

12-40 hrs.

# COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

## Twenty-fourth Report

**SHRI G. LAKSHMANAN** (Madras North): I beg to present the Twenty-fourth Report of the Committee on Private Members' bills and Resolutions.

12-41 hrs.

## CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

**Reported incidents of robbery, kidnapping and rape by dacoits in Bombay-Howrah Janta Express**

**SHRI HARIKESH BAHADUR** (Gorakhpur): Sir, you are not allowing a discussion on the killing of harijans.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Come to the Calling Attention.

**SHRI HARIKESH BAHADUR:** I am coming to this. But there are some important subjects which should have been allowed. I would also like to correct the statement of the State Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, when he said that it is on record that the Speaker would decide several matters of importance.

**MR. SPEAKER:** You read the Calling Attention Notice.

**SHRI HARIKESH BAHADUR:**

I am reading it. Several matters were mentioned then of importance and this right was given to the Speaker to select from them.

I call the attention of the Minister of Railways to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:

"The reported recent incidents of robbery, kidnapping and rape by dacoits in Bombay-Howrah Janta Express train between Manikpur and Satna Railway Stations of the Central Railways".

(Interruptions)

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN)** Sir, at about 23-00 hrs. on 1-5-81, 22 to 25 armed criminals looted passengers travelling in a second-class Coach No. 8907 of 41-Down Bombay-Howrah Janata Express between Tikaria and Markundi stations (near Manikpur) in Allahabad-Jubbelpur Section of the Central Railway. 33 passengers were looted of their belongings, cash, ornaments etc., worth about Rs. 25,000/-. 7 passengers received minor injuries. Shri Gopal Singh, a Havildar of Army Supply Corps who was also travelling in the affected compartment reported the matter to Government Railway Police, Manikpur, where a case of crime No. 34/81 under Section 395/397 IPC was registered. As a result of the efforts made by the Police, 9 brief cases, 1 suitcase, 2 steel boxes and 1 leather suitcase could be recovered. 8 culprits have so far been arrested.

The reports about rape of a girl and kidnapping of 2 women do not appear to be correct, as no such complaint has been lodged with the Government Railway Police, Manikpur.

Superintendent, Government Railway Police, Allahabad, visited Manikpur and supervised investigations. Vigorous investigations by the Government Railway Police are in progress.

According to Police authorities, no case of robbery in Bombay-Howrah Janata Express occurred at Jaitwar station a few days ago.

**SHRI HARIKESH BAHADUR:** It is most unfortunate that this Govt. has completely failed in providing security to the citizens of this country. All the times there are reports of dacoities, murders, rape, kidnapping and so on; all sorts of crimes are going on in this country. When passengers are travelling in trains, their lives are not safe at all. Sometimes there are accidents, sometimes there is robbery, sometimes there is dacoity or kidnapping; every kind of crime is going on in the railway train. It is very unfortunate. I would not like to demand just the resignation of the Hon. Railway Minister. I would suggest that it is the moral responsibility of this government, the entire government, to tender its resignation. This Government should say we are not in a position, we are not competent enough, to control the present situation; therefore, we hereby tender our resignation and there should be fresh elections in this country, because this has become the order of the day..... They are laughing, but it is a very serious matter which I am mention-

ing. There is complete failure of the Government. The Government is totally incompetent, incapable to control the present situation.

The Hon. Minister has mentioned in his statement that there has been no kidnapping. I do not know whether this statement is correct or not. Since he has mentioned it, I am accepting it for the time being. But I would also try to find out whether this statement is correct. If it is incorrect, I will bring a privilege motion. Because, all the newspapers have reported that there was robbery, kidnapping of girls rape etc. But everything has been denied in this statement. They deny everything, but actually the reality cannot be suppressed. Previously only robberies were taking place, only dacoities were taking place and sometimes murders were taking place. Now, this kind of information is also coming that kidnapping is taking place and raping is taking place. Even in Boeing 747 one lady was gangraped. Such types of things are happening throughout the country not only in trains, but also in aeroplanes. That is why I am demanding resignation of the existing Government.

Sir, what are the duties of GRP and CRPF? In fact, the GRP is being controlled by the State Government. The GRP people are completely irresponsible, they are not discharging their duties properly. I have also been victim of the misdeeds of GRP people which I had already reported to the Railway Ministry. Some action was being taken. I do not know what action was being taken, but they are so irresponsible that they feel that the Railway Ministry cannot

do anything against them. They are being controlled by the State Governments and therefore they do whatever they like. In fact they are involved in money collection. Also, sometimes they just occupy the entire First Class compartment, they do not go to do their duty. They occupy the First Class compartment, from there they create mischief, they create trouble, they collect money and they do not allow passengers to enter into the Second Class bogie without charging money. All such types of things are going on.

So far as the RPF are concerned, they are in great trouble because they had neither been given the status of CISF (Central Industrial Security Force) nor are they being given the facilities of railway employees. The Government must try to give them either the facilities of CISF (Central Industrial Security Force) or the facilities which are being given to the railway employees. None of these two is being given to them. That is why they are also very much frustrated.

