

## **RAJYA SABHA**

(1980)

### **Point of privilege**

*Misreporting of a member's speech by a news. paper*

### **Facts of the case and ruling by the Chairman**

On 24th July, 1980, the Chairman (Shri M. Hidayatullah) informed<sup>1</sup> the House as follows:--

"I have to inform the House that on the 26th June, 1980, one of our hon. members, Shri Bipinpal Das, had sought to raise a question of privilege against the Editor of 'The Assam Tribune'. Gauhati for misreporting his speech in the Rajya Sabha on the 9th June, 1980, while speaking on the Statutory Resolution seeking approval of the House to the continuance in force of the President's Rule in Assam for a further period of six months. On my direction, the matter was referred to the Editor of the newsPaper, enquiring from him if he had Anything to say in this regard.

The Editor in his letter dated June 27, 1980 "informed me that he had published the summary of Shri Bipinpal Das's speech as delivered by him in the House in the column, 'Letter to the Editor', under the caption 'Not Accurately Reported' in the issue of the paper dated 26th June, 1980 at the instance of Shri Bipinpal Das himself who had taken up the matter with the newspaper.

In his letter to the Secretary General, the Editor had not only regretted the discrepancies in the reporting of Shri Bipinpal Das's speech but also assured that there had been no deliberate attempt on his part to malign an hon. member of the Rajya Sabha or to tarnish his political image.

I however, felt that a mere publication of a summary of the member's speech was not making proper amends in this case. The Editor of the newspaper was, therefore. asked to publish his unqualified apology in an issue of the 'Assam Tribune' at a prominent place before the matter could be considered further.

The Editor has since published his apology and expression of regret in the issue of the 'Assam Tribune' dated 13th July, 1980. In view of the Publication of the expression of regret and apology by the Editor, if the House agrees. the matter may be treated as closed

In this connection, I Would like to observe that the Press should be circumspect in reporting the Proceedings of the House ...If there, is. editing with a view to Suppressio veri or Suggestio falsi, then in my sole judgment I shall take appropriate action. I hope that misreporting and such other things will not occur in future"

The matter was, thereafter, closed.

R.S. Deb., dt.24.7.1980