

Demand for a mechanism to check biased media coverage

SHRI R.K. SINHA (Bihar): Hon. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I want to draw your attention on the issue of media coverage of protests in the name of Citizenship Amendment Act. For example, if a particular news channel ran a 30 minute bulletin on CAA, all of it are filled with public opinion and editorials against CAA. At no point, such bulletin gives space to counter opinion or even narrates what CAA says, set aside attempts to clarify misconception about CAA.

It appears that in name of news, such biased platforms are serving as platform to publicise a narrative with vested interest and agenda than news which should be unbiased, balanced and truthful.

I am not saying that such media outlets should engage in 'advocacy' for CAA but they should place before audience factual information of such Act even if they are giving opinion against it.

Such media creates an air of misinformation and negative image of the country which violates basic principles of journalism and even license conditions to run a media outlet in name of freedom of speech.

Media is fourth pillar of democracy and except dark era of 19 months of emergency, press in India has always been free. But free press should not be biased or one-sided. Since existing mechanisms to ensure balanced journalism have not been effective, I strongly recommend that Government must consider evolving a mechanism which can check such violations in the interest of the nation and to save democratic practices in our great country.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The House stands adjourned till 1100 hours on Tuesday, the 11th February, 2020.

*The House then adjourned at nine minutes past
seven of the clock till eleven of the clock on
Tuesday, the 11th February, 2020.*