

whenever they fell ill, they were released from jail. But the Uttar Pradesh Government has surpassed even the British rulers because it is not releasing even an M.L.A. suffering from cancer. I would like to know from the Government as to why it is not releasing Shri Madan Baiya, Shri D.P. Yadav and Shri Vishambhar Singh. All the three are S.J.P. M.L.A.s. I would like to request the leader of the House to intervene in the matter and announce its decision for their release. This is our request.

[English]

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, I hold that the submission that I wish to make is potentially embarrassing to the legislature as such and it would be my appeal to both the leader of the House, as also the leader of the Opposition, to jointly apply themselves to this particular problem that I wish to draw their attention to. A writ has been filed in the Supreme Court challenging the legality of sanctioning pensions to Members of Parliament and legislators. The submission that has been made is that salaries and allowances to Members of parliament as admissible if I am not mistaken — under Article 106 does not include pension. Therefore, whatever pensions had been paid in the past or are being paid today either to the former Members of parliament or to legislators are in violation of the Constitution. If the Supreme Court were to hold that writ as valid then the entire legislators would be faced with an embarrassing situation because, I do not know a very eminent barrister is present here whether we can retroactively amend the Constitution.

Therefore, it is my appeal both to the Leader of the House and also to the Leader of the Opposition to apply themselves to this particular aspect to save embarrassment of the legislators as such.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE

(Bolpur): Sir, so far as the question of prices of essential commodities in this country is concerned, concerned, the situation is becoming, is more and more alarming. There is continual spiralling of prices. Essential commodities are becoming out of the reach for the common people and the poor people.

Since the Budget was announced, although all sorts of pious wishes were expressed by the Finance Minister, nothing has happened. There is a continued spiralling of price which is putting greater and greater strain on the common people. This is a matter which must be attended to immediately. I would like to know what is the step taken by the Government. We do not find any attempt being made to contain the spiralling of prices in this country; to control the inflation. We are told that after three years the result of the new Economic Policy, new Industrial Policy and the new Trade policy will be felt. But, what will happen to the people during these three years, nothing has been said. People are losing jobs. No new jobs are being created. On the plea of sickness factories and establishments have been closed. This is a very serious situation which has already arisen and it is becoming more and more difficult for the people.

Over and above that, Sir, There are reports circulated in the National Dailies of this country which are not controverted by the Government which say that the World Bank has recommended radical changes in the Indian Agriculture. The Bank has suggested reduction in food buffer-stock; curtailment of the role of Food Corporation of India, that means affecting the Public Distribution System; Integration of Price Support and Crop Procurement Policy; a new Crop Price Formula linked to International price; disbandment of levy scheme for procurement of rice and sugar and liberalisation of foreign imports. All these are bound to have a cascading effect on our prices.

Then, Sir, in a comprehensive memorandum to the Government the multi-lateral agency, that is the World bank, has also demanded increase in the Prices of fertilisers, irrigation, water, electricity and reforms to reduce the farm subsidy which is largely enjoyed by the rich State and rich farms. It is said that 1992 Budget should provide...

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARAMANGALAM): Sir, normally, you do not refer to the newspapers' reports.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: On this important issue there is no reaction by the Government.

Sir, it is said that 1992 Union Budget should provide for the subsidy cut.

SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARAMANGALAM: Generally, Sir, newspapers' reports are not referred to here.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Let us take it to be my observation.

Therefore, Sir, the situation is going to become more critical. Are we continuing to be an independent country or not? I do not know. Who is going to decide our policy? Our Budget policy, economic policy, everything is being dictated here which is having... (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

Please listen

[*English*]

Please listen Cannot you think of the country for a while?

[*Translation*]

Nobody knows as to when some one is in or out of power.

[*English*]

I know he is also feeling concerned. But sitting there, obviously he has to make his presence felt. Please, not in this manner. When serious situations are being raised here, matters should be given proper attention. I am sure nobody in this country and nobody in this House can deny that price situation is critical and becoming more and more critical. Therefore, instead of trying to shout me down which you cannot, you try to listen and take some steps.

Therefore, I call upon the Government at least to make a statement here immediately as to what is going to happen and what steps they are taking on this very very vital issue. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI LAL K ADVANI: Sir, I rise to draw the attention of the Government to the virtual paralya is of postal services in the North-Eastern Region because of the strike undertaken since 15th November by postal employees belonging to the C&D Group. This is the situation. Their grievances are very legitimate. Their grievances are that all Central Government employees in the North-Eastern States like, Assam, Meghalaya, Mizora, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Tripura and Manipur are paid a Special Duty Allowance because of the geographical conditions there, the transport difficulties etc., etc., and even from among the postal employees, Group A & B officials have been given this allowance, but Group C & D employees have been denied this. They went to the Central Administrative Tribunal which directed that they should be paid. Subsequently, the Government went to the Supreme Court and sought a Stay. The Supreme Court refused to give a Stay and