

mission. Sit down. This is a very unruly behaviour. You are a Member of the Panel of Vice-Chairmen. When I am talking to somebody, don't get up. Sit down.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY:\*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : I have not given you my permission, and nothing will go on record of what you said. There is a way of behaving in the House.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY : There is a difference between the two Swamys. He is a Liberation Tiger : I am a Tamil Tiger.

SHRI S.K.T. RAMACHANDRAN (Tamil Nadu) : For the sake of publicity he is calling himself a Tiger. Then he also wants to follow that. What is this? The two Swamys are vying for publicity, cheap publicity.

**RE. RECENT DEVELOPMENT  
IN RAM JANAMBHOOMI-BABRI  
MASJID CONTROVERSY—contd.**

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Now we are having further clarifications on the recent developments in the Ram Janambhoomi-Babri Masjid controversy. Mr. P. Upendra.

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA (Andhra Pradesh): Madam we are discussing in this House a very Sensitive issue involving the emotions of millions of people.

A volatile situation is developing gradually. It is fraught with very serious consequences not only to the communal harmony but also to the unity and integrity of this country. So, it is very essential that we should take note of the developing situation.

m The statement issued by the "General Secretary of the Vishwa

\*Not recorded

Hindu Parishad was, indeed unfortunate to say the least. But I charge the Home Minister with providing the provocation for this statement. I had an occasion to discuss the matter with the Secretary of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, and he categorically said that neither he nor any of the office bearers of the Parishad had ever told the Home Minister that they would abide by the court's decision. By making a provocative statement that one party or both the parties had agreed to abide by the court's decision, the Home Minister has provoked them to come out with such a statement which, I have already said, is very unfortunate.

| The programme announced by the Parishad and its associates—the Bajrang Dal—starting from September 30 and culminating on November 9 will have very serious repercussions, particularly in a very sensitive time when most of the parties and the people will be preoccupied in electioneering. It is likely that the situation will be taken advantage of by some interested parties to fan communal passions and anything might happen.

Before I come to my suggestions and before I seek some clarifications from the Home Minister, I would like to recall some of the important events in this case which have a bearing not only on the present situation, but which should also be kept in mind while deciding upon the future course of action. It is a fact that there was a temple at that site and it is also a fact that a Masjid was built in its place a long time ago. Until December 22 or 23, 1949, it was dormant and only on that day some idols were installed in that temple and the Government acquiesced in the act by appointing a priest and subsequently a receiver. The matter went to the court in 1950 and the Civil Judge, Faizabad, allowed holding of Puja in that place. The Muslim community first came into the picture in 1961 disputing the holding

[Shri Parvathaneni Upendja]

of Puja there and the Sunni Central Waqf Board came into the picture with the court case. But it should be remembered that it was the Shias who were keeping the control of the Masjid till then. One party went to the court asking for permission to construct a temple at the site which was refused by the DO, Faizabad and the sub-Judge, Faizabad till December 1985. But unfortunately the situation took a communal and inflammatory aspect on February 1, 1986 when the District and Sessions Judge, Faizabad, rightly or wrongly, permitted the unlocking of the premises to allow entry of pilgrims. The other side says it was a unilateral decision of the court. The other side was not represented during the hearing of the case. Then the Babari Masjid Action Committee came into the picture. But on March 18, 1989, the District Judge, Faizabad, upheld the *status quo* by making an important observation which I quote. The District Judge, Faizabad, in his judgement had observed that "it is most unfortunate that a Masjid should have been built on a land especially held sacred by the Hindus. But as that event occurred 356 years ago, it is too late to remedy the grievance. All that can be done is to maintain the parties in *status quo*. Innovations could cause more harm." The appeal for the construction of the temple was dismissed, that was the judgement in 1986.

