

Sir, I have the list of other enactments also. I can detail out all the 18 enactments with reasons. But I do not think the hon. Members of this House would require me to do that. A majority of the Members have already agreed with this Bill. Many of these Acts pertain to the pre-Independence days and those enactments are effectively replaced by better statutes after Independence. After the present democracy has taken place, we have taken care to replace these old enactments by the new statutes.

Sir, lastly I would like to respond to the point made by Shri Chauhan. He was talking about the loss that is being caused to the exchequer on account of abolition of the Estate Duty. Sir, we are not seeking to abolish or exempt Estate Duty by the provisions of this Bill. In fact, the hon. Member as also the House are well aware that this is the superfluous provision of the Act that has lost its effect long back. The Estate Duty is no more applicable. So, immediately there is no loss to the exchequer and care has been taken to augment the revenue through other sources. So, there is absolutely no loss to the exchequer. Consequent to that, the share which was going to the States also has not been reduced. In fact, we have tried to help States more and more. Just the other day, we have passed the Constitution (Amendment) Bill by which the Government of India has decided to devolve 29 per cent of the taxes collected by it.

Sir, with this, I once again thank all the hon. Members for supporting the measures taken by the Government. I would request that the Bill may kindly be taken up for consideration.

SHRI ANADI SAHU (Berhampur, Orissa): Sir, this is by way of clarification to Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan. The Governor-General in Council during the wartime had passed certain ordinances which were on the same footing as the laws. The DIR was on same footing. In my State of Orissa in 1944 the Governor-General in Council passed an ordinance regarding alienation of tribal land.

It was revoked in 1956 when it was merged with the Orissa Regulation (2) of 1956. There were saving clauses in this ordinance. It was in the same footing as the other laws.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill to repeal certain enactments relating to direct taxes, be taken into consideration."

*The motion was adopted.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House shall now take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

"That clauses 2 and 3 stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was adopted.*

*Clauses 2 and 3 were added to the Bill.*

*The Schedule was added to the Bill.*

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

SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

*The motion was adopted.*

15.22 hrs.

## DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

### Hijacking of Indian Airlines Plane, IC-814

[Translation]

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR (Nagpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I express my gratitude to you for having given me permission under Rule 193 to raise the issue relating to incident of hijacking of I.C. 814 plane of Indian Airlines that took place some four months back.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the last week of December, 1999 will be written in the history of India in black letters. When the entire world was welcoming and celebrating the new century and new millennium, our country and our Government was mourning because of the hijacking of Indian Airlines I.C. 814 plane. Our 165 citizens were struggling for life. During these four months, the Government has explained in detail the reasons for hijacking of the plane and whatever was said has come before us. It is unfortunate that the way the Government of India handled the matter has demoralised the country all over the world. The Government had to surrender before the handful of terrorists because the lives of our 165 citizens were in danger. During this period democracy and democratic ideals were hostage to the terrorists. Peace lovingness, dignity of national behavior, human proximity and civilised way of life of not only India but the entire World remained hostage. What was its culmination?

[Shri Vilas Muttemwar]

The noble ideals of the civilised society were defeated and our Foreign Minister had to take three dreaded terrorists to Kandhar. Only then hostages were released. It was because of this action that during those days every Indian was telling that this Government was weak, as it could not manage release of those hostages for 8 days and could not solve this problem. One question that comes before all of us is that how the Government which cannot face the terrorist, will, defend the country? It is highly regrettable that the information about this incident was reported to the Prime Minister, Home Minister, Foreign Minister and Civil Aviation Ministers some two hours late. Countrymen and the Government knew about this hijacking from the foreign media channels. Mr. Chairman, Sir, two hours is more than enough for today's age of information and Technology. Any country can be destroyed in these two hours but it is regrettable that the Government of our country and the Cabinet who runs the Government knew about this after two hours. This shows how strong our Government is. Reality is that in those days there was no Government worth the name. There was anarchy everywhere. Nothing was clear about the hijacking. One statement regarding this was given by our hon. Foreign Minister. It was said that action was initiated immediately after the incident. Cabinet meeting continued from morning till evening but no concrete decision was taken. I have great respect for the hon'ble Prime Minister. He has been front ranking leader of this country for many years. He has vast experience, but when we see this hijacking incident then we find that the Government could not be benefited by his experience. Those days he was bewildered and silent which shows that he could not take any decision. It appears that remote control was somewhere else and at that time some foreign pressure was working on them and it will not be exaggeration if I say that (English) he was a prisoner of indecision. (Translation) In this very House Vajpayee ji had long back remarked about Pt. Nehru that though sometimes he becomes Charchill but in working most of the time he is like Chamberlaine and surrenders. Now at this time of crisis what should I call him Charchill or Chamberlaine, he has to reply this. At least on this occasion he had certainly surrendered.

In the entire sequence of this incident the need was to teach a lesson to the terrorists. But that was not done. It is the general opinion of the countrymen that the country has been deceived by way of giving them a safe passage. Keeping in view the above thing my humble submission to the Prime Minister is that he is not getting proper advice from the people around him and they are misguiding him. He should be cautious in time. Our hon. Home Minister, Advani ji is compared with Sardar Patel. He says that India is a soft state but this incident has maligned the image of the entire nation. During the entire week of the incident, Advaniji continued to give hollow

assurances and various statements and at the end nobody could imagine as to how much difference is there in preaching and practice.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, on the one hand effort was made to get the release of the hostages by sending Commandos and on the other hand our Foreign Minister took three of the dreaded terrorists to Kandhar as VIPs. This kind of behaviour was a mockery of the security of the nation. Our Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh ji went with them. It has not been disclosed as to what was the reason behind it. He has given only one statement in which it has been said that Kandhar airport is very small and our IC-814 plane was already parked there. So there was not enough space to land one more plane there. So he also went with those three terrorists. Along with this, it was also said that he had gone there with the view that if any other situation developed, it could be resolved immediately. But was it not possible for him to go to Kandhar one or two days earlier? He should have gone there to meet the hostages who were Indians. What was that urgency that he had to go with those terrorists? It was because of this that the image of the country and the system have been maligned all over the world. It can never be tolerated.

Mr. Chairman, Sir today on this occasion I would like to pay my tributes to deceased Rupen Katiyal, who sacrificed his life in this tragedy but his sacrifice was not duly acknowledged by the NDA Government. Our passengers remained captive for 8 days and thus the sacrifice of Shri Rupen Katiyal went in vain. Plane was hijacked on 24th and that happened in Nepal. Sir, if we look at the entire episode, then we see three important reasons—first is the Tribhuvan airport, second is Amritsar airport and third is Kandhar Air Port and in between are Lahore, and Dubai airports. As far as Nepal is concerned, on several occasions concerns have been expressed in the House about the running of terrorist activities and entry of terrorists in India via Nepal.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you I want to tell the House that in November, I had initiated the discussion about the terrorist activities in Jammu & Kashmir and north eastern states under Rule 193 and at that time too I had emphasized that the terrorist activities might increase on the part of terrorists in the coming times, during new year and at the time of Id, so we should be vigilant. I had also warned that terrorists are being sent by ISI via Nepal and the entire operation is being conducted by the ISI through Nepal. In reply to that Advani ji had said that efforts were being made to check such activities.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the plane has not being hijacked for the first time. In this country, planes have been

hijacked 13 times. Some times planes are hijacked for trivial reasons. Only twice planes were hijacked for trivial reasons, once for renaming Marathwada University after Baba Saheb Bhim Rao Ambedkar and second time by the striking students of University for pressurising to meet their demands. Rest of the hijackings have been done due to Pakistan. Keeping in view the increased ISI activities during the last few days and the prevailing security system in Nepal, there is a need to take special precautions. I had pointed out all these points and had brought it to the notice of the Government during discussion in the House under Rule 193. If fool proof arrangements would have been made at that time then such incident would not have happened. I want to know from the Central Government what were the terms of reference of the talks between our hon'ble Foreign Minister and the Nepalese Government on the security issues? What was the outcome of that discussion has not been disclosed. ISI is active in Nepal since 1990. Drug Mafia of Nepal or other such gangs are puppets in the hands of ISI. Now it is known to all that ISI was behind the hijacking of Indian Airlines plane. Hijackers had alighted from a Pakistan Airways Plane and entered the plane of Indian Airlines without any security check. I would like to know as to what steps have been taken by the Government of India to tighten security measures at Kathmandu airport. Is there any failure on the part of intelligence which did not warn Nepalese or Indian Governments in time? Will the Foreign Minister give a detailed information regarding this to the House? Had Government of India asked other nations to pressurise Pakistan that it should have over terrorists alongwith the hijackers to India?

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to tell that this incident happened due to the two hour late reporting the plane hijacking to the Government. Before coming to Amritsar, plane had gone to Lahore and in between our Government. Foreign Ministry or Home Ministry could have cautioned the Government of Pakistan on humanitarian grounds and this matter could have been resolved after getting the hostages released but no such effort was made in this direction. That plane remained in Amritsar for about 50 minutes. Our Government did not give any instruction as to what should be done about this plane. The plane could have been immobilised or grounded but the airport officials were probably not ready for such an emergency. They had no appropriate orders. Whatever convention is there about hijacking that was not followed. Negligence was shown in this regard. Inquiry has been conducted in the matter but no information has been given by the Government regarding the action taken against the guilty officials. The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security conducted survey of several airports of the

country and found that there were no adequate security arrangements there.

