court's ruling, which it gave six months back, and a notice to the West Bengal Government to identify and file an affidavit regarding the presence of Bangladeshis in the State of West Bengal? That is also there. If you know about it, please convey it to the Minister concerned. This direction was given by the Supreme Court about six months back, in a similar situation.

SHRI SATISHCHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN (Maharashtra) Sir, I associate myself with what Dr. Sarma has said.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO (Goa): Sir, I also associate myself with what Dr. Sarma has said.

SHRI SHANKAR ROY CHOWDHURY (West Bengal): Sir, first of all, I thank you for the academic distinction which I did not achieve in real life, but I thank you very much. I associate myself with what Dr. Sarma has said because the problem of Assam, which he has posed before us, applies in equal measure to all the States along our north-eastern periphery with Bangladesh, applies to my State West Bengal - applies to Tripura, applies to Manipur, and the problems which Dr. Sarma has enumerated in such a detail, more or less, pertains to all the States in that area; but restricting myself to Assam, in addition to the problem which Dr. Sarma has identified, Assam, now, has become a thoroughfare for illegal immigrants passing through Assam, going to Bhutan and other places of India also. Immigrants are of three types. They are all illegal. There are economic migrants. The hon. Minister, some months ago, had said that this was a problem for which they would have to find a solution. Some kind of issue of temporary work permit, etc. But that is with the Home Ministry. We do not know what is happening about that. The second category is of the infiltrators, about whom the hon. Member has just mentioned, because Bangladesh has become a base of ISI activities. It is actually a subsidiary front for Jammu & Kashmir. The

districts of Assam, which are most affected, as my hon. friend has mentioned, Warlparadbubri, in which you have organization, like the Islamic Liberation Army, South Assam, Kachar, Haplong, Karbianglong. A situation has come where, now, the political border of India and Bangladesh and the demographic border of India and Bangladesh are different. The political border is where it is, the geographic border. The demographic border extends up to 10 to 20 Kms. inside India, depending on the State you are in. Sir, I will blame the Central Government for this, because the situation on our eastern border is not being treated with the same degree of concern as in the case of the western border. It has been our experience that the western border; Jammu and Kashmir, etc. have their own problems. They are very major problems. I do not deny that. But the remedy to that has generally been to lift the Border Security Force from the East and bring it to the West. Sir, the result of this is that the entire Eastern Border -- West Bengal, Assam, Tripura, Manipur - is very thinly manned. It has become a totally porous border, intelligence is lacking there, and wire fencing has come up in patches. So, in addition to the various measures which have been proposed by Dr. Sarma, the answer to this is to find a special method of identifying these illegal immigrants who have come from across the border, who have settled down, courtesy the various political parties which were in power and which had given these illegal certificates. The Centre must now reinforce the border control measures along the entire Indo-Bangladesh border, specifically around the areas, namely, Assam, Tripura and West Bengal, about which Dr. Sarma has also mentioned. The Centre must strengthen its intelligence coverage of these areas. Sir, the Centre must now devote its attention equally to the eastern border, as it is giving to the western border. Thank you, Mr. Vice-Chairman.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI ADHIK SHIRODKAR) : May I request Dr. Sarma, Mr. Chowdhury and the other concerned hon. Members to get together and make their factual observations about the States which they have mentioned? Based on this, you make your suggestions as to how to curb this, because the Supreme Court has also expressed its displeasure over it. Will you kindly do that by sitting together and making a very detailed note for the benefit of the Government?

Attack on cattle protectionists resulting in murder of citizens in Gujarat

श्री ललित भाई मेहता (गुजरात) : उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, गुजरात में घटी एक