

Bill to the vote of the House. The question is :

"That the Bill to provide for the inclusion of certain tribes in the list of Scheduled Tribes specified in relation to the State of Karnataka, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. SPEAKER : The House will now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill. The question is :

"That clause 2 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 2 was added to the Bill.

MR. SPEAKER : Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and Long Title stand part of the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI SITARAM KESRI : I beg to move :

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. SPEAKER : The question is :

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

WEAKER SECTIONS OF THE SOCIETY IN THE COUNTRY

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : The House will now take up further consideration of the motion moved by Shri Ram Vilas Paswan on 13th August, 1991.

I would like to bring to the notice of the Hon. Members that we have discussed this motion for 5 hours and 53 minutes. There is a large list of Members who want to speak on this motion. We have allotted five hours or eight hours or ten hours to Ministries also. So, we shall have to decide how much time we should give to this motion. This is an important motion no doubt. But then we have the limitation of the time also. May I request that this motion has to be completed today—may be within 45 minutes' time but not more than that.

Then, we shall take up the drought and the flood matter also which has been pending on the list for a pretty long time. The Demand of the Industries Ministry, for which eight hours were given, is being postponed. We should take up the Demands of the Ministries also. I hope the Members will understand the time constraint and will cooperate. Mr. Shyam Lal Kamal was on his feet. He may please speak.

SHRI SHYAM LAL KAMAL (Basti) : Honourable Mr. Speaker, Sir, the other day, I was dealing with the national problem of atrocities on Harijans.

25.14 hrs.

MOTION RE. ATROCITIES BEING COMMITTED ON THE SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES AND OTHER

In continuing that discussion, I would like to bring to the notice of the House, the Governments at the Centre and the State that adequate funds have been given for the development of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, as the Budget has permitted. But I am sorry to convey my views that about 50 per cent of the grants is eaten away and devoured by the demon of corruption. Hardly 25 to 30 per cent reaches the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes who are actually in need of it. The village touts who pose themselves as helpers of these Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes mislead them and cheat them. The actual beneficiary is not the member of the Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe. Moreover, he has to bear the burden of all the loans that are given to him.

When some of the Scheduled Caste people, who want to get some loan for setting up some small scale or cottage industry, approach the banks, 10 per cent of the loan which they demand is taken away by way of commission straight away. And those who do not pay the commission, are not given loan with the result that the small scale and cottage industries suffer and actually perish and the liability is entirely borne by such Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe entrepreneurs who want to come up and face the burden of society by way of removal of economic poverty.

Sir, there is a very subtle and queer method of committing atrocities on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled

Tribes by the educated people, particularly, those who are in Government service.

Firstly, an imbalance is created by declaring the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as inefficient and unsuitable. But the Government has given avenues and provided a chance for their promotion from grade to grade. The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, who are dealt with by their senior officers, are not given justice. Their character rolls are spoiled at the time of promotion, some type of inquiries are instituted and it is said that since some inquiry is pending against them, they will not get promotion. This type of atrocity is being committed by higher class Government servants in a very subtle manner. The result is that now the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Employees Unions are perishing. There is voice of dissatisfaction amongst them. They are not actually appreciating good work or the grant or the help that is given and they are revolting against the Government because of such corrupt practices.

Sir, the political reason for atrocities on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is also not unknown. When the election comes, a search is made for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe officers and they are posted in districts, particularly so in the case of District Magistrates and Superintendent of Police. After the elections, for one cause or the other, within four to six months, they are removed from district. Only a few are allowed to continue in the district, so

that there may not be any complaint in the press or in political circles. Before the elections, it is shown as if 20 per cent quota is fulfilled. And after the elections, hardly 8 to 10 per cent are allowed to stay in the district and the rest are transferred to unimportant posts.

With regard to recruitment, I know a case in Lucknow District.

MR. SPEAKER : No please. Please do not go into all those details. I have a long list of speakers and time is very short. Please do not quote stories and cases. Come to principles and policies.

SHRI SHYAM LAL KAMAL : Generally, I do not do it Sir. But this is a very pertinent issue.

Sir, one Scheduled Caste person topped the list in the competitive examination. But when the recruitment was actually made, the person who stood second was enlisted, the Scheduled Caste person was denied a chance. A lawyer in Basti district was given a licence to run a petrol pump. The district supply officer asked him to go and start his sales. But after three days, he raided that man and caught hold of that man. The petrol pump is closed for the last five years. He is not given a permission. Nor has a denial been made that he could not run the petrol pump and that he could dispose of it. He invested lakhs of rupees in it.