Now, the parties, particularly the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, comes up with the demand that there should be a negotiated settlement, and that it is not a matter to be decided by a court. They also came forward with an argument. I do not know? we may agree or may not agree. They say : "Whereas for one section of the community It is very sacred because' you cannot shift the birth place of Rama, whereas

in spite of the sanctity and sentimental attachment to the mosque, your mosque can be rebuilt elsewhere to allow the people to pray". That is the argument which these people put forward and I should admit both the Government and the political parties in this country have not taken it so seriously till the other day and they allowed this dispute to linger on. Now, the matter has gone, as per the Uttar Pradesh Government's desire, before a full Bench of the High Court and 14th August, 1989 has been fixed as the date of hearing. But after my talks with one party to the dispute, I am convinced that a court-judgement may not be the final word in a religious matter and there is no end to this dispute also. Tomorrow even if the High Court gives the judgement in favour of One party, nobody can prevent the other from going in appeal to the Supreme Court and may be for years this dispute will still linger on. They also say that in the Shahbano case when the Supreme Court had given a judgement, the Government said at that time : "In religious matters, court judgement need not be the final word. The Government can come forward with a legislation in such matters." Therefore, the Government itself has given a scope for this kind of an argument that in religious matters court judgement may not be the final word. It appears, in my view, that only a negotiated settlement will be a durable settlement. It is difficult, I know, because both the parties have taken rigid stands but it is not impossible also.

In this connection, Madam, I would like to refer to some of the suggestions for a negotiated settlement which had come forward from different sources. I don't want to take sides and I don't plead for any of these solutions but I think it is worth consideration whether any of the solutions offered can be taken seriously. I refer to Kamalapati Tripathiji's statement on May

24, 1989. I again make it clear, Madam, this is not my suggestion but I am only referring to some of the suggestions made. Mr. Kamla-pati Tripathiji said : "The contro-versial place of worship at Ayodhya be declared as a national monument and protected as such." To this I came across a counter-argument from the side of the Vishwa Hindu Pari-shad. They said : "It is not a national monument for us. It is a national dishonour. Therefore, there is no question of considering the sugges-tion." They have refused it point-blank. .

Mr. Syed Shahabuddin who was connected with, perhaps is still con-nected with the Babri Masjid Action Committee, said in a letter to the *Times of India* on 1-3-1987,1 quote:

"It would indeed add to our glory as a nation if a mosque and a temple co-exist in peace ' next to each other The tra-dition of Kabir, Nanak and Gandhi do not permit an act of coercion. There is a tradition of tolerance, goodwill and mu-tual respect in which there is no place for superiority, power, hegomonism or chauvinism"

That is what Mr. Syed Shahabuddin has said.

Madam, Dr. Karan Singh who was intimately connected with se-veral Hindu organisations said on the occasion of Ramnavami cele-brations in the capital on 7-4-1987: Dr. Karan Singh—the President of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad but they say, he was . not the President of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad any time—advised his followers that they should concede the disputed monument in Ayodhya to Babri Masjid supporters in the national interest. He also said, on some other occasion, "that the idol should be shifted from inside the shrine to the chabut^ra outside and a temple be constructed there. The Muslims shou'd be given right of passage through the side entrance and allowed

I to offer prayers." That was Dr. Karan Singh's suggestion. Then, the Indian Muslim Youth Con-ference President, Mi". M.A. Naqvi said, I am quoting: "He has urged the Muslims not to be mis-guided by the leaders of the Babri Masjid Action Committee and sug-gested that they should better think of gifting away the birth-place of Lord Ra.ma to the Hindus. He fur-their stated, Babai was a conqueror and not a God as was Lord Rama' Therefore, it would be in the fitness of things if the place of birth of Rama was restored to the Hindus. This would cement the bonds of friendship and goodwill between the Hindus and the Muslims."

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My friend, Mr. Madhu Limaye, gave another suggestion. He said and I quote: "If both the commu-nities are inspired by mutual goodwill and want a just and equi-table settlement of the problem, the , ideal solution would be to trans-form the place into an archaeolo-gical spot and a museum. As a token of goodwill, all the Muslims contri-bute all the money for the construc-tion of Rama mandir on an open site on the bank of river Sarayu and let the Hindus finance the con-struction of a mosque in the vicinity of Muslim habitation in the en-vironment of Faizabad." That was his suggeststion. Like that, Madam, in the latest-issue ofthe *Surya* ma-gazine, I read a statement by a leader of the Shia community. They said, "We were the ofiginal ens-todianas of this mosque. Therefore, we are preared to give it to the • Hindu community." That was also on record. These are some of the suggestions which came from diffe-rent areas. Now, they have to be considered if at all we think that only a negotiated settlement is the solution' {Interruptions).. Please wait. Let me finish. In the last day's discussion, some suggestions we're made that the Government should intervene and stop the pro-gramme announced by the Vishwa

