

समझता हूँ कि हिन्दुस्तान की इससे साब गिरी है इसलिये प्रधान मंत्री का काम और कठिन हो गया है। मैं चाहूँगा कि प्रधान मंत्री जी के जाने से पहले यहाँ पर सुख राम जी, मंत्री महोदय, और प्रधान मंत्री सारी स्थिति को स्पष्ट करने की कृपा करें।

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI (Gujarat): Madam, may I say a word,

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, you may not. **Shri Kishore Chandra Deo.** Please be brief.

Attempt by I.T.C. to Prevent State Govts. from Imposing Tax

SHRI V. KISHORE CHANDRA S. DEO (Andhra Pradesh): It is being reported in *The Sunday Mail* and also in *The Business Standard* that ITC, a large private company in India, has been using threats and indulging in acts of blackmail in an attempt to prevent State Governments from imposing taxes. The State Governments of Kerala and Bengal have imposed a luxury tax on cigarettes. In fact, *The Business Standard* of yesterday says that this Company has instructed its people to stop supply of cigarettes to Bengal. In Kerala also the Finance Minister has said that he would not resist their attempt at preventing the imposition the tax. What they are doing is this. The Company itself is organising smuggling of cigarettes from Tamil Nadu. Madam, the Government of Tamil Nadu has made an announcement on the 2nd March that they would impose a 10 per cent luxury tax on cigarettes. But till today it has not been implemented. Already 1-1/2 months have passed. We do not know that is transpiring between the Government of Tamil Nadu and the ITC company and what the deal is all about and why it has not been done. But you see today that the State is being used as a ground for of encouraging

smuggling from one State of another to see that Kerala doesn't get any money from this kind of taxation.

Madam, Members from that side and some Members from here were talking earlier about protecting the interests of our home industry from the alleged on slaught of multinationals. Are these the kind of companies that we are trying to protect? I would like the hon. Members of this House to understand this. Madam, first of all, is this permissible at all? Will the Central Government remain a silent spectator to this. It is the Constitutional right of a State to impose taxes. You see, when a tax like this was imposed, they threatened to withdraw their packing units, processing units. Then they literally blackmailed the State Government into not raising the revenue which they wanted to do. On the other hand the company itself organises smuggling of cigarettes from a neighbouring State where apparently some talks or negotion or a dela are going on with the people who are at the helm of affairs there. I think the Central Government should take a serious note of this and they should think of a way by which this kind of an unethical practice by a company can be controlled and put to an end to. Thank you.

SHRI N. E. BALARAM (Kerala): Madam Deputy Chairman, I would like to .. (interruptions) ..

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Not like this. I will call your name.

SHRI M. A. BABY (Kerala): Madam Deputy Chairman, I may be permitted to associate myself with a serious matter raised by my hon. colleague Shri Kishore Chandra Deo.

We know that cigarette smoking is injurious to health. The manner in

which this multinational cigarette company is operating is absolutely injurious to the health of our economy. Since Mr. Kishore Chandra Deo has already explained the details, I do not want to go into it. I want to know from the Central Government what steps they would take. Now the cigarette company wants to prevent the State Government from imposing a legitimate tax which it is entitled to impose. This company is engaging itself in blackmailing tactics and other devious methods are sought to be employed by the multinational company. I hope that the Minister who employed by this multinational central Government would react to this.

Assaults on pressmen

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA (Uttar Pradesh): Madam Deputy Chairman, the Press Council Act was passed by the Parliament in 1978 to ensure fearless working by the newsmen, journalists, news cameramen and the Press people.

The Press Council every year brings out an Annual Report. The 14th Annual Report was placed on the Table of the House a fortnight back. Now it deals with many instances where newsmen or journalists were threatened and impediments were placed before them in their working. The Press Council deals with threats to the press, freedom. "Freedom of the press is dependent on the existence or absence of pressure on it from various sources including the Government. Instances of handcuffing of journalists continued to occur despite strictures passed by the Supreme Court and also by the Council on this behalf several times."

The report further says, "Journalists were confined by the police in a room for over three hours during the entire period of Bangladesh Prime Minister, Begum Khalida Zia's stopover at Calcutta airport." Then it deals with another incident of assault on newsmen at Trivandrum outside the district court.

It says. "The fact remains that the police officers and law and order enforcing authorities remained mute spectators to the assaults on media persons on the 6th December, 1992. It was the duty of police to intervene and prevent these assaults." "The Ayodhya incidents further confirm the impression that the Press is increasingly coming under pressure and attack. This is a serious situation for a democratic policy which must consider positive steps not only to protect the Press and other media people from physical assaults but also create conditions in which the media can function effectively, fearlessly and independently to serve and strengthen society. Society would not be able to look to the Press as a powerful, honest defender of the public interests if journalists had to work under the lurking fear of assault and destruction of property." It deals also with certain matters in Bihar. The report says that in Bihar, pressures and impediments come in the way of the free functioning of the Press.

Therefore, Madam, through you, I urge that the Fourteenth report of the Press Council of India which was tabled in the House should be discussed in the House in this very Session. The reports of the Press Council were never discussed in this House. The objective of the Press Council Act is that the Press people should be allowed to function freely without fear or favour. I would also like the Minister to react.

Atrocities by Naga Terrorists

श्री बिष्णु कान्त शास्त्री (उत्तर प्रदेश) : माननीय सभापति महोदय, मैं आपको माध्यम से इस सदन और भारत सरकार का ध्यान बढ़ते हुए नागा आतंकवाद की ओर आकृष्ट करना चाहता हूँ। महोदय, कल जनसभा में यह प्रकाशित हुआ है कि नागा उग्रवादियों ने नौ ग्रामवासियों की हत्या कर दी, योगकलॉग गाँव में, जिनमें एक जवान श्री था। मैं आपको यह स्मरण कराना चाहता हूँ कि उग्रवाद की यह घटना नागा उग्रवाद