

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE (WEST BENGAL): Normally, we don't have elections. We make adjustments. It could be notified by tomorrow. There is no problem.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I would like to draw the attention of the Leader of the House and would request him to get it notified.

THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) Madam Deputy Chairman, I support the contention made by my friend, Shri Pranab Mukherjee.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Otherwise, Members feel that they would not be in a position to participate in the deliberations of various committees. So, please take care of it.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: They have to do it, Madam.

MOTION FOR ELECTION TO THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC UNDERTAKINGS

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. U. VENKATESHWARLU): Madam Deputy Chairman, I move the following Motion:—

"That this House concurs in the recommendation of the Lok Sabha that the Rajya Sabha do agree to nominate seven Members from Rajya Sabha to associate with the Committee on Public Undertakings of the Lok Sabha for the term ending on the 30th April, 1997, and do proceed to elect in such manner as the Chairman may direct, seven Members from among the Members of the House to serve on the said Committee."

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

RE. CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN IN DELHI

MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE (Maharashtra): Madam Deputy Chairman, crimes against women in Delhi are on the rise. The Home Minister should make a statement regarding the law and order situation in Delhi.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY (Pondicherry): Madam, yesterday, we had raised the issue. The nephews of the Chief Minister of Delhi are involved in an assault case against the doctors of the AIIMS. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I did not give any directions. I say that on any matter which is raised on the floor of the House, the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs or any other Minister representing the Government should take note of the sentiments expressed by Members. I couldn't give any direction because the Home Minister was not present here.

AN HON. MEMBER: Madam, you give your ruling.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There is no ruling on it.

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES (Goa): Madam Deputy Chairman, Delhi is a Union Territory. The Central Government is fully responsible for it.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA): Madam Deputy Chairman, if you permit me, I want to say something on this. I share the concern expressed by several hon. Members here about the law and order situation in Delhi. I would like to assure this House that the Government is going to take all necessary steps.

In the last seven weeks, in the first twelve days, the question of this Government's legitimacy was there. So, I wanted to have the clearance from the Parliament. Till then, I had not taken any decision. In the last five weeks, may I tell you very frankly, I did not sit quietly. I called the Lt. Governor of Delhi, the Chief Minister of Delhi, the Chief

Secretary, the Commissioner of Police and I reviewed the whole situation. I am sorry to say that we have seen only one face of Delhi and we have not seen its other face. I am a man coming from the south, that too, from Karnataka. When I meet the common people in the Janata Darshan, when I hear some of the events that take place on the other side of Delhi, I feel so sad and wonder whether we are in a civilised society or not. This is the issue which crops up in my mind. More than 60 per cent of the representations which I receive every day in the Janata Darshan are connected with rape, kidnap,...(*Interruptions*).

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Shame, shame.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: To whom should you say this? We all should share the shame. Do not attribute motives to any one political party, whether the BJP is ruling there or we are ruling here. It has not happened in five weeks. We have created such a society and we should all share the responsibility. Collectively, we must work to see that this type of a situation is put down with a heavy hand. I may tell you very frankly, to all our hon. lady Members, who are like my sisters, I feel so sad. Some ladies come and touch my feet and cry. Their daughters have been kidnapped. Their children have been kidnapped. They have been raped. When call the police officers and ask them, when I ask the Lieutenant Governor and the Chief Minister, they say, "Normally, every day, this will go on". (*Interruptions*). Please wait. Don't be under the impression that I am sleeping. I am aware of the facts. I have taken certain major steps. But the Government orders have to be issued. I want to create a special squad, task force, directly under my control. As long as I am here as Prime Minister, I will take care of this issue, this hooliganism, goondaism. I have come to know that there are 17 gangs working like this. I have got my own report. They are collecting money by abduction and other methods. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: With the connivance of the police.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: I do agree. And there are some political brokers also behind them. I am not afraid of this.