MR. SPEAKER : Please conclude.

SHRI SHYAM LAL KAMAL : Sir, I visited Andhra Pradesh very recently and with regard to atrocities committed there, I would like to cast some reflections on the district administration including the police. On 7-7-1991, a Harijan boy touched the feet of a . .

MR. SPEAKER : Please conclude now. There is no time for all this.

SHRI SHYAM LAL KAMAL : There was another case on 9-7-91. The boy's father was beaten up on 4-8-91. A girl was molested on 5-8-91. Then a Harijan boy was beaten up. Section 144 was in force, but no arrests were made. Police were satisfied by simply registering a case.

MR. SPEAKER : You have to finish in one minute's time.

SHRI SHYAM LAL KAMAL : Sir, I would stress upon the need to improve the performance of the police. The Third National Commission on Police made some recommendations which were very valuable. The recommendations should be implemented to make police efficient.

MR. SPEAKER : Please sit down. Now, what Shri Sonkar Shastri speaks only goes on record.

SHRI SHYAM LAL KAMAL : I am sitting, Sir.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI (Saidpur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir. I express my gratitude to you for having given me an opportunity to speak. However, I am constrained

to say that you are allowing me a very limited time. Incidents of atrocities on Scheduled Castes are taking place all over the country but I do not want to go into the details of these incidents so as to observe the time limit which you have fixed. Incidents of atrocities have been many and my friends have dealt with all these in detail during the course of their submission. Sir, I would only confine myself to the root cause of these incidents. Many Hon. Members have expressed their views in the House by making repeated references to these incidents. Flowing speeches are delivered, detailed figures are presented all sorts of questions are asked to which the Hon. Home Minister gives replies and with that the matter ends. So far as my parliamentary experience goes, I can say that hitherto only 3-4 hours used to be allotted for discussion on this subject, but it is heartening to note that you have allowed three days for this discussion. Already we have had discussion for many hours on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, during the course of their submission, the Hon. Members have said that the main reason for atrocities on the people belonging to Scheduled Castes is economic. A number of friends have said that if untouchables are given economic powers and thereby made prosperous, atrocities on them would automatically stop. There are some other who said that these atrocities would come to an end only by giving them political power. But in my view, the main reason for atrocities on them is social.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am trying to be very particular about the time that has been allotted to me, but I must place an example before you. Babu Jagjivan Ram was the Member of this House in 1977 and at that time he occupied a very high position. He was the Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister. As all know, he was economically well off. But when he was invited to unveil the statue of Dr. Sampurnanand in Banaras, he was greeted at the airport with the slogans—"Jaggu Chamar Vapas Jayo, Vapas Jayo. Juta Polish Kaun Karega—Chamar Karega, Chamar Karega". When we reached the place of function and Shri Jagjivan Ram moved forwards the statue to unveil it, shoes and chappals were thrown at him and slogans were raised—"Jagjivan Ram Vapas Jayo, Vapas Jayo, Juta Polish Kaun Karega—Chamar Karega, Chamar Karega". "Dilli se Chamda laya sandesh, Bhains charaya Ram laya sandesh, Bhains charaye Ram Naresh was the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, one more thing I want to say. The Home Minister has left the House. I do not know where he has gone? He should have been present in the House to listen to this debate as it concerns atrocities on Harijans which is a very important issue. Sir, the Kashi-Vishwanath Temple

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA
(Andaman and Nicobar); Shri Raju
Vilas Paswan is also not present here.

SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI: You leave Ram Vilas Paswan. We do not want him to be present here as he is no more the Minister. We want the Home Minister to be present here. I do not want to be dragged into this controversy. This is a very important issue. We do not raise any objections when the issue relating to the temple is discussed. But if you happen to visit Vishwanath Temple in Kashi, you will find that the words "Achhut ka Mandir mein pravesh varjit hai" (Untouchables are not allowed entry in the temple). Sir let me give you another example concerning the same temple. Gold ornaments were stolen from the temple. When this theft came to light, a lot of hue and cry was raised. Our opinion was sought, press people's opinion was sought in the matter. We told them that since theft has taken place, thieves should be punished. Government should take swift action to nab the thieves. Thereafter, Kashi Naresh (the ex-ruler of erstwhile princely State of Kashi) issued a statement in which he said that the temple has lost its divinity and that he stopped visiting the temple some 25-26 years back. Through the columns of the local newspapers I asked Maharaj Kashi Naresh to tell whether the temple had lost its divinity 25-26 years ago when Harijans entered the temple?

