

12.12 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

DOWRY DEATHS IN THE CAPITAL

SHRIMATI SUSEELA GOPALAN (Allepey): Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Home Affairs to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:—

"Several gruesome dowry deaths in the Capital recently reported in the newspapers and the action taken by the Government in the matter."

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. VENKATASUBBALAH): Sir, the Government are seriously concerned about the increasing incidents of dowry deaths.

During the current year upto 30th September 1982, 31 cases of dowry deaths have been reported to Delhi Police. Ten of them have been registered as cases of murder under Section 302 IPC and twenty-one under section 306 IPC. 56 persons have been arrested in these cases. While challans have been put in the Court in 5 of these cases the investigation in other cases is in progress. In all these cases, the charge is that in-laws maltreated the deceased on account of insufficient dowry. The deceased were either murdered or harassed to such an extent that they committed suicide. It is the constant endeavour of the Government to deal with incidents of dowry deaths promptly and effectively and bring to book the miscreants who indulge in such reprehensible and anti-social acts.

Some of the administrative measures taken are mentioned below:

(i) Instructions have been issued to the Police Officers to take serious notice of all cases of suicide or death in suspicious circumstances of young married

women in the first ten years of marriage. The cases are treated as special report cases and the investigation is to be conducted by an officer not below the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police (Asstt. Commissioner of Police).

(ii) A re-conciliation-cum-Guidance Bureau under the Anti Dowry Scheme has been set up by the Directorate of Special Welfare of Delhi Administration to provide counselling and guidance services to married women in distress and victimised by their in-laws on account of dowry. The Directorate is also launching publicity/propaganda through various media.

(iii) Instructions for getting the post-mortem conducted by at least two Doctors in dowry death cases have been issued. Moreover, doctors are required to do the necessary certification and attestation at the time of the recording of the Dying declaration.

(iv) Special Magistrate have also been detailed for recording the Dying declaration in such cases.

(v) All women who are victims of offences are entitled to free legal aid.

Hon'ble Members are aware that the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee of the Parliament, to make Dowry Prohibition Act more effective, have been laid on the table of the House.

The High Court of Delhi under whose control and superintendence subordinate courts in the Union Territory of Delhi are functioning, has earmarked one court of Additional District and Sessions Judge at Tis Hazari Courts complex for the trial and disposal of cases pertaining to dowry deaths.

I appeal to all sections of the people, particularly the women welfare organisations, to mobilise public opinion and enlist public cooperation in the efforts of the Government to eradicate this social evil. Besides law, the ultimate sanction against the evil of dowry is enlightened and vigilant public opinion and the conscience of the society.

SHRIMATI SUSEELA GOPALAN:

Sir, it is shocking that more and more reports of inhuman dowry killings have been pouring in the daily newspapers especially from the Capital City. According to the Minister, there were only 32 dowry killings during the last 10 months, that is, up to September 1982. But according to 'Patriot' newspaper report dated 19-6-1982, there were 137 cases of dowry killings and of so-called suicides by housewives, 100 cases of suspected murders were reported. So, there are about 137 cases of dowry deaths and 100 cases of suspected murders. That is the report given in the newspaper 'Patriot'. There are many more cases of this nature which go unreported. The newspaper 'Statesman' dated 1st July 1982 writes that on an average one bride burning a day is occurring. According to them, an unofficial source suggests that there is one bride-burning in every 12 hours in the capital city. In the 1st week of July alone, about 11 dowry killings were reported. The news report to this effect came in the press and I have got the cuttings of this particular news item. It is claimed that it may be due to rousing the consciousness of the people, that more cases are reported. There was a claim by the Home Ministry that it was only due to the rousing consciousness among the people that more cases are reported. Otherwise, the cases are not more. How could it be true? I fail to understand the logic behind this claim. If the general crime situation in the country is on the increase, how can dowry killings be less? You say that it is increasing because of the rousing consciousness. It is increasing not because of the increase in reported cases but it is also due to increasing economic crisis, growing economic disparities; price rise and unemployment are the result of your capitalist path of development. This has resulted in the general degradation of moral values among the people. But anyhow the reality is this which we have to take into consideration and then act according to the situation.

12.16 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

Now, the point is: how to combat this within the frame work of the situation as

it exists? One is the stringent legislative measure. The Joint Committee on Dowry Prohibition Bill has submitted its report on 11th August 1982. The Bill among other things provides for a stringent measure against the offenders. Now, what are the measures taken by the Government? Two months have elapsed but no action has been taken so far. If the Government is so serious about this, they could have brought forward the Bill during this Session for consideration and passing. The Law Ministry have already taken into account all the deliberations made during the Committee meetings. They could have framed the Bill considering the deliberations and the views given during the meetings and brought forward the same during this Session itself. There were demands by various organisations for a stringent law to punish these offenders. But that is not considered. But you say that there are so many ways as to how to register the cases and all that. What is the part played by the Police in such cases? You have given us a very good directive which you have given to police. The A.C.P. will do the investigation and such investigations will be reviewed by the D.C.P. In such cases, the Special Magistrate will be present to record the dying declaration. In the case of metropolitan cities like Delhi, it was suggested that the Lt. Governor would review the cases. These are all good suggestions. I appreciate them. But what is the actual experience we have in such cases? I can cite so many instances where the Police has not cooperated. For instance, on October 18, 1982, Niru Gupta, a 22-year old 6-month pregnant woman was burnt at her husband's residence in Shakur Basti, West Delhi. She was admitted to Safdarjung Hospital with 90 per cent burns. She aborted the foetus. In a barely conscious state she gave a statement before a Magistrate that she had been harassed for dowry by her mother-in-law for which reason she had burnt herself. Subsequently, she informed her family that her mother-in-law had burnt her and that she had given the statement to save her husband who had tried to save her.

We have an organisation known as the Janwadi Mahila Samity, which has been

coming to the rescue of such unfortunate girls. We have intervened in many cases and in one case with our help even the dowry was returned to the parents of the girl. As soon as we came to know of it, a representative of our organisation went to the Safdarjung Hospital and Niru Gupta gave her the details of how she had been burnt by her mother-in-law. They immediately contacted the acting DCP of West District, Shri Balwant Singh. They informed him that Niru wanted to make a fuller statement and that he should immediately contact a Magistrate and inform him that the girl had made the earlier statement under pressure. Shri Balwant Singh said that "there was no pressure then, and there was a pressure now to say something", and he refused to do anything. They informed him that her condition was deteriorating and somebody should go to record her statement. Any how, after a very long and heated arguments, he agreed to send his S.H.O. to the Magistrate. After an hour he informed them that the Magistrate was not available. They told him that the girl's condition was very critical and if there was any further delay, she would be in no position to make any statement. He ultimately said that the police personnel on duty there would record the statement. This was at 10.30 p.m. But when our members went to the hospital, they found that there was no policeman on duty. They asked the doctors there to record the statement, but they were also not prepared to do that. They then recorded the girl's full statement on a tape-recorder. If the Minister wants, I can produce the tape-recorded statement. In her statement she said: "My mother-in-law has burnt me. Earlier my mother-in-law and sister-in-law beat me saying—why did you not bring Rs. ten thousand? The poured kerosene on me and burnt me. When I screamed, my husband rushed in to save me. She tried to stop him. He brought a blanket but she poured a bucket of water on me, although he tried to stop her. The earlier statement I made was not correct. This should be taken as the correct statement."