The responsibility of the Government is this. There is so much of security to protect us, to protect me. Nobody will kill me. If anybody wants to kill me, nobody can save me. To protect me, there is so much of security. To protect the common man, there is no security in this country. I am not going to allow that. I will take very hard decision on this matter. I would assure you of that, whatever may be the consequences. This Government is aware of the whole situation in Delhi. I have been saying, "I have seen one face of the coin, this Parliament and this area. The other area, I have not seen up-till now." When people went on giving stories, I wanted to have surprise checks in some slum area. My officers said, "No, no. You cannot go. We will not allow you to leave." Whatever it may be, this Government is going to take very stern action on this matter. And we will not allow this to continue.

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN (Maharashtra): There is one point I want to make, Madam, since the Prime Minister is here. I was given to understand that in the Delhi Assembly, some hon. Members raised the issue of some molestation, which had taken place, by a very responsible Member. Some hon. Members of a particular party were actually suspended for three days. And thereafter,...(*Interruptions*).

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA (West Bengal): I am on a point of order. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: This is the Council of States.

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN: Thereafter, I am given to understand that they have passed a resolution that those who have raised this issue should be booked under the 'hawala' cases. If it be so that they

have passed such a resolution—..... this is what I am given to understand; I can't believe this kind of a story, but if this is a fact, then, of course, we will have to take a serious note of it and try to find out as to how far this information is correct. If I am proved wrong, I will be very happy. (Interruptions)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Prime Minister is here. The Prime Minister is the person who should answer this question because he is the head of the Government, the Executive and the entire country. He should answer this question and not a Member of this House. (Interruptions)

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN: My only request to the Prime Minister is that he should ascertain the facts and if the facts, as stated to have been reported, are found to be correct, then, of course, we will have to take a very serious note of it and something concrete will have to be done because you cannot deal with the freedom of the hon. Members who participate in the debates in the Assembly or here and pass a resolution that somebody has to be booked under Hawala. Please look into it. (Interruptions)

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Madam, I am on a point of order. (Interruptions)

श्री ओ० पी० कोहली (दिल्ली): मैडम, मैं भी इसी विषय में कुछ बोलना चाहता हूँ। ... (व्यवधान)... मैडम, मैं दिल्ली से हूँ और इसलिए मैं इसी विषय पर कुछ बोलना चाहता हूँ। ... (व्यवधान)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I want to bring to the notice of the hon. Members that a matter addressed to the Prime Minister or the Government has been raised by a Member of this House. Now, a Member might have some information. But that information is not being sought from that hon. Member. The information is sought from the Government and the Government is responsible to give a reply to the House and not a Member. (Interruptions)

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Madam, I am on a point of order. (Interruptions)

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): Madam, Mr. Kohli is seeking your permission to give some information and he should be permitted. (Interruptions)

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Madam, I share the anxiety of the Members about the law and order situation in Delhi and I compliment the Prime Minister. But the issue is. Can something that has happened in an independent, sovereign House or a Legislature, be discussed here? Something wrong might have happened there, something right might have happened there. But it is for that sovereign House to defend the dignity and honour of that House. It is not for the Council of States to look into it. Madam, I want your ruling on this point whether what has transpired in the State Assembly can be discussed here. While completely appreciating the views expressed by the hon. Member, Mr. Chavan, I would like to know whether this House can discuss the behaviour of the Members or the Speaker or the Government of any other House. (Interruptions)

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE (West Bengal): He is seeking information. (Interruptions)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta, you have been a member of this House for a long time. You are not a new Member. I could provide you the information which is there on record, not just now, but later on. I don't remember it whether it was 'A' Assembly or 'B' Assembly. But the issues, specially relating to women, have been raised here irrespective of the fact whether they were the State subject or whether they were raised in a State Assembly. I remember a few instances. There was a similar kind of a case about

