

12.30 hrs

CALLING ATTENTION TO MAT-
TER OF URGENT PUBLIC IM-
PORTANCE

Reported inhuman incidents relating
to Harijans in Andhra Pradesh

SHRI BUTA SINGH (Rupar): Mr. Speaker, 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:—

Reported ugly and inhuman incidents relating to Harijan women in a village in Mehboobnagar District and burning alive of a Harijan boy in Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN): Mr. Speaker, Sir, according to the information received from the Government of Andhra Pradesh, on 24th February, 1968 a Harijan boy was caught by villagers of Kanchikacherla, Krishna District, for committing the theft of some brass vessels. He was taken to a hotel where he had sold the vessels and the stolen articles were thereupon recovered. The villagers then took him to a pandal and tied him to a pole, beat him and set fire to his clothes . . .

SHRI HEM BARUA (Mangaldai): Throwing a boy into the fire?

श्री रवि राय (पुंगी) : आंध्र प्रदेश में कांग्रेसी सरकार है, यह सच क्या हो रहा है ?

MR. SPEAKER: Please let him read.

SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN: . . . which resulted in extensive burns. He went to a police station and made a complaint. The police registered a case under Section 326 IPC and sent him to Nandigama Government hospital and from there he was shifted to Vijayawada hospital for treatment. He died on 26th February, 1968.

37 (Ai) LS—7.

श्री रवि राय : कोई उच्च जाति का पुलिस वाला होगा ।

SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN: Police have completed the investigation and the identity of the culprits has been established. . .

SHRI HEM BARUA: Don't leave it to the Police there.

SHRI S. KANDAPPAN (Mettur): Shoot the culprits.

SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN: So far five accused have been arrested and vigorous efforts are being made to arrest the remaining two accused. After the death of the Harijan boy on 26th February the section under which the case was registered has been altered to Section 302 IPC. Charge-sheet has been filed on 26th March, 1968.

The incident is, to say the least, barbarous and I have no doubt that all sections of the House would strongly condemn such acts.

SHRI D. C. SHARMA (Gurdaspur): Sir, mere condemnation is not enough. The Andhra Government should be taken to task.

श्री मधु लिमये (मुंगेर) : दो मिनट खड़े होकर हम अरुसोस व्यक्त करें, अपना सिर झुकायें ।

SHRI RANDHIR SINGH (Rohtak): It is most unfortunate, Sir.

SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN: Sir, I had written about this to the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and requested that vigorous efforts should be made to bring the culprits to book.

Facts regarding the incidents in Mehboobnagar District are being ascertained from the State Government.

SHRI RANDHIR SINGH: Action should be taken against the whole village.

SHRI BUTA SINGH: Sir, you will kindly bear with me if I read only for a single minute an article that appeared in the PRAJAWANI dated 16th March, 1968, a daily published from Bangalore. The editorial is entitled "Animals are better":—

"One Harijan committed some mistake in a village near Mehboobnagar in Andhra Pradesh. The people of the village were upset but they did not complain to the Police. They took the law into their own hands and punished the offender. What is the punishment given? All the Harijan women in the village were made to walk naked in a procession. (*Interruptions*). Again in the same Andhra State a young boy belonging to this unfortunate community committed theft, a very common thing in the society. People of the particular village themselves acted as Judges and punished him. What is the punishment given this time? The person alleged to have committed theft was brought and tied to a tree and burnt alive. These are not cock and bull stories. This is what has happened very recently in this country which has been proclaimed as an Independent Sovereign Democratic Republic where everyone is considered equal in the eyes of law. The incident of burning the young man alive happened without any obstacle whatsoever after a few months of the first incident. This is a matter where every person who calls himself a civilised citizen should hang his head in shame. This animal behaviour is not peculiar to Andhra only, this is a thing which is happening in all the States very frequently. (*Interruptions*) It seems three Harijan workers were shot dead in a village in Madhya Pradesh for the simple reason.... (*Interruptions*)."

MR. SPEAKER: Will you kindly confine your question to Andhra Pra-

desh only? All other things we will discuss later on.

SHRI BUTA SINGH: It says further:

"This shows the law of jungle is prevailing in our country. (*Interruptions*). These few incidents will show that the independence for which Gandhiji fought day and night is nothing but slavery so far as Harijans are concerned even after 20 years of Independence. In such outrageous incidents if the concerned State Government takes very stern action such brutal incidents undoubtedly will not recur. It will not be a loss even if you do not achieve prosperity in this India but opportunity should be created for all the citizens of this country to lead a life of equality. If this much could not be done, what is the use of having independence at all?"