Now, how can a policeman say that they would not record a second statement?

After the statement was taped, they again tried to contact the police. On 7th October morning the family informed our Samity that she was sinking and would probably not be able to speak. It was only at 1 p.m. that a Sub-Inspector was sent to record her statement, but at that time she was not in a position to make a statement.

This is the state of affairs, and on the other hand, you are saying that women organisations should cooperate. We are prepared to cooperate. So many women organisations who are serious about it are there. But is the Government serious about it?

Apart from this, there are many such instances. Dr. Shipra Garg and Dr. Surjit Kaur also died under tragic circumstances and became victims of this evil. The same was the attitude of the police in such cases. I can give you a number of such instances. You have indicated that you have taken a number of steps in this direction, but what do we find in practice? Government is not at all serious about it. What is the machinery that you have provided for this? There is an anti-Dowry Committee set up by the Social Welfare Board. Can you at least associate them in recording evidences and dying declarations. This is a good set up if it works properly. When the police personnel are declining to do these things, what is the wayout for us? Are you prepared to take action against the erring police personnel? Otherwise, nothing can be done.

I would like to know from the hon. Minister, when the Government is bringing forward the legislation for amending the Anti-Dowry Bill? We have submitted a report. Further, amendments are required in various connected legislations also, if we have to prevent such nasty deaths. So, if the Government has the political will to implement these things, you come forward with the amendment to Legislation regarding the property right, criminal and such other laws. Sir, we want to know when this legislation will be brought because this is too late.

[Shrimati Susheela Gopalan]

Then what will be the arrangement if the Police personnel are declining to co-operate? Where will the people go? What is the arrangement for that? And, Sir, what action the Government propose to take against those police people who are erring.

These are the questions. Of course, we want to cooperate with the Government, but you have to see that dowry killings are increasing. I want to know how these are going to be tackled by the Government?

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: Sir, I share the concern of the Hon. Member with regard to these obnoxious social evils.

Firstly, she asked that though the Joint Select Committee has submitted its report two months back, why the Government has not come forward to introduce it in Parliament, Sir, it is not the Government's hesitation to introduce it in Parliament. I will certainly impress upon my colleague, the Minister incharge of Social Welfare, who is in charge of the Bill, that as expeditiously as possible this report should be introduced in the form of a Bill.

Sir, the Hon. Member has mentioned about the case of Mr. Neeru Gupta. If the Hon. Member is patient enough, I may read Neeru Gupta's case. A case has been registered under 309 IPC, Punjabi Bagh, which has been subsequently converted to Section 360 IPC on 7-10-1982. That is the date when Shrimati Neeru Gupta died in the Safdarjung Hospital.

The information was received by the local police on 15-10-1982 at 10.50 a.m., recorded vide number so and so, Shakurbasti that Neeru, wife of Ashok Kumar, aged 20 years, had been admitted in Safdarjung Hospital by her husband with 100 per cent burns. The Police Officer in-charge immediately rushed to the hospital and was able to secure the medical legal information by about 12 noon and without any delay whatsoever recorded the statement of the burnt lady.

Sir, she said while she was cooking, she was getting down kerosene tin, which accidentally slipped from her hand and fell on the burning stove and her clothes caught fire. This was her first statement. This statement was recorded at 12 noon, and she said that she was married eight months back and in that morning she was preparing onion Parothas for her husband on the stove. Suddenly the fuel in the stove got exhausted and she poured kerosene oil in the stove and in the process oil fell on her gown; and when she lit the stove, there was a fire and her gown also caught fire. Her husband tried to extinguish the fire and in the process burnt his hands etc. She has nothing to say against any one in the dying declaration which was duly signed by her and recorded in the presence of Shrimati Phool Vati, wife of Vijay Kumar Gupta and Bua of Neeru and Dr. A. S. N. Rao.

Again subsequently we requisitioned the services of the Sub Divisional Magistrate for recording the statement of the burnt lady. At about 2.30 p.m. Shri Ajit Srivasta, Sub Divisional Magistrate, Punjabi Bagh recorded her statement in the presence of Neeru's father, Shri Kanti Prasad. In the statement Neeru first said that her mother-in-law poured kerosene oil and set her on fire. But soon contradicted herself and said that she had burnt herself because her mother-in-law used to beat her and her husband. She again said she has nothing against her husband and has stated on the contrary that her husband and neighbours tried to save her while the mother-in-law threw water on her which was causing her a lot of pain.

Based on this statement we registered a case. It is not as though a case has not been registered. It was registered under 309 IPC, which after the death of Shrimati Neeru has been converted into 306 IPC. Investigation is in progress and we will soon finalise it. It is not as though we have not taken it into account, i.e. what was registered before the Sub-Divisional Magistrate.

This is the case of Shrimati Neeru Gupta.

SHRIMATI SUSEELA GOPALAN: Why was the second statement not recorded?

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: On the basis of the second statement which was recorded....(Interruptions) The Sub Divisional Magistrate has recorded the second statement. If the hon. Member wants to know, I will get further details about it. We are very much seized of this matter. We have taken it seriously.

I have read this statement, but it does not mean that I am belittling the seriousness of the situation, nor doubting the veracity of the dying woman. She has died under very tragic circumstances. Whatever may be the first or second statement, I may assure the hon. Member and the House that we will take stringent action. Investigation is also going on.

Another point is about the administrative actions which I have enumerated while reading my statement, viz. that instructions have been issued, and also that a Reconciliation-cum-Guidance Bureau under the Anti-Dowry Scheme has been set up by the Directorate of Social Welfare of Delhi Administration to provide counsel and guidance service to married women. We have taken whatever administrative action we could possibly take. I may also mention to the House that the Lt. Governor and the Chief Commissioner of Police are all concerned about this matter. Whenever any dereliction of duty is found on the part of any Police officer, I may assure the House that stringent and serious action will be taken against those officers who are treating the cases in a light-hearted manner.

The hon. Member also knows that two Joint Select Committees have been constituted—one on the Dowry problem, and another on rape. The report of the latter will soon be presented to Parliament by the Chairman of that Joint Select Committee.

I know how much interest the hon. lady Member takes in this matter. She came to me once or twice. I am happy to

announce that this was reported in 1 or 2 cases. Even though those cases do not lie within the jurisdiction of this Ministry, I have taken action and instructed the Police officers to contact their counterparts in other States, to take action immediately.

