

SHRI RAJO SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government has stated in its reply that proposals for amendments in the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 are under consideration in which proposals regarding reduction in time taken in the disposal of cases and making the Act more effective and purpose oriented are included. Keeping in view all these difficulties of the Commission, be it at the state level or at the district level, whether Government propose to bring the Bill to be introduced regarding reduction of time in the disposal of cases during the current session?

SARDAR SURJIT SINGH BARNALA: As I have already stated that after receiving the opinions from the Department, action would be taken in this matter. Broadly, I would like to tell you about those proposals.

[English]

Simplification of Selection procedure for Presidents and members of the district fora

[Translation]

As Smt. Goeta Mukherjee was speaking, judges are not being appointed there.

[English]

Provision for reappointment of Presidents and members; provision of interim orders and provision to do away with *de novo* proceedings - *De novo*

[Translation]

has been started, once a judge went another judge would take up the case afresh, we are trying to stop this practice.

[English]

Provision for creation of benches in the state commissions and National Commission, and provision for the senior most member of the Consumer Fora to preside in case of absence of the President—

[Translation]

If the President is present the court will sit and if he is not present the court will not sit. Sometimes the President does have to go somewhere else and to take leaves making it impossible for the court to sit. One proposal is that some senior-most judge or member could preside.

[English]

To extend the provisions of the civil procedure Code with modification as may be necessary—

[Translation]

Sometimes after applying the Civil Procedure Code the notice and reply became long so we are trying to modify it.

[English]

Issue of notice to Opposite party within 21 days of the receipt of the complaint—

[Translation]

It took many days after the receipt of the complaint. So it has been proposed that notice should be sent to the opposite party after 21 days. There are many such things. We are doing all this so that it would take the least time.

[English]

White Paper on ISI Activities

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*123. DR. SUGUNA KUMARI CHELLAMELLA:
SHRI CHADA SURESH REDDY:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have decided to launch joint operation with State Governments to check the activities of Pakistan's Inter-Services intelligence;

(b) if so, the plans prepared by the Union Government and the States to combat ISI activities in the country;

(c) whether the Union Government propose to issue a white paper on ISI activities in the country; and

(d) if so, the time by which the Union Government propose to lay the white paper on the Table of the House?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) With a view to tackling the problem of militancy sponsored by ISI from across the border in various parts of the country and also to frustrate their attempts, the Government have adopted a multi-pronged approach. This, among other things, includes strengthening the border management through measures such as fencing, floodlighting, patrolling etc. and curbing infiltration and exfiltration. Close vigil is kept by the security forces and intelligence agencies along the border/LOC and in the interior areas. Well co-ordinated and sustained anti-militancy operations have been undertaken.

Periodic coordination meetings are held with the State Governments and the security agencies for sharing information and for devising strategies to counter ISI activities. Depending upon the requirement, joint operations are also launched.

Further, vigil on the international border has been intensified to check smuggling of arms and explosives and various security agencies have been sensitized about the threat perception emanating in this regard.

(c) and (d) A White Paper on ISI activities is proposed to be presented to Parliament soon.

DR. SUGUNA KUMARI CHELLAMELLA: Through Your Honour, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the agents of ISI are increasingly using Andhra Pradesh as a base for their subversive activities in India, and if so, the number of agents nabbed in Hyderabad during the last six months.

Is it a fact that the Afghan-based Saudi dissident Osama Bin Laden had visited Hyderabad in connection with Coimbatore bomb-blast in which nearly 60 people were killed in February, 1998?

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: We have seen reports to that effect in a section of the Press. But so far as the Government is concerned, it has no such information.

DR. SUGUNA KUMARI CHELLAMELLA: Will the hon. Home Minister be pleased to state at what stage is the case booked against ISI-associated terrorists in respect of the bomb-blast in which the hon. Home Minister escaped narrowly?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member wants to know at what stage the case is.

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: The charge-sheet has been filed, and the State Government is prosecuting the case. It is pursuing the case, and most of the accused have been arrested or apprehended — those who were supposed to be the principal persons who were responsible for that conspiracy and for that serious tragedy in which many innocent persons have lost their lives. They are facing trial now.

