

## Regarding Freedom of Speech

**SHRI K. C. VENUGOPAL (ALAPPUZHA):** Thank you, Madam, for giving me an opportunity.

Today, I would like to raise an alarming crisis that is threatening the very soul of our democracy. The systematic erosion of freedom of speech is happening in this country whether it is in media or in social media or in movies. In Kerala, for the last so many days, we are witnessing a serious attack on a movie named 'Empuraan'. Why is that attack happening? The film has got censorship certificate. In the Censor Board the BJP leaders are sitting. They have given clearance for the film and the film was released. But a systematic attack has happened on the actors, producers and directors of the film. Now, they are forced to cut 24 parts of the film.

Actually, it is a shame for the nation that after the Censor Board gave the certificate, some people feel that it is not fit for them because that film narrates about the Gujarat riots. Hence, some people thinking that this film cannot be shown. How can it be so? Therefore, whether it is in journalism, or other media there is a clear-cut systematic attack on freedom of expression that is happening we can see that. The YouTubers are under attack; certain journalists are under attack.

Whenever somebody is talking against the Government or against the BJP Party, they are under threat and the entire machinery of ...\* and BJP are behind them. Therefore, this is going to ruin our democratic values.

They are systematically trying to finish the Right to Information Act. The Right to Information Act is one of the best weapons for the common people of this country. They are trying to finish that Right to Informational Act. They are trying to finish the freedom of expression.

How can a country like India that flourished due to democracy function like this? Therefore, my prayer is that the Government has to protect freedom of expression and those who are threatening or creating problem have to be taken seriously.

Madam, thank you very much.

माननीय सभापति : मैं सभी माननीय सदस्यों से आग्रह करता हूँ कि सभी अपने-अपने विषय को एक-एक मिनट में रखने का प्रयास करें ।

डॉ. जयंत कुमार राय जी ? उपस्थित नहीं ।

श्री मनीश तिवारी जी ।