

tional institution in Alibag had made derogatory references to Chhatrapati Shivaji.

Speaking in the legislative council on Monday, Deputy Chief Minister RR Patil said the state government would take measures to ensure that such incidents (of defaming national idols) were not repeated in the future.

Earlier, Diwakar Raote (Shiv Sena) had said that Professor SA Suryavanshi in the Janata Shikshan Mandal in Alibag had made derogatory references to Chhatrapati Shivaji. The state gov-

by the police.

Leader of the Opposition Pandurang Phundkar (BJP) too demanded an enquiry and action in this regard.

Patil said a police complaint would be lodged and the educational institution would be told that since they were getting government grants, it was their responsibility to control such incidents.

The police complaints lodged against students who had protested against the professor would also be withdrawn. It was also necessary to rethink the argu-

in India to author James Laine who had made derogatory references to the icon in his book 'Shivaji: Hindu King In Islamic India, it was necessary to see examine who had given him the information.

Kapil Patil (Lok Bharati) demanded that the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (BORI), where Laine had conducted his research for the book, and which had been vandalised by protestors later, be taken into custody by the state government.

## Black Magic Bill: Legislature panel extends period of inviting suggestions by one month

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

MUMBAI, JULY 30

THE Joint Committee of legislators from both the Houses of Maharashtra legislature formed to review the Maharashtra Eradication of Black Magic and Evil and Aghori Practices Bill, 2005, has decided to give one month time more for individuals and organisations to send suggestions and objections to the provisions in the bill.

The new deadline is August 30. The Bill was passed by the state legislative assembly, but was not carried through in the legislative council which resulted in the creation of the committee.

The committee headed by Social Justice Minister Chandrakant Handore had met for the first time on June 27 and invited suggestions and objections from the public till July 30.

The committee met on Monday, when several members demanded some more time for the public to file their suggestions and objections.

It was decided that the deadline be extended to August 30.

The Bill seeks to punish those who cheat people on the pretext of healing ailments or extort money or exploit women.

The Bill has been opposed by Hindu organisations, which feel that it is against Hinduism and that the provisions in the legislation would be used to target Hindus.

### *Dead lawyer's derogatory letter baffles MLAs*

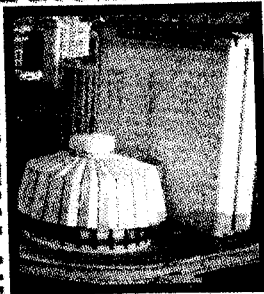
IDENTICAL letters sent to about 50 MLAs by a lawyer from Jalgaon Satish Tayade baffled MLAs on Monday. BJP member Shobha Phadnavis raised the issue, demanding action against him. The MLAs, however, were surprised when local MLA Gulabrao Patil told the House that Tayade had died long ago and somebody was playing mischief by using his letterhead. Speaker Babasaheb Kupekar asked the Home department to conduct an inquiry into the issue.

Phadnavis had raised the issue through a privilege motion, stating that the letter she had received was vulgar and defamatory. The letter had stated that as an MLA she had forgotten in her duties and was more busy in staying at government rest houses, drinking liquor, going to dance bars and womanising. Soon, several MLAs stated that they had also received identical letters from the same lawyer, who had posed as the lawyer of two police inspectors H G More and R A Talekar from Jalgaon.

Several members sought action against those that were playing the mischief and defaming MLAs. Some opined that it was a result of internal rivalry in the police force and demanded action against the culprits.

#### LEGISLATURE

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