Haryana which was raised by a Member in this House. That Member is sitting in the House right now. I do not want to take the name of that Member. You can see the record. There were occasions when cases relating to other States were also raised on the floor of this House. Now, are we going to bind ourselves on a matter of such a serious nature? When allegations are levelled by a Member who knows as to what has happened actually and a query is being made by some Members of the House while the Prime Minister of the country is sitting here. I think they have a right to seek clarifications from the Prime Minister. If the hon. Members coming from various States are not heard sometimes in their own States, and if they want to put certain questions to the Central Government and the Prime Minister, then which is the forum where they can do so if not the Council of States?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Madam, in fact, Mr. Chavan wanted to have authoritative information from the Government of India in regard to certain transactions that have taken place in a Legislative Assembly. It is not that we are discussing the conduct of the Legislative Assembly on the floor of this House as such. I agree with you that we should not bring in matters concerning the other Legislative bodies on the floor, but it does not prevent us from seeking authoritative information from the competent authority. It is just like that.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It does not violate anything. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: My point was this. On the incident, on the criminality of the incident, there is no difference of opinion. My point was, since the hon. Member wanted to know whether they were booked because of the behaviour within the House, the best course is to draw the notice of the hon. Speaker there and get the remedy. *...(Interruptions)...* We cannot discuss

that. We cannot discuss that matter here. *...(Interruptions)...*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We are not going to interfere. Something happened outside the House. *...(Interruptions)...* Something which happened outside the House was raised in a particular Assembly and as a consequence of that, there is some misinformation, perhaps.

Mr. Chavan said, in his own statement, that he is not sure whether it is right or wrong. Then which is the forum where Mr. Chavan can ask, if not from the Prime Minister on the floor of the House? He is a Member of this House. There are certain allegations raised. There is some misinformation if there is any, then you tell me the forum where Mr. Chavan should raise this issue. *...(Interruptions)...* Mr. Chavan is a legitimate Member of the House and the Prime Minister is there to....

SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Madam, I want to seek certain information.

मैडम, मैं इस मामले में एक जानकारी प्राप्त करना चाहता हूँ. *...(व्यवधान)...*

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Madam, please give me one minute. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI (Kerala): Madam, I want to make a point. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT: Is he able to provide that information? *...(Interruptions)...*

उपसभापति: अभी भी सवाल यह यहाँ उठ रहा है *...(व्यवधान)...*

श्री सिकन्दर बाख्त: वह सवाल मैंने सुन लिया है और आपने उस पर अपनी रूलिंग दे दी है।

† [شفري سیکندر باخت : وہ سوال میں نے
سن لیا ہے اور آپ نے اس پر اپنی رولنگ دے دی ہے]

उपसभापति: अफसोस यह होता है कि रूलिंग देने के बाद भी उसके ऊपर दूसरी रूलिंग आ जाती है ... (व्यथान) ...

श्री सिक्न्दर बख्श: कौन सी रुलिंग आ गई?

[۱] مشرقی مسکن در بخت • کونہی رولنگ آگئی [۲]

उपस्थापित: आपकी नहीं दूसरे लोगों की, रूलिंग आती है कि इसके अंदर यह राइडर लगा है।

I have to clarify; that is my duty. To the best of my ability, I tried to settle that issue so that we are not blamed that we are doing anything illegal or against the rules on the floor of the House.
...*(Interruptions)*....

श्री ओ.पी. कोहली: मंडम, मैं एक जानकारी प्राप्त करना चाहता हूँ ... (व्यवधान...)

SHRI VAYALAP RAVI: Madam, the issue is not that we are discussing the matter which was raised in the Legislative Assembly. ...*(Interruption)*...

श्री मोहम्मद सलीम (पश्चिमी बंगाल,): महिला के साथ मॉलेस्टेशन हुआ और मंत्री के घर में हुआ ला एंड ऑर्डर, खासकर के जो दिल्ली पुलिस है, यह दूसरी स्टेट असेम्बली का सवाल नहीं है, दिल्ली शहर की पुलिस सेंट्रल गवर्नमेंट के पास है, तो हम इस सवाल में, यह जो मॉलेस्टेशन हुआ और उसके बाद जो एफ-आई-आर दर्ज किया गया, उसमें भी घपला है, जैसा कि मॉलेस्टेशन के मामले में इसलिए मैं पूछना चाहता हूँ क्योंकि सेंट्रल बजट से जाता है दिल्ली पुलिस का पैसा। मैं दिल्ली असेम्बली के कंडेक्ट का सवाल नहीं कर रहा हूँ लेकिन दिल्ली के मंत्री का कंडेक्ट अगर गलत हुआ और पुलिस का कंडेक्ट इस मामले में अगर गलत हुआ तो ... (व्यवधान) ... प्रधान मंत्री से हमें पूछने का हक है। ... (व्यवधान) ...

