

**Death of key witness to Christian Priest's murder in police custody**

†\*53. SHRI V. V. RAGHAVAN:

SHRI NAGENDRA NATH OJHA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister had asked Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister to order a judicial probe into the death in police custody of a key witness to the killing of Christian Priest George Kuzhikandam in Mathura on the 7th June, 2000; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the Chief Minister's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I. D. SWAMI): (a) and (b) The Government of Uttar Pradesh *vide* their notification dated 1-7-2000 have set up a one-member Commission of Inquiry under Mr. Hon'ble Justice Palok Basu, a sitting Judge of the Allahabad High Court to enquire into the incidents of death of Brother George, Warden of the St. Francis School, Navada, Mathura on the night of 6th-7th June, 2000 and Sh. Vijay Kumar, an employee of this school, who was the key witness to the killing of Brother George on 17th June, 2000 respectively. The Commission is required to submit its report to the State Government within a period of two months.

SHRI M. J. VARKEY MATTATHIL: Sir, it has been stated, "As per information available." We want information from them. We do not want 'available information'. ...*(Interruptions)*... Whatever has been stated here, all the newspapers have published it. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI I. D. SWAMY: The Government of India gets information from somewhere. ...*(Interruptions)*... It does not come from the sky. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI MD. SALIM: They should not work as a post-office. ...*(Interruptions)*... They should work as an active Home Ministry. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI I. D. SWAMY: Sir, it is a State Subject. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let him speak. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Sir, I am on a point of order. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI I. D. SWAMY: The information has been collected from the State Government. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let him answer. ...*(Interruptions)*... Let him answer. ...*(Interruptions)*... I am not hearing anything. ...*(Interruptions)*...

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† Starred Question Nos. 42 and 53 were taken together.

**SHRI MD. SALIM:** In both parts of the question, they have stated "as per the information available to the Government of India". ...*(Interruptions)*... They are not passing on the information, the Home Ministry is hearing. ...*(Interruptions)*...

**SHRI I. D. SWAMY:** Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are not passing on the information. We are stating the facts because the law and order is a State Subject. ...*(Interruptions)*... We will have to depend on the State Governments because the State Governments are managing this subject. ...*(Interruptions)*...

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Let hon. the Home Minister say something. ...*(Interruptions)*...

**THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L. K. ADVANI):** Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have been in this House for many years. I know that in the case of State Governments information is sought from the State Governments. After that we may have something separate of our own. But in the House we provide the information that is provided by the State Governments. We are responsible to the House here and, therefore, it becomes necessary that we give "as per information available". This is the situation because, ...*(Interruptions)*...

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Let him speak. ...*(Interruptions)*...

**SHRI L. K. ADVANI:** Sir, this is a matter on which you can give a decision. ...*(Interruptions)*... So far as I am concerned, in all cases relating to the States, we gather information from the State Governments and provide it to the House. ...*(Interruptions)*...

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Let him complete his sentence. ...*(Interruptions)*... Let him say what he wants to say. ...*(Interruptions)*... Let the hon. Home Minister complete. ...*(Interruptions)*... You should not get up till he has completed. ...*(Interruptions)*...

**SHRI L. K. ADVANI:** Sir, this incident has happened in a State and if there is a question relating to this incident, I would naturally seek information from the State Government. May be, my own agencies give me some other information. I am not going to come to the House with that information. I will come to the House telling this House that I sought this information from the State Government because a question has been put, and that this is the information provided to me. That is all. ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, it is for you to decide whether there is anything wrong in it. ...*(Interruptions)*...

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** There is nothing wrong in this. ...*(Interruptions)*...

**SHRI I. D. SWAMY:** The House wants this information and we are supplying

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this information. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI M. J. VARKEY MATTATHIL: What is the basis of that information? ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am not hearing anything because so many Members are speaking simultaneously. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI L. K. ADVANI: Sir, in this particular case it so happens that the State Government has appointed a judicial inquiry. Therefore, I see no reason as to why any objection should be taken to a simple statement that the UP Government has informed us that this is what has happened and subsequently they have appointed a judicial inquiry.

Sir, it is for you to decide whether there is anything wrong in this kind of formulation.

SHRI S. PETER ALPHONSE: Sir, the information is available to the Government, and he has not classified whether the information is available from the State Government or from the Centre. The question is, what is the information available with the Home Minister. The question is very direct. He says, 'information is given to me by the State.'

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has replied.

SHRI S. PETER ALPHONSE: He says he will disclose the information which is supplied to him. He says that the information is given to him by the State and not by the Centre and that we have not put the question like that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is State subject. He enquired from the State and they have got the information.. *(Interruptions)*. Please sit down. *(Interruptions)*.. Please sit down. The hon. Minister has said that they have got the information from their own source as well. But here when they have come before the House, they are giving the information which they have got. What is wrong in it? On the basis of that, they have got a judicial enquiry done. What is wrong in it? What is your objection to the answer? *(Interruptions)*.

DR. KARAN SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Home Minister has said that he is only passing on to the House the information received from the State Government, and although he has got his own agencies and they may have given him more information, he will not share that with the House.

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: I did not say anything like that. *(Interruptions)*. I did not say anything like that. *(Interruptions)*. I did not say anything. *(Interruptions)*.