श्रीमती गुरबिन्दर कौर बरार (फरीदकोट) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, डाउरी डैय्स बड़ी नेशनल प्राबलम हो गई है। प्रधान मंत्री ने अपने नये 20-सूत्री प्रोग्राम में भी इसको बहुत महत्ता दी है।

अगर देखें तो अवसर डैय्स 20, 22 की एज में होती हैं। नई-नई शादी हुई, डाउरी काफ़ी न हुई तो कई जगह मदर-इन-ला-इन-सफीशियेंट डाउरी की वजह से तंग करती हैं।

कुछ केसेज में देखा गया है 2, 3 साल के बाद भी ऐसा होता है। इसी तरह से 3 साल के बाद मोदीनगर की एक लड़की थी, जिसके एक लड़की भी थी, वह मारी गई। उसमें पुलिस ने तो एक्शन लिया, जब उसके खातिर को मुजरिम ठहराया तो 7 के करीब मेम्बर्स अरेस्ट किये।

ऐसे ही एक केस रामा का सहारनपुर का है। वह लड़की मिसिंग थी। उस केस में वालेंटरी एसोसियेशन ने बड़ा पाट प्ले किया। वह उनके पास गये और पुलिस को भी कहा। दिल्ली स्टेशन पर एक होल्डाल में उसकी डी-कम्पोज़ बाड़ी थी। इसमें भी पुलिस ने काफी एक्शन लिया।

यह बात नहीं कह सकते कि सरकार को उनकी फिक्क नहीं है। सरकार को इस बात की फिक्क है और सरकार ने अपने स्टेटमेंट में बताया है कि हमने यह यह कदम लिये हैं।

[श्रीमती गुरबिन्दर कौर ब्रार]

डाउरी की बात को देखा जाये तो कई किस्म की डाउरी होती है, जैसे जेवरात और पैसे की और मिडिल क्लास में फर्नीचर, रेडियो, फ्रिज, टी० वी०, और अब शायद कलर्ड टी० वी० की भी बात शुरू हो जायेगी। अब देखना यह है कि इसको कैसे खत्म करना है। यह खत्म तभी हो पाएगा जब कि आल पोलिटिकल पार्टिज को इसमें इन्वाल्वड किया जाए और वे सच्चे मन से इस काम में मदद करें। साथ ही, यूथ आर्गनाइजेशन्स और पोलिटिकल पार्टिज इसके बारे में मास-मीडिया के जरिए सोशल अवयरनेस करवायें।

अब मैं एक और साफ बात कहना चाहती हूँ कि जब किसी की डैथ हो जाती है तो उसके ऊपर हम लोग चिल्लाते हैं, जब कि होना यह चाहिए कि डैथ होने से पहले, जो उनके नेबरस हैं, उनको पता तो लग ही जाता है कि इस घर की लड़कियों के साथ कैसा सलूक हो रहा है, वैसे इन्होंने जो यह क्लीनिक खोला है, वह इस बात में मदद तो करेगा, लेकिन जब उनके साथ लोग अच्छा बर्ताव नहीं करते तो उसी वक्त इसके बारे में कुछ होना चाहिए।

दूसरे, मेरी रिक्वेस्ट यह है कि हमारे मास-मीडिया को ऐसे केसेज को सामने लाने में देर नहीं लगानी चाहिए जिनमें सजा हो चुकी है और केस निपटाये जा चुके हैं। वैसे गवर्नमेंट और होम मिनिस्टर से मैं आगे जाकर कुछ कन्सेक्वन्स कहूंगी, लेकिन मेरी इल्तजा यह है कि ऐसे केसेज इतनी जल्दी खत्म किए जाएं, ताकि लोगों को उससे कुछ सबक मिल सके।

अब आपने अपने स्टेटमेंट में कहा है कि ज्वाइन्ट सलेक्ट कमेटी की रिपोर्ट मिल गई है, लेकिन इस बारे में मेरी कोलीग श्रीमती सुशीला गोपालन ने जो सवाल किया है, वही मेरा सवाल भी था। उसका जवाब तो इन्होंने दे दिया है कि दिल्ली में आप एक स्पेशल सैल बनाने जा रहे हैं एक्सपैरीमेंट के तौर पर और उसकी कामयाबी के बाद सारी दिल्ली को उसके साथ कवर कर दिया जाएगा। इस बारे में उनसे मेरी रिक्वेस्ट है कि अच्छा रहेगा यदि इस सैल की इन्चार्ज या हैड किसी औरत को बना दिया जाए।

Summary trial by special courts of cases involving dowry death.

अब मैं आपसे यह पूछना चाहती हूँ कि इन केसेज को निपटाने के लिए जो स्पेशल कोर्ट्स आपने बनाये हैं, जिनमें इन केसेज को ट्राई किया जा रहा है, उनकी स्पीड क्या है। वह स्पीड मैक्जीमम होनी चाहिए। यह न हो कि वे उन केसेज को निपटाने के लिए बहुत ज्यादा टाइम लगायें। फिर उन कोर्ट्स को इस्टैब्लिश करने का मकसद भी खत्म हो जाएगा। जितनी जल्दी ऑफेंडर्स को सजा मिले, उतना ही अच्छा है। हमारे यहां सेंट्रल सोशल वेल्फेयर बोर्ड है, स्टेट वेल्फेयर एडवाइजरी बोर्ड है और जितने भी दूसरे वोलंटरी इंस्टीट्यूशन्स हैं, उन सब को इन्वाल्व करके एक सैल बनाया जाए और उस का जो परमानेंट आफिस हो, वहां पर उसकी वाइड पब्लिसिटी होनी चाहिए ताकि जितनी भी वहां दुखी औरतें हैं, वे उसका फायदा उठा सकें, वहां आकर अपने केसेज बता सकें, टाइम पर उनकी मदद हो और वे डैथ से बच सकें। मैं इस बात पर ज्यादा जोर देती हूँ।

यहां पर कहा गया कि डी०एस०पी० से छोटे रैंक का कोई आदमी उसमें नहीं होना चाहिए, जो इन्वेस्टीगेशन के लिए लगाया जाएगा हम इस को वैलकम करते हैं। दूसरी बात यह कही गई कि डंड बौडी को भी उस वक्त तक डिस्पोज ऑफ नहीं किया जाएगा, जब तक कि उसके पेरेंट्स और रिलेटिव्स आकर उसको देख नहीं लेते हैं। यह एक बहुत बढ़िया स्टैप है क्योंकि अक्सर यह होता है लोग उसके रिश्तेदारों के पहुंचने से पहले ही उस को जलाने की कोशिश करते हैं। यही उनका मकसद होता है। आम तौर पर बेचारी लड़कियां बर्न्स के कारण जलती हैं या उसको स्पूसाइज दिखाया जाता है, क्यों कि वे एट्रोसिटीज से तंग आ जाती हैं। इसीलिए ऐसे मामलों में उसके रिलेशन्स या पेरेंट्स का होना वहां जरूरी है। फिर जो मजिस्ट्रेट वहां होगा, यदि वह नो ओब्जेक्शन सर्टिफिकेट दे और फिर उसकी बौडी डिस्पोज ऑफ की जाए, तभी बात बन सकती है।

अब मैं आपसे एक और बात कहना चाहती हूं कि आपने जो मौनीटिंग की है, उसका क्या नतीजा निकल रहा है। उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से मिनिस्टर साहब से पूछती हूं कि उस मौनीटिंग का क्या नतीजा निकल रहा है, उसकी इम्प्लीमेंटेशन में क्या बढ़ोतरी आई है और उसके कारण डौरी डैथ्स की संख्या इण्क्रीज हुई है या कुछ कम हुई है। क्या इससे कुछ फर्क पड़ा है। जो गवर्नमेंट ने सैल सैटअप किया है, उसका क्या नतीजा निकल कर आया। क्या बाकी स्टेट्स में भी ऐसे सैल्स क्रीएट किए जाएंगे जो कि उस स्टेट में डौरी डैथ्स के मामलों को डील करेंगे। मुझे याद है कि हाउस में एक कवेस्चन के जवाब में आनरेबल मिनिस्टर ने कहा था कि हम मास मीडिया को हारनेस