Sir, I would like to narrate an incident that took place in this House. One 1008 Shri Lakshmananand Ji Brahmchari issued a statement in the newspapers that Rajnath Sonkar

Shastri had no right to ask such a question because he is a Shudra. He further illustrated his statement by saying that as a she-deer cannot give birth to a cub, similarly Rajnath Sonkar Shastri's mother being a Shudra cannot give birth to a learned person. Thereupon, I gave a notice of privilege motion in this House, and the matter was referred to the Privileges Committee. But there too casteism played its role.

15.30 hrs.

[SHRI SHARAD DIGHE (in the Chair)]

Sir, I am constrained to say that matter of privilege was not pursued further and then we had to take it up vigorously. When 1008 Shri Lakshmananand Ji Maharaj was to come to Delhi himself, we told him that we have lakhs of followers in Delhi, he begged pardon.

Sir, as I said the reasons for atrocities on Harijans may be economic and political, but the main reason is untouchability. The reason is, therefore, more of social nature than economic. As long as the Home Minister and for that matter any Government does not solve this problem, atrocities on Harijans would continue to be committed. I was listening to the speeches of Shri Buta Singh and Shri Sita Ram Kesri. I am glad to note that they said in their speeches that these issues should not be politicised. But I must say that, whenever discussion on Scheduled Castes take place, it has become a fashion in the

House to say that politics should not be dragged into it and that the speeches should be objective. But ultimately all sort of politics is dragged into it. If we go through the initial part of Shri Bata Singh's speech, we shall find that he had said that this issue should not be politicised and we should make our submission with an open mind. Shri Sita Ram Kesri's speech was no exception. He levelled an allegation against Shri Paswan and when the latter came out with a prompt reply, it created a storm. Thereafter the issue took a political colour. Sir, the discussion which takes place here is purely political. When facts and figures are presented, it is said that "time is limited, there are other speakers too and their list is long." Sir, keeping in view the long list . . . do not ring the bell, I have to speak for 40 minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please continue, but I told you in the beginning that you would get five minutes.

SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI: Sir, there is a village named Naripattudevra in Ghazipur district of Uttar Pradesh under Nandganj police station. An incident took place in this village 3-4 months back. What happened was that a boy working as a T.C. in the railways and dressed in pants and coat was passing through the village. He was accosted by some people who asked them as to why he was wearing pants and coat? He was asked to take off his pant and coat. All the people of the Mohalla gathered there and some of

them started making speeches. Arguments and counter-arguments followed with the result the arguments became so hot that the entire village was burnt down. Breast nipples of two Harijan women were cut with sword in that village. Though F.I.R. was lodged with the police station, yet no action has been taken so far. The Government says that there is Untouchability Act to take care of such incidents. The Hon. Minister is present here. I would like to ask him as to how many people were punished under the Untouchability Act during the last 45 years—India's post independence era. I would like to know as to how many people have so far been punished under the Untouchability Act? Babu Jagjivan Ram was the Defence Minister. Sampurnanand statue unveiling episode received worldwide headlines, but why did the Government fail to register a case under the Untouchability Act despite the fact that he was a member of the Union Cabinet? Today when murders of and atrocities on Harijans have become a daily routine, why don't the police register cases under the Untouchability Act? Sir, these are very strange issues. I do not want to go into them, but I am constrained to say that these atrocities are increasing at such a pace that it is difficult even to imagine it.

There was a character in Ramayan by the name of Shambook. He was beheaded and still today we say that Shambook was beheaded. In the modern times, thousand of Shambooks are beheaded despite the existence of so many laws. I do not know

whether any law existed during Raman era, but now that Act is there why Shambook is not saved from being beheaded?