I would like to tell that it has been decided to provide permanent Crack National Security Guard commando at airports. Besides this, is there any provision made to constitute Aviation Security Force to check the incidents of hijacking? It has also been said that they will be deployed at 37 most sensitive airports as also with the international flights. In this context the crew of Indian Airlines and Air India should also be imparted training regarding the security measures. Our main airports will be handed over to C.I.S.F. Besides efforts are being made to bring the various operating agencies at airport under one officer or Authority so that security arrangements could be tightened. Is there any arrangement being made to send sky marshal in the flights originating from sensitive airports? I would like that the hon'ble Minister should reply to all these points.

Mr. Chairman Sir, this hijacking drama had continued for eight days. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister that if those three dreaded terrorists were to be released, then why eight days were taken for doing that? Had we been left with no other alternative to get the hostages released? As is clear that our diplomatic relations with Pakistan and Kandhar (Afghanistan) both are not that good so an effort was made to seek support from all over the world to get the hostages released. In spite of that why did not any alternative come before us? The fact is that there might be certainly some shortcomings in our system as also on the Part of our Government that this drama continued for 8 days and ultimately the Government had to bow. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister whether it will not demoralise the spirits of our brave soldiers who are fighting the terrorists in Kashmir? Three dreaded terrorists Maulana Masud Ajar, Mustaq Ahmed Ajar, and Ahmed Umar Saiyad Shaikh have killed many persons and many persons had sacrificed their lives to arrest them. But the Government took those terrorists to Kandhar with honour and the entire world know that from there they directly went to Pakistan. Will such incident not demoralise the spirits of those soldiers who are fighting terrorists? Has the Government taken any concrete steps to stop the recurrence of such incidents in future?

Even before this we had released dreaded terrorists in order to liberate Rubi Sayeed, the daughter of Mufti Mohammed Sayeed.



15.43 hrs.

(SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN in the Chair)

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajganj, Bihar):  
Why did you lay such a tradition?

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR: It was not laid in our time. It has become order of the day that first they make sympathisers and then get the terrorists released. I would appeal to Government that some concrete programme should be formulated for this purpose. I make a request to Shri Jaswant Singh ji and all our political parties that no politics should be involved in fighting the terrorism. If our Government makes any programme in this regard, then I assure you that I and my party members would always be by your side in the effort to combat the terrorism. You boldly come forward. Four months have passed. The month of December was a black month for all of us when the passengers were detained as hostages. With the passing of four months, we tend to forget this incident, but the Government should give consideration towards this fact and should also make sound programmes and may take concrete steps to avoid such incidents in future, moreover information regarding to Government's efforts should also be furnished to the House. The document produced by Shri Jaswant Singh on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is just an eye wash. Politics should not be involved in this. Mistake has been committed. Everyone has witnessed the weakness of Government, but Government will take concrete steps to do away with such incidents in future. I thank you for having given me an opportunity to speak.

[English]

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (Balasore): Sir, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to speak. The hon. Member from the Opposition, Shri Vilas Muttemwar, has raised very familiar points which have already been mentioned by not only our hon. Minister of External Affairs but also the Prime Minister. It is more surprising that when the people of India as a whole, though grudgingly, have accepted the contention of the Government, I do not understand why the hon. Members of the Opposition are raising these points time and again inside and outside this House.

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR: It is coming after four months....(Interruptions)

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: The hon. Member, Shri Vilas Muttemwar, represents the major Opposition party-Congress. But I am more surprised that even though it is after four months that the matter is being raised in this House, he has not raised a single point which is new. Now, the hon. Minister of External Affairs has already

given a *suo motu* statement. The hon. Minister has already anticipated the following questions likely to be asked by the hon. Members of the Opposition. Why was no action taken at Amritsar? Why did the hon. Minister of External Affairs go to Kandahar all by himself and why not anybody else? Why did he take the terrorists who were later on freed aboard the plane in which he himself was travelling? All these points are very old. But again these points have been raised by the hon. Member of the Opposition. So many times, the planes had been hijacked from this country. But in those days, it was not the day of the Television. Television never glamorised anything like Kargil or the hijacking of IC-814. Every bit of it was projected on the Television. The entire people of this country, including all the hon. Members of the Opposition, have seen the behaviour of the relatives of the people who were taken prisoners-wailing, shouting, cursing the Government and demonstrating in front of the house of the hon. Prime Minister, staging *dharna* and telling that had any prisoner been a daughter or a son of any Minister, the Government would have taken some action much before. But because we are not Ministers, we do not belong to the ruling party, no action is being taken by the Government.

I believe that if the Government would have stuck to the decision of not negotiating with the hijackers, not negotiating with the Taliban, and as a result of which if some people in the plane would have died, the same Opposition would have said now that this is the Government whose hands are red with the blood of the innocent people of this country. If you negotiated and set them free, you are wrong. If you do not do any such thing, let the people die, you are also wrong.

So, it is only the Opposition which finds ways just to accuse this Government because they have no other issue to raise against this Government. But I believe, the Government has done the best under a very trying situation; out of the basket of worst alternatives, it has taken the best alternative that was available under the circumstances.

At Amritsar, for hardly 49 minutes the plane was kept. Nobody knew that it will land at Amritsar. Everybody knew that after hijacking it will go to Lahore and it actually went there. But because the Government of Pakistan wanted to show to the world that actually they are the greatest *Sati-Savitri* in the world and that they did not have any connection with the hijackers, that is why, they initially said that they would not allow it to land at Lahore. It again came to Amritsar. But then, how the Government of India knew that it would come back to Amritsar.

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR: From the very beginning they had been saying that they would take it to Lahore....(Interruptions)



SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: Sir, I heard him with rapt attention and never objected to him when he said many things about this Government. So, I would appeal to him to listen to me also patiently....(Interruptions) I am not the last speaker and there are many more speakers after me to speak on this issue....(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do not interrupt and no cross talks please. If you have any thing to say, you speak when your turn comes.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: Sir, I am an ordinary Member and not a Minister. The Hon. Minister is here and if I say something wrong, he will correct it in his reply.

So, when it landed at Lahore, the Government did not have any comprehensive information with it about the number of hijackers in the plane, the weapons they were carrying with them and the gadgetry that they were having with them. Secondly, all the time the pilot of the plane was intimating to the Government that four passengers had already been killed by the hijackers, though he might have done this under pressure from the hijackers. But how do we know whether he was giving right or wrong information? That was a very tense situation. Everything was possible at that time. If he had intimated that already four passengers had died, the Government had no other option but to accept it. Thirdly, all the time the plane engine was on. They did not stop the engine and did not keep the plane stationary. It was being shifted from one position to another several times. Then a tanker to load the aviation fuel in the plane was sent but when it was only 300 yards away from the plane, the hijacker suspected something, and they very rightly suspected, that the Bowser was coming just to prevent the plane from taking off. So, all of a sudden they asked the pilot to take off. I do not think, the Government had any other option there at that time.

The Government could have stopped it but as everybody knows that on the very first day the hijackers do not enter into negotiations with anyone because they generally remain very tense and they are bound to take any action that is possible to be taken at that time. They could have killed many passengers because at that time it was intimated by the pilot to the Government that they were having pistols and hand-grenades.

Finally, I would say that the Taliban was hand-in-glove with the hijackers. They set free not only the hijackers but all the terrorists which were released by the Government of India. Sir, have you seen anywhere in

the world that the hijackers are given ten hours to leave the country?

So, we did not have a diplomatic relationship with Taliban, Our Government was forced to have a dialogue with them through our High Commissioner in Islamabad. He did good job. Initially, the Government of Pakistan wanted to provide him with a helicopter to come to Lahore but before he could reach Lahore, already the plane had taken off from Lahore. Pakistan was hand in glove. Taliban was hand in glove. The aliens were surrounding there. I would say that the infrastructure available at Kandhar airport was very meagre. So, the Government of India had no other option but to concede the least possible demand of just releasing three prisoners so that the lives of many people could be saved.

Sir, a question arises—the Minister will reply to this as to why did he go there. I think, he did the right thing because at the last moment if something would have taken place, then who could take a final decision. If there is nobody from the Government, who holds a very responsible position and who is a senior member, then who could take a decision on the spot? It was very good on the part of the External Affairs Minister to have gone there and to have seen that the hostages are released in a very peaceful manner.

