

by Minister

13.28 hrs.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION BY MINISTER

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI L. N. MISHRA): Mr. Speaker Sir, I learn that after the Question Hour in Lok Sabha yesterday some Hon'ble Members of the House drew your kind attention to a news-item published in a few newspapers about the report of the Sub-Committee of Estimates Committee of Bihar Legislative Assembly on River Valley Projects (Kosi) with regard to the contract work of the Kosi Project.

In fact, I was myself amazed when I saw this news-item two days ago.

While I have not seen the Sub-Committee's report in question, from press reports today it appears that a number of Members of the Estimates Committee have questioned the impartiality and the propriety of the Sub-Committee's report. They, therefore, protested to the Speaker of the Bihar Legislative Assembly within minutes of the laying of the said report on the Table of the Vidhan Sabha prior to its adjournment *sine die* on 24th August. These Hon'ble Members, along with others, requested the Speaker not to accept the report and to remit it to the Estimates Committee for its reconsideration.

However, this is an issue to be settled between the Hon'ble Speaker and the Hon'ble Members of Bihar Legislative Assembly.

Hon'ble Members may have also seen the reference in today's press to the official Press Note of Government of Bihar which has described the allegation to be "totally misleading and incorrect."

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): Sir, I rise on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: No point of order.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Sir, you cannot shut me out like that. The rule clearly says:

"A Member may, with the permission of the Speaker, make a personal explanation although there is no question before the House, but in this case no debatable matter may be brought forward, and no debate shall arise."

He cannot bring in any debatable matter in his statement.

Kaul and Shakhder clearly says..

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down; let him make the statement. I will listen to your point of order after that.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: You must listen to my point of order. I have written to you.... (*Interruptions*).

MR. SPEAKER: You yourself had asked him to make a statement. I have allowed him to make a statement. He was ready to make it yesterday. You did not allow him to make it yesterday. You are not all allowing him to make a statement today. Why don't you allow him to make a statement?

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: From what has fallen from your lips, we seem to infer that the point of order raised by the hon. Member, Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu, could be raised later. Now, the question is, if something debatable is imported into the statement, would it be your pleasure to expunge those remarks later? The rule does not permit introduction of any debatable matter in the statement. Will you be able to expunge that later? If you are not able to do that, the point of order raised by the hon'ble member, Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu, has to be disposed of first.

MR. SPEAKER: I am not going to decide unless I hear the statement. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: This is a serious technical matter.

MR. SPEAKER: Without hearing the statement, how can I judge it? (*Interruptions*).

SHRI SEZHIYAN (Kumbakonam): Sir, the Minister is well within his right to make a personal explanation. But while making a personal explanation, can he import a matter which is debatable.. (Interruptions).

MR. SPEAKER: Unless I hear the whole statement, how can I judge it? Everything will be guided by the whole statement.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: I want to draw your attention to another aspect of it. Is it not a practice that before the personal explanation is given, the personal explanation is submitted to you?

MR. SPEAKER: Yes.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: Have you gone into it that it conforms to Rule 357?

MR. SPEAKER: Yes; it does.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: Therefore, the question will arise whether your order is in conformity with Rule 357 or not. That is the question which will arise now.

MR. SPEAKER: It is sent to me in advance.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: We are perfectly in order to make a submission that it is not in conformity with Rule 357. (Interruptions).

MR. SPEAKER: Which part are you referring to?

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Rule 357, Sir. For your convenience, I am reading out:

"A member may, with the permission of the Speaker, make a personal explanation although there is no question before the House but in this case no debatable matter may be brought forward and no debate shall arise."

Now I quote from *Practice and Procedure of Parliament* by Shri M. N. Kaul and Shri S. L. Shakhder;

"Sub-Committee on Working Groups of Parliament:

"Whenever the Committee decides to examine a matter involving serious financial irregularities etc." such as this one—

"referred in the Appropriation Accounts or Audit Reports thereon or even otherwise, it may appoint a sub-committee to go into the matter. A sub-committee so appointed has the powers of the undivided committee and its report, after the Committee's approval is deemed to be the report of the whole Committee...."

MR. SPEAKER: What part that you have heard is debatable?