करने की कोशिश कर रहे हैं, ताकि सोसायटी में सोशल एवेयरनेस जेनीरेट हो। मैं जानना चाहती हूं कि क्या सरकार इस मकसद में कामयाब हुई है या नहीं। सेंट्रल गवर्नमेंट को स्टेट गवर्नमेंट्स से पूछना चाहिए कि क्या उन्होंने स्पेशल कोर्ट्स और स्पेशल सेल्ज बनाए हैं या नहीं अगर बनाए हैं, तो वे किस तरह से काम कर रहे हैं। क्या मिनिस्टर साहब इस पर रोशनी डालेंगे कि गवर्नमेंट ने लेजिस्लेशन बनाया है, पोलिटिकल पार्टीज और वालन्टेरी आर्गनाइजेशनज ने उसका साथ दिया है, तो इसका नतीजा क्या निकला है।

यह बहुत ही इम्पार्टेन्ट बात है कि डौरी के इकानोमिक और लीगल चैलेंजिज का मुकाबला करने के लिए और मास मीडिया की मदद से सोसायटी में सोशल चेंज लाने के लिए नेशनल और रिजनल पालिसीज बनाई जाएं। जब तक सोसायटी में सोशल चेंज नहीं आएगा, तब तक इस तरह की घटनाएं होती रहेंगी। इसके लिए मारल एजुकेशन का इन्तजाम भी होना चाहिए।

यू० पी० सोशल वेलफेयर बोर्ड ने मेरठ डिस्ट्रिक्ट में एक स्टडी कन्डक्ट की, क्योंकि वहां डौरी डैथ्स बहुत होती हैं। उससे पता लगा है कि 60.4 परसेंट यूथ्स, ग्रैजुएट और पोस्ट ग्रेजुएट, डौरी सीक करते हैं। मेरे नालेज में भी यह बात आई है कि ग्रैजुएट तो स्कूटर तक रह जाते हैं, लेकिन जो लोग आई० एस० या आई० एफ०एस० में आ जाते हैं, उनकी कीमत और बढ़ जाती है और वे कार मांगते हैं। लोग कहते हैं कि हमने लड़के की पढ़ाई पर इतना खर्च किया है, इसलिए हमें डौरी चाहिए, क्योंकि उसने अपने ही घर में रहना है और एक पढ़ी

[श्रीमती गुरबिन्दर कौर ब्रार]

लिखी लड़की उनके घर में आ जाएगी ।
इस किस्म के सीन देखने को मिलते हैं ।

इस स्टडी से यह भी जाहिर हुआ कि जब तक इसमें यूथ्स को इनवाल्व नहीं किया जाता—लेने वाले और देने वाले, मेल और फीमेल दोनों इसमें आ जाते हैं—तब तक इसमें कामयाबी नहीं मिल सकती । क्या सरकार स्कूल-कालेजों में लड़के-लड़कियों को एज्यूकेट करने की कोई तरफ़ीब सोच रही है जिससे उन्हें डौरी से नफरत पैदा हो और वे यह महसूस करें कि अगर कोई देता है, तो ठीक है, नहीं तो दूसरे लोग कहां से डौरी देंगे, जबकि उन्होंने लड़की को पढ़ाया लिखाया और 20, 22 साल की उम्र तक उस पर हर तरह का खर्च किया ? सरकार इस सिलसिले में क्या कदम उठा रही है ?

सरकार ने जो भी कदम उठाए हैं हम उनको वेलकम करते हैं । वालन्टरी आर्गनाइजेशन ने इसमें एक बड़ा पार्ट अदा किया है । गुलमोहर कालोनी में जो किस्सा हुआ था, अगर वालन्टरी आर्गनाइजेशन वहां जा कर शोर न मचातीं, तो वह मामला दब जाता । जैसा कि मेरी बहन ने कहा है, बहुत से केसिज तो नोटिस में नहीं आते हैं, उन्हें रफ़ा-दफ़ा कर दिया जाता है । अगर सोशल ऐंबेयरनेस होगी, नेबर्स को पता होगा, तो ये बातें छिपी छिपी नहीं रह सकतीं और यह सोशल ईविल खत्म होगा ।

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, you can reply.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: Sir, the Government is very much benefited by the suggestions.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Calling attention is going on very well because all are ladies. This has to be emulated by you all tomorrow.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: Very valuable suggestions have been made by the hon. Member. I am highly thankful to the Member for having made very very valuable suggestions and I may assure the House that whatever suggestions she has made will certainly be borne in mind. She has enumerated several measures that should be taken to eradicate this pernicious social system.

PROF. N. G. RANGA (Guntur): Especially, publicity should be given to the steps taken.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: Yes. But, it is unfortunate that every mother-in-law forgets that she was once a daughter-in-law.

SHRI K. MAYATHEVAR (Dindigul): One clarification.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Mayathevar, no clarification. He is replying to Mrs. Brar. You cannot seek any clarification.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: Mr. Mayathevar can only be a father-in-law and not mother-in-law.

SHRI K. MAYATHEVAR: I am not even a father-in-law.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: The hon. Member wanted to know certain steps that are to be taken to tighten investigation and procedure. I may inform the hon. House that if fresh evidence is available in regard to a case which has already been closed, the Police could take cognizance and re-open the case. That is one thing which we have done.

About the steps that are being taken to see that these matters are highlighted and the culprits are brought to book, I have said in my statement that a re-conciliation-cum-guidance Bureau under the Anti-Dowry Scheme has been set up by the

Directorate of Social Welfare of Delhi Administration to provide counselling and guidance services to married women in distress and victimised by their in-laws on account of dowry. The Directorate is also launching publicity/propaganda through various media. If you listen to the radio—perhaps, it is in Hindi and it would be difficult for you to follow—everyday, the evil of dowry has been made one of the important items to be transmitted so that the people may get educated in this matter.

We are also actively pursuing a proposal for the constitution of the Family Courts with the Department of Justice, which are envisaged to settle all family disputes including dowry problems in a conciliatory manner. A suitable legislation for the constitution of these courts will be ready shortly.

Further, to make the offences against women like rape more stringent, a Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill is with the Joint Select Committee. They are making their recommendations in this regard.

The Central Social Welfare Board organised a Seminar against dowry in June 1982 and is following it up with meetings of voluntary organisations for creating social awareness against this evil. The Central Social Welfare Board has started a voluntary action cell to seek active cooperation from the voluntary bodies in this regard. The State Social Welfare Advisory Boards have similarly been asked to start campaigns against this evil. We have already given instructions to various Social Welfare Boards in the States to follow it up. This is a matter which we have been pursuing.

The hon. Member has also brought out the fact that nearly 60.4 per cent of the youth want dowry. This is a social evil. The more a person gets educated, the more his demand for dowry. The medical and engineering graduates are very much in demand in the market. That is the whole tragedy.

I completely agree with the hon. Member that at the University stage or college stage, we have to introduce such course as to educate the youth against this social

evil, because in the dowry deaths several precious lives are lost.

I may assure the hon. Member that whatever valuable suggestions she has given, will certainly be given due consideration with all the seriousness which they deserve.