[Shri Parvathaneni Upendra]

Hindu Parishad. I feel personally and also on behalf of my party that wheie as the Government should take all measures for maintaining lavv and order at the particular place, Ayodhya I think, it is not proper- to interfere with the activities of the Parishad elsewhere. It will only create unnecessary tension and I do not think it is advisable. We can only persuade them to stop this or postpone this. Now, I am giving some concrete suggestions from our party side. One is, as I said earlier, this call by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad at this juncture is fraught with grave danger to the communal harmony and the unity of the country and particularly I mention this because the passions of the people would be aroused during the election year at the election time. So, this programme must be pes poned at least if not abandoned. We should request like that. Therefore, I suggest an all-party joint app;al should go to both the parties because the Vishwa Hindu Parishad has announced a programme of *Shilanyas* and other programmes whereas the Muslim community has announce movement of defence squads two days in advance to that place. Both are dangerous moves. Therefore, I suggest either it can be done by the parties meeting themselves or the Government can take an initiative in calling a meeting of all the political parties to make such a joint appeal to both the groups to postpone this action at least during this year. Seconcly, all the parties should come to an agreement in that meeting that this issue will not be made an elec'ion issue. I think there should be an agreement on that. Then, the court is taking up the case on August 14th and in case the judgement comes during this year, it might create complications. Therefore, we might request the court also not to give the judgement the year and post-pDne the consideration itself till the new year. (*Interruptions*)., The

Government can make a petition to postpone this. That is possible.

And the various political parties and social organisations should carry an intensive campaign in that area for promotion of communal harmony so that the peace is not disturbed in that area. I am particularly related to read in the 'Times of India' yesterday that the surveys conducted by the 'Times of India' group in various parts of the country have proved that people in general are not v?ry much taken in by this campaign of either party and they do not consider it as a major issue at this moment. Ifthatisthe feet, this feeling should be strengthened by all the parties and the people and I believe at Faizabad itself they have formed the 'Save Ayodhya' panel. They have formed a group consisting of both Muslims and,

Hindus to safegurd the peace in that particular area and to prevent fanatical groups entering that area.

It is a very welcome move and we should encourage t ha} panel and help it in all its activities.

Madam, these are a few concrete suggestions which I have made. As I said earlier, it is a very sensitive issue and we should deal with it in a very careful manner. The Government has bungled so long. Otherwise for forty years this issue should not have been allowed to linger on like this. Probably in the earlier stages a negotiated settlement would have been much easier than today. But still the time is not lost and I hope all the political parties ano the Government would rise to the occasion and make a fervent appeal to both the groups not to take any precipitative action pending a negotiated settlement. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :

Shri P.K. Bansal. I would request hon. Members to be brief because we j have constraint of time. I have got

I so many names listed here.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL (Punjab) : Madam, Deputy Chairman, religion occupies an important place in our lives. It makes our lives sublime. It gives the necessary peace of mind when any worldly set-back or conflict threatens a nervous break down. But when misused and abused, it becomes a potent weapon of destruction. It becomes so when people, for petty political interests, take the shelter of religion and make it their instrument of self-aggrandisement in total disregard of the universal message of brotherhood and tolerance that every religion preaches.

The people of India chose secularism as one of the cardinal principles to run the affairs of this vast and diverse land. But during the last forty years, there have been communal clashes in various parts of the country which have brought immense sorrow and misery to the people. One of the very first tasks which Shri Rajiv Gandhi addressed himself to on taking over the prime-ministership of the country was to eliminate the evil influence of religion over politics. Definite steps were taken in this direction by enacting a new law preventing the misuse of religious places and incorporating the necessary amendments to that effect in the election law as well. Today, when the Government is engaged in a sincere endeavour to separate religion from politics, some people for reasons wholly irreligious, are adopting courses of action which, if unchecked, would surely inflict a serious blow to our body politic. The Babri Masjid-Ram Janambhoomi dispute is one such instance. Left to the people of Ayodhya themselves it would never have been the cause of any dispute whatever because the people there have lived in perfect harmony for centuries. But, Madam, that would have deprived the vultures of their flesh. This is why they try to descend menacingly and fly away with the flesh torn afresh from the body of motherland, that is India.