MR. SPEAKER: Now you are making a speech instead of putting a question.

SHRI BUTA SINGH: Sir, this is an article in that particular paper. Now I want to know whether in view of this barbarous and naked butchery the Central Government is prepared to appoint a high level judicial inquiry into all these incidents and bring the offenders to book?

SHRIMATI TARKESHWARI SINHA (Barh): It should be done. These things are happening every year.

SHRI RANDHIR SINGH: The whole village should be punished.

SHRI BUTA SINGH: These things have been suppressed in the Press. It did not appear in any of the local press uptill now.

SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN: The hon. Member's suggestion is a very good suggestion. I will certainly consider

his suggestion because these Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe communities do require special protection in this matter. As far as this particular incident is concerned, I myself accepted a short notice question in the other House with a view that it should be highlighted. Such things some times go unnoticed in this country and the Parliament if it is not highlighted.

Sir, I have personally talked to the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh—and he himself has taken a very serious note of the matter—that as the whole village was involved in it, possibly sympathies were rather divided and so it was necessary that some important Police Officers should undertake the investigation and Government should pay some attention to it. I was told that some 7 persons were involved. Out of them, six were absconding, but I am glad that in the last week or so they have arrested 5 persons and the other two persons are also likely to be arrested.

SHRI HEM BARUA: Why don't you act? (*Interruptions*).

SOME HON. MEMBERS rose.—

MR. SPEAKER: No please. This is a Calling Attention motion. Only those members who have given notice and put questions. I will request the Home Minister also not to reply to other Members because it will encourage others also to get up.

श्री रवि राय : शेड्यूलड कास्ट ऐन्ड शेड्यूलड ट्राइबज कमीशन को मामला भेजा जाए ।

SHRI H. N. MUKERJEE (Calcutta North East): Sir, I am not asking a question. . .

MR. SPEAKER: You can ask me—after I call you.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND (Chikodi): From the statement he has given just now before this House, we

feel that the Andhra Police are partial. They did not take immediate steps to book the culprits. Is it a fact whether the whole people of the village, non-Harijans, were responsible for the burning of this boy and the Police did not arrest a single person for days together and then put only 2 or 3 persons behind the bars just to make a case? If it is so, what is the attitude of the Central Government, if the Andhra Government is not looking into the matter seriously?

SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN: It is a fact that for the first few weeks, nearly for 3 or 4 weeks, no arrests were made. When I asked for the report and it was received here, people responsible for it were absconding. But the very day I got this information, I personally took up this matter with the Chief Minister on the telephone.

SHRI J. B. KRIPALANI (Guna): What was he doing till then?

SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN: I am saying what I was doing.

SHRI J. B. KRIPALANI: Let the hon. Minister ask the Chief Minister what he was doing till then?

SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN: Certainly I will do that. As it is, it is quite possible that, as the hon. Member has said, the non-Harijans were in sympathy with the other people. The society in which we are living is such, the facts are there.

SHRI HEM BARUA: Sympathy or no sympathy.

SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN: I can understand the indignation. But if I get a feeling, even 1 per cent feeling that the State administration has not taken proper action in the matter, I will certainly intervene in the matter.

श्री ओ० प्र० स्वामी (मुरादाबाद): मैं अपनी पार्टी की ओर 'से इन घटनाओं की निन्दा करता हूँ और सरकार से खास तौर पर यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि 20 वर्ष के

[श्री श्री० प्र० त्यागी]

इस अरसे में क्या आपको यह विश्वास हुआ है कि कानून के द्वारा, यह अछूतपन का जो भाव है, वह समाप्त हो जायगा और यह सत्य नहीं है कि शासन के जो अधिकारी हैं उनमें 90 प्रतिशत छूत छात की भावनाओं में विश्वास रखते हैं और वे हरिजनों में इस प्रकार की घटनाओं की उपेक्षा करते हैं और अन्त में दिखाने के लिए यह निकालने हैं कि हमने जांच की और चूक एविडेन्स नहीं मिला इस लिए मामला फाइल कर दिया गया ? इसी वजह से ये घटनायें बढ़ रही हैं । मैं आपके द्वारा जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या सरकार अब इस अनुभव पर आई है कि केवल कानून के द्वारा इस बीमारी को समाप्त नहीं किया जा सकता है इसलिए आर्य समाज जैसी संस्थायें जो कि समाज से कुरीतियों को दूर करने का प्रयत्न कर रही हैं, भविष्य में इस प्रकार की संस्थाओं का कोआपरेशन लेने का सरकार प्रयत्न करेगी ?