श्रीमती प्रमिला दंडवते (बम्बई उत्तर मध्य) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं अपना भाषण आरम्भ करने के पूर्व ही मंत्री जी को धन्यवाद देना चाहती हूँ क्योंकि रीता खुराना का जो केस हुआ, जिसके सम्बन्ध में सभी लोग जानते हैं, जब रीता खुराना की मृत्यु हो गई तो आल इंडिया वीमेन्स हास्टेल में रहने वाली लड़कियाँ मेरे पास आई और उनको लेकर मैं मिनिस्टर साहब के पास गई और मिनिस्टर साहब ने आश्वासन दिया था कि मि० खुराना, जोकि आई.बी. के कर्मचारी हैं, उनके खिलाफ कार्यवाही करने में वे कोई हिचकिचाहट नहीं दिखायेंगे। उसके बारे में जो उन्होंने कदम उठाया है, उसके लिए मैं उन को पहले ही अपने भाषण में धन्यवाद दे चुकी हूँ।

इसके अलावा मैं आपके सामने दो तीन बातें कहना चाहती हूँ। इसी साल सितम्बर तक आपने कहा है कि 32 डैथ्स हुई है। आज ही अखबार में पुष्पा नाम की एक लड़की की मृत्यु की खबर आई है। वह शायद आपके ध्यान में नहीं हैं। इस प्रकार मिला कर 33 डैथ्स हो जाती हैं। 1980-81 में 137 डैथ्स हुई है। एटैमटेड सुसाइड और डैथ्स 100 हो गए थे। इसके मुताबिक प्रति दिन दिल्ली जैसे शहर में, जो देश की राजधानी है, कम से कम एक डाउरो डैथ हो जाती है। मैं आप से यह भी जानना चाहती हूँ कि

[श्रीमती प्रमिला दंडवते]

क्या आप ने अस्पताल में बर्निंग केसिस का स्टैटिस्टिक्स डाटा इकट्ठा किया है? जो केसेज अस्पताल में आते हैं, उनमें कितनी महिलायें हैं, उनकी क्या उम्र होती है और उसके क्या कारण होते हैं? यह स्टैटिस्टिक्स डाटाज भी हमारे पास होने चाहिये। जिससे यह पता चले कि कितने केसेज पुलिस में दर्ज नहीं किये जाते। लेकिन बर्निंग के होते हैं और जिनमें डाउरी होने की बहुत संभावना होती है।

मैं एक बात और कहना चाहती हूँ। मैं महिला दक्षता समिति के बारे में कहना चाहती हूँ। मुझे अभिमान है कि मेरा उससे संबंध है। दिल्ली में दहेज के खिलाफ 22 अक्टूबर, 1978 को पहला डिमांड स्ट्रेशन हुआ था, जिसको इस समिति ने आगे बढ़ा दिया था। उसके बाद अलग-अलग जगहों पर शुरू हुए। यह अलग बात है। लेकिन दुःख की बात यह है कि इस समिति ने जिस घर के आगे डिमांड स्ट्रेशन किया, उसी घर में उसी लड़के की शादी एक साल के अन्दर हो गई। उनके घर में लड़की देने के लिए दूसरे मां-बाप कैसे तैयार हो जाते हैं—यह बहुत दुःख की बात है। जिस घर में पहले ही दो बहुओं को जलाया गया हो, उसी घर में तीसरी बहु देने के लिए तैयार हो जाते हैं। हो सकता है कि आस-पास के पड़ोसी उनको बताते नहीं हों कि इस घर में ऐसी-ऐसी बातें हो गई हैं। संसद की संयुक्त समिति ने डाउरी प्रोहिबिशन एक्ट के बारे में 11 अगस्त, 1982 को रिपोर्ट पेश की है। लेकिन सरकार स्ट्रिजेंट बिल कब लाएगी? उम्मीद थी इस अधिवेशन में लायेगी। इसके साथ मैं यह भी

निवेदन करना चाहती हूँ कि किमिनल्स ला अमेंडमेंट बिल महिलाओं के अत्याचारों के बारे में बिल लाना आवश्यक है। क्योंकि यह संसद का अधिवेशन 5 नवम्बर से ज्यादा चलने वाला नहीं है। इसलिए दिसम्बर, 1982 को एक स्पेशल पार्लियामेंट का सेशन हो, उसमें इसको पास करके यह कोशिश करनी चाहिए कि 1983 में एक भी डेथ न होने पाए। इस प्रकार की व्यवस्था होनी चाहिए। अब अगर हम इसको पोस्टपोन करते रहेंगे, तो ठीक नहीं होगा और बहुत जलती ही रहेंगी।

फैमिली कोर्ट्स के बारे में अनेक बार मेरी ला मिनिस्टर से भी बातचीत हुई है। उन्होंने कहा हम कर रहे हैं। और इस बारे में देख रहे हैं। मेरा आप से निवेदन है कि फैमिली कोर्ट जल्दी से जल्दी होना चाहिए। बिल जब मंजूर होगा, तब मंजूर होगा, लेकिन उसके पहले आपको हर पुलिस स्टेशन पर स्पेशल डाउरी सैल खोल कर डाउरी आफिसर की व्यवस्था करनी चाहिए। आज पुष्पा का ही मामला नहीं है। पुष्पा जब जलाई जा रही थी तो उसकी खबर वहां के एक पड़ोसी ने पुलिस को दी थी; जिसको किसी दूसरे कारण में गिरफ्तार कर लिया गया। लेकिन 24 घंटे तक पुलिस ने बयान नहीं लिया, जो लास्ट स्टेटमेंट (dying declaration) होता है, वह नहीं हा पाया। पुलिस को बहुत जगह पर जाना होता है, इसके लिए कोई कार्यवाही नहीं होती है इसलिए हमारी मांग है कि इमिडिएटली एनी पुलिस स्टेशन पर एक स्पेशल डाउरी आफिसर नियुक्त करा जाए। कहीं भी, किसी भी जगह से अगर कोई शिकायत आती है तो वह तुरंत वहां जाए।

PROF. N. G. RANGA: Should it be a woman officer?

SHRIMATI PRAMILA DANDAVATE: Yes, that should be a woman.

पिछले साल, जब ज्ञानो जैल सिंह जी होम मिनिस्टर थे तब उन्होंने एलान किया था कि यदि किसी भी स्त्री को संदेहास्पद अवस्था में मृत्यु हो जाती है, या वह सुसाईड कर लेती है तो उसकी दो डाक्टरों द्वारा जांच की जाएगी, उसका पोस्टमार्टम दो डाक्टरों द्वारा किया जाएगा। इसी सदन में उन्होंने यह बात कही थी। आपने भी यह सारा लिखा है। मैंने खुद इसी सदन में यह सवाल उठाया था कि गुजरात में 36 ऐसे सस्पेशस केसिज हुए हैं जिनके बारे में ज्योति संघ नाम के संगठन ने सेन्ट्रल गवर्नमेंट को लिख कर भेजा है। मुझे पता नहीं कि उनके बारे में आज तक कोई जांच हुई या नहीं। अगर इस तरह से दो-दो साल किसी केस के बारे में लग जाएं तो उस से कोई फायदा होने वाला नहीं है। जब मुझे से पूछा गया तो मैंने उनको कहा कि मैंने पार्लियामेंट में सवाल खड़ा किया था, मैं होम मिनिस्टर से भी मिली हूं और उनको सारे केसिज दे कर आयी हूं। लेकिन मुझे दुःख है कि आज इतने महीने हो गये उन 36 केसिज के बारे में न तो कोई सेन्ट्रल गवर्नमेंट का और न कोई स्टेट गवर्नमेंट का अधिकारी पूछताछ के लिए गया। 36 केसिज गुजरात स्टेट में होते हैं, न जाने दिल्ली में ऐसे कितने प्रकार के केसिज होते होंगे। मैं आप से पूछना चाहती हूं कि ऐसे कितने केसिज के बारे में लोग आपके पास शिकायत ले कर आये हैं और आपने उन केसिज के बारे में क्या-क्या कार्यवाही की?