Before I conclude, I would raise two or three points. Pakistan wants that Kashmir should be amalgamated to it because they think that the only Islamic country based on religion in the world is Pakistan, and because the majority of the people in the Kashmir Valley are Muslims, it should be annexed to Pakistan. This is unacceptable because Pakistan is also propagating the same two-nation theory what it used to do earlier. For the last 52 years, the people of Pakistan are fed with the only theory. 'It is anti-Indianism. India is a Hindu State. Kashmir is a Muslim majority State, and so, Kashmir should not remain with India but it should come to Pakistan.' If the Muslims of every country should remain in one country, then why Afghanistan be a separate country, why Iran and Iraq fought a war for eight years, and why there are so many Islamic countries in the Middle East, and why there are so many countries in Europe though they belong to Christianity? So, if religion is the basis of a State, then all the States of one religion should come into one State. Why is there a small State like Luxembourg, which is also a Christian State?

The two-nation theory is not acceptable to India because a country does not have any basis in religion. Culture does not emanate from any religion. Culture is a way of life. That is why, there are so many countries in the world though they belong to one religion.

[Shri Kharabela Swain]

Sir, Nepal is a Hindu country. The King of Nepal is a Hindu. If you say that Nepal should be amalgamated to India, it will not happen. What I mean to say is that India is having a culture, and all the people in India, whether they are Christians or Hindus or Muslims, they belong to one culture.

16.00 hrs.

It is because if you go from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, you will find that in a given situation, an Indian father will behave in the same manner in Kanyakumari also, as he will behave in Kashmir. He will react in the same manner in Kanyakumari because he has got an Indian mind....(Interruptions) Sir, you might be a person of great knowledge. I do not deny because all the time you get up and just obstruct to everybody....(Interruptions)

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI (Khajuraho): Every time I speak, you invariably interrupt. I never objected to your interruption. I was simply asking that you please focus yourself on the plane hijack....(Interruptions)

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: It is a news to me that I object to him every time. Sir, it is a news to me.

I mean to say that we know the partition from which he has come. They accepted the two-nation theory in 1947 even though the person who objected to this is virtually the main idol of their Party. In spite of it, Mahatma Gandhi did not agree for the partition of India. It is the Congress people to which he belonged wanted that the country should be divided into two, and they agreed to this two-nation theory by that way.

Sir, I am not very surprised that when I am objecting to this two-nation theory, he should object to it....(Interruptions) I agree because they have surreptitiously accepted this. Even though they did not tell so, but actually they accepted this two-nation theory. But the two-nation theory is not acceptable.

Let me come to the training of *Jehads* in the *Madararas* which have been set up in Pakistan by *Jamaite-e-Ulemai-Islami* and *Jamait-Ul-Islami* to whom the rulers of Pakistan, not only of today but starting from Zia-ul-Haq and up to Benazir Bhutto, everybody supported.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your time is up.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: Sir, please give me two minutes' time. I will complete.

They patronised them. Somebody patronised *Jamaite-e-Ulemai-Islami* and somebody patronised *Jamait-Ul-Islami*.

All these terrorist organisations which preached *Jehad* against India and against all the unislamic people in the world are being patronised by the rulers of Pakistan. *Jehad* is not only against Kashmir but it is also against India, and against the human civilisation. They want that the entire human civilisation should collapse, and that they should come only under the terrorists, and this is unacceptable.

I will appeal to the hon. Minister of External Affairs, and through the hon. Minister of External Affairs to the hon. Prime Minister that not only should we enter into a dialogue with Pakistan but also we should keep ourselves strong. Only by that way, only by keeping ourselves strong, we should be able to defeat Pakistan and countries like them that have only the rein of terror. Then only, we can win this war. Only by that way, the world will salute us. Only by that way, India, in this century, will become a super-power in the world.

With these words, by supporting the action of the Government, I conclude my speech.

SHRI ALI MOHD. NAIK (Anantnag): Mr. Chairman, Sir, please give me five minutes' time because militancy pertains to my area. I have to take it up with the Government.

SHRI SURESH KURUP (Kottayam): First of all, I bow my head to the memory of Shri Rupan Katyal whose precious life was plucked away by the terrorists. I also salute all the passengers and the crew of Flight IC 814 who bravely endured the ordeal.

This hijacking was the most painful and anxious situation this nation faced after the Kargil. The one-week hijacking drama revealed that this Government which was basking in the glory of Pokhran and Kargil, is totally unprepared in handling this sort of a crisis.

The hijacking and the Government handling of the situation is a classic example of in what way a crisis should not be handled.

As every one pointed out during the wide debate which took place all over the country, it was this Government's thoroughly inept handling of the situation at Amritsar which made the whole thing slip out of our hands. There was absolutely no coordination. Nobody knew what to do. Once it slipped out of our hands till the end, we could not recover from it. We were forced to act according to the script written by the Taliban and ISI. When the plane took off from Amritsar and finally landed in Kandhar, it was quite evident that all our initiatives to restore the crisis to our favour are bound to fail.



Sir, if we look at Nepal from where this whole episode started, it was common knowledge that Nepal, due to various reasons and factors, has become a safe haven for terrorists working against our country. Fully knowing this situation, our country had done nothing to enhance the security of the aircraft or the passengers. In the Airport, for all practical purposes, there was no security at all. This was accepted by the Government of Nepal itself that serious security lapses were there. Given this background, it is quite astonishing that the Government never thought of doing the security check up of the passengers on their own while they boarded the aircraft. This shows our negligence, or is it that none of our intelligence agencies was aware of the ground situation in Nepal, which was known to the whole world. This is the first question the Government had to answer to this nation. Why were our own security measures not adopted to screen the baggage and the passengers while they boarded the plane? This is being done by many countries.

And once it landed in Kandhar, it became evident that it is going to be stationed there enjoying the hospitality of Taliban, but our Government did absolutely nothing to mobilise international opinion to put pressure on Pakistan and Taliban for releasing the hostages. It is being repeatedly publicised by our Government that the United States and India are now jointly engaged in tackling terrorism. At least this is what the Government wants us to believe. But nobody came to our Government's help. Except some general statements condemning the terrorism, no country in the world came forward and supported India in condemning the role of Pakistan and Taliban. During the crisis or after the crisis, we could not convince anybody about our repeated assertion regarding the ISI hand in this ugly drama.

And it was after this ordeal came, the statement of the hon. Prime Minister accusing Pakistan as a terrorist State. The move was aborted at the beginning itself. During the week-long crisis, it was quite evident that our diplomacy has failed. After this our new US-centred foreign policy experts tried in vain to make USA accept India's position regarding Pakistan as a terrorist State. Now, every day we are finding new meaning in the statements of various officials of the State Government and even the most ardent supporters of new India-US relationship could not find any positive shift in their stand regarding Pakistan and ISI.

It is the most pathetic situation that we could not convince anybody, any Government in the world that it is Pakistan who masterminded the hijacking and provided shelter to the hijackers. Not a single country in the world responded positively to our move. The Home Minister has been repeatedly saying about the White Paper on

ISI, but it is yet to come. Let us hope it will come out soon. To cut short, the hijacking and its tackling by the Government revealed to the whole world this Government's total unpreparedness and callous attitude regarding the security matters. Those who are proud of Pokhran, meekly submitted to the demands of the terrorists and exposed the thorough failure of our foreign policy initiatives.

Our Minister for External Affairs—I have great respect for him—had to cut a very sorry figure during the crisis. I do not know who decided that he should escort the terrorists to Kandhar. He has become the Minister for Escorts. It was with the same enthusiasm that he displayed while escorting Chelsea and Bill Clinton's mother-in-law to Udaipur, that he accompanied the released terrorists to Kandhar. The whole country, while heaving a sigh of relief when the hostages were freed, held its head in shame when it witnessed the most contemptuous scene of our External Affairs Minister accompanying the terrorists. This single act of the otherwise savvy External Affairs Minister, has tarnished his image permanently in our country.

The Government's promise to the nation was that it will secure the release of the hostages and will not compromise on national security. The country celebrated the release of the hostages, but each and every one in this nation was ashamed to see a Government without any firm directions or any resolve, groping in the dark during the whole crisis period. It was this weak handling of the crisis which paved the way for enhanced terrorist activities in Jammu and Kashmir. Now the Government has to be very careful. They should ensure that this sort of a thing does not happen in future and that the country will not be held to ransom by a few anti-social elements. The best way to curb future hijack and hostage situation, so many people have already pointed out, is to assume that these can happen at any moment, at any time and, therefore, institutionalise the procedures and drill to deal with them.

This Government, with its benevolent silence regarding the activities of organisations like *Bajrang Dal* and *Vishva Hindu Parishad*, is indirectly encouraging the work of ISI in this country. These organisations are sowing divisions among the populace for the separatists to exploit.

As long as there is a Government at the Centre whose secular credentials are doubtful, it will encourage separatist tendencies in the country. What this whole country wants is that proper security measures should be adopted at our airports and also in the flights which we operate from other countries. For that, *ad hoc* measures will not do. This crisis has shown the utter helplessness of a Government which boasts of hard State and which

[Shri Suresh Kurup]

wants to drop the image of a soft State. During the whole crisis, the whole country, the whole nation, witnessed the inept handling of the situation by this Government. It was this inept handling of the situation which ultimately paved the way for the release of the hostages, the release of the dreaded terrorists and the External Affairs Minister accompanying them to Kandhar. This Government cannot absolve from its responsibility.