الشری محمد سلیم: مہیلا کے ساتھ "موسٹیشن" ہوا اور فٹری کے مگر میں "اللائٹڈ آرڈر" خالص کے جو دتی پولیس ہے۔ یہ دوسرے ایٹھ اسمبلی کا سوال پیش ہے۔ دتی ٹمپورل پولیس سنٹرل گورنمنٹ کے پاس ہے تو ہم اس سوال

میں یہ "جوسٹیشن" ہوا اور اسے بعد
ایف۔ ایچ۔ آر۔ دلچ کیا گیا اس میں بھی چھپلا
ہے "جوسٹیشن" میں اس کے دو بیٹے پوچھنا چاہا
ہوں کیونکہ سینٹرل جج سے جا رہے تھے پوچھ
کا پیمہ۔ میں دس اسٹیبل کے کنڈکٹ کا
سوال نہیں کر رہا ہوں۔ لیکن دس کے منتوں
کا کنڈکٹ اگر غلط ہوا اور پولیس کا کنڈکٹ
اس معاملے میں اگر غلط ہوا۔ "مداخلت"۔
پیر دھان منتری سے پوچھنے کا حق ہے۔
"مداخلت"۔۔۔

श्री विष्णु कान्त शास्त्री (उत्तर प्रदेश): असत्य आरोप लगाया है। ... (व्यवधान...)

श्री सिकन्दर बाज्रत: मैडम, कोहली साहब को मौका दीजिए मेहरबानी करके, यह बात क्या है?
... (पवधान) ...

ۛۛ شغری مسکن در بخت : میثم - کو صلی صلب
 کو موقع ریجے مہربانی کر کے یہ بات کیا ہے -
 ... ”مداخلت“ ... ۛۛ

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: MR. Vayalar Ravi, you please sit down. Mr. Narayanasamy, that matter is complicated.(Interruptions)...

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Madam, I would like to make a point. Please allow me. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Madam, he was referring to the political process also. ...*(interruptions)*... Let the Prime Minister book everybody who is involved in this crime, whether he is a politician or an ordinary person,*(interruptions)*.... The people who are in power ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT: Madam, let us deal with the questions raised by Chavan Sahib.

(Interruptions)

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Madam, I would like to make a point.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kohli also wants to say something.

Let him speak. बोलिए कोहली साहब।

श्री ओ०पी० कोहली: उपसभापति महोदया, मैं दो बिन्दुओं पर जानकारी प्राप्त करना चाहता हूँ।

उपसभापति: किससे?

श्री ओ०पी० कोहली: मैं सरकार से जानकारी प्राप्त करना चाहता हूँ और मेरी जानकारी माननीय श्री चव्हाण साहब ने जो बात उठाई है, उससे भी जुड़ी हुई है। मेरी जानकारी का पहला बिन्दु तो यह है कि जिस बलात्कार के केस का, मॉलेस्टेशन के केस का यहाँ जिक्र किया जा रहा है, क्या उस सिलसिले में दिल्ली सरकार ने मामला क्राइम ब्रांच को सौंप दिया है या नहीं? मेरी जानकारी के मुताबिक दिल्ली सरकार ने वह मामला क्राइम ब्रांच को सौंप दिया है और मुख्य मंत्री ने विधान सभा में स्पष्ट रूप से यह जानकारी दे दी है। एक तो मैं इसके बारे में जानकारी चाहता हूँ। महोदया, माननीय चव्हाण साहब ने जो बात उठाई है उसके संदर्भ में मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि जो जानकारी मुझे मिली है उसके हिसाब से ये दो मुद्दे अलग-अलग हैं। हवाला कांड में लिप्त लोगों के खिलाफ कार्यवाही करने का जो प्रस्ताव दिल्ली विधानसभा ने पास किया, उसका कोई संबंध इस घटना से नहीं है। यह घटना बिल्कुल अलग है और वह प्रस्ताव बिल्कुल अलग है। इन दोनों में कोई संबंध नहीं है और इस प्रकार का संबंध जोड़ना बेमानी है।