DR. KARAN SINGH: He said, it is from the State and from his agencies. He cannot say, 'I will share the information from the State and not from the Centre'.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I raise an objection. When the Centre wanted to know about the factual position in certain States and Central teams were sent, the door was shut on their face saying, 'how dare you intervene in our affairs?' My point is, the Chair should guide. If the Chair guides the Home Minister, then he should make enquiries independently and then furnish the information to the House. There should not be any objection. It can be a precedent. In future, it will be useful also. We can send teams to Kerala, to Bengal, to U.P., to Orissa, etc. (*Interruptions*).

† श्री मोहम्मद सलीम: अभी मंत्री महोदय जवाब दे रहे थे कि मैं राज्य सरकार से इन्फोर्मेशन मांगता हूँ और हर सदन में रखता हूँ, यही परंपरा है जिस दिन से वे इस सदन में हैं। अगर उनके पास इन्फोर्मेशन है, होम मिनिस्टर की हैसियत से अपनी एजेंसी द्वारा तो क्या वह हमारे यहां नहीं दे सकते? हम जब सदन में सवाल पूछते हैं उनके किसी मंत्रालय से, किसी मंत्री से, क्या वे कलेक्टड इन्फोर्मेशन पोस्ट ऑफिस की तरह पास करने के लिए या सरकार के पास, केंद्र सरकार के पास, मंत्री जी के पास जो इन्फोर्मेशन आई हुई है क्या हमारे साथ शेयर नहीं कर सकते हैं?

SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI: There is a practice as regards a State subject.

SHRI I.D. SWAMI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the case is registered in a police station. After all, the State Government will also ask the police station people, 'what are the facts?', and the facts go to the State Government. It is a State subject. The State Government will have to inform us when we ask why this has happened. Your own question is, whether the Government's attention has been drawn to such and such caption or such and such newspaper report. On that basis, we will write to the State Government to find out what has happened. We have said, 'yes; we have read this report.' We asked the State Government as what were the facts of this case. The facts have come to us. I am narrating the facts, as they have been communicated to us. But if the subject pertains to the Government of India, of course, there, we will not say, 'as per the available information from the State'. We will say, 'this is the information.' What is wrong in this? Mr. Chairman, Sir... (*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, we will take up the second question. Mr. Chitharanjan. Mr. Chitharanjan will put the second question.

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† Transliteration of the speech in Persian script is available in the Hindi version of the Debate.

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**SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:** Sir, the incident referred to here is not an isolated incident. Instances like that are taking place in large numbers, not only in U.P. but it has happened in several other States also. Therefore, it has become a matter of very great importance.

But, unfortunately, the Minister had not replied to the question taking into consideration the seriousness of the situation. I am very much disappointed over that. These incidents are taking place in the background of a concerted plan, a hate campaign which is being carried out throughout India against the minorities, especially the Christian community.

**SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI:** This is your view.

**SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:** No, no... *(Interruptions)*. I am certain....

**SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU:** Against the Hindus....*(Interruptions)*.

**SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:**.... that an organised hate campaign is being carried out against a particular community...*(Interruptions)*.

**SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU:** Sir, he cannot make such a sweeping charge that a particular community is being targeted. There are other communities which are also feeling that they are being targeted....*(Interruptions)*.

**SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:** No, no...*(Interruptions)*.

**SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI:** Sir, he is not putting his supplementary...*(Interruptions)*.

**SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU:** Sir, he is making a sweeping statement against a particular community....*(Interruptions)*. The point is....*(Interruptions)*.

**SHRI MD. SALIM:** Sir, you should take exception to this.....*(Interruptions)*... Sir, even the supplementary is being censored... *(Interruptions)*... What is this? ...*(Interruptions)*... Who are you to censor the supplementary?... *(Interruptions)*.

**SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU:** Sir, no sweeping statement can be made in the House against a particular community...*(Interruptions)*.... It will send a wrong signal not only to the country but also to the outside world...*(Interruptions)*... The community which they are referring to is more safe and more secure in India than in any part of the world...*(Interruptions)*.... The minorities in India are more secure....*(Interruptions)*..... These people are trying to take political advantage out of it....*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI MD. SALIM: Does the BJP need a spokesman to censor a supplementary? ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Sir, re-conversion of religion is also taking place in several parts of India. It is in that background, I would like to say...*(Interruptions)*... When such a hate campaign is organised against a particular community, it is the responsibility of the Government, especially the hon. Prime Minister of India to look into that seriously...*(Interruptions)*... But, unfortunately, the Prime Minister of India has done nothing...*(Interruptions)*... What he has done is, once he visited Gujarat...*(Interruptions)*... What we have to do is, we have to go to the root cause of the incident...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI MD. SALIM: They are defending the Home Minister and the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, this is Rajya Sabha...*(Interruptions)*... We will not allow this ...*(Interruptions)*... If you allow this, one person to hold the proceedings...*(Interruptions)*... This is a shameful thing...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have not heard anything ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Sir, he is not the Home Minister, let the Home Minister speak ...*(Interruptions)*...

## WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

### Security lapse at Chennai Airport

\*43. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a security lapse was exposed at the Chennai Airport on the eve of P.M.'s visit during a security rehearsal;

(b) if so, whether the loopholes have been detected; and

(c) what steps have been taken to prevent such security lapses in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (CH. VIDYASAGAR RAO): (a) and (b) As a part of verification of security