With this, I conclude, Sir.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj): Mr. Chairman, Sir, after a long long time we have been able to get this discussion in this House. Therefore, we are all thankful to you.

Before I contribute to this discussion, I congratulate the brave members of the crew of that fateful IC-814, the passengers and their families for sharing the agony, almost in the stage of trauma, and specially the family members of late Rupan Katyal whom I also consider a martyr like the martyrs of Kargil.

This act of hijacking, no doubt, deserves condemnation from all quarters and it was so done. We all did it; the entire House did it; and the entire nation did it. But the role of the Government in that critical hour should not be judged in the context of the period of hijacking. The Government had witnessed the naked conspiracy of Pakistan even after Lahore Summit. The hon. Prime Minister admitted in the House that after reaching Lahore he had to reach Kargil. The Government was in full confidence, control and command as to what were the designs of Pakistan. Often the hon. Minister of Home Affairs Shri L.K. Advani referred to this in the House that the frustrated Pakistan, after defeat in Kargil, started behaving desperately to destabilise India with various forms and designs.

Did the hon. Minister of External Affairs, Shri Jaswant Singh, who is our good friend, did the entire Government, did the hon. Prime Minister take note of the designs or the frustrations of Pakistan after the Kargil war as to in what manner and dimension that it could come? Did they alert our Intelligence authorities everywhere, including Kathmandu? I know authoritatively that a day before the hijacking, the Ministry of Home Affairs was in full-hand information about the ISI activities in Kathmandu. There were messages after messages from the Indian High Commission to the Foreign Ministry about the hostile attitude of the Pakistan Government who were harbouring their elements in Kathmandu. Let the hon. Minister say 'no' to this. The hon. Minister of Home Affairs was having full information. What steps did you take in order to

prevent the hijacking or any kind of a thing that could take place in such vulnerable areas?

Sir, there is a track record of 12 hijackings since 1971. Excepting one of Bhindranwale agitation, all the rest are linked to Pakistan or Kashmir and the whole information is with the Government—the designs, the motives, the operations, and the outcome.

Today, I was not in a mood to score anything politically because this is not a political issue. Tomorrow we may sit on the side and you may sit on this side. If a hijacking takes place then, one should not score politically. The whole nation expressed its concern on the issue.

I quote from the statement of the hon. Minister. You claimed to have scored very seriously in the diplomatic front to mobilise support of friends from here and there to defend India. That was always your claim. I quote from your own statement.

"While the flight is to land in Dubai, the UAE authorities, after initial reluctance...."

This was a request from the Government of India saying: 'My dear friend, I am speaking from the Government of India; we are in trouble; please help us'. But the statement said that the UAE authorities after initial reluctance, responded positively to our request about permitting IC-814 to land at an UAE airport.

Why was there the initial reluctance? There were not only Indians among the passengers who were on board but there were passengers from other countries. Could you demonstrate the strongest will of those nations? No.

If I may give the chronological order of the events, the seriousness will come out. The hijacking was over when the Parliament was not in Session.

I want to highlight the seriousness of the Government. Such a serious thing had happened in terms of security, fame and name of our country. This Budget Session started on 17th of February and the Government came forward with a *suo motu* statement on 13th of March. This is the kind of seriousness they have in regard to report such matters to the Parliament, to the nation. You should have come with a *suo motu* statement the very next day of the President's Address telling dear Members of Parliament and respected Speaker how you overcame the situation and what happened. The statement after several interruptions made by distinguished Members in the 'Zero Hour'. This is the kind of importance you attach to the whole episode.



Sir, the brave Prime Minister of our country, who was too brave for his rhetoric during Kargil which paid you a lot of dividends, came with similar rhetoric. I quote the speech of the Prime Minister of 28th December. It says:

"My Government will not bend before such a show of terror. The hijacking is act of terrorism by desperate men who have no respect for human lives and human rights."

When did the Prime Minister meet the leaders of the Opposition? He did not meet them on 25th or 26th December but on 27th December. He thought that some miracle might be taking place due to the sincere intervention of the Crisis Management Group within 48 hours and he would come to the Vijay Chowk and say 'look, after Kargil, it is Kandhar'. Unfortunately, things went in a different tune. You could not mobilise even the support of the UAE. When your flight landed at UAE airport, I saw in television Shri Sharad Yadav going with aircraft to bring the passengers. It was a good thing that you did. I thank you for that. At that point of time, what was your diplomacy? Could you not pursue the UAE and other countries of the Gulf to mount such a pressure that the aircraft could not leave Dubai and go to Kandhar. Why did you fail? Was it due to the NSG? The NSG was related to Delhi and Amritsar. The hon. Minister has admitted that they were reluctant to do it, to allow the aircraft to land and then, somehow they landed. Is this reluctance of the UAE vis-a-vis your Government not enough to expose your strong possible understanding- which you claim every time as all right-even in the Gulf in such a situation? You have not. You forget Dubai.

Then, the aircraft went to Kandhar. Sir, I know that in Kandhar, the Taliban regime was not in your control and I used to see your faces every day before the television. I knew that at the end of the day, we will have to repent. Even you could have imagined that there was connivance between the Pakistan and the Taliban. They were hand in glove in this matter. However, at that time, sentimentally and psychological, I would have done the same thing what you did, had I been in that position. I agree. But where do I come? It is not my statement. My dear friend from the NDA was accusing Shri Vilas Muttemwar.

The responsible man whom you assigned the probe into Kargil matter, Shri K. Subramaniam has commented in this regard. I quote his statement. It says:

"K. Subramaniam, the Convenor of the National Security Advisory Board termed the deal struck with the hijackers as a setback for India's fight against terrorism."

Shri Subramaniam, who was the Head of the probe Committee of Kargil expressed this without any ambiguity. I do not say that we all wanted that our passengers should be killed there.

I only give one example today of how it was handled by Shrimati Indira Gandhi. Please do not misunderstand me that I am comparing this for political score. On 5th July 1984, Srinagar-Delhi airbus flight carrying 255 passengers and 9 crew members was hijacked and taken to Lahore by nine militants of Bhindrawale Group.

The Indian Airlines' representatives and a Government official were ferried to Lahore by a helicopter. It was around 1.00 a.m., but the negotiations with the hijackers were initiated immediately. From the Pakistani side, Col. Niazi assisted us. We kept talking to them through the night. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was closely monitoring the situation and had been informed every 15 to 30 minutes about the progress. She did not see the need to issue lofty statements here and there, now and then, but she was monitoring closely. The hijackers demanded the release of 22 of their colleagues lodged in different jails. Every time they placed a demand, we agreed, telling them that the request had been communicated to Delhi. The negotiation process started.

Meanwhile, the Intelligence officials in Delhi were probing each of these demands to establish the hijackers' link. We were not aware of the arms that the hijackers were carrying, but they kept threatening to blow up the plane. So, we had to be careful. The hijackers made a rather strange demand. They said, "Give us our baggage immediately." It was conveyed to Shrimati Gandhi immediately. Shrimati Gandhi advised the negotiating group to move with confidence, with patience and quietly. The Pakistani side were inclined to fulfill the demand. Luckily the Indian Airlines' representative smelt a rat and decided to procrastinate. He told the hijackers that the demand would be met, but they would have to wait for the baggage because it had to be airlifted from Amritsar. Twenty-four hours later also, right from 10.00 a.m., Shrimati Gandhi further monitored the situation without making any statement in the public. The hijackers were worn out. Sensing their fatigue, our representative decided to call them out for negotiations. Four of the seven hijackers came out. We tried to hold them back for two hours, and then we allowed them to return. Then, the three hijackers in the aircraft had become suspicious and thought that their colleagues had struck a deal. In fact, it was done in such a fashion that confusion started among the hijackers.

When our men informed Shrimati Gandhi about the slow movement of success, her first statement, which

[Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi]

was most important, was: "What about the baggage? The moment it is over, get quickly the baggage." Why? Shrimati Gandhi came to know that the process of threatening every now and then might be some deliberate act of bullying and the actual things might be lying in the baggage. It was finally found that the hijackers were threatening all through fake bombs, and the luggage was fully loaded with Sten guns. Shrimati Gandhi was very correct in her observation, which was due to minute to minute monitoring.

This experience would have helped you, if you had no personal obsession against Shrimati Gandhi's dealing with the situation on 5th July, 1984. It was no less important thing. How were the negotiations protracted? It was not done by making any statements, but by understanding the motive, the design, by mobilising the international opinion.

At Amritsar Airport, what transpired between the ATC and the pilot? If we just go through the ACT's proceedings—I think, Shri Swain has not gone through it—we should come to know that when the hijackers were bullying the pilots, the pilots were conveying it to the ATC. But the psychologists or those who are experts in these hijacking matters were not given the minute to minute tape-recorded version of the Crisis Management Group to find out as to why they are doing so. The pilots were saying "the hijackers would kill all of us; please bring the taker." Later it was reported that the take-off was delayed by 15 minutes. Had it been delayed by another 15 minutes, the NSG commandos would have arrived by that time. The Crisis Management Group was not formed at that time; it was formed a little later. So, the NSG commandos could not operate.