हमारी वीमेंस आरगनाइजेशन है। हमारे पास सुबह से ले कर शाम तक लोग

केसिज लेकर आते हैं। सुसाईड केस के बारे में आ कर लोग कहते हैं कि आप थाने में टेलीफोन कर दीजिए कि पोस्टमार्टम लाश का किया जाए और जब तक लाश का पोस्टमार्टम न हो जाए तब तक लाश का क्रिमेशन न किया जाए। मेरी आप से प्रार्थना है कि आपको इस बारे में सख्त कदम उठाने चाहिये। अगर कहीं से शिकायत आती है और पुलिस उसके बारे में कोई कार्यवाही नहीं करती है तो पुलिस के खिलाफ भी आपको कार्यवाही करनी चाहिये। आप सरकुलर भेजते हैं, इंस्ट्रक्शंस भेजते हैं उन पर ठीक ढंग से कार्यवाही नहीं होती है। पुलिस वाले शिकायत करने वाले की मदद नहीं करते, बल्कि जिनके खिलाफ शिकायत की जाती है, उनकी ही मदद करते हैं। ऐसा लोगों का कहना है। इसलिए आप इस बारे में सदन के सामने ज्यादा से ज्यादा आंकड़े रखें कि आपने अब तक कितने कितने केसिज में क्या-क्या कार्यवाही की?

फेमिली कोर्ट्स के बारे में मेरा कहना है कि यदि ये इमीडियेटली नहीं बन सकती हैं तो कम से कम स्पोडी ट्रायल करने की इंस्ट्रक्शन आप कोर्ट्स को दें। इस प्रकार के जो केसिज होते हैं उनमें लोगों को कोर्टों में बहुत दिक्कत होती है।

फ्री लीगल एड कमेटी के लिए बहुत पैसा रखा गया है और दिया भी गया। मैं पूछना चाहती हूं कि फ्री लीगल एड कमेटी से अब तक कितने लोगों को फायदा हुआ है और कितनी राशि का इस्तेमाल हुआ है। पूरे साल में आपने कितना पैसा दिया और कितने पैसे अब तक इस्तेमाल किये गये। इसके सारे आंकड़े आप सदन के सामने रखें। मेरे

[श्रीमती प्रमिला दण्डवते]

विचार में इस फ्री लीगल एंड व्यवस्था का लोगों को ठीक तरह से फायदा नहीं मिल रहा है।

दूसरे जो ये डावरी केसिज हो रहे हैं, इनको रोकने के लिए इम्पीडियेंटली कानून बनाना चाहिये।
Compulsory Registration of Marriages Act along with the registration of all the things that are given at the time of marriage.

जब तक आप ये कानून नहीं बनाते हैं तब तक ये बातें रुकने वाली नहीं है। जैसा कि सुशीला जी ने बताया कि लड़की को शादी के बाद जब वापस घर भेज दिया जाता है तो उसका सामान उसको कैसे वापस मिले, इसके लिए भी कानूनी मदद होनी चाहिए। इसलिए मेरी आप से प्रार्थना है कि आप जल्दी से जल्दी इसके लिए कानून बनाएं।

जगह-जगह पर जो वोलेन्ट्री आरगेनाइजेशंस काम कर रही हैं, वे फैमिली काउंसिलिंग का काम भी करती हैं। चूंकि इन आरगेनाइजेशंस के पास इतना ज्यादा पैसा नहीं होता है जिससे कि वे ठीक तरह से अपना काम कर सकें, इसलिए इन आरगेनाइजेशंस को भी मदद देने की जरूरत है। आपने सोशल वेल्फेयर आरगेनाइजेशन में एक सेल बनाया है। आप भी फैमिली काउंसिलिंग करते हैं। लेकिन ये आरगेनाइजेशंस बहुत काम कर सकती हैं और डावरी केसिज रोकने में बहुत मदद कर सकती हैं। इसलिए मेरी आप से प्रार्थना है कि आप इन आरगेनाइजेशंस के लिए स्पेशल ग्रांट देने की व्यवस्था करें। उनको पूरी ग्रांट सौ फीसदी दीजिए। इस पर विचार करने की आवश्यकता है। आज जो डावरी घस हो रही हैं—क्राइम्स अगेंस्ट विमेन,

इसके बारे में आप क्या समझते हैं। क्या आप प्रधानमंत्री के कथन से सहमत हैं, जो कि उन्होंने एक विदेशी जर्नलिस्ट को दिया है 1977 में जब कांग्रेस की डिफीट हो गई, उसके बाद जनता पार्टी Janata Party tried to teach a lesson to the woman who is the Prime Minister

उसकी वजह से पुरुष अपने-अपने घर में महिलाओं को सबक सिखाने की कोशिश कर रहे हैं, इसलिए डावरी डैथ्स और crimes against women बढ़ गये हैं। मैं सिर्फ इतना जानना चाहती हूँ कि क्या आप इस कथन से सहमत हैं? क्या डावरी डैथ्स का कारण इतना सिपल है? इसके बारे में आपका क्या विचार है?

अंत में मैं कहना चाहती हूँ कि जो रिक्मण्डेशंस एक्ट में दी गई हैं—
ostentatious marriage should be banned.

कितना खर्चा होना चाहिए, इस पर पाबंदी रखी गई है। लेकिन मेरी आपसे प्रार्थना है कि कम से कम इस सदन के लोग तय करें कि जो सदस्य अपने घर में धूमधाम से शादी बनाएगा, उनकी शादी में कोई सदस्य शरीक नहीं होगा। कम से कम इतना तो कीजिए। एक सदस्य ने अपने घर में शादी में 20 हजार लोगों को दावत दी और शादी में सारे मिनिस्टर शरीक हुए थे।

This is indirect encouragement to this kind of marriages. मेरी प्रार्थना है कि कम से कम इसमें—

Nobody would attend the marriage especially of the marriage of the member of the family of the Member of Parliament. इस तरह का आश्वासन दिया जाना चाहिये।

हम इसको पालीटिकल इशू बनाना नहीं चाहते हैं और दिल से चाहते हैं कि यह प्रथा बंद होनी चाहिये और सारे सदस्य इसके लिए काम करें, चाहे वे किसी भी पार्टी के हों। अभी मिसेज ब्रार ने कहा कि इसका पालीटिकल इशू नहीं बनाना चाहिये, मैं उनको इसके लिए धन्यवाद देती हूँ। इसके लिए हमको लोगों के अंदर चेतना जगानी चाहिये। समाज की चेतना जगाने के लिए पिछले दिनों दिल्ली में कुछ महिला आर्गनाइजेशंस ने जुलूस निकाला था, आल इंडिया विमन एसोसिएशन, वाई डब्ल्यू सी ए आदि निदेशीय संस्थाओं ने हिस्सा लिया था। उसमें सभी दलों के आर्गनाइजेशंस को भी आमंत्रित किया था। उसमें कोई पार्टी जैसी बात नहीं थी, कोई झण्डा नहीं था, लेकिन दुःख की बात है कि हम सबको बुलाने में नाकाम-याब रहे। लेकिन जो हो गया वह तो हो गया, लेकिन आगे हमको दहेज विरोधी चेतना जगाने के लिए एक दूसरे का सहयोग करके यह काम करना होगा, तभी हमको सफलता मिल सकेगी। इसलिए वालेंटी आर्गनाइजेशंस किस तरह से इस क्षेत्र में आगे आ सकते हैं, इसके बारे में भी आप विचार करें।

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: The hon. Member is a champion of the oppressed and the suppressed and tortured women folk. Her valuable service for the cause of women is well known. I want to pay my tribute to her for her tireless energy to fight for the cause of the women.

