

[Shri M. M. Jacob]

try on the subject. Delhi Administration have also set up a high-powered committee to monitor the progress of follow-up action on raids conducted by the Enforcement Wing of the Excise Department and the Drug Controller's Organisation.

I am sure that the Honourable Members would join me in conveying our sympathies to the bereaved families.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHASKAR ANNAJI MASODKAR): Mr. Minister, you must take into account the difficulties of the Members. You should work out some modalities so that Members get enough time to study the statements.

SHRI M. M. JACOB: Sir, I am prepared to sit any time on Monday.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHASKAR ANNAJI MASODKAR): As you know, today being Friday, Members go away. (Interruptions). All right, make the other statement also. I just want to impress upon you the anxiety voiced here.

SHRI SANGH PRIYA GAUTAM (Uttar Pradesh): On Monday, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHASKAR ANNAJI MASODKAR): The other statement will be postponed.

II. The situation arising out of recent communal violence at Varanasi (U.P.).

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): According to the information received from the State Government, the communal trouble at Varanasi started in the evening of 8 November, 1991 during a traditional religious procession for immersion of Kali idols. Clashes between the two communities broke out following an accidental injury to a person of another community from the fire crackers let off during the

procession. Anti-social elements took advantage of the resentment generated by this incident to start looting and arson. Rumour-mongering by these elements led to incidents of brick-batting and stabbing between the two communities. Some persons coming out of a cinema hall also fell prey to this violence. These clashes resulted in the death of eight persons: four died on the spot and four succumbed four died on the spot and four succumbed persons were injured. Some shops suffered minor damage due to arson. Senior officers reached the spot on receiving information of the disturbances and brought the situation under control. Curfew was imposed in the areas of eight police stations as a precautionary measure.

The curfew was gradually relaxed from 11 November, 1991. However, violence erupted again on 13 November, 1991 when some people attacked the passengers of a tempo in Madanpura locality with knives and scissors; one woman was killed and 4 persons were injured. In Mohalla Jangabadi, a crowd belonging to one community collected and started shouting provocative slogans. In Mohalla Sunarpura and Revdi Talab, four incidents of stabbing took place. A bomb was also thrown at ADM (City) and SP (City) due to which one Orderly was hurt. During these fresh incidents, 7 persons were killed and 11 injured. Thereafter the process of arrests and searches was intensified.

According to the State Government, the curfew was tightened and the police also undertook house to house searches to unearth illicit arms, ammunition and explosives. The police have so far arrested 617 persons of which 302 belong to one community and 315 to the other community.

In all, 17 persons lost their lives and 26 persons received injuries during this period. Of the persons killed, one person who was in police custody died in a hospital; the DM Varanasi had ordered a magisterial inquiry into this death.

Police pickets have been set up in Varanasi city and intensive patrolling con-

tinues. At present, there are 13 companies of P.A.C. and 6 companies of CRPF deployed in the city. No untoward incident has been reported since 18 November, 1991. The State authorities have informed that ex-gratia grant @ Rs. 20,000/- each to the next of the kin of the persons killed in communal violence, Rs. 4,000/- each to those seriously injured, and Rs. 1,000/- each to those who received minor injuries is being paid.

All necessary help and assistance has been provided by the Central Government to the State. Five additional companies of CRPF were provided to the State on 1 November, 1991. The State Government have reported that the situation is under control and the curfew has been gradually relaxed. Curfew passes have been given in deserving cases, including to all MPs and MLAs.

The Central Government is resolved to maintain communal peace and harmony in the country. Law & Order is a State subject; however, the Centre has from time to time issued guidelines to the States for the promotion of communal harmony. It also shares its intelligence with the States and provides central forces when necessary. In recent weeks, it has been alerting the States about the possibility of communal violence in different places. To improve the communal climate a meeting of the National Integration Council was convened on the 2nd November, 1991 to discuss the issue of Communal Harmony in the context of the Ram Janma Bhumi-Babri Masjid issue. The NIC called upon all concerned to act with restraint and in a manner that will promote harmony and goodwill among all communities.

I have conveyed to the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh the anxiety expressed by the members in this House over the situation in Varanasi and the manner in which it was permitted to develop. I drew his attention to the points which particularly agitated the members and requested him to furnish full information on these points. I also suggested to the

Chief Minister to seriously consider the suggestion of holding a Judicial Inquiry into the incidents. I am pleased to report to the House that the Chief Minister informed me today that the State Government has ordered a Judicial Inquiry in respect to the communal incidents at Varanasi.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHASKAR ANNAJI MASODKAR): Clarifications on these two statements will be sought on Monday. Now there is a third statement, by the Finance Minister.

श्री सत्य प्रकाश मालवीय (उत्तर प्रदेश) वह आज नहें होंगा।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHASKAR ANNAJI MASODKAR): It is better. It has also been made in the Lok Sabha. I had ruled that whatever statement has been made in the Lok Sabha should be made here also... (Interruptions)...

SHRI SANGH PRIYA GAUTAM (Uttar Pradesh): After all, the clarifications cannot be over in one day. The House will have to be adjourned also.

DR. RATNAKAR PANDEY (Uttar Pradesh): The Finance Minister is a Member of our House. We welcome him fast... (Interruptions)...

SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA (Bihar): We welcome the Finance Minister, not his statement!

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH): You will welcome the statement, Madam.

III. Gold Transactions

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH): Sir, On 18th July, 1991, I had made a *suo motu* statement on gold transactions before this august House. I had explained how our Government, on taking office was faced with a Balance of Payments crisis of an unprecedented na-