SHRI PILOO MODY (Godhra): Whether the Estimates Committee's report is correct or incorrect is a debatable point. It is a report which has been presented to the House. It is a report over which some members might have differed.... (Interruptions).

The Assembly was adjourned *sine die*; the matter has not been settled. It is a debatable matter. (Interruptions). . . .

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: This is not only a report of the sub-committee now. This report has been adopted by the entire Estimates Committee and the Chairman of the Estimates Committee presented it to the House.

Secondly, he says that seven members have now come forward with a note of dissent. But that forms only a minority view.

Thirdly, the note of the highly partisan Government is also a question which can be debated.

All these three points are questionable.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: I further read, Sir... This is from page 704.

"No minute of dissent is permissible.

"The report as finally adopted by the Committee is presented to the House by the Chairman or in his absence by any other member of the Committee so authorised by him."

Therefore, the Sub-Committee's report is quite in order. It cannot be superseded by a Government announcement. The report of the Sub-Committee of the Estimates Committee is revealing. (Interruptions). Therefore, the Minister has no right to continue in his Chair.

(Interruptions).

श्री मनु लिंगये (बांका) अध्यक्ष महोदय मेरा व्यवस्था का प्रश्न है। वो नियमों के अन्दर यह ब्यान दे सकते थे। और 372 में ब्यान देते तो प्वाइंट आफ आर्डर हम लोग नहीं उठाते। उनके ब्यान पर तब हम बहस की मांग करते। लेकिन चूंकि आपने इनको 357 के अन्दर ब्यान देने के लिए कहा है इस वास्ते व्यवस्था प्रश्न उठता है। नियम 357 में एक सेक्शंड प्रोसीजर है, पवित्र प्रक्रिम है। मैं आपका ध्यान दिलाना चाहता हूं कि चौथी लोकसभा में यहां एक और के बिड़ला जी नाम के सदस्य थे और उन्होंने मेरे सम्बन्ध में एक व्यक्तिगत स्पष्टीकरण देना चाहा और उस में बहुत सी विवादस्पद बातें बह कहने लगे। तब मैंने आपसे उठाया था कि व्यक्तिगत स्पष्टीकरण का जो ब्यान है पहले आपको उसको ठीक से देखना चाहिये, और आपने कहा था कि भविष्य में ऐसा ही किया जाएगा। मेरा प्वाइंट इतना ही है कि यह रिपोर्ट एस्टीमेट्स कमेटी की है। इस में एक वाक्य है :

उप समिति द्वारा प्रस्तुत प्रतिवेदन मुख्य समिति द्वारा दिनांक 22 अगस्त 1973 को हुई बैठक में अनुमोदित किया गया।

समिति की जो प्रकाशित रिपोर्ट है उसको हम लोगों को क्रेडिट देना चाहिये उस पर अविवेक नहीं करना चाहिए। ऐसा नहीं कि कोई भी आज और भ्रष्टचारों में बयानबाजी करना शुरू करदे। उसको बौहराने का काम करने का किसी को भी अधिकार नहीं है। सदन में यह सवाल उठ सकता है, विधान सभा में यह सवाल उठ सकता है। विधान सभा को रिपोर्ट को रद्द करने का भी अधिकार है। लेकिन कोई भी भ्रष्टाचारी का कुछ भ्रष्टाचारी विधान सभा के बाहर यदि इस तरह से रिपोर्टों को चुनौती देने लगे तो पार्लियमेंटरी कमेटी की प्रक्रिया का और नियमों का कोई मतलब नहीं रह जाएगा। इसलिए यहाँ कोई विवादस्पद बात एस्टीमेट्स कमेटी के बारे में वह न कहें, यह मैं आप से निवेदन करना चाहता हूँ। अब यह रपट पूरी कमेटी की है न कि उपसमिति की।

SHRI VASANT SATHE (Akola): I am also referring precisely to Rule 357 which says:

"A member may, with the permission of the Speaker, make a personnel, explanation although there is no question before the House, but in this case no debatable matter may be brought forward, and no debate shall arise."

Now, the explanation was given to you and you satisfied yourself that it did not contain any debatable matter, and, therefore, you granted the permission. The moment that was done, the requirements of Rule 357 were completed and complied with.. (Interruptions).