इस प्रकार की घटनाओं की जांच करने के लिए क्या गवर्नमेन्ट इस प्रकार का नियम बनाने के लिए तैयार है कि इस प्रकार की जांच करने में एक हरिजन अधिकारी जरूर होगा चाहे वह थानेदार हो या कोई और अधिकारी हो, वह अधिकारी हरिजन जरूर होगा क्योंकि सवर्ण अधिकारी के द्वारा इस प्रकार की जांच कभी ठीक नहीं हो सकेगी ?

SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN: The hon. Member has put his finger on the right point that merely by law this thing cannot be achieved. There will have to be very intensive and continuous efforts through social organisations, institutions etc. This Government is always willing to take the co-operation and give the cooperation to those who are undertaking such activity. If there are any specific suggestions which the hon. Member has in mind I am prepared to consider

them. This question of appointing a Harijan officer is a good suggestion. I am not sure whether in that area such Harijan officer is available. It is a good suggestion and it will be considered.

श्री राम चरण (खुर्जा) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, दरअसल यह बहुत शर्म की बात है कि एक ऐसे राज्य में जहां कि चीफ मिनिस्टर कांग्रेस का हो, जहां से एक डिप्टी मिनिस्टर हो, जहां से एक मिनिस्टर हो अध्यक्ष महोदय जिस राज्य से सम्बन्धित हों, वहां पर ऐसी घटनाएं घटें ।

मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि मध्यप्रदेश में जब ऐसी घटना हुई तो होम के डिप्टी मिनिस्टर दूसरे दिन ही फलाई करके वहां पहुंचे और उन्होंने स्टेटमेंट दिया और जांच कराने का आदेश दिया वैसे ही कदम यहां के बारे में भी उठाया जाना चाहिए । यहां पर इस तरह से हरिजन औरतों को नंगी करके जलूस की शकल में गांव में घुमाया गया, ऐसी शर्मनाक हरकत वहां पर की गई लेकिन उस के बारे में न तो चीफ मिनिस्टर ने और न ही होम मिनिस्टर ने कोई बयान निकाला है । मैं सरकार को चेतावनी देना चाहता हूँ कि इस तरह से यह राज्य चल नहीं सकता है । आंध्र प्रदेश जहां पर कि कांग्रेसी प्रशासन है वहां पर हरिजनों पर इस तरह के अत्याचार व जुल्म हों और उन की औरतों को नंगा करके घुमाया जाय इस के लिए यहां की सेंट्रल सरकार को शर्म आनी चाहिए । अगर वाकई में वह अपने आप को गांधी जी के सच्चे अनुयायी समझते हैं तो चीफ मिनिस्टर को इस्तीफा दे देना चाहिए था । और इस तमाम कांड की एक हाईकोर्ट के जज द्वारा जुडिशिएल इनक्वायरी करानी चाहिए थी ।

इस के अलावा मैं गृह मंत्री महोदय से यह पूछना चाहता हूँ कि ऐसे अत्याचारों

और जुल्मों को न होने देने के लिए और अपराधियों को कठोर दंड देने के हेतु वह अपने मंत्रालय में कोई एक सैप्रेट शैल स्थापित करने जा रहे हैं ?

इस तरह से औरतों को नंगी करके निकाला जाना यह पूरे देश व समाज के लिए शर्म की बात है। यह समूचे हिन्दू धर्म के लिए शर्म का बात है। हमारी प्राइम मिनिस्टर एक महिला हैं, मिनिस्टर भी महिला हैं और उनको मैं समझता हूँ इस विषय में गम्भीरता से सारे मामले पर सोच कर भविष्य में इसका पुनरावृत्ति न होने के लिए सक्रिय कदम उठाने चाहिए। जाहिर है कि अगर हमारी बहनों के साथ मैं इस तरह का अत्याचार होते देखूँ और मेरे हाथ में रायफल हो तो मैं उसी वक्त अत्याचारी को गोली से उड़ा दूँ चाहे वह कोई भी क्यों न हो। मुझे आश्चर्य होता है कि क्यों नहीं ऐसी शर्मनाक घटना हरिजनों पर हुए अत्याचार के लिए अपराधियों को फाँसी पर लटकाया जाता ? मैं गृह-मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या वह अपने मंत्रालय में एक सैप्रेट शैल अप करने जा रहे हैं ताकि भविष्य में ऐसे जुल्म न हों ?

SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN: I share completely not merely the anxiety but the indignation of the hon. Member. I can very well understand it. But I would like to tell him that the other Member had made a suggestion about undertaking some sort of judicial inquiry into this matter. I will certainly consider this thing. Calling Attention is over.