महोदया, मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ सरकार से कि उसके पास जो जानकारी है उसके हिसाब से ये दोनों मुद्दे अलग-अलग हैं या नहीं? इस प्रस्ताव का कोई संबंध उस घटना के साथ नहीं है। ये दोनों बिल्कुल पृथक मुद्दे हैं।

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Madam, my point is very simple. (Interruptions).

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. (Interruptions).

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Madam, only one minute. The hon. Member has said something. I am not repeating it. I

fully agree with him. We are not discussing the conduct of the Assembly. Mr. Khurana made a public statement. He made this statement in a Press conference. He is a former Chief Minister. In the Press conference—that is what Mr. Chavanji said—he made a statement that.....(Interruptions). Mr. Khurana made a statement....(Interruptions).

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL (Rajasthan): He cannot give any explanation. (Interruptions).

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let me hear it first. (Interruptions). Let me hear it first. (Interruptions). मुझे सुनने तो दीजिए कि कह क्या रहे हैं?(व्यवधान)

SHRI K. R. MALKANI (Delhi): Madam, are you allowing a free discussion on it?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I don't want a free discussion on anything. A specific issue has been raised before the Prime Minister who is present here. As far as the legal part of it is concerned, I have explained it. Now Mr. Chavan raised a query. In that connection I have allowed the hon. Member from this side to seek some more clarifications from the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister will answer it whenever he wants or when he has the information. What Mr. Vayalar Ravi has said, I have not even understood the whole thing. He was referring to....(Interruptions).

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: What has happened is this. Mr. Khurana has said—that is what Chavanji said—"We will pass a resolution for prosecuting the Congress MLAs under Hawala because these Congress MLAs have made a demand for the arrest of a Minister for rape or whatever it is." It is not based on the proceedings of the Assembly. (Interruptions) I can quote the statement. A copy of the statement made by Mr. Khurana is with me. He is a former Chief Minister. (Interruptions). A copy of the statement is with me. He threatened the Congress MLAs that they would pass a resolution to prosecute them because they raised

issues against the Minister and the Chief Minister. That is the issue which is being discussed here, not the Assembly.

SHRI TRILOK NATH CHATURVEDI (Uttar Pradesh): Madam, may I have your attention please? I have not seen that statement. Whatever Mr. Vayalar Ravi has said, I presume he has said it with a full sense of responsibility as he always does. It is my presumption. The point is, Mr. Khurana is a former Chief Minister. He is also an MLA. If he has said something against a person or persons who are also MLAs if he has said that they should be hauled up for alleged participation in Hawala, etc., then it is a question of privilege in the Assembly....(Interruptions).

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: We are referring to the Press statement...(Interruptions)... not the proceedings of the Assembly. (Interruptions).

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Mr. Chavan has raised a particular issue. (Interruptions),.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Vayalar Ravi, let him speak. (Interruptions).

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: Mr. Chavan,.....(Interruptions).

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: He is the Vice-President of the BJP. (Interruptions). He spoke as the Vice-President. (Interruptions).

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him speak.

SHRI SUNDER SINGH BHANDARI (Rajasthan): It has nothing to do with the Assembly. You may be a president of party. But what are you here? That is the point. (Interruptions).

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: President of a party says a number of things. I can also quote a newspaper, The Pioneer report and then put a question, "Is it a case of graft or 420?" It is for you to choose one of them. The simple thing is....(Interruptions). Even 120 Members this House...(Inter-

ruptions)... cannot muffle my voice...(Interruptions)... I am a representative of the people...(Interruptions)... Let a decision be taken...(Interruptions)... Madam Chairperson, I know Mr. Narayanasamy. He is a very good friend of mine. We occasionally go for morning walks together and exchange views. He gives me a fair amount of his vitality and I can compete with him so far as the slanging match of the lungs is concerned. But I do not want to do it. If the issue relates to the Assembly and it is about a Member of the Assembly, let it go to the Committee of Privileges of the Assembly. If it was said outside and anybody hurt, let a defamation case be filed against Mr. Khurana or any other person who has made this kind of an allegation. I do not want to take more time...(Interruptions)...