SHRI CHADA SURESH REDDY: I would like to know whether the Government proposes to deploy more troops in the Kashmir Valley to check the ISI activities in Kashmir, and supply equipment for effective observation during day and night.

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: Deployment of troops and paramilitary forces is on the basis of requirement. This proxy war is certainly being dealt with by the Government in all earnestness, and all that is necessary is being done. Insofar as ISI activities are concerned, the Government has made a special effort to see that intelligence gathering and interception of messages is more effective so that even before these agents are able to strike, we are able to nab them. During the year, very many such modules have been unearthed and neutralised.

SHRI C.P. RADHAKRISHNAN: Sir, though the main culprits of the ISI activities have been arrested, the arrested people have not been enquired properly. One person by the name of Shri Bachha, who was arrested nearly five-and-a-half months ago, was enquired only 15 days back. I would like to know whether the Central Government is keeping a close watch to find out whether the State Government is conducting the enquiries properly or whether they are making in-depth enquiries to arrive at the truth. The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu had made a statement that because of CBI's negligence, those who were involved in the bomb blasts at RSS Headquarters, Chennai, were coming out on bail. If it is so, then what action the Government is going to take in this regard?

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: So far as the Chennai blast is concerned, I think that the State Government is pursuing the matter earnestly. The Central Government has been in constant touch with the State Government, and it has kept itself posted with all the developments. It is a matter before the court of law, and I am sure that the law will take its own course.

SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN: May I know from the hon. Minister whether the Government is aware of the repeated statement of the hon. Chief Minister of Kerala that the ISI of Pakistan is very active in certain parts of Kerala, and that certain organisations in Kerala are being financed by the ISI? If so, what steps are

being taken by the Government to check the activities of ISI in the State of Kerala?

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: In the beginning, the ISI activities commenced in the North-West of the country, but more particularly, after the setback that they received in Punjab, they transferred their attention elsewhere — they went to the North-East and South, and gradually they have been trying to spread their tentacles in different parts of the country. In this course, we are aware that even in Kerala, their agents have been active so much so that the growth of the Al-Umma in Tamil Nadu may not have been possible had it not been for the kind of assistance they had received from the adjoining State. The Central Government has been watching the activities of all these elements very carefully, and we propose to come to Parliament soon with an elaborate analysis of our assessment, as also whatever facts can be shared with Parliament, we would like to share it in the shape of a White Paper.

SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN: Sir, I would like to know whether the Chief Minister of Kerala is apprised of the matter or not.

MR. SPEAKER: The Government would present a White Paper on that.

SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN: That is true. But I would like to have the information from the hon. Minister.

MR. SPEAKER: No, Shri Sudip Bandyopadhyay please.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY: Sir, militancy is being sponsored by the ISI from across the border in different parts of the country. I would like to know as to which are the main border areas through which such operations are being carried out. I would also like to know whether the ISI activists are functioning in the Indo-Bangladesh border areas across the border lines of West Bengal including the North-Eastern region.

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: As I said in reply to a question by an hon. member earlier, the ISI activities started first in the North-Western part of the country, mainly in Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir, but subsequently they have tried to spread them elsewhere and even in the North-East and in the East across the Bangladesh border. They have been trying to send infiltrators and to use both Bangladesh as well as Nepal as bases of their activities.

With the change of Government in Bangladesh, it has been possible for the Government of India to build

up some rapport with the Bangladesh Government and see that these activities are contained. The situation is still not wholly satisfactory. But so far as diplomatic efforts are concerned, both with respect to Bangladesh and Nepal, they continue. We are vigilant in respect of all these activities which affect the North-East and the East.

SHRI R. MUTHIAH: Sir, the hon. Minister has stated that the activities of the Al-Umma in Tamil Nadu is posing a great concern to his Government. I would like to know from the hon. Home Minister whether this Government has got any proposal to ban the activities of the Al-Umma in Tamil Nadu, particularly in view of the fact that this organisation is having nexus with the ISI.