It is you who have to sit in judgement whether Rule 357 is complied with or not and it is not for the Members to decide whether it is complied with or not.

After all, certain allegations based on a certain press reports were made against the Minister. You may base your reliance on some committee's report or not. That is a different matter. But, if on the basis of the press

report, allegations are made against the Minister, is he not entitled to clear his point of view... (*Interruptions*) and that is what the hon. Minister did. If I understood him correctly, he is not challenging.....

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: All wrong,

SHRI VASANT SATHE: He is not challenging the report of the Estimates committee.... (*Interruptions*). He has only said that certain members of the legislative Assembly themselves had challenged it. That is also a press report. So, is he not entitled to quote the press report which says that certain members of the Assembly who were members of that committee themselves had challenged the validity of that press report.... (*Interruptions*). Therefore, even on that ground he is not beyond his rights and you have already permitted him. Therefore, no point of order arises under Rule 357.

SHRI PILOO MODY: Speaker Sathe has just given a ruling on the point of order!

SHRI P. K. DEO (Kalahandi): My point of order is that the basis is not only the press report. Here is the report of the Estimates Committee. With your permission, I would like to lay it on the Table of the House.. (*Interruptions*).

So far as parliamentary practice is concerned, I would like to draw your attention to page 605 of Practice and Procedure of Parliament by Kaul and Shakhder where it is said:

"Reports of parliamentary committees are based on decisions arrived at by a majority of members of the committee present and voting....

MR. SPEAKER: That is not a point of order. It is not relevant.

SHRI P. K. DEO: "...Except in the case of select or Joint Committees: on Bills, minutes of dissent are not appended to the reports of the committees, the reason being that the committees, working as they do on behalf of the House, function as one penalty and their decisions are as far as possible unanimous irrespective of party affiliation of the members of the committee".

Therefore, it means that even though the committee is composed of various parties, there we cut across party lines and the recommendations are all unanimous recommendations. It is taken for granted that that is the recommendation of the committee. So whatever has been recommended in this committee is taken for granted that it is the unanimous recommendation of the Estimates Committee.

MR. SPEAKER: *This is not*
~~MR. SEZHIYAN: Sir, I appeal to~~
point of order.

SHRI SEZHIYAN: Sir, I appeal to all sections of the House to follow the best legislative procedure. Here the Estimates Committee's report presented to the State legislature. My question, is whether we can allow any derogatory expressions to be made against the finding of this report. That we should not is my respectful submission. It may be, some Members of the Bihar Assembly might have questioned the findings in the Committee. The Government of Bihar also might have come out with some opinion. But what will happen if the Estimates Committee Report of this parliament is to be discussed in some of the State Legislatures? Will you allow that? Will you accept that position? As it stands now, the findings are final. It is for the State legislature to go into it and consider the findings whether they like it or not. I am not sure, whether we can directly or indirectly allow references to be made by somebody also against the findings of the Committee report. The point is whether in the

[Shri Sezhiyan] course of his statement he can directly or indirectly bring in comment made by somebody else against the finding of the Committee. I would appeal to the House that we should respect the rights of the State Legislature Committee also.

SHRI P. K. DEO: Sir, will you please allow me to lay it on the Table?

MR. SPEAKER: No, no.

Yesterday also it was raised on the basis of Press report. We did not have any report yesterday nor did I receive any today. (*Interruption*) Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu, you bring so many things; I almost doubt sometimes from where you bring them. You brought here the Wanchoo Committee Report before it was brought to this House by the Government. And now you have brought this before I have had it from the State Legislature.

SHRI PILOO MODY: Mr. Gujral is the Minister of Information and Broadcasting. We got all our material from him.

MR. SPEAKER: I very much appreciate all your points. This was processed by the Secretariat and it came to me. I also saw it before it came to me. (*Interruption*). Not much earlier. I have never doubted when you make a statement or somebody else makes a statement. We always think that whenever a Member comes, he comes with some responsibility. (*Interruption*). Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu, very much so, in your case. He has quoted saying, this has appeared in the Press. At the end he says: This is an issue to be settled between the Hon. Speaker and Hon. Members of the Legislative Assembly. He does not express any opinion on it. I will see what he has quoted from the Press. I will compare it with that news. If there is anything beyond that news, then we will have to....