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN (Tamil Nadu): Madam, let us go on to other business...(Interruptions)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You raised an issue which has generated heat and I have to settle it...(Interruptions)... It is not for me alone to settle it. The Members have to be satisfied. If an issue which is controversial is raised in the House—Mrs. Natarajan, you know how the House works—if you speak, they would also like to speak and Members on this side would also like to speak. You cannot ask the Chair only to allow you and not to allow others. It is a matter which concerns everyone...(Interruptions)... Matters are raised in the House based on some information. I can give umpteen examples. Every day newspaper reports are referred to in this House. I just want to ask one thing. The Prime Minister is here. He has all the authority and the assistance needed from the police, the IB and whatever else. He can use his good offices to get the correct information and come to the House and tell us the truth so that everybody's sentiments, queries and worries are satisfied. I am not the person who can satisfy the Members or give information. He is

the competent person who can give it. Now I think this matter should be taken as closed because he is taking the responsibility of answering the Members from the right, the left and the centre... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: I would like to make only one point... (*Interruptions*)... The Prime Minister has got up and I take my seat in deference to him.

SHRI E.D. DEVA GOWDA: I would like to say one thing in this connection. Mr. Chavan who is a senior Member of this House raised an issue. It is a heinous crime. So far as Assembly proceedings are concerned, you have already given the ruling that it cannot be discussed. The issue relates to a lady. A heinous crime is alleged to have taken place. I will get the whole matter, examined and if possible, tomorrow itself I will make a detailed statement on the floor of the House.

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: I would just like to set the record straight. I would like to submit that I share fully the agony of the Members and the truth about the alleged molestation should be brought out. I would also like to mention that I fully share the concern of my colleagues about the law and order situation in Delhi. The hon. prime Minister has promised that he would look into it and I welcome his assurance because this is what is needed.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The matter is closed so far as the crime is concerned. Regardless of whether it was raised in the Assembly or not, it is a crime and the Government should look into it. That part is over. We are not discussing the proceedings of any State Assembly. But a crime has taken place and the Prime Minister should inform us. If there is some misinformation, the Members from the rest of the country have a right to know the truth as to what is happening in Delhi.

RE. REPORTED LEGISLATION TO RESTRICT THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

SHRI M.A. BABY (Kerala): Thank you very much, Madam, for having permitted me to raise this serious issue. Madam, there have been some reports in the media that the present Government is contemplating some legislation to restrict the freedom of the media, the Press. There have been some hints towards it and some senior Ministers, not the Prime Minister, made certain statements on the basis of which there have been many reports in the Press including some highly respected newspapers like the *Times of India*. Madam, one would not have raised this issue in this forum except for the fact that many a time, in spite of this being a healthy democracy, there have been occasions when the freedom of the Press has been tampered with. So far as the United Front is concerned, Madam, the position is very clear. The Common Minimum Programme, which can be considered as the *Bhagawad Gita* or the *Quran* or the *Bible* of the United Front, is very categorical... (*Interruptions*) I expect a denial from the Information and Broadcasting minister. Madam, you may kindly permit me to briefly make my submission. The CMP has categorically stated that the freedom of the Press would be defended. It goes further to say that the Prasar Bharati Bill with sufficient modifications would be implemented so that even the electronic media could have full freedom of expression. Madam, we have had the experience of the Defamation Bill being introduced, but which had to be withdrawn thanks to a very strong opposition from the Press as well as from the political parties. We also have had the experience of what happened to the Fourth Estate during the Emergency days; I need not have to explain. Therefore, we are all very much concerned about it. Madam, we are thankful to the statements made by all hon. Ministers of this Government. But since the Prime Minister is present here, I hope that all