In our system, the Judiciary occupies pre-eminent place. Whenever a citizen is aggrieved against any action of the Executive or even of the Legislature, he goes to the Judiciary to seek redressal of his grievances and seek adjudication on any matter. But, here, today, unfortunately we find the Vishwa Hindu Parishad threatening that they would go ahead with their plan to march to Ayodhya and construct the Ram temple there notwithstanding any order of the High Court whatever. This, Madam, is a very disconcerting move and deserves outright condemnation by every right thinking citizen of the country who has any interest of the country in mind. And it is here that I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what action the Government would take against those individuals or office-bearers of any organisation who indulge in and revel in such beratings against the Judiciary.

Madam, the date fixed for the foundation laying ceremony of the temple at Ayodhya is 9th November, 1989. This conveys volumes of thought and intentions of the organisers and of those forces and political parties which support the move. That is the time, as Upendraji rightly said, when the country would be in the process of general elections. Creating chaos and anarchy would obviously be the strategy of those who have no credible ideology and programmes to offer. So they must try and are now trying to whip up communal passions in their desperation to seize power. Madam, I do want earnestly to believe Shri Upendra and other hon. Members of the Opposition when they say that the Babri Masjid-Ram Janambhoomi dispute must not be made an election issue. I want to extend my support to a demand as that and would take this opportunity to appeal to everybody concerned to scrupulously avoid making that an election issue. But, Madam, our expression of such pious intentions would lose all meaning if the spark is ignited now and the fire

[Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal]

breaks into a major conflagration later on at the time of election. Words unfortunately do not bind some of our friends on the other side. Their actions go on. The actions go on to enlist the support and extend support to the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Shiv Sena, Bajrang Dal and many such other outfits whose aim is to make Hindus deviate from their traditionally religious path of love, understanding and respect for other faiths. They know that ideas have legs and now they are busy planting such ideas in the minds of the ordinary men with their eyes, minds, and hearts on the next elections.

Madam, people cannot and must not be misled by such declarations. But I would like the honourable Minister to inform the House about the stand of each political party on the issue when the meeting was convened on this matter some time back. Shri Gurudas Das Gupta was, as usual, quite forthright in condemning communal tendencies that are erupting in the country. But, with utmost humility and deference to him, I am constrained to say that for once his words did not carry conviction. I would like to know from him whether it is not a fact that his party, that is, the CPI, is also being seduced into some sort of alliances, direct or indirect, with the Shiv Sena, the BJP and -other communal organizations via Shri V.P. Singh's Janata Dal. I shall be happy if he repudiates this and allays the fear of the progressive people in the country.

SHRI PARVATHANENI UP-  
ENDRA : Like the Congressmen?

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BAN-  
SAL : Pardon?

SHRI PARVATHANENI UP-  
ENDRA : Progressive people like  
Congressmen ?

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BAN-  
SAL : Madam, I do not know any  
thing about Esirology. Out friend,  
Shri Suresh Panchouri, made copious

references to the opinions of some known astrologers and authorities on the subject.. But I do know that every Hindu programmes his major actions according to the movements of the planets and we are also told that the construction of a temple is never started when the earth is in the Dakshinayan phase. This basic rule is also being flouted now with the sole object of selecting the date for the purposes of laying the foundation-stone only to coincide, as I said earlier, with the election process in the country and, in the process, there is a determination on the part of some of the anti-social forces in the country to divert the attention of the people and create a difficult situation right on the even of the elections may be, but I hope not that the astrologers prove themselves right by the actions of our friends starting the construction during that inauspicious period. But I do hope that no inauspicious event visits the country when they start an important programme - during an inauspicious phase. Nevertheless I again would like to know from the honourable Minister as to what steps the Government proposes to take to meet the law and order situation that may-be created by the long march of the volunteers of the Vishva Hindu Parishad to Ayodhya and the situation, which was also referred to by Shri Upendraji, that would arise out of the resistance being offered by the Hifazati Dastas raised by an equally communal Muslim organisation.

Madam, the plans to collect 5-75 lakh bricks from an equal number of villages, from different parts of the country and to collect a token contribution of Rs. 32 crores from the people.

AN HON. MEMBER : Token?

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BAN-  
SAL : That is what they say it is.  
This, Madam, unveils the intentions  
of the VHP and all political parties