The hijacking report came to you around 5 o'clock, and they landed at Amritsar Airport at 7.20 p.m. If, in two hours and twenty minutes, a responsible Government cannot manage their operations, from the past instances of hijacking, then the Home Minister should not occupy his office, and he should have resigned. Is two hours and twenty minutes' time not enough to plan your strategy, to call your experts to find out the position and to know how the earlier negotiations were held and was the fall-out? You could have negotiated with the other party.

The Foreign Minister said at that time that he was happy with the US reaction. Let him tell the House if he was really happy in his heart. He was expecting the US to brand Pakistan as a terrorist State. That would have been very good. But he could not get the US issue a forthright statement, in the manner in which it should

have been issued, within 24 hours of the incident. The US reaction came after 72 hours of the beginning of the incident. Is this the diplomacy of the Government? The Government had failed on diplomatic front in mobilising international support; the Government had failed in assessing the situation; the Government had failed to study and learn from the past incidents of hijacking. It is not just a question of two hours and twenty minutes. The flight went to Lahore and from there to Kandahar.

The Foreign Minister is a good friend. He is a very distinguished personality in international diplomacy. When he negotiates, I feel proud as an Indian. But, he was to project an image not of him as an individual in Kandhar. His presence in Kandhar reminded me of the surrender of Pakistan in Bangladesh in 1971. I saw photographs of Gen. Niazi surrendering in Dhaka with folded hands and the entire Bangladesh and the people of India celebrating that surrender. When the Kargil operation ended successfully, the family members of the martyrs were honoured and the martyrs were worshipped by us. Those were the moments of glory for us. But, I am sorry to say that the Foreign Minister taking those dreaded terrorists along with him—their names I will not take because to take their names is also a sin—to Kandhar was a demoralising episode for the people. Negotiations with the terrorists were held not by the Minister but by a Joint Secretary level officer of the Ministry of External Affairs. It was Shri Katju, one of the competent officers of the Ministry, who held the negotiations and I have high respect for him. Negotiations with hijackers were held by him and the Foreign Minister carried the honour of India to Kandhar. He, the Foreign Minister of India accompanied the terrorists to Kandhar to surrender in front of the hijackers. I compare India's surrender in Kandhar to that of Gen. Niazi in Dhaka.

SHRI VAIKO (Sivakasi): That is not a fair comparison.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj): Shri Vaiko should think beyond Party lines when it is a matter of the honour of the country. The Minister could have sent his officials. He could have sent the Chief Secretary of Kashmir. He could have sent the Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs. Can he explain as to why he himself had to go? It was to instil confidence in hijackers that the terrorists were going to be actually released. The Minister's escorting terrorists to Kandhar undermined the position of honour of the country, image of the nation in the world, and the victory of Kargil in which hundreds of our people laid their lives. My views would be echoed by even some of the BJP Members. In private parleys they say,



[Translation]

It was not right to do so, they could have sent someone else. He should not have gone there but he went, what can do?

[English]

Maybe the Foreign Minister thought that he would convert the Taliban by his skills of motivation and negotiation and that he would come back to India and say that he not only brought the passengers back but he made Taliban to understand India's viewpoint and give up fundamentalism!

The entire episode was managed, and the events were orchestrated as a result of three things—the helplessness of the Government; non-commitment on the part of the Government to the system of international security management; Government's lack of vision and understanding, and their inability to learn from the past. Time and again they accuse the Congress Party for its fifty years' rule. I would like to say that if one can find some cream in the entire Government, it is the product of our fifty years' rule. When they criticise the Congress Party for its fifty years' rule, they should be ready to learn the good things from our rule, as to how Mrs. Gandhi handled a similar situation in the past and as to how others handled such situations. They should have learned as to how such hijacking in the past had aroused the world opinion in favour of India. The Government has failed and failed miserably in that. I only wish that it would not be repeated. Indian airlines flights to Kathamandu will be resumed soon.

I hope that wisdom will prevail upon you late than never to understand these things in a better perspective in future. Please do not treat this country and do not handle the country's affairs in such a fashion where people will feel insecure for your mismanagement and for your lack of vision.

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajanj, Bihar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, today a debate is going on in the House on an extremely sensitive issue. More than four months have passed since the incident of plane hijacking took place. The whole country was concerned for this incident. This incident occurred when people were waiting for the year 1999 to pass by and were enthusiastic for welcoming the new year, new millennium to live with a new style of life. The whole country was distressed over this unfortunate incident that took place on 24th December and not only the Government, but even people in the

villages of this country were concerned about this problem. The I.C.-814 aircraft which was hijacked and as per the document received, it was observed that the hijackers were trying hard to land the aircraft at Lahore. But the question arises as to why did they want to land the aircraft at Lahore airport? What was the secret behind this? It is clear from this fact that they had nexus with Lahore and that is why they were feeling secured in Lahore. I have no objection in congratulating the Government regarding its effort of getting 165 passengers released safely from the clutches of hijackers, but alongwith this, the process of release of passengers has some flaws too. When the aircraft stayed at Amritsar for around 45 minutes, then why did we let the situation go without any solution merely watching it as spectators helplessly? Why didn't we take a solid and a stringent action which could lead to the release of Passengers there itself. I agree that on humanitarian grounds we got 165 passengers released and were also compelled to released three dreaded terrorists and their allies, who must have made numerous women unfortunate widows. No doubt, we achieved success from the angle of humanity. We got the passengers released, but despite of this I am not ready to accept that this act of the Government is a cent percent success. At the time when daughter of the Home Minister was abducted and terrorists were released thereby, people of the whole country had criticised this act that the Home Minister had made an agreement with the abductors in order to get his daughter released, but that situation was not there with the present government. The Government released these 165 passengers, which include foreigners, women and children only out of a humanitarian attitude. They all had undergone a painstaking experience, mental agony etc. which is even difficult to explain.

At the time of the occurrence of this incident, many questions were raised by hon. Members through the newspapers, wherein the question of the visit of Kandhar by the Minister of External Affairs had also been raised. Releasing of three terrorists was published in the newspapers. According to the Government report, this incident took place due to the nexus amongst Taliban, harqat-al-mujahideen and ISI agency. When hijackers stabbed Late Shri Katyal the aircraft stopped for 2 hours and 25 minutes at Lahore. If Pakistan had shown a little humanitarian attitude, then Shri Katyal would have been saved. But the role of Pakistan led to suspicion, which is not new for this country. Discussion on I.S.I. has always been made vigorously in our country, in the House itself and even outside the House. It has also been said that some of the denizens of our country have become agents of ISI and cause terrorist activities after procuring arms and ammunition with the money provided by ISI. It is an issue relating to the internal security as well as the

[Shri Prabhakar Singh]

security of borders of this country. The Government should seriously ponder over this matter. I would rather say that the intelligence department of Government must also have failed in its efforts to give prior information about hijacking of aircraft, otherwise such an incident could have been averted. It is a very grave incident, but we feel that the aspersions made by the opposition are not true at all. As Shri Vials Muttemwar recently said that the government got this information after two hours, is not true. I want to say that the Government received the information of plane hijacking in Delhi merely after three minutes if its occurrence. Information being received in Delhi means that the Government had got this information and was making efforts since then. After this incident, we are able to understand with the discussion going on that we have achieved success in our foreign policy. It is the result of this policy that the President of America had given a statement with regard to Pakistan after 72 hours. After this incident, many countries in the world, especially America, were compelled to declare Pakistan as a terrorist State. We are receiving statements from America also in this regard, which are being published in the newspapers, but we should not become complacent and delighted with the success that we have achieved, rather we should be cautious that such incidents may not occur in future.

Sir, I would like to say one more thing. Reference to ISI has been made in the government report and nobody can deny that ISI is involved in this incident. Today a news has appeared in Sahara newspaper in the headlines as well as in small print. A challenge has been given in the news which has appeared in small print. It says-'I am an ISI agent, if you have courage then arrest me. The Government should take serious note of the fact that a religious or political leader is giving such a statement and it may get published in the newspapers what we are the agents of ISI, if you have courage then arrest us.

I mean to say that the Government should immediately, arrest the leaders, who make such statements, as ISI corruptions castles are booming up in the country through such leaders, moreover Delhi is also becoming the centre of ISI. We should not say so, but we are compelled under the circumstances to make such statements. Recently Imam Bukhari of Jama Masjid has made a statement, we would like to know as to who gave him the right to make such statement. People, despite living in this country and calling themselves Indian, make such statements. We would like to say to the Government through you that a person like Imam Bukhari should be arrested and imprisoned so that no one else in future, could dare to make such a statement.

Sir, presently the condition of Nepal is very bad. Nepal is a friendly nation of India, but the way publicity

of good virtues of Pakistan and propaganda regarding defamation of India is being done through television, the mentality and thinking of people there is changing and people are developing a negative attitude towards India. We, therefore, wish that our Government should talk to the Nepal Government so that such a propaganda through the T.V. against India and publicity in favour of Pakistan could be checked.