We come across another character named Eklavya in Mahabharat. His thumb was chopped off and today we repeat saying that his thumb was chopped off. What happened in Tsundur recently? Shri Paswan was saying that hands and feet of many were chopped off, but in a matter of few days, the case would be hushed up and nothing would come out of it. Sir, therefore, mere lectures will not serve any purpose. Our colleagues claim that they are renouncers. They talk of renunciation but such a renunciation will not solve any problem. All the people who claim that they are leaders and social reformers, change their colour just like a chameleon. There is a need to curb this practice also. The most important thing is that we shall have to go into the depth of each and every issue and see what is the problem and its root cause. I would like to present some suggestions in this regard.

We had already said that this problem is exclusively a social problem and we shall have to clear our conscience first in order to solve this problem. I would like to quote an example. In Meerut there was a Harijan called Kaidas. He had been ailing for a long time. On his way to collect medicine, he fell down because of fainting or something else, and he died there and there. His dead body was lying there for three days. There was

nobody to pick up his corpse from that place. Some Christians were living nearby. Shri Khurana please listen. In Meerut, the Christians picked up the dead body and carried it away and when they started the process of burial according to their customs, some Hindus, people of Bharatiya Janata Party reached there and started saying that he was a Hindu and his dead body should be handed over to them. Christians returned the dead body but as soon as they found that they had no money to purchase the wood etc. for his last rites, they left the corpse as it was. I am quoting the reports published in the *Blitz*. On the one hand the Government is saying that the Harijans are our own people but how do you claim that they are your people. Today, if somebody tries to adopt Islam religion, such charges are leveled that money is flowing in from foreign countries and Arab countries, and on the basis of that money people are being converted as Mohamdans. But we do not assess our deeds. If some body is embracing Islam, what is the reason behind it. Even today, if some Harijan bridegroom is passing while mounted on a mare, the result is 'Kafara' episode.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, therefore, unless we follow certain rules and unless we implement these rules, such atrocities will not cease to exist. I am going to quote certain instances at I hope that the Hon. Home Minister will think over them.

Firstly, all the cases related to Harijans and Scheduled Castes should be

brought directly under the Ministry of Home Affairs. Merely saying so that it is a State subject, will not serve any purpose. It is not a state subject. It is a matter directly related to the Central Government. Home Ministry should be directly responsible for it.

Secondly, whenever atrocities are committed on the people belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, the Home Minister should give the Statements twice in the House. As soon as any incident occurs, the Home Minister should give his first statement immediately after happening of the incident and inform the House that incidents have taken place at Tsundur and Farrukhabad, and these were the reasons, behind them. After a month or so, the Home Minister must make another statement in the House stating the action taken in the matter following that particular incident; and the House should be apprised of the specific information about the punishment awarded to the culprits responsible for the incident. When the Minister will make the statements twice in the House, the action will automatically begin, whereas in case of only one statement the case is hushed up in infancy.

Thirdly, I would like to state when Belchhi incident occurred, the then Prime Minister mounted on an elephant went to that village immediately following the incident. Fourteen people were killed in that incident. The people, who are sitting there this time, used to sit here that time. That time, Gowdary Charan Singh ji was the Home Minister. That time it was

said that special courts would be set up for quick disposal of cases. When atrocities were committed on Harijans in Belchhi, Shrimati Indira Gandhi had said that the cases should be decided quickly and for this purpose, special courts should be constituted. I would like to ask the Home Minister through you as to how many special courts were constituted and the number of people against whom action has been taken on the basis of that report. We want a reply from the Home Minister. If the Home Minister is unable to reply at present, he can inform us about the facts and figures in this regard after a month or after 15—20 days. Mr. Chairman, please do, not ring the bell for a moment, I will take two-three minutes more.

Mr. Chairman, the Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Shri Ram Lal Rahi is not present here. Shri Rahi had given a statement to the Press that arms licences should not be issued in the country now. What he has said in his statement is not possible. The licences for arms will continue to be issued and the people will demand licences for guns and you shall have to issue the same. But I would like to submit to you that at the time of issuing licences for the gun, the Home Minister should ensure that 100 or 200 gun licences out of one or two thousand gun licences should also be issued to Harijans. I am not giving any definite figures in this regard, the Government can fix the quota itself as it deems proper. Sir, one might ask a question when

a person belonging to Scheduled Caste, is not able to get food; how he can afford a gun, wherefrom he can get Rs. 40 thousand for purchasing a pistol. In this connection, I would submit when you are providing them scholarships, so many grants, and other assistance etc., and spending crores of Rupees in this way, digging wells, setting up industries for them why subsidy cannot be provided to them for purchasing guns and pistols. What is the hitch in doing so?

