

11.33 hrs.

**CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER  
OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

NEWS ITEM IN THE TIMES OF INDIA  
DATED THE 31ST MARCH, 1977 RE. ALLEGED  
REMARKS BY PRIME MINISTER IN RESPECT  
OF WOMEN AS PRIME MINISTERS

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN  
(Coimbatore): I would first like to  
point out that I have not received a  
copy of the statement to be made by  
the Prime Minister, as is the usual  
practice.

MR. SPEAKER: There is no ques-  
tion of an advance notice.

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISH-  
NAN: But to the person who gives  
the Calling Attention notice it should  
be given in advance so that he or she  
will have an opportunity to go through  
it.

MR. SPEAKER: He has not given  
anything in advance. He is replying  
here to the Calling Attention: you can  
hear him and then put your questions.

SHRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM  
(Tiruchirapalli): I have been a Mem-  
ber of the House for six years, and  
the practice so far was that when a  
Calling Attention is admitted, before  
it is taken up for answer here, a copy  
of the statement is made available to  
all the Members and not only to the  
Member who gives the Calling Atten-  
tion notice. (*Interruptions*).

MR. SPEAKER: When the state-  
ment is long, that is what is done but  
in the case of some Calling Attention  
notices like this, when they want to  
answer it extempore, it is not obliga-  
tory or compulsory that it should  
be given in advance. (*Interruptions*).

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHN-  
AN: I call the attention of the Prime  
Minister to the following matter of  
urgent public importance and request

that he may make a statement there-  
on:—

"The news item appearing in the  
Times of India dated the 31st March,  
1977 attributing statements alleged  
to have been made by him regard-  
ing women as Prime Ministers and  
levelling derogatory and unseemly  
remarks about them."

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI  
MORARJI DESAI): May I say that  
the controversy which has arisen is in  
respect of something which I said more  
than two years ago? But I don't wish  
that that controversy should go on nor  
do I wish that I should add to it fur-  
ther. It is very unfortunate that this  
should have happened and I regret  
very much that I should have been  
the cause of it. I can only say that  
in future I shall be careful to see that  
I don't give scope for such a thing.

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHN-  
AN: I am very grateful to the Prime  
Minister for the statement that he has  
made. It is the image of our country  
that is involved also, it is International  
Women's Decade. That is why we  
were disturbed. Particularly, he has  
claimed in that statement that he is  
a follower of Gandhiji. Gandhiji was  
the person who taught our country  
that women have to take their place  
equally with men in order to ensure  
salvation for our country.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: May I say  
that I respect women far more than  
the hon. Member does.

11.36 hrs.

**RE MATTER UNDER RULE 377**

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Biju Patnaik.

SHRI JYOTIRMAY BOSU (Dia-  
mond Harbour): Sir, I had given a  
notice under rule 377 to draw the at-  
tention of the House to public burning  
and trampling of newspapers in a pub-  
lic meeting.....