Discussion has taken place many a times about the fact that ISI activities are increasing through Nepal, which involves some area of Chhapra, Sivan and Gopalganj in Northern Bihar and some areas of Uttar Pradesh viz. Devaria and Gorakhpur. You may make a review of these areas. Temples worth rupees 50 lakhs and 1 crore are getting constructed at these places. I would like to tell you that actually ISI corruption castles are getting constructed over there and so they can, at any time, prove to be dangerous for the country.

Today especially the area of northern Bihar and some parts of Uttar Pradesh, Gorakhpur and Deoria are facing threat from ISI. Hence the Union Government should step up its vigilance in these parts of the country and deploy intelligence agencies for conducting investigation in all these areas.

Terrorism is being spread in the name of religion and as a result of it incidents of plane hijacking are taking place. No one should be permitted to indulge in such acts in this country. With these words I conclude.

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH (Maharajganj, U.P.): Mr. Chairman, Sir, on 24th December 1999, an Indian aeroplane was hijacked from Kathmandu which is capital of the only Hindu nation of the world Nepal. As per the office reports, the Government got this information just minutes after the incident of Hijacking. As per the report, the plane was hijacked at 4.53 p.m. and the Government received this information at 4.56 p.m. According to news items published in various newspapers the plane was flying over Lucknow the capital of Uttar Pradesh at that time and hijackers wanted to take it to Lahore.

Sir, I would like to say very clearly that the role played by our brave army in 1971 led to division of Pakistan and Bangladesh emerged as a new nation on the world map. Since then Pakistan has engaged in guerrilla warfare in order to destabilise our economy. I have no hesitation in saying that Pakistan was very much involved in this incident of hijacking and that is why hijackers wanted to take this plane to Lahore. I would like to say to the Minister of External Affairs that Pakistan has been successful in its game plan to a large extent especially at international level and your strategy has been

proved to be a failure. Pakistan selected Kathmandu for this hijacking which is capital of Nepal, the only Hindu nation of the world and did not allow that plane to land in Lahore. Under compulsion the aeroplane landed at Amritsar airport and remained there for 49 minutes. Earlier also hijacked planes have landed at Amritsar airport five times. Five incidents of hijacking have taken place earlier and this time the aeroplane remained there for 49 minutes, still no fruitful efforts could be made by our security agencies to free the aeroplane. It is clearly a failure on the part of the Government. Workers of BJP and RSS often make a mention of ISI activities. It has also been stated that ISI is spreading its activities in Nepal. Have our intelligence agencies failed to check it? It will be a serious threat to internal as well as to the external security of the country if the Government admits failure of intelligence agencies.

It is an important issue as the country was put in an awkward position in Kargil as well. Our intelligence agencies could not provide required information at that time also. It was a failure on their part. All of us and the government should consider it seriously and find out reasons therefore. We had to hang our heads in shame due to Kandhar incident.

Sir, earlier also prisoners have been released in lieu of hostages, Hon'ble Prabhunath Singhji, I would like to tell you and this House that Janata Dal Government was in power at that time when daughter of Union Minister of Home Affairs was abducted. BJP was supporting that Government. Patriotic sentiments of your party would have been known to everyone if support had been withdrawn at that time. However, your party did not withdraw support on this issue and toppled the Janata Dal Government on Ram Mandir issue. Now again the country has had to face such a situation during the regime of NDA Government. Everyone is aware of the disgrace brought to our country in Kandhar episode. We should be prepared to sacrifice even millions of lives for maintaining dignity of the country but we should not bow our heads before the terrorists. A clear cut policy should be formulated in this regard.

Pakistan is patronising terrorists and terrorism is striking its roots deep in our country. The whole country and the House should take clear cut decision for tackling the problem of terrorism.

Several persons have lost their lives due to Azhar Masood, who was released. The Government may be aware of it. It is not that only the 164-165 passengers who were kept hostage for eight days under went this trauma but all the people of this country were terror stricken during this period. On 1st January the aeroplane returned carrying the free passengers but one cannot

imagine the extent of disappointment felt by the youth at having freed the terrorists.

With the due respect I would like to say to hon'ble Minister of External Affairs that we have no doubts about his good intentions but he should show his determination and admit his failure. Pakistan will continue with its evil plans and terrorist activities. History will not forgive you if you do not perform your duty and keep on blaming ISI for such activities.

Today a terror of ISI has been created whereas earlier terror of CIA has created. Why the Government is not identifying the agents of ISI? What are our intelligence agencies doing? The persons supporting ISI agents should be identified and punished. But I have no hesitation in saying that country will be divided once again if in the name of ISI, people of a particular community are blamed and harassed.

A mention has been made regarding Maulana Imam Bukhari. I would like to say here clearly that a state Minister of Government of Uttar Pradesh was visited to Nepal thrice illegally. Shri Shriprakash Shukla, who was killed recently by STF was very close to him. You may seek the report of intelligence agency of Uttar Pradesh. It will be proved. My constituency, district Maharajganj, is located at Indo-Nepal border. Prabhunathji, I would like to take you along on a visit of Maharajganj area. I will resign from Parliament if you find a single Madrasa or Mosque having been constructed at a cost of more than Rs. 10 or 15 lakh. This allegation is being levelled under a well planned conspiracy. How these madrasas and mosques have been constructed? Not only madrasa and mosques but temples have also been constructed on the same pattern there....(Interruptions) I am talking of my constituency.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: It is a co-incidence that hon'ble Members has also been elected from Maharajganj which is in Uttar Pradesh. My constituency is also Maharajganj, which is in Bihar and is adjacent to Nepal. I would like to tell here that temples and mosque have been constructed at a cost of more than Rs. 50 lakh in border area of Nepal from Bettiah to Raxol and Motihari. There is no doubt about it. If an enquiry is conducted, you will find that ISI activities are going on there. There is no need to prove it as such statements are appearing in newspapers.

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH: I have clarified the position regarding my constituency Maharajganj. Hon'ble Minister of Uttar Pradesh levelled charges of being ISI agents against the seven persons belonging to Hindu community and seven persons belonging to Muslim community. Several agencies investigated this case and



[Kunwar Akhilesh Singh]

later on it was proved that these allegations were levelled due to political malice. Everyone has a right to level charge against anybody but if these charges are proved false and if a person is humiliated and harassed wrongly then action should be taken against the persons found guilty of levelling those charges wrongly. Such a provision should be made.

If we do not make such a provision, then it is sure that the people against whom allegation are levelled will feel inferior and insulted and will undergo mental torture. Try to understand the sentiments of Maulana Imam Bukhari whose statement you are referring to. In this connection he did not say that in fact he was an ISI agent. What he meant was that if any particular community is blamed then he is also an ISI agent. I would like to tell the Foreign Minister with great respect that it is a very sensitive issue. The Government will have to exercise great caution while making any statement. The Government should consider this sensitive issue honestly. The sentiments of minority should be understood and the feelings of fear and insecurity should be removed. If the Government manages to remove fear and insecurity from their mind, then the issues coming up now, will not arise.

With these words, I also want to say that because of aircraft hijacking the country had to face humiliating situation. This incident has lowered our prestige before the whole world. The pride earned by the nation in 1971 has been definitely tarnished by the Kargil war and aircrafts hijacking incident. We will have to find out the ways to restore that prestigious position.

[English]

SHRI VAIKO (Sivakasi): Mr. Chairman, Sir, on 24th December, 1999 when the whole world was in a mood of jubilation to celebrate Christmas, by the stroke of the mid-night, the sad and disturbing news of the hijacking of Indian Airlines plane shocked the entire country. Sir, not only the Christians but also the people all over the world who have got reverence and respect for the Jesus of Bethlehem were in a mood of celebration. In India, millions and millions of people were about to celebrate the birthday of the hon. Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. On 25th morning, the Prime Minister cancelled all the programmes of celebration of his birth anniversary.

When I was listening to my friend, Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi, I felt sad as some discourteous utterances were there. I never expected such references to our hon. Prime Minister by Shri Dasmunsi. For seven days, what an amount of mental agony our hon. Prime Minister was subjected to. It is not a partisan matter or a matter of politics.

When the whole world celebrated the entry into the new millennium, we heaved a sigh of relief the previous night of 31st December, 1999. So, when the world was celebrating the new millennium, we also joined because of the release of the hijacked passengers. I would like to applaud and congratulate the Minister of External Affairs for the steps taken in respect of crisis management. A commendable care was taken by the hon. Minister.

Shri Dasmunsi was telling that two precious hours were lost between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. But Sir, the first news said that they were heading towards Lahore. When they were denied permission for Lahore, then only they landed in Amritsar. But what was the situation? Some people suggested that some commando operation could have been conducted in Amritsar itself and that National Security Guards could have been rushed there. But there were minute-to-minute panic reactions from the pilot. He was informing that already four persons had been killed and other passengers had been brought to the front row of the 'J' class and that their hands were tied. He also informed that their lives are in danger. Under these circumstances, the prime concern was to protect the lives of the passengers. Any adventurous action could have resulted in terrible loss of lives.