She had organised a Seminar. It is unfortunate, though I wanted to join that, but because of certain pressing circumstances I could not do that.

She has raised many points.

About Khurana's husband I must inform the hon. Members that he has been arrested by the Jammu and Kashmir police. He has been placed under suspension by the I.B. and the case is going on. About the Pushpa case, I may tell the hon. Member that the facts that were brought to our notice, are not borne out by the Press statement. She was burnt in a room bolted from inside. Her father and mother themselves have stated this information. I would not say that this is a correct information. But whatever information we have got from the police and from the administration I am just placing before the House. Her father and mother themselves stated that she had good relations with the husband and they did not suspect any foul play. The *post-mortem* examination has not revealed any other injury except of severe burns which led to her death. Enquiries are still under progress. It seems that she stated herself to the doctor that she was burnt by spilling-over of kerosene out of the lighted stove when she was heating water. A magistrate was also called to record the statement of Pushpa. But unfortunately, she was not in a condition to record or give her statement. The magistrate was called immediately, without any delay. With that, I am not trying to defend the case but what I wanted to tell is, these are the facts which were brought to the Ministry. Notwithstanding all these things, I may assure the hon. Member that we are further proceeding in this matter. If there is any foul play suspected, the culprit will be brought to book.

Another thing is about the Gujarat cases. She has said about the 36-cases. We have no information. I will take the information from the hon. Member and immediately contact the Gujarat Government and ask why there is a delay and why the case is pending for such a long time.

About how many people have made use of 'legal aid to the poor' that has been given by the Government, I will collect the statistics and also the amount that has been given to these people. We will see that much more propaganda is done so that many more people can take advantage of it. And if there are any suggestions

[Shri P. Venkatasubbaiah]

made by the hon. Member, we will certainly take them into consideration and see that much more extensive propaganda is given so that more people may take advantage of this.

Regarding the compulsory registration of marriage which the hon. Member has suggested, I will pass it on to the concerned Ministry for their consideration in this matter.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I think, there is also a Private Member's Bill on this.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: About providing financial assistance to the voluntary organisations, I will certainly look into this matter. I may assure the hon. Member that we will give whatever is possible so that that may give further incentive and also a sort of wherewithal for those organisations to create more social awareness and also to help the Government in bringing these culprits to book. I appreciate her suggestions.

About ostentatious marriages, I entirely agree with the hon. Member. These ostentatious marriages have ruined several families. At the same time, perhaps it would compensate by getting large number of presents—I do not know. What is the *modus operandi*, I do not know.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Do you have any personal experience?

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: Yes, Sir. I may tell you that I had four sisters. My father's property was ruined because of these marriages. I know from my personal experience what a horrible thing it is.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I understood from the way you put it.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: I know how my father suffered in those days. He had to sell a good portion of landed property to give dowry. Out of my personal experience, I know what it is.

About this setting up of special court also, I will not be able to say anything

now. I will certainly place this matter before the concerned authorities as to whether that would be able to eradicate the evil speedily and in what manner. I would certainly assure the House that the Government will give as much attention as is necessary.

She mentioned about the Prime Minister. I could not catch what she has said about the Prime Minister's statement and all that. I may say that in this country, our Prime Minister is very much concerned about this social evil. She also intervened in the Rajya Sabha yesterday about the children. About the atrocities committed on women, she is very much concerned and she is very particular to see that severe action is taken to eradicate this evil. She is the symbol of our womanhood and also an outstanding leader of our country.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE (Panskura): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, already a number of questions have been covered. Even then, I have to raise some points and I draw the attention of the hon. Minister to them.

In the statement, the hon. Minister has stated:

"It is the constant endeavour of the Government to deal with incidents of dowry deaths promptly and effectively and to bring to book the miscreants who indulge in such reprehensible and anti-social acts."

If by "Government", it is meant Minister, then I fully agree. But, unfortunately, the Minister does not deal with the cases. It is not possible. I have worked with him in the Joint Committee on the Criminal Law Amendment bill and I fully appreciate his sympathies for women. But the claim made here, I am afraid, is not substantiated by our experience.

While making this charge, I will give some examples. Take, for example, the expression:

"promptly and effectively and to bring to book the miscreants."

There is a case of Usha Arora about which her father wrote a letter to the National Federation of Indian Women, dated 29th September, 1982. This lady, Usha Arora, W/o Kirti Kumar of 35/36, West Patel Nagar, herself a teacher, died on 19th September, 1982 at J. P. Hospital. The news was published in almost all the news papers on the 20th and 21st September, 1982. When this lady was dying in the Hospital, she told her mother clearly, in Hindi: **कोर्टि ने मुझे जला कर मार दिया।**

She was the mother of a 20-month-old child about whom she was very much concerned and asked her mother not to give the child to the family.

I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to the letter referred to by me, the letter written by Shri Khusi Ram Arora who happens to be the father of this lady. In this letter which is dated 29th September, 1982, that is, after 10 days of her death, despite the case being reported in all the newspapers, he says:

“With a very heavy and broken heart, I have to bring to your kind notice that the concerned police authorities have not taken any action at all to remove my grievances. Rather, they have added fuel to fire. It is amazing that even after the registration of the case, initially, under Sections 307, 341 and, subsequently, after her death, under Section 302—that is, murder—vide FIR 488 of West Patel Nagar Police Station, they have made no arrest of the culprit till today.”

That is, after 20 days of the occurrence of the above mis-happening.

Then he suspected malafide intention. He also said:

“On my repeated requests to them and after giving evidence of the happening of incidents, they have not yet paid any attention in this regard to give justice to me. They have rather freed the said culprits with the result that they are now

throwing challenge to me to face the consequences. It is perhaps more appropriate if this case is transferred to the Vigilance Department, CBI, Crime Branch, for further proper action.”

It is a well reported case. Within ten days, this is the situation. Can it be said that prompt action is being taken? No.

I will again say that I am not blaming the Government, the Ministers or the Cabinet. But the Government surely is responsible for its Police force, if these things are happening.

The Minister should know that despite all this agony, what is happening if this is the case.

This is Usha Arora.

Let me cite another case. It is even more interesting. This is the case of Shrimati Geeta Malik, wife of Shri S. M. Malik, 100-A, Pocket-1, Mayur Vihar, New Delhi. She died on the 5th June, 1982, with 100 per cent burns. This girl was a M.Sc. and Bachelor of Education. She was a teacher of the Bal Bharti School at Pusa Road. This case was registered under Section 306. That is not Section 302, Abetment to suicide. The alleged accused were arrested at 2.55 PM on 8-6-82, that is, three days after the incident but, they were released on anticipatory bail on 9-6-82. To make matters even worse, the father of this girl incidentally happens to be—I do not know but fortunately or unfortunately for him—one of the high officers of the Government, that is, he is Mr. S. C. Vijh, Deputy Director, Ministry of Irrigation.

After this, Mr. Vijh, in his letter to the Hon. Home Minister said that police investigations in this case are being held in connivance with the in-laws.

