

माननीय प्रधान मंत्री जी विमान के टूटे-फूटे टुकड़ों को देखकर ही वापस आ गये। जहाँ पर शवों का ढेर था वहाँ जाने की उनको फुर्सत ही नहीं मिली। लोग आश्रय कर रहे थे कि प्रधान मंत्री आर्येगे और हमें आश्वासन देंगे लेकिन वहाँ भी जाने की फुर्सत हमारे प्रधानमंत्री जी को नहीं मिली और मृतकों के परिवारजनों से बिना मिले ही वापस चले आये। मैं चाहती हूँ कि प्रधान मंत्री हों या मंत्री हों सख्का रवैया एक ही होना चाहिये। जो मुआवजा तय किया गया है वह तो देना ही चाहिये और उस मुआवजे की रकम का भुगतान एक सप्ताह में ही हो जाये, ऐसा प्रबन्ध किया जाना चाहिये। मैं माननीय प्रधान मंत्री जी और मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहती हूँ कि केन्द्र सरकार मुआवजे की रकम गुजरात और अन्य राज्यों के मृतकों के परिवारजनों को कब तक देगी? मुआवजे की रकम देने के तुरन्त प्रबन्ध किये जाने चाहिये यदि कोई कानूनी बाधा बीच में आती है तो उसको तुरन्त सुलझाकर मुआवजे की रकम का तुरन्त भुगतान किया जाना चाहिये। आप भी इसमें इंट्रेस्ट लें ताकि लोगों को मुआवजा तुरन्त मिले।

#### RE: NEED TO PREVENT SATI YAGNA AT JHUNJHUNU

PROF. (SHRIMATI) BHARATI RAY  
(West Bengal): Madam Deputy Chairman, I rise to draw the attention of the House to a news item published in *The Hindustan Times*, dt. 27.11.1996 and also today about the Mahachand Yagna at the Rani Sati temple at Jhunjhunu to celebrate the 400th birth anniversary of Rani Sati. Mantras are being chanted. The organisers are planning to have saaj-shringar of Rani Sati. They are also arranging an illumination at the temple. Madam, we all know that the custom of sati was actually invented for conveniently getting rid of widows with claims to property. This was a murder for gain.

Unfortunately, this was socially an approved murder, a suicide induced by the society. Whatever be the case some women were powerless to resist it, and

some were the willing victims of this barbarous form of male coercion. Madam, oppression is most effective when it is perpetuated with non-resistance or willing cooperation of the victims, and this was done by denial of education. The negative perception of women was achieved by denial of education, denial of exposure. That is my point. A wrongly and unfairly constructed belief system is unfortunately still lingering on, today. *The Hindustan Times* report said that a young bride was going to pray at the Jhunjhunu temple. She said that she was going to pray at the temple "because of tradition". Any historian would tell us that traditions are invented, traditions are constituted, traditions are constructed. Who has invented the tradition and why? Why were the lives of women interlocked with those of their husbands? Why has there been a double standard of morality for men and women? Why are they saying it for women?

There is a question in Bengali which means we would sing the praise of a woman only when she is dead. That is by her death, she has to prove her purity and her devotion to her husband. How long would women be sacrificed at the altar of tradition? How long would we continue to do this? In independent India, our message is that women have far better things to do than to die on the pyre of her husband. Women are capable of doing anything as men are. Women must have confidence in themselves and confidence to go ahead in the society. Her contribution not only to the family but to the society at large cannot be ignored. This message has to be disseminated and has to be believed. This is an uphill struggle because of the deep-

rooted belief of both men and women in the inferiority of women. If this glorification of sati is permitted to continue, if the denigration of women is allowed to acquire the halo of deification, then, we would lose the battle before we start it.

Today, Madam, 'sati' has also to be looked at from a different perspective, a new perspective. It is not in isolation. It is part of a continuum which starts with female feticide and goes on to dowry deaths and various forms of torture of women in utter disregard to women as human beings. I strongly urge upon the Government to take urgent steps to stop the 'yagna' any any other form of perpetuation of the continued devaluation of women in the name of tradition. Thank you.

**RE: NEED FOR CENTRAL  
GOVERNMENT'S ASSISTANCE TO  
CONTAIN TERRORISM IN ANDHRA  
PRADESH**

1JR. Y. RADHAKRISHNA MURTY (Andhra Pradesh): Madam, I rise to make a submission on a very serious topic which should be of concern to all the Members of this august House. I want to remind the Union Government of the request of the Andhra Pradesh Government for 40 companies of Special Armed Police to contain the menace of terrorism in that State. I also want to emphasise the need, the necessity and the urgency of the matter.

International terrorism, Madam, is a matter of worry and also of serious concern to the world today and it is a subject for discussion at various international fora. We have our own share of this terrorism. We have lost our Mahatma. We have lost our two great

Prime Ministers. We have also had a taste of organised terrorism in our country—Punjab, J&K, Assam, North-East, etc., etc. These things have inflicted both extensive and intensive damage on the civil life, on the economy and on the development.

The naxalite problem has been a major problem in Andhra Pradesh. The naxalites are now divided into 37 groups in the country and we have at least 10 groups in Andhra Pradesh. Their generic name is 'naxalites'. But the brand names differ like PWG, Jana Shakti, Praja Bandha, Pro-Lin Piao, Anti-Lin Piao, etc., etc. This PWG group is the most dreaded and widespread organisation. It is taking to senseless and gruesome murders on the pretext of a 'class enemy' or 'informant'. And there are also internecine wars among these groups of naxalites. They have become almost cannibals just for the area of influence in those districts. They are also working as hired murderers for landlords to settle scores between landlords and also between landlords and poor peasants. They are resorting to systematic and well-planned murders of political leaders and workers of all political parties. Here at least, they observe the principle of equality and equal injustice to all. All the political parties in Andhra Pradesh—the Congress, the TDP, the CPI, the CPM, all of them—have suffered at their hands. They have lost most of their leaders during the last 10 years.

To take an account of the amount of damage they have inflicted on Andhra Pradesh, as per the sources of the Andhra Pradesh Government, from 1990 to 1996 August, there were 810 murders of civilians and 280 police people. There