Sir, now I will say something about Indian Penal Code. There are so many lacunae in it. If a Harijan is killed, the case under section 302 will not be registered, instead a case under sections 166, 148 and 149 will be registered alongwith section 302, but the case will not be registered exclusively under section 302; If there is a dispute with a Harijan, action will be taken against him under section 107, 116 and he will be arrested under section 157 and 15—20 people from one particular side will be arrested, while only one or two persons from the other side will be detained. In this case, action will be taken under section 323 and it will be taken only when S.P. issues the orders. Sir, my submission is when action is taken under section 323, it does not require the order of S.P. The action should be delinked with the SP's orders. (Interruptions) Sir, the role of Police is also doubtful now. They are not playing their role properly. If atrocities are committed at particular place and if Police reaches there within 24 hours, or even in 36 hours, still it is

a consoling factor. There are instances where police arrives after 72 hours and at certain places and in certain cases police does not go even after a year and a half and no action is taken on this report. Therefore, my submission is that, there should be some such arrangements through which Police may arrive on the spot very quickly.

Sir, every Government irrespective of the party, gives an assurance that wherever atrocities are committed on Harijans, the Superintendent of Police and the District Magistrate of the concerned area would be dismissed. When Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav Government came to power in U.P. he also gave the same assurance and the subsequent Government also claims the same thing. But the whole process is only on papers, and when atrocities are committed, these assurances are only repeated once again, and nothing is done in real sense. Therefore, I would say that the difference between words and deeds should be wiped off. It should be reviewed and implemented immediately.

Sir, there is already a Harijan Cell. Its function is to investigate. When the case is sent to S.H.O. after investigation, he does not file a suite. He says that S.P. did not render any help to them. Therefore, I would request the Hon. Home Minister that this Harijan Cell should be given such a power as it can investigate the cases itself, and register a report, file a case in the court, and pursue the same in the court. Unless it is done, atrocities on Harijans will never be ended.

Sir, I wo'nt go into the Report of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Commission. It is the Report of an office. Such Reports usually come. If you give all the powers to the commission, it wo'nt fetch any particular gain. The atrocities on Harijans are being committed because of land disputes also. There are land disputes everywhere. In view of these disputes a decision was taken that barren and infertile land should be distributed among the Harijans. But actually how many persons got possession of this land. For giving possession action has to be taken under 198(4). I belong to Uttar Pradesh and I know that this has not been done. If you can tell me that this has been done under 198(4) even in one district—be it Benaras, Ghazipur, Jaunpur or any other, I would think that the enactment of law has served a purpose. I challenge no police officer has ever taken any action under 198(4) in my village. It is only on papers.

I would like to conclude by saying only one thing. Everyday we hear about reservation for Scheduled Castes. I will not go into the details as to who is guilty or what should be the percentage of reservation etc. I may tell you that backlog of the quota of reservation has not been filled even till today. It will not be filled because your intention is not clear. Earlier it was said that Harijans are not available. When they became available, it was said they were not suitable. When they became suitable, they said they are not capable. When the Harijans became capable it

was said they are not trustable. Even after that many many "ables" would be added.

I may tell you that an interview is being conducted in Benaras Hindu University. I received a phone call yesterday that about forty candidates of Scheduled Castes having first class are being interviewed by different departments of the University. I have already informed Kesariji and Arjun Singhji about it. Paswanji is sitting here. When his party was in power I had informed him also. He called his Secretary and dictated a letter. That letter was dumped there and the matter ended. Forty persons are being interviewed and in a University where there are four thousand lecturers and Professors only three belonging to Scheduled Castes are there. You would see for yourself that not even one would be selected out of these forty candidates. I will resign from my seat in the Parliament if it is otherwise. Our leaders shed crocodile tears on the plight of Harijans. They give long lectures but when they are in a position to help they forget their duty.

There is no reservation for Scheduled Castes in any legislative council, whether it is Uttar Pradesh or any other State. Not even a single person belonging to Scheduled Caste has got elected to the legislative Council on the basis of reservation but still our leaders say they are champions of the cause of Scheduled Castes. Same is true of Rajya Sabha. No provision has been made in the Constitution for the Scheduled Castes so that they can get

elected to Rajya Sabha or Legislative Council.

