

[Shri Madan Pandey]

such saints is one of such acts. It is also a matter of satisfaction that commemorative stamps on most of the saints and great men have been issued. However, there are still some personalities left whose lives should be made known to the people not only through books but also through postage stamps.

One such saint was Maharishi Dadhichi. When his bones were required for the projection of human values, he went into a trance after applying salt on his body and allowed it to be licked slowly by the cows and in this manner he sacrificed himself and his bones were used to manufacture arms by which the destructive forces were destroyed.

Hence I request the Minister of Communications that in the present circumstances, in order to build up an environment against terrorism, a postage stamp commemorating the sacrifice of Maharishi Dadhichi should be issued. Similarly, the sublime lives of the pre-historic saints and sages of India should be propagated towards which the attention of the Government has not been drawn so far.

[English]

(v) Need to take necessary measures to help the small newspapers in the country, particularly those published in the rural areas.

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR (Chimur): I would like to invite the attention of the House and the Government to the real danger of freedom of press which has arisen as a result of the growing monopolistic tendencies in Indian journalism. Already Indian Press is, to a large extent, dominated by half a dozen big newspaper establishments controlled by big capitalists having annual turnover of crores of rupees. With the phenomenal technological development there is real apprehension that this has further increased the strength of the big establishments and harmed the small newspapers.

Small newspapers are the real grassroots of Indian journalism. They are published in local languages and have rapport with our rural masses. There is growing tendency in rural areas to buy newspapers but people in these areas can ill-afford to buy more than one newspaper. It is these newspapers which alone can transmit the message of the Government relating to 20-point programme and developmental activities in general. They are the genuine organs of ventilating peoples' grievances and problems.

I, therefore, urge upon the Government to take the following immediate steps to strengthen these small newspapers, particularly those in rural areas :—

1. As recommended by the Second Press Commission, a Newspaper Finance Corporation should be immediately established in order to help financially these small newspapers ;
2. The news agencies like PTI and UNI should be directed to change small newspapers at subsidised rates ;
3. The Ministry of Tele communication should give substantial concessions to these small newspapers in the matter of postal charges, telephone charges and teleprinter charges ;
4. The DAVP may be asked to revise its advertisement policy and release major portion of its budget to small newspapers, and completely stop advertisements relating to family planning, 20-point Programme and agricultural development to English Newspapers, as only 3 per cent of the people in India understand English.

These steps, in my views, are very necessary because it is these small newspapers which really help the cause of communal harmony and national integration.