SHRI PILOO MODY: Expunge it.

MR. SPEAKER: If it is beyond the news, and if he has added anything on his own, certainly, that will be deleted.

After quoting the news from the press, he said that it is for the Speaker and the Members to settle it. He has not expressed any opinion or any reflection on it.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: Then why make an irrelevant statement? My submission is that it cannot be allowed to go on like this.

MR. SPEAKER: After I compare the press report with the one which he has quoted, if I find that there is any reflection, then I shall delete it. Now you will please complete your statement (*Interruptions*).

SHRI SEZHIYAN: What you cannot do directly, can you do it indirectly? (*Interruptions*).

MR. SPEAKER: I say that I shall compare it with the report and if there is any reflection I shall delete it. Many things have been coming from this side. And tomorrow many things may come from the other side.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: With all respect to you, the rule is for relaxation in favour of the ruling party.

MR. SPEAKER: I have given my ruling. If you like, I shall refer it to the Rules Committee and I shall accept their verdict. He has quoted from the press but, at the end, he says that it is not for him but it is for the Speaker of the Bihar Assembly and the Members to decide.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: My point has not been met. I have submitted that extraneous elements have been introduced into the statement. You were pleased to say that he was only referring to the report..

MR. SPEAKER: After comparing that, if I find that he has expressed anything on his own in the statement, then I shall delete it.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: It is always my lament that you go on speaking when I am speaking, and you do not allow me to continue. (*Interruptions*).

What the hon. Minister said was that it was a sub-Committee's report and it was only a newspaper report. It has been just now quoted that it is the report of the entire Estimates Committee and I had also submitted that the report is with me. I too had submitted earlier that this is the report of the entire Estimates Committee.

MR. SPEAKER: If I find any difference between what appeared in the press and what he has quoted, then I shall delete that.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: Then you will please delete this. He has introduced the second element, that is, the minute of dissent by seven members. These seven Members have written to the Speaker. Can any letter written to the Speaker be quoted when an import-Committee has presented its report to ant Committee like the Estimates Committee has presented its report to the House? Is it proper for him to introduce any extraneous element just to detract from the dignity of the House?

MR. SPEAKER: Should we accept the practice here that any statements concerning a Member appearing in the press should not be quoted here?

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: Not that. Can he quote the statement made by any member of the Legislature completely negating the report of the entire Committee? That is the point of made by the hon. Member. (*Interruptions*).

MR. SPEAKER: May I bring it to your notice that again I have to make it very clear? He says this is from what is appearing in the press reports to-day. This is what he has said

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: Then what? Then, we shall debate

it and say that it has absolutely no validity. Would you not please pause to consider what has been said by the hon. Member....

MR. SPEAKER: Certainly, if it had not appeared in the press, I will have to delete it.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: This is my respectful submission that a committee of the House is the House itself, and by reflecting upon the report of a committee, you are reflecting upon the entire Bihar Legislature.

MR. SPEAKER: May I tell him what I said yesterday? I said that what hapened in the Vidhan Sabha of Bihar and what concerned a committee of the Vidhan Sabha of Bihar may better be left to the Vidhan Sabha of Bihar.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: What I am saying is that a committee of the House here is also considered to be the House itself. If any remarks are made about a committee, then they are remarks about the whole House.

MR. SPEAKER: I accept this suggestion and I shall not allow reference to anything that happened in the Vidhan Sabha in this House.

SHRI PILOO MODY: Why?

MR. SPEAKER: If I go by his observations, then I shall not allow anything.

On the one side, they want to bring those matters in the House, and on the other they want to shut them out.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: Sir, you have been kind enough to listen to all the points. There is a third element and that is that the Minister has brought in the note of the Bihar Government in his defence or in vindication of his stand. Again, that is debatable, whether we can attach any importance to the note of the Bihar Government *vis-a-vis* the

[Shri Shyamnandan Mishra]

report of a committee of the House; he has brought in the note of the Bihar Government. Why has the note of the Bihar Government been brought in?

MR. SPEAKER: He says "From press report today.....", and he concludes by saying:

"However, this is an issue to be settled between the Hon. Speaker and the Hon. Members of Bihar Legislative Assembly."