Shri Charan Singh got a person belonging to the Scheduled Caste elected to the Legislative Council in 1977. If your party has done something similar, it deserves to be congratulated. At least a serious thought should be given in this direction. (*Interruptions*) Some of my friends are trying to justify. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am concluding. My friends are right in saying that they have already implemented reservation but I would like to tell them that will they remove the name plate displayed outside Vishwanath temple which says that untouchables . . . (*Interruptions*) . . . that name plate should be removed from the premises of Vishwanath temple, now that they are going ahead with the construction of Ramjanambhoomi temple in Ayodhya. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAM NAIK : We will go with you there and stage a 'Satyagraha'.

SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI : I would like to submit here that the matter of atrocities on Scheduled Castes is a serious matter. We should not indulge in allegations and counter allegations or try to justify. If proper attention is not paid in this regard, the situation may deteriorate.

When Mahatma Gandhi had given the name of Harijan to these classes, Dr. Ambedkar had said in the House that he wants to ask one question from Mahatma Gandhi. He said if

Harijan means children of God, then are those sitting in this House children of devil. Many people got irritated at that time. Loud protests were made against this remark. Today we try to justify when the matter of Harijans is raised. The matter is ridiculed. Allegations and counter allegations are made. I would like to submit that merely levelling allegations and counter allegations will not serve the purpose. We should have good intentions and try to implement the suggestions made from time to time for the upliftment of Harijans, by rising above petty political considerations. A question was raised in this regard in the morning and the Government had given some suggestions. Unless serious thought is given to these suggestions atrocities will continue to be committed against Harijans and one day India will become a butchery for Harijans. Then Harijans will be forced to embrace Islam and Christianity. It would be said thereafter that there is politics in it. Muslims are getting people converted and money power is being used. Similarly, Christians are luring people by money. I mean to say that the matter is very serious and it should be taken seriously.

I have put a few questions to the Hon. Home Minister and would like him to reply whenever it is convenient to him. But he must reply to them.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : I now allow the Minister of Civil Aviation and Tourism Shri Madhav Rao Scindia to make a statement regarding the tragic

air crash of Indian Airlines plane near Imphal, Manipur on the 16th August, 1991.

SHRI RAM NAIK : Sir, it is rumoured that he is resigning taking moral responsibility of the accident.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Accident of Indian Air Lines Aircraft near Imphal

[English]

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, It is with deep anguish that I report to the House on the air crash at Imphal, Manipur on the 16th August, 1991 which claimed sixty nine precious lives. As the House was not in session till today, I could not make this statement earlier.

2. The illfated Boeing 737 aircraft of the Indian Airlines was on a scheduled flight IAC-257 from Calcutta to Imphal direct on 16th August, 1991. It was under the command of Capt. S. Halder with Capt. D. B. Roy Chowdhury as the Co-pilot. Besides four airhostesses, there were sixty two passengers and one infant on board the aircraft. The flight had left Calcutta on time at 11.52 hours and was scheduled to arrive at Imphal at 12.55 hours.

At 12.41 hours, the aircraft had been cleared by the Air Traffic Control (ATC) Imphal to make an Instrument Landing System (ILS) approach. The prescribed visibility minima for

ILS landing at the Imphal airport is two kilometres whereas the visibility at that time was seven kilometres.

At 12.45 hours, i.e. five to seven minutes approximately before the landing, the aircraft had reported to the ATC, Imphal that it was commencing procedure turn at 5000 feet for the ILS landing. This was the last contact between the aircraft and the Air Traffic Control (ATC) and thereafter no contact could be established by the ATC with the aircraft. The ATC had asked two other aircraft of Indian Airlines—an Airbus A320 which was just airborne and a Boeing 737 which was due to depart from Imphal at that time to establish contact with the aircraft, but they also could not do so.

In accordance with the prescribed procedure, ATC Imphal initiated search and rescue operations for the missing aircraft around 13.10 hours. The assistance of the Air Force and para-military organisations in the area was called for to search for the missing aircraft. However, bad weather conditions for helicopter operations and difficult terrain hampered the search and rescue effort. It was only around 17.00 hours that a wireless message was received from the State Administration that the aircraft had crashed in the Thangjing hills about twenty five miles South-West of the Imphal airport.

As night landing facilities are not available at the Imphal airport, I flew to Calcutta the same evening and from there reached Imphal by 7 a.m. on the 7th August 1991 by a special plane accompanied by senior officials of the