Sir, so far only four commando operations have taken place in foreign territory. The first one was in 1976 in Entebbe by Israel; and second was in late 1970s in Mogadishu by West Germany. Both these operations were successful with a minimum acceptable human cost. But the other two, one was in the year 1985 by Egypt was successful but at a tremendous human loss of 59 passengers. The other one was in the year 1978 at Cyprus which was a disaster because the commandos were mowed down by the local security force.

Therefore, at Amritsar what best could be done, was done by the Government. In Lahore, by the time our High Commissioner got the permission with great difficulty—thanks to the efforts of the Ministry of External Affairs—and the helicopter was arranged, the aeroplane left.

Where did they land? They landed in a territory which is not friendly with India. The Taliban administration is not friendly with India. Under these compelling circumstances and challenging scenario, we have done our best.

Our friend was telling that we have surrendered to terrorists and extremists. But we should not forget the other instances. Shri Dasmunshi was referring to the efforts made by the then Prime Minister Madam Indira Gandhi for whom I have got the greatest respect. But that time was different. In 1981 in one incident even

after our persuasion the plane was blown to pieces with the grenades supplied to the hijackers by the ISI in Pakistan itself. We have provided concessions on the demand of the hijackers. That has been done in many other instances also. Israel has done it, Pakistan has done it and also USA has done it because the protection and security of the lives of passengers are of paramount concern. We should not forget that.

Out hon. Foreign Minister has been criticised saying that he should have sent his Secretary there. If something had happened to the lives of passengers, then a big hue and cry would have been raised that the Government did not care to protect the lives of passengers.

There are many components in this crisis management and hijack management drill. They are; relatives management, media management, hijacker management and finally comes the commando operation. Here, the psychological advantage was in their favour. Of course, they have not claimed any victory. Only the politicians here are saying that they have got victory.

In this particular case, when these people were in the aircraft and when we were holding parleys and negotiations with the authorities, our Foreign Minister did not want to take any risk or any chance because if something had gone wrong at the last moment, decisions would have to be taken on the spot. For the purpose only our hon. Foreign Minister went there. That gave solace to the passengers also.

The media management is very important. We were shocked to see the TV exposure. Some of the relatives, who may not be the real relatives but who came telling that they were relatives of the hijacked passengers, formed a big crowd. Some people were shouting against the Prime Minister. They were uttering all irresponsible and reckless statements. That was highlighted like anything by the media. As a citizen of this country, I felt very sad. At the same time, the widows of the Kargil heroes made a statement that at this hour we should stand by the Government.

The son of one elderly Mudaliyar from Vellore was also in the hijacked plane. I am proud to say that the elderly gentleman came to Delhi and made a statement that even if his son's life were to be taken away, the honour of the country was of paramount importance. But in the Press and visual media what reactions were being exposed? Some in the name of the relatives of the hijacked passengers were shouting against the Government and the Prime Minister. Such people were instigated by the political quarters because the same irresponsible statements were being made by the political quarters here also.

Sir, in this case, when they were claiming the dead body of one Muslim, it was not acceptable as per the tenets of Islam. I find it even in the statement. There are five duties in Islam. One of the basic duties is observing *Ramzan* fast. In *Ramzan* fast, there is an exception for the passengers and it is very pertinent also. Chapter-II, *Al-Behera of Al-Quran* says:

"...fasting for a fixed number of days but any of you, if ill or on a journey, the prescribed number should be made up from days; later."

The exemption was given. Even Prophet Mohammed is giving the same statement at one point of time. While observing *Ramzan* fast, the passengers should be given exemption. So, what they did in the name of Islam was actually anti-Islam.

When this hijacking happened, some political parties were searching for issues to corner the Government to embarrass it. They were terribly disappointed when they came to know that all passengers safely returned to the country. Of course, my heart goes to Shri Rupin Katyal who was killed....(Interruptions)

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR (Mayiladuturai): Who was disappointed?

SHRI VAIKO: I did not name the Congress Party, Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar. Why are you feeling hurt? I said 'some political parties'...(Interruptions) I know that, at that time, some political parties, thinking that the passengers will not return safely, made reckless statements against the Government. But the Government took all precautionary steps to rescue the passengers, to bring them safely here and for the providing succour and solace, our Foreign Minister went to Kandhar. This is the achievement of the Government. This is what we have achieved. At the same time, there is lapse of security arrangements in Kathmandu. What best could be done by the Government was done. An alarm bell should be there. Such precautionary arrangements have to be made at the airport. The Government has taken this as priority item in the Government agenda. Therefore, the Government had done an excellent and marvellous job in this hijacking episode to rescue the passengers and protect the lives of the passengers. I commend the work of the Government, particularly that of the Foreign Minister.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI (Visakhapatnam): The incident that took place on the 24th December, 1999 is a very sad incident in the history of Indian air service. We should not forget one thing. The hijacking did not occur in the Indian Territory. It was beyond our control

[Shri M.V.V.S. Murthi]

as it occurred in Kathmandu. In Kathmandu, we have limited facilities of security. How could the Government anticipate that plane was likely to be hijacked? The moment hijacking took place, the Government....(Interruptions) But it was beyond our control. We are not operating our security forces in Kathmandu. How could we say that Kathmandu could have come to our rescue? That is why, we should take necessary steps in future when we fly our aircraft to other places. We should have necessary security arrangements there. I appeal to the Government in this regard....(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH (Aurangabad, Bihar): Is it not that the Indian Airlines office is operating in Kathmandu? It was also the failure of the Indian Airlines office in Kathmandu. How can you absolve yourself from that?...(Interruptions)

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: It is a foreign land. How could it be done? How can the Government of India have control over a foreign land?... (Interruptions) How can any Government have the control over a foreign land?... (Interruptions)

SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH: I say this because the Indian Airlines is operating in Kathmandu. So, its responsibility is there. But you say a wrong thing....(Interruptions)

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: Madam, When your turn comes, you can speak about it. Let me continue speech. All *bona fide* flights, either it is our Indian Airlines or Air India or any other flight, fly from any country. But there is a security lapse in Kathmandu. That is why, this hijacking incident took place. Basically, we should not forget about that.

The second thing is that there should not be any politics in saving the lives of the passengers. The Government of India, as a matter of fact, played a very exemplary role in this situation. A lot of restraint had been exercised. It is also not correct to say that the other countries had not come to the rescue of our country. They had all appreciated the role played by the Government of India. My friends can say why we should not have sent a Secretary or somebody or an inspector to bring the passengers back. It is not correct. They should not say like that. With all sincerity and genuineness, our Foreign Minister had gone there to rescue the passengers. Some hon. Member was telling that we should not have sacrificed our honour; we can sacrifice even 10,000 people. It is very wrong to say that. You cannot put the lives of others in danger. We should not say like that.

Next, in the hijacked plane, not only were Indians there but also the nationals of other countries were there. How would they look at it if you say that you can sacrifice the lives of the passengers and we should not bother about it? With all sincerity, an effort had been made and the net result was that we could save the lives of all the passengers except one Shri Katiyal for whom we all mourned. Today, it may be the IC-814. Tomorrow, it may be some other plane. But the fact is that this plane had not originated from India. It had originated from Kathmandu. How you can say that the Government of India had not given ample security cover? The Government of India had taken all the steps.

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR: What about the security lapse and the ISI activity? That is the point.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: Of course, there is the ISI activity which might have resulted in the hijacking, which is not being disputed by anybody. Nobody has disputed that....(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH: Sir, I would take just a minute. Pardon my intervention. I just want to make two things clear. We are not discussing the lapse that the Foreign Minister committed or his magnanimity in going to Kandhar with those people to fetch the passengers back.

I am talking about two issues. First, the Indian Airlines operated in Kathmandu. There was a security failure. We were told about the security lapse five days in advance. Sir, please make a point of it. The important point is that five days in advance, we were told that such a security lapse might likely take place in Kathmandu. I would like the hon. Minister of State for Home, who is sitting here, to take note of these things.

The second part of it is that the Intelligence Bureau and the RAW, which are meant for giving information to you, both were not working. It should be put into order. The Government will have to concede the Intelligence failure part of it. That is the main thing.

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: When there is an opportunity, you can take time and speak about these things instead of interrupting me from time to time during the course of my speech. If you feel something wrong, then only you interfere.

There is another thing. We cannot compare one hijacking incident with another. We cannot have the same strategy every time. The earlier leaders had played an able role. I am not disputing that fact. This time also, our leaders have played an able role. There are no two



opinions about it. The House should join us when we tell that our Government, our Foreign Minister and our Civil Aviation Minister have done their best in resolving this crisis.

SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH: What punishment have the people concerned got?

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI: They are feeling that they want to corner the Government somehow or the other. There are several occasions and incidents to corner the Government but not on this issue.

This issue is related to the security of the people, security of the planes, honour of the country and above all security of the whole nation. We should take it in that way. Earlier, there were occasions where dreaded terrorists were exchanged, not only by this Government but also by various Governments, including the Congress Government. That is the reason why the Government has also taken steps. We should not forget that. Now, the security of all the airports has been entrusted to the CISF. Special care is being taken in this regard. I would request the Government to see that such instances are not repeated in future. We should take steps to ensure that in future Indian planes, either of Air India or of Indian Airlines, are not hijacked.