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: He has brought in the note of the Bihar Government for exculpating himself....

SHRI L. N. MISHRA: As reported in the press.

MR. SPEAKER: At which point did the hon. Minister stop his statement? At what sentence did he stop? Did he also read paragraph 4 of the statement?

SHRI L. N. MISHRA: Yes, Sir.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: He did read it. Otherwise, how did we hear it?

MR. SPEAKER: In this case, I think Shri Shyamnandan Mishra's point of view is correct.

SHRI L. N. MISHRA: Then, I withdraw paragraph 4.

SHRI KARTIK ORAON (Lohardaga): I think all the trouble has started because of the misinterpretation of the word 'may' occurring in rule 357? Rule 357 says:

"...but in this case, no debatable matter may be brought forward...."

14.00 hrs.

Therefore, the point here is that no debate shall arise on this. It cannot be debated here (Interruptions)

SHRI DINESH CHANDRA GOSWAMI (Gauhati): On a point of order in regard to the interpretation of rule

357. The rule says:

"A member may, with the permission of the Speaker, make a personal explanation although there is no question before the House, but in this case no debatable matter may be brought forward, and no debate shall arise."

If there were only the word 'may' in the entire rule, it could reasonably have been argued that 'may' means "shall". But while farming the rule, two pertinent words have been used, 'may' in one place and 'shall' in another. The law of interpretation of rules is that when the rule-making authority in their wisdom use the word 'may' in one place and 'shall' at the same time in the same place, one will be discretionary and the other mandatory. In this case, when in your wisdom you have permitted a statement to be made in regard to a debatable matter, the discretion is yours. But what is prohibited is a debate. There cannot be a debate; it is prohibited. There cannot be a debate on your ruling permitting him to make a statement on point of personal explanation and there cannot also be a debate on the issue. In the light of this, they have got no case.

श्री बी० पी० मौर्य (हापुड़) : अध्यक्ष जी, मधु लिमये जी कोई प्वाइन्ट ऑफ ऑर्डर उठावेंगे तो आप फौरन सुन लें, लेकिन हम को दबाया जाता है। कृपा कर हमारा प्वाइन्ट ऑफ ऑर्डर भी सुनिये।

आप ने नियम 357 के अन्तर्गत केन्द्र के मंत्री श्री एल० एन० मिश्र को अपना ब्यान देने की इजाजत दे दी। अभी यहां पर दुर्भाग्यवश दोनों ही मिश्र हैं, इसर से भी मिश्र हैं और उधर से भी मिश्र हैं। अभी पहले आप ने यह बडिक्ट दिया था कि "मिश्र जी, यह आप ने गलत कहा है।" तो यह जो गलत कहा था यह मंत्री महोदय ने गलत कहा था या आप ने गलत कहा था, इस गलतफहमी को दूर कर दें।

अगर आप ने मंत्री के पैरा 4 के लिये कहा है कि यह एतराज के काबिज है तो आप ने उस को पहले ही पढ़ लिया था और आप ने पढ़ कर इजाजत दी है, इस लिये उस को बिटड़ा करने का प्रश्न ही नहीं उठता। इन्होंने गलत-फहमी में बिटड़ा किया है।

There is confusion created by the Speaker.

श्री मधु लिमये : अध्यक्ष जी, अब आप मुझे सुन लीजिये। आप ने तीन कांग्रेसी मेम्बरों को सुन लिया है

अध्यक्ष महोदय : अब तो हर चीज का तरीका ही उलट गया है, हर बात उल्टी देश में चल रही है। अगर मैं कुछ कहना चाहूँ तो कहते हैं कि आप बोलते हैं, चुप कर जाइये। अगर मैं उठ कर खड़ा होता हूँ तो कहते हैं आप बैठ जाइये, मैं कह रहा हूँ। यह बड़ी अजीब बात है। ब्रिटिश पार्लियामेंट की रीति की बात करते हैं, लेकिन बात हिन्दुस्तान की करते हैं। कोई परम्परा होनी चाहिये, यहां न अपनी परम्परा चलाते हैं और न उन कों चलाते हैं।

श्री मधु लिमये : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मंत्री महोदय ने दो उदाहरण दिये—एक अखबारों वाला और दूसरा बिहार सरकार वाला। मेरा यह कहना है—यह प्रोसीजर की किताब है

"Speeches or writings reflecting on the House, its Committees or Members."