Sir, I would also like to know whether this Government has come across any information about the close nexus between the State Government itself and the Al-Umma.

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: The State Government has already banned the Al-Umma.

SHRI R. MUTHIAH: What about the Central Government?

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: So far as the Central Government is concerned, there is a proposal from the State Government that we should ban it throughout the country. But it is a matter to be considered because till now the activities of the Al-Umma are confined mainly to Tamil Nadu. Whether it would be of advantage to ban it throughout the country or not, is a matter which the Central Government would consider at an appropriate time.

PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM: Sir, there is a report in *The Hindu* today that some of the members of one of the ruling partners of the Government are expressing very strong and renewed pro-LTTE sentiments. As everybody is aware that the LTTE is a militant and terrorist outfit.

MR. SPEAKER: This question relates to the activities of the ISI.

PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM: Sir, this is also a part of the terrorist movement going on in this country and I think, it is a relevant question. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: If it is not a relevant question, I will disallow it.

PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM: Okay, Sir. Now, let me put the question.

Sir, it is related to the militant, extremist and terrorist outfit, the LTTE. It is relevant especially against the background of the Rajiv Gandhi assassination where there has been an alleged involvement of this particular outfit. Has this come to the notice of the Government? If so, what is the stand taken by the Government *vis-a-vis* the alleged involvement of the LTTE in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination?

MR. SPEAKER: I disallow it.

SHRI K. VIJAYABHASKARA REDDY: Sir, may I know from the hon. Home Minister whether all the agents of the ISI are collected in West Bengal and are then taken to Dhaka and from there they are taken to Lahore for training. After training they are again sent back to India through the same channel. Is the Government aware of this and if so, have they taken any steps to break this channel?

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: Sir, one of the important activities of the ISI has been somehow to induct people and give them training, training in subversive activities; training in infiltration; training in arms; and this has been going on for quite some time. It is not confined to just one channel.

Sir, they have been doing it through various channels and we have been keeping a close watch on that and stopping and disrupting it wherever it is feasible. I have with me a long list of modules that have been unearthed and neutralised during the past two years. Very soon it would be possible for the Government to share all this information with the Parliament.

[Translation]

SHRI ADITYANATH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to know from the Government whether the Government will take any action against the stepped up activities of infiltration through Bangladesh along the Indo-Nepal border, in which ISI and some traders and leaders of political parties of the area are involved after their identification?

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: The Government of India are aware that I.S.I. is trying to step up its activities in our country by making Nepal as its base and due to that, particularly the border of Uttar Pradesh is affected. We are continuously trying to check these activities with the help of Uttar Pradesh Government. Besides, to some extent we have succeeded in controlling these activities with the help of Nepalese Government on bilateral basis.

[English]

Increase in Population

*125. SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is likely to face food and water shortage as its population is set to increase to 1,535 million by 2050, making it the most populous nation on the earth;

(b) if so, whether the Government have any specific strategies to check this problem of population explosion in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): (a) Projections made for 9th Plan document for increase in agricultural output and for per-capita availability of water do not indicate shortages in availability of these upto 11th Plan. The estimates of projected population of India in year 2050 made by UNFPA in 1996 are based on past trends of population growth. Lately efforts for Family Welfare and population stabilisation has been substantially strengthened and this is expected to help in keeping population of the country at a substantially lower level than projected in UNFPA estimates.

(b) and (c) As a result of Family Welfare effort, birth rate in the country has declined from 29.5 in 1991 to 27.2 in 1997. The use of contraceptives and terminal methods is being canvassed with citizens for avoiding unwanted pregnancies and facilities for reproductive and child health are being improved which would help in keeping families small in the long run. As a result progress in reduction of population growth is expected to improve in coming year.

(d) Does not arise.

SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA: Sir, the answer given by the hon. Minister is totally vague. I asked a categorical question. First, as per today's growth of population what would be the population of this country in the year 2050? Second, what steps the Government proposes to take for providing food for this increasing population? And third, what steps does the Government propose to take to control population?