

(Several hon. Members stood up.)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, order.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: On a point of order, Sir. You have been good enough to admit this question and answers have been given in part but the answers do not make any sense, in view what has appeared in the papers to the contrary and this creates confusion, unless the logical sequence is followed, namely, the nature of the case is given. Nothing of the public interest will be involved or harmed by adding this little information to what he has already said. On the contrary, the public will be thinking that because it is a case of a Minister, the Ministers are trying to shield one of their colleagues. That is what the public may think and that is why the Minister is taking protection under some particular Rule. Therefore, Sir, I would submit to you to kindly consider this. It is precisely the public interest which demands that the hon. Minister should open up fully since he has opened up a little and tell us which of the charges relate to the two significant items on which the Attorney-General has given his opinion; and if he wants to take protection under the cover of serving the public interest, let him state the Rule for it, have it on record that under such and such Rule he is seeking protection.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have understood your point of order. As Mr. Gupta has said, I was good enough to admit the question, I am now bad enough to admit the plea of the Home Minister that it is not in the public interest that he should divulge the nature of the two charges!

Next question.

SAMYUKTA SADACHAR SAMITI

*140. SHRI A. D. MANI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state the relationship established

between the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Samyukta Sadachar Samiti, which was formed recently?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI): The Samyukta Sadachar Samiti is a purely non-official and non-political body with Shri G. L. Nanda as President. In view of the objects and functions of the Samiti, Government welcome its constitution, will extend full cooperation to it and avail of its services in the campaign for eradication of corruption and the redress of public grievances.

SHRI A. D. MANI: Sir, is it a fact that the office of this Samiti is located in the Central Secretariat and that the Prime Minister attends the monthly meetings of the Samiti to discuss the agenda?

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI: No, Sir, the office of the Samiti is not located in the Central Secretariat building, in the North or the South Blocks, but this Samiti has been given a room in the L Block, outside the Secretariat.

SHRI A. D. MANI: Will the allegations which may be made before the Samiti be allegations made on affirmation? What remedy will there be available to a person against whom false allegations are brought in?

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI: Generally, what the Samiti will do is that it will receive complaints from the public, individuals. These will then be screened to find out whether *prima facie* there is a case or not. If there is a case, then the question will be taken up with the Government authorities. The cases may be referred either to the Central Vigilance Commission or to the departments concerned, the departmental Vigilance Officers or the Samiti may itself take up the questions.

SHRI A. D. MANI: Has it occurred to the Home Minister that it is a mat-

ter of doubtful propriety for Government to associate itself in this manner with a registered society particularly when the work of the society is not subject to parliamentary review?

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI: I do not think there is anything improper because the Government is not in that way associated with it. But really the Government wants the co-operation of all public institutions or public organisations to root out corruption.

SHRI N. SRI RAMA REDDY: I would like to know if Sadachar Samitis will be formed at the States level also.

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI: Yes, they have been formed and will be formed in all the States. Wherever they are not formed they will be formed.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: May I know if any financial assistance has been given to the Samyukta Sadachar Samiti or whether any such assistance is proposed to be given?

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI: No financial assistance has been given by the Government to this Samiti nor is it proposed to give any financial assistance to it.

SHRI R. S. KHANDEKAR: May I know how this Sadachar Samiti differs from the Committee which is appointed at the District level like the Complaints Committee or the Vigilance Committee?

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI: This Samiti differs in this sense. Let it be understood that the function of this Samiti is not merely to receive complaints and pass them on to the Government authorities. That is not the only function. Really its main function is to create a social atmosphere and to cultivate opinion against corruption, to have a research or study of the various focal points of corruption and redress public grievances,

that is, to receive complaints from the public about their grievances. Not that the Samiti has only one function of looking into complaints of corruption; there are many other functions. In that way it differs from the Vigilance Commission.

SHRI SYED AHMAD: Who are eligible to be members of this Samiti?

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI: Well, the Constitution is there. Any person who has completed the age of 18 years and signs the prescribed pledge and the application for membership as per schedule shall be eligible to become a member of the Samiti in accordance with the rules and regulations.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: May we know whether due care is taken to see that the members of the Samiti are not corrupt and if so what is the method that is adopted to ensure that?

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI: There is one thing. A person comes forward and he takes a pledge. And the pledge is this:

"I hereby take a pledge that I will not give or take bribe and will not be a party to bribe taking or bribe giving in any form whatsoever and I will render assistance . . ."

Now, here is a question of the moral character of the nation and the people. If we start with the assumption that everybody who signs the pledge is a dishonest person and that he has not come forward with a clean moral conscience we cannot go ahead. It is not a question purely of a legal enactment; it is not a question purely of administrative reform. It is a question of character building of the nation as a whole and I hope this House will take this movement in that spirit. We are all out here for character building of the nation.

SHRI DEOKINANDAN NARAYAN: If there are certain conditions for membership it means there will be many members. Then, is the constitution going to be a democratic one? How are the Committees going to be elected? That is one thing. The second thing is, is there going to be any code of conduct for these members to carry out their work?

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI: Questions are being asked as if I am an office bearer of this Samiti. This is a private voluntary, non-political, non-official organisation but the Samitis in the various States will have their constitution based on the constitution of the Central Sadachar Samiti.

DR. NIHAR RANJAN RAY: How many Ministers of the Central Government and of the States have signed this pledge? How many have refused?

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI: I do not think anybody has refused. Nobody has refused. I do not know. So far as the Ministers are concerned, I do not have the list of all the members who have signed the pledge.

SHRIMATI SHARDA BHARGAVA: It is said that the members have to sign a pledge but do the Government not know that the blackmarketeers never say that they do blackmarket-ing? They always say that they have never indulged in blackmarketing. The corrupt people never say that they have indulged in corruption. They always say that they are above corruption. So, I am not clear how the Government has thought or that organisation has thought that those who filled in the pledge will be really honest people.

SHRI GULZARILAL NANDA: May I say a word about it? I think too much is being read into this. No conclusions need be drawn from the fact that a person has signed the pledge. Because he signs a pledge, it does not mean that he has been doing

bribe giving or bribe taking in the past or if he does not sign it, it does not mean that he will go on doing something corrupt. No rights are being conferred and no powers can be exercised. It is an individual voluntary act; it is not going to be made public. It is not going to be a mass pledge taking. Any individual may find possibly he can help the cause by signing the pledge. Signing the pledge also means that the person is going also to assist in the movement that is being launched. I do not think much really rests on this.

NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS FOR POST-GRADUATE STUDIES

♦141. SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the duration of National Scholarships for post graduate studies;

(b) what steps are being taken to see that these scholarships are paid to the recipients as early after the start of the academic year as possible; and

(c) whether any complaints have been received about late payment of these scholarships?

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION (SHRI M. C. CHAGLA) : (a) The National Scholarships for post-graduate studies are tenable for the completion of the Masters' and the Doctors' Degree if the condition laid down under the rules are fulfilled.

(b) Funds are placed at the disposal of the State Governments at the beginning of each financial year to make payment to the scholars.

(c) Yes, Sir,

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: May I know whether it is a fact that these Scholarships are tenable for ten months only and not twelve months?