यह कन्टेम्प्ट है। अब गवर्नमेन्टवाली बात के लिये आप ने मना किया, लेकिन जो प्रेस में आया है और अगर वह विधान सभा की मान-हानि करने वाला ब्यान है तो उस को भी कोट नहीं करना चाहिये। जिस तरह से आप ने

सरकारवाला काट दिया है, उसी तरह से इस को भी काट देना चाहिये—मैं इस के ऊपर आप की स्वीकृति चाहता हूँ।

SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN (Badagara): He is trying to mislead the House.

SHRI B. P. MAURYA: You clear the position.

MR. SPEAKER: I am trying to follow the facts.

श्री मधु लिमये : इस को भी काट देना चाहिये :

"Speeches or writings reflecting on the Committees of Parliament or the legislatures."

MR. SPEAKER: He has quoted from the news in the press. It is not from his ownself. I have already said that so far as his remarks about the Bihar Government is concerned, I have advised him to take it back. This is slightly debatable. He is also quoting that from the press.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: Order it to be deleted.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Sir, on a point of order. How do you depart from the rules? You have seen it yourself. How do you allow it now?

MR. SPEAKER: It can be brought to my notice any time. Any matter could be brought to my notice any time.

SHRI L. N. MISHRA: So, I am withdrawing paragraph 4. The previous paragraph will end as follows:

"However, this is an issue to be settled between the hon. Speaker and the hon. Members of the Bihar Legislative Assembly."

Then, it will be another paragraph, which will read thus:

[Shri L. N. Mishra]

"On my part, I would like to categorically state that at no time did I have any pecuniary or other interest in any of the contracts of the Kosi Project or any other Government work. Further, I categorically deny any suggestion that I have interfered with the transfers and postings of officers relating to the Kosi Project or brought my influence to bear on the award of any contract relating to the Project.

For the information of this hon. House, I would, however, like to mention a personal matter—I have four brothers and during the lifetime of my father, who died in May 1951—some 22 years ago, we effected separation among ourselves. Ever since then, we have separate establishments and are completely independent of each other. We have no joint financial interest in any shape or form."

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Sir, on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: No point of order. Shri E. R. Krishnan.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Yesterday you reserved your ruling.

MR. SPEAKER: No question of reserving it. It is already disposed of.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: You reserved the ruling for delivering it today: whether this House is competent to discuss a matter, something which has been published by a State Legislature's Financial Committee. May, I in that connection, say—

MR. SPEAKER: No please.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Sir, on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: It is already 2 O'clock.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: You have to give that ruling. You reserved your ruling yesterday. You are avoiding it.

MR. SPEAKER: I am yet to consider it. I have no papers before me. It came at the end of the day yesterday. I had not the time. I will take some time. Now, Mr. Krishnan.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Thank you, Sir.

14.10 hrs.

MATTER UNDER RULE 377 DISTRIBUTION OF YARN TO HANDLOOM WEAVERS

*SHRI E. R. KRISHNAN (Salem): Hon. Mr. Speaker, Sir, under Rule 377, I wish to draw the attention of the concerned Minister of the Central Government to two import issues involving several lakhs of handloom weavers. In Tamil Nadu, there are 1.5 lakhs of handlooms requiring art silk yarn and 17,000 powerlooms requiring staple fibre. Per month 5 lakh Kgs. of art silk yarn and 24 lakh Kgs. of staple fibre are the minimum requirement. All these looms are facing the threat of closure. The main reason is that after the Central Government accepted the voluntary agreement with the art silk millowners and other individual millowners, the millowners have not bothered to implement this voluntary agreement. According to this voluntary agreement, they have to distribute all their production through the Central Committee, which they are not doing. The handloom weavers requiring art silk yarn and staple fibre are entering the portals of starvation zone. They are not able to buy art silk yarn at Rs. 31 per Kg. in black market, while the controlled price is Rs. 13.75 per Kg.

Secondly, Sir, 5.5 lakhs of handlooms on which are dependent 20 lakhs of weavers and their families are in complete disarray. The millowners have taken stay from the