SHRI H. N. MUKERJEE rose—

MR. SPEAKER: I would request the hon. Member to resume his seat.

SHRI RAM CHARAN: Let us have two hours discussion.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS rose—

MR. SPEAKER: My point is this. I entirely agree that it is a very serious matter about which all of us must be ashamed. There is no doubt about it. If you want to have any further information and all that certainly you can have it. The home Minister is not able to give information about the second incident mentioned about the ladies being paraded naked and all that. If the Home Minister can give some information some time later to the House we can have a small discussion.

श्री मधु लिये : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं आप के द्वारा केवल इतना ही गृह-मंत्री महोदय से कहना चाहूँगा कि जैसे मध्य प्रदेश में जांच हाँ रही है वैसे ही जांच वह आंध्र प्रदेश सरकार को भी कराने के लिए कहें ?

MR. SPEAKER: I am not saying anything now. After all many people are excited and naturally excited. The Home Minister has to collect information in the second incident mentioned where the ladies are supposed to have been paraded naked.

About the hon. Members' desire to have a discussion, I shall certainly allow after the information is collected by the Home Minister and given to us. It is equally horrible. Therefore we shall have a discussion on that. Two or three persons getting up and saying something will not help us now. It will not be useful at this stage. I will assure you that if necessary we shall have a discussion. I am not going to allow any question now. There will be no question at all on this matter. Calling Attention is over.

श्री शिव नारायण (बस्ती) : अध्यक्ष, महोदय, मैं बचेरचन नहीं पूछ रहा हूँ केवल एक ही वाक्य कहना चाहता हूँ। यह देश के मान का प्रश्न है।

It is not a question of only Harijans. It is a question of nationality. (Interruptions).

MR. SPEAKER: In spite of my appeal, if hon. Members shout I cannot help it. I will give you time, I said. Let the Home Minister collect the information. If every hon. Member wants to get up and say something, how can I control the House? I would appeal for your cooperation. I am telling you that I am going to give some time for discussion. Even after that you wanted to say something.

SHRI SHEO NARAIN: I have given notice of my name to the office. My name is not there and only four names have been included.

MR. SPEAKER: There must be some limit. Even for Shri Sheo Narain there must be a limit. Otherwise it is impossible to carry on like this. The point now is, where will it lead us? I know hon. friends want to associate themselves. It is some horrible incident that has taken place. They want to ask some question or information about the matter. They want to associate their party and themselves and all that. But then where will it lead us? There is no question of party here. Everybody is horrified at the things that have taken place.

SHRI H. N. MUKERJEE rose—

MR. SPEAKER: I am expressing this on behalf of the whole House. My point is this. Some hon. Members want to make certain suggestions, like Shri H. N. Mukerjee, Shri Kundu, Shri Sheo Narain, Shri Ram Charan, Shri Sharma and Shri Banerjee.

SHRI H. N. MUKERJEE: I am interested about the House and certain matters.

MR. SPEAKER: Later on I shall see.

SHRI H. N. MUKERJEE: In regard to this also.

MR. SPEAKER: Let me see. All of you want to make suggestions about

this matter Mr. Kundu wants to say something. Mr. Sharma and other people want to say something I have no objection. (Interruption). If I allow Shri Mukerjee others will want to say something. Shri Mukerjee is a senior member and Deputy Leader of a party and I have very great respect for him. My difficulty is this. Once it begins, where will it stop? If somebody can suggest, if one or two leaders can suggest a way, I have no objection.

SHRI NAMBIAR (Tirucherappalli): Let us have a discussion.

MR. SPEAKER: That is what I say. Even Shri Hiren Mukerjee can participate in that discussion. I will allow it, but only after the information is collected by the Home Minister.

एक माननीय सदस्य : मैं भी बोलना चाहता हूँ

श्री रवि राय : उनको भी सुन लीजिये ।

MR. SPEAKER: When I am requesting a senior Member like Shri Hiren Mukerjee to sit down—he has been in this House for perhaps 15 years and he is the Deputy Leader of a Party—would it be proper for others to stand up and raise it again and again? It is admitted by all that what has happened is horrible. I will certainly allow a discussion, but after information has been collected. The gravity of the situation is understood by all the Members of the House. But the discussion can take place only later, after information has been collected. Now, Papers to be laid on the Table.

12.48 hrs.

RE. QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

श्री मधु लिमबे (मुंगेर) : प्रक्रिया के अनुसार डाइरेक्शन 2 और 115, नियम