With these words, while agreeing with the role played by our hon. Foreign Minister, the hon. Civil Aviation Minister and our Government, I fully support the action taken by the Government in this regard.

[Translation]

SHRI RASHID ALVI (Amroha): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to speak on this issue on behalf of Bahujan Samaj Party. History is very cruel. It never forgives anyone and the coming generation will decide from the history as to what their forefathers did. If one want to form an opinion about a person, one should observe his background and character. If performance of any Government is to be judged, its achievement will have to be taken into account. This Government has not been in power for a long time. But even during this brief period, Kargil incident has happened which will be remembered as a major event in the history. Our country's intelligence agencies totally failed in this case.

It is a matter of happiness that we won the Kargil war. But the Government and its intelligence are directly responsible for the loss of so many lives during this war. Similar incident occurred on 24th when an Indian Airlines aircraft IC-814 was hijacked. It is a matter of regret that it was not the first case of hijacking in country. One always learns from the earlier mistake. After the first

mistake, one becomes more vigilant and decides to do away with his shortcomings. Pakistan's ISI has always been active in this country. If anything happens, the Government straight away says that ISI and Pakistan are responsible for it. The Government can't absolve itself from responsibility by saying so. The question is that ISI is active in this country but how active is our intelligence and on which fronts it has been failing. Today the question is not of party politics. I have not risen to corner the Government. But I regret to say that the Government and the intelligence is fully responsible for the plane hijacking. Terrorists activities are increasing day by day in this country. Terrorists from across Pakistan easily infiltrate into our country and go back as easily. They break three tier security, accomplish their task and go back. Masood Azhar, who was released in lieu of the hijacked passengers was active in Srinagar for three months. He was lodged in Tihar Jail for two years and later shifted to Jammu Jail. One of the senior officer, whose name I will not disclose, told me that he had announced that he will stay in the jail only till he desires. There is no jail in India which can keep him for long. Did the Government not know that a dreaded terrorist was in the jail who was talking in such a manner from the jail and he dug a tunnel to escape from the prison? Did the Government not know that he was digging a tunnel in jail and what a dreaded terrorist he was? But our intelligence agencies as well as our Government were inactive. It is because of this that on 24th our plane took off, at 4.53 p.m. and as per the statement of the Minister at 4.56 p.m. ATC recorded that our plane had been hijacked. But the Government had no idea as to what to do. How the passengers were to be saved? From 4.56 to 7.00 p.m. the plane went to Lahore and came back after hovering over it for sometimes and landed at Amritsar. The Government has no answer regarding the action they took during these 2.04 hours.

17.26 hrs.

(DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH in the Chair)

The first mistake was that we didn't take any concrete step in Amritsar. We did not anticipate that the plane could land at Amritsar.

It has happened earlier also in 1971 when the plane came to Amritsar and our commandos overpowered the hijackers. Why was it not possible again? Negotiations were going on through officers at Amritsar, and I have a record of that. ATC has recorded that every minute they were demanding a tanker for refuelling. After every second minute, we told them that tanker was on its way. But tanker was not to be seen anywhere. Had we parked our tanker in front of the plane, it would not have been

[Shri Rashid Alvi]

possible for the plane to take off. Experts in this field say that by moving the tanker on one side, we could have made the hijackers believe that we were ready for refuelling and by parking the tanker in front of the plane we could have stopped the plane from taking off. But as per the record available with me from 7.11 p.m. to 7.49 p.m. they kept on asking for tanker. But we didn't send any tanker. The Government says that it was told that one person had been killed, four people had died. With great regret, I have to say that we do not even have so much wisdom to judge what the terrorists were talking to us and what they are conveying through the pilot. We cannot guess in what volume they are speaking the truth or telling a lie.

I feel that it would have been a diplomatic win, had we been able to withhold the plane at Lahore itself. We could have exposed Pakistan in front of the whole world, if we could have done that. This could have been conveyed to Government of Pakistan and efforts to withhold the aircraft there could have been made. The aircraft reached Kandhar and about the Government of Kandhar, which we do not recognise, Shri Advani Sahab gave a statement on 3rd.

[English]

The Home Minister had words of praise for the Afghan Government, because it gave a warning to the hijackers that it would storm the plane if there was bloodshed. This had compelled the hijackers to drop their idea.

[Translation]

I have read the statement of the Minister and on page 8 of the statement, the Minister has said:

[English]

"The hon. Members would permit me to add that the hijacking of IC 814 was an exceptionally professional and complex operation. Kandhar is, possibly, the most adverse location for us from where to address the situation....and the triangular coordination of the incident by the hijackers between Taliban, HUM and ISI operatives, the most demanding chunk...."

[Translation]

The Minister says that all three are involved in it. ISI, Kandhar as well as Taliban are involved in it. But the Home Minister of India is saying that what the Taliban Government did was commendable. Many Members said

that the Minister of External Affairs took all the terrorists alongwith him in his plane. Statement of the Minister which I saw myself I feel that the Minister himself felt ashamed in this matter. This I say so because the Minister himself said on page 7 in his statement.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI RASHID ALVI: It is very important subject. I am concluding my point in a minute. The Minister said:

[English]

"My travel on the same aircraft as the three terrorists was entirely on account of logical compulsions brought about by the limited infrastructural facilities at Kandhar airport."

[Translation]

It means the Minister feels that mistake has been committed. Therefore clarification is being given statement by the Minister that we took three terrorists because we were helpless, itself proves that the Minister feels that mistake has been committed or he is ashamed of it.

MR. SPEAKER: Please conclude.

SHRI RASHID ALVI: I will conclude in two minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can continue your point when this comes on second day. Now half-an-hour discussion has to be taken up.

[English]

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Can we continue after six p.m. to continue discussion on this because we never get an opportunity?...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The debate is incomplete today, and this will be completed on second day. Now we are starting Half-an-Hour discussion.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Half-an-Hour discussion which is going to start at 5.30 O'clock and will conclude at 6 O'clock. We can continue this debate after that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If sense of the House is so, then let it be.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): The Hon'ble Minister has to go somewhere at 6 O'clock therefore it is not possible today.

[*English*]

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA: Can we continue after six o'clock?...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI VAIKO: That will take place only 17th. That has been decided by the Business Advisory Committee.

[*Translation*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister has to go somewhere after 6 o'clock.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: We have decided that tomorrow on 11th we will discuss Bharatpur incident under rule 193. Only three days of this session are left and in the next week discussion has to take place on Kargil as well as on disinvestment. Therefore, you are requested to continue this debate after 6 o'clock and after that the hon'ble Minister can reply.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now Half-an-Hour discussion will be taken up.

SHRI RASHID ALVI: Let it be decided whether it will be taken up tomorrow.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We will think over it.

SHRI RASHID ALVI: We can fix this for tomorrow.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We will look into it. Rule is that there is a rule to provide for incomplete work in List of Business. Now there is no need of argument. Let us take up Half-an-Hour discussion. I am calling Shri Suresh Kurup.

17.33 hrs.

## HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

### MPLADS

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, we shall take up Half-an-Hour Discussion. Shri Suresh Kurup will speak.

SHRI SURESH KURUP (Kottayam): Respected Chairman, Sir, the Starred Question No. 364 on 19th April, 2000 was regarding MPLAD Scheme. The original question is mainly related to the interest portion of the amount that has accumulated. During the course of the Question Hour, various Members raised important points regarding the implementation of the Scheme. Hence, this Half-an-Hour Discussion was allowed by the hon. Speaker.

This Local Area Development Scheme was introduced in 1983. In 1997, a clear-cut guidelines were issued regarding this Scheme. Those guidelines were revised in September, 1999. As per the guidelines, the local Members of Parliament should recommend schemes and the implementing authorities are the district authorities.

So, lot of bureaucratic delay occurs while the scheme is being implemented. The hon. Minister says that an amount of Rs. 1,800 crore is lying unutilised. I would like to know from the hon. Minister is it he fault of the Members of Parliament who are not recommending the schemes or is it due to the fault of the implementing authorities. That has to be verified and the hon. Minister has to give a specific answer to this question.

To my experience, it is only due to the bureaucratic delay, while it is being implemented, that this amount is lying unutilised. The tenor of the hon. Minister's answer gives an impression that this scheme is not necessary and that this is an unnecessary scheme. He says that lot of criticism is there regarding the scheme. He says that the Standing Committee on Finance has also made strong recommendations regarding the implementation of the scheme.

Actually the Standing Committee's report says:

"The Secretary, Ministry of Programme and Plan Implementation was candid enough to admit that there have been frequent delays in the timely release of the funds due to lack of coordination between the Ministry and the district authorities. Under the scheme, the district heads are required to communicate information on the progress of works under the scheme.... once in two months and a Commissioner level officer is supposed to conduct an annual meeting involving the heads of district and MPs to assess the progress of works under the scheme."

All these guidelines have, however, hardly been implemented. That is what the report of the Standing Committee on Finance says. So, the actual problem is that these guidelines are not being implemented properly. Unusual delay occurs while the programme is being implemented. The scheme which I recommended in early