“Since 6-6-82, the Police has not contacted us nor called us.”

That means after the registration of the case.

“Rather, whenever we approached investigating Officers, we were discouraged. Now we are being falsely implicated in

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criminal cases and the Police has registered a criminal case under Section 452."

452 is trespass, 506 is a criminal intimidation and something like that.

This morning I consulted IPC and found what those Sections are. I am not a lawyer. I found that they were intentions of grievous hurt and what not.

So, under such Sections, a counter case has been started against Mr. Vijh, the Deputy Director of the Ministry of Irrigation and against his other family members.

Mr. Vijh writes:

"The investigating officers are just acting on the whims of the persons involved in burning of Mrs. Geeta Malik."

Under these circumstances we are being denied a proper inquiry in the case and the investigating officer is openly favouring the accused.

Mr. Vijh's letter to the Home Minister is dated 6th October. I have got all these letters because they all come to the National Federation of Indian Women which constantly endeavours to take up these cases. That is how these things have come to me.

There is a third case where the case is well reported in all the papers and things have gone to this extent that one Doctor, the husband of Dr. Mrs. Shipra Garg—who happens to be an MD, wanted money for setting up a nursing home and since the poor father denied, this man—what should I call him? I would call him a villain—not only murders this girl by burning—you know this girl was burnt and after that this man took the girl to a private nursing home, she had to scale three storeys up in that situation with 95 per cent burns and when that nursing home refused, only the

next day this girl was taken to the hospital. Even after that, this man did not even accompany the girl to the hospital when she went and this man is an MD. In this case too, the Police was taking no action. Then the National Federation of Indian Women, workers and other women of the locality took it up and there was a demonstration. When the demonstration was going on and the Police Officer was approached, he said, "Nobody is coming for evidence. What can I do?" Immediately one person came forward to give evidence. It was in that situation that nobody was coming to give evidence. 94 men and women of the locality have sent a letter to the Lt. Governor on October 2 requesting him to entrust the case to the Crime Branch.

We have many such cases. These three cases I have raised to show how the Police is conducting these things and how serious the things are becoming. Doctors, M.Sc. girls, teacher girls—all well-placed girls are not able to put up any resistance. Whenever possible, the case is registered under abetment to suicide and not for murder.

My first submission to the Minister who I am sure is genuinely very sympathetic, is to go into these cases and I have no doubt that the normal police machinery will not be able to expedite these cases, however much concerned the Minister personally may be. So in all these three cases I have shown that either the father or the residents of the locality or the organisation concerned which is dealing with it have demanded that these be investigated by the Crime Branch. I do not say that investigation by the Crime Branch would produce a very different effect because my experience also is very bad. Even then it is clear that some other agency, some special agency has to be created for investigation of these cases and prompt dealing with these cases no doubt. My friend, Shrimati Dandavate has suggested that a Special Police Officer be posted at each Police station. I think for Delhi that is an immediate necessity and it must be done.

But that is not the only thing that has to be done. Here in this statement the Minister has given some steps which the

Government has taken. The steps, so far as they go and the intention of the steps, are good. But I would like to know a few things about it because the efficacy of the steps doubtless are nowhere near the expectation. About that the Minister also agrees—I am sure. That being the case, I would like to know.

Firstly, I would like to know whether you will see that the cases that I have referred to—I have given them to the hon. Speaker also earlier and I can give those papers to the Minister also—are investigated into not like the normal police investigation that takes place but like a criminal case where investigation takes place. Secondly, Sir, in the statement he mentioned a re-conciliation-cum-Guidance Bureau under the Anti-Dowry Scheme has been set up. The social workers like myself and Smt. Gopalan do not really know about such a scheme. I did not also ask Mrs. Pramila Dandavate. I do not know whether she knows about this. Where is the Dowry Cell and what is it doing. It seems to be that Reconciliation-cum-Guidance Bureau is loosely called by that name. I shall be happy if something is done about it. Is this the Bureau to which all the cases go? I do not think all cases go to this Bureau. It is clear that something is wrong with it. Firstly, let us know the address of this Bureau and what is its functions? Who are the people in charge of it. It should be widely published in all the newspapers so that the people can go there. To make it effective, it is absolutely necessary that the women's organisations dealing with these things should be associated. There are 101 organisations and all of them may not be dealing with these things equally well. At least recognised women's organisations who are known to be dealing with these cases should be associated compulsorily with this Bureau and proper attention should be given to it. Voluntary organisations should be helped in this regard. It is absolutely necessary. For want of time I do not want to go into any further.

Further, Sir, I know that the Dowry Bill will be passed in the course of a

year and a big movement will come out of that.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: Sir, I am beholden to the hon. lady Member who has brought before the house certain cases.

About the case of Shrimati Arora, four persons have been arrested—the father-in-law, the mother-in-law and the husband and the sister-in-law of the deceased—and the cases are under progress.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The law will take care of that.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: About Mrs. Geeta's case, the case has been registered and three persons have been arrested and that is under investigation.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You mentioned the name as 'Mrs. Geeta'. Say Mrs. Geeta Mallick. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: As regards the other matter, she wanted to entrust these cases to an agency which will be able to expeditiously investigate and bring the culprits to book. Last time also a demand was made on the floor of the House. Of the five cases of dowry deaths, in Delhi, three were referred to the Central Bureau of Investigation. It looked into the cases and confirmed the investigation conducted by the Delhi Police. All these cases are either suicidal or accidental deaths. They confirmed what the police has given in their investigation. In such cases a strict vigilance is required. About the further investigation of the cases, we shall certainly take care to see that a proper

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authority goes into the matter. I have already stated that if there is any dereliction of the duty on the part of a police officer and if it is brought to our notice by the voluntary organisations or even when we ourselves come to know of that, we shall not certainly hesitate to take action against these people. In the Delhi Police Administration, Government is actively reconsidering whether we can have a special vigilance cell in the C.I.D. headed by an independent Police Officer to look after these cases. This is under our consideration. (*Interruptions*). We are thinking whether a special division has to be created; we are thinking whether dowry death cases could be brought under the purview of one single, efficient, police officer. This is under our consideration. Other hon. Members have repeated the points which the hon. Members has just now mentioned and already I have given my replies to them. Once again, I thank the hon. Members for giving an opportunity to the Government to state the facts in this case, and the action taken by the Government in this matter.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: I want to understand one thing. You said that they have been arrested. We find that immediately they are released and they go on threatening and then counter-cases are started.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: I will certainly look into the matter regarding what the hon. Member has stated.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: A very serious case is there relating to Mrs. Shakuntala Arora, Professor from

Shyama Prasad Mukherjee College. There have been so many demonstrations. I had come to know today that no action has been taken.

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH: I will certainly look into it.

SHRIMATI SUSEELA GOPALAN: So many cases are there. We want to know whether during the investigation stage you can associate the Anti-Dowry Committee with the investigation, because all the mischief is done at that stage; the police is doing the mischief.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: They will have some lady Police. Don't worry.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: Let the hon. Minister personally deal with the cases for some time. (*Interruptions*).

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Would you agree for lady Police to investigate into the cases?

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: I do agree, but let this Gentleman Minister personally look into it. (*Interruptions*).

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Government will take care of it. We have had a very good Calling Attention. Thank you.

13.33 hrs.

The Lok Sabha adjourned for Lunch till thirty minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.