It is also very unfortunate that goods and railway properties etc. are being stolen away from railway yards and trains and in this, some police people are also involved. Robbers and thieves take them away and Government pays compensation. As has been mentioned by the Hon. Minister in his reply to a question, crores of rupees are being given as compensation so far as these materials which are being stolen away from railway trains and railway yards are concerned.

Sir, it is the reply of the Minister that 15 persons died in 351 rail daco-

ties in 1980 and it has been published in the newspapers. The whole country knows it. In fact, it is the report regarding 15 persons only but I know that there have been more killings in the trains.

I would like to know from the Hon. Minister how many persons were killed only during this particular period from January, 1981 to 30th April, 1981, in these robberies and dacoities and how many persons were injured. I would like to get the specific information regarding this.

The entire system of railways has got completely disrupted. Only a few days earlier, a news item appeared in the press that a wagon loaded with bombs was caught by the police near Danapur in Bihar. A wagon full of bombs was being carried by the train and it has been already caught by the railway police or the civil police. It was caught, and this news appeared in the press. We have given a Calling Attention Notice on this, but here itself I would like to mention it. If this is the situation that trains are carrying bombs about which the Government does not have any information or the Government does not have any knowledge, it means such kind of mischief is being played and perhaps it was being transported to the Biharsharif area. By the way, it is God's grace that in the mean time it was detected.

Now, Sir, what is the condition? The RPF people are unable to provide security to the passengers, but they are involved in several kinds of misdeeds. One of them is reported here in the press—"Woman manhandled by RPF men in Baroda House", which is the

[Sh. Harikesh Bahadur]

headquarter of Northern Railway. This is the situation about what they are doing today and the Railway Board administration is completely paralysed.

I have raised the issue that extension should not be given to the officers who are retiring. I do not know what has happened to this Government. Previously they decided that extension will not be given and in respect of officers who had been given extension, their extension was terminated. But now again this Railway Board Chairman who is completely anti-labour and took several wrong decisions, he is creating several mischiefs, he has been given extension for two years. You cannot defend it. On the one hand you say that it is bad to give extension, but on the other hand this Chairman has been given extension. When Hon. Shri Kamalapati Tripathi was the Railway Minister, this matter was raised. Even the Prime Minister had taken it very seriously. But now what has happened? The Chairman has been given extension.

News has appeared in the press that a Loco Driver has been forced to proceed on sick leave. This driver is quite all right. Doctors have examined him. They say he is all right. He can function properly. But the Railway Board people and the officers say, no, he is not all right. He cannot function as a driver, and, therefore, his name has been put on the sick list. This kind of anti-labour attitude is being adopted by the Railway Board people and the Railway Officers because that particular driver belongs to a trade union. He was active trade union worker. Therefore, this

kind of action is being taken against him.

श्री कमलपति त्रिपाठी (बाएँ) :  
कालिय एडेक्सन नोटिस में कोई चीज खोजने  
वा नहीं ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN  
THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS  
(SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF):  
He is making a general speech. He  
is not at all serious about the inci-  
dents.....(Interruptions).

SHRI HARIKESH BAHADUR :  
I am relevant. I am raising all these  
things because there is utter frustra-  
tion in the railways. Staff is not  
working properly. RPF people are  
not working properly. It is because  
they are dissatisfied. They are not  
getting proper amenities and facilities.  
Anti-trade union attitude is being  
adopted by the Railway Board. Such  
a kind of attitude is creating total  
anarchy in the Railways. That is why  
people are not safe. People are not  
being provided proper adequate faci-  
lities and security. I would like to  
ask a few specific questions from the  
Hon. Minister—

- (a) What are the specific steps proposed to be taken by the Govt. to provide security to the passengers ?
- (b) How is the Government going to activate RPF and GRP ?
- (c) Is Government going to provide all facilities to RPF men as has been done in the case of CISF or Railway employees ?
- (d) How are you going to control GRP which has become a gang of scoundrels, I must say ?



(e) Can you provide compensation to those who have been looted ?

(f) How many robberies and dacoities have taken place in the year 1981 only and how many murders have taken place during this period ?

प्रश्नकर्ता श्रीशरीफ : क्या मिनिस्टर साहब इतना ही जवाब देंगे ?

**SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF:**  
I would only say that my friend is not at all serious about the main subject of the Calling Attention. He has only made use of this opportunity to make a long speech for which not we as a Government but they themselves are responsible. There is no doubt, as my colleague has mentioned about the.....(*Interruptions*).

**SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV** (Azamgarh): Three Ministers of State are sitting. The Prime Minister is out. It does not mean that they should take the House so non-seriously. Not a single Cabinet Minister is sitting. There is such a big Council of Ministers and here only three Ministers of State are sitting. They are taking so lightly, the House . (*Interruptions*) I want to draw your attention. It is a serious matter and it should be taken up. They are taking the House so lightly.

**SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF:**  
I appreciate the sentiments of Shri Chandrajit Yadav. I can assure you we represent the Government.

**SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV:**  
I am sorry, you do not. You have

no 'place' in such a big Cabinet and Council of Ministers. The Prime Minister is away. It does not mean that you should take the House so, non-seriously. Important discussions take place and three State Ministers are sitting ! You say that you appreciate my sentiments.

**SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF:**  
We are here.

**SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV:**  
No doubt, you are here. The Cabinet Minister should have been here for the Calling Attention Motion. It is a serious thing that three State Ministers are sitting in the House so non-seriously when the Opposition is raising certain issues. The session is coming to an end. Such a thing has never happened. I have been attending the House for the last twelve years. At least one Cabinet Minister has always been in the House. The tradition of this House is very high. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru used to give maximum time. He used to attend this House. I can understand Prime Minister going for an important foreign tour.

I appreciate that but it does not mean that the entire Cabinet should be absent from the House. And this is the explanation given. If this is the explanation being given, it is most unsatisfactory. I would request you to at least call the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs. Somebody should be here.

**SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES** (Muzaffarpur): You must ensure the presence of Ministers here.

**SHRI HARIKESH BAHADUR:**  
When I started my speech, I did not notice that. If we do not demand resignation from the Government, what else can we do ?

**SHRI C.K. JAFFAR SHARIEF:**  
As has been mentioned in the statement, the culprits have been arrested and some recovery has been made. Further investigations are in progress. It is our effort to see that these things do not recur. But whatever is possible at our command we are doing. Since it is a matter relating to the State Government, we have decided to call Chief Ministers of two or three States to have a discussion to see how we can improve the situation.

**SHRI HARIKESH BAHADUR:**  
None of the questions has been replied to.

श्री मनीराम बागड़ी (हिसार) : श्रीम  
नारायण सिंह जी आ गए हैं.....

संसदीय कार्य तथा निर्माण और आवास  
मंत्री (श्री श्रीम नारायण सिंह) : हम तो  
बाबुर आप की सेवा में हैं, उसके बावजूद भी  
आप आपत्ति करते रहते हैं। (व्यवधान)...

12-47 hrs.

(MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the chair*)

**\*SHRI AJIT KUMAR SAHA**  
(Vishnupur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the incident of loot and rape that occurred in 170 Dn. Janata Express is most dastardly, shameful and humiliating. I must record my appreciation for the army officer who had apprehended at least one of the hated culprits in this

case. Today there is absolutely no security for the train passengers. Not only that their property is being looted and they are being killed while travelling but what has made it worse still today is that ladies are not being spared. Their honour is being looted and they are being molested and raped. In today's Times of India we have read with shock and agony that a girl called Pushpa was gang raped in a 707 Boeing Aircraft in Bombay. A few days ago a lady was raped by a G.R.P. Constable in Bihar. Sir, we are really at a loss to understand whether we are living in a civilized world or the rule of the jungle is prevailing.

Sir, in reply to a question in Parliament Shri Mallikarjun Deputy Minister for Railways he stated that during 1980 December and 1981 February there were 455 incidents of train dacoities and as a result of this 3 persons died, 35 were wounded and property worth Rs. 13 lakhs 31 thousand 523 rupees were lost. In reply to another question again answered by Sh. Mallikarjun in fact he answers all such questions—said that during 1980 there were 35 incidents where 15 persons died and the compensation for the loss of property amounted to Rs. one crore 25 lakhs 85 thousand and 296 rupees. Not only this but while answering Parliament questions all railway Ministers Cabinet, State or Deputy Ministers have assured the House that Government have taken effective measures and such incidents will not take place in future but far from reducing such ugly incidents have gone on increasing. Sir, in this particular place, such incidents of theft had taken place twice before but we find that Government have done precisely nothing to curb the situation that a third incident takes place which we are discussing

\*The original speech was delivered in Bengali.

today. *Jugantar* of 5th May, 1981 says that in the border between M.P. and U.P., 25 armed people had entered a train and in the process of the loot two culprits Akhilesh and Pappu were caught by the passengers and handed over to the police.

I would, therefore, like to know from the Hon. Minister what effective steps the Government have taken to put an end to such incidents in this zone. Sir, the Ministers have gone on record saying that the Railway Protection Force Act was an old legislation and a discussion for reform was due. Here too the reply was evasive. Sir, in the present case the newspapers—almost all—have stated that 50 persons were injured but the Government's reply says that only 7 persons were injured. Again all the national dailies have stated that two ladies were raped but the Minister says that no complaint of rape was reported with the Railway Police. Sir, I would therefore like to know the names of the persons who were injured and whether Government enquired from other female passengers in the train whether two ladies were raped or kidnapped. Sir, I would like to have clear answers to these specific questions.

**SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF:** I think that my friend did not go through the reply that we have given in which we have made it clear that the number of arrested culprits is not 1 but 8.

With regard to the remaining matters, efforts are in progress.

GRP is the force which escorts the train and assists the Railway Protec-

tion Force in times of need. The Railway Protection Force is mainly concerned with the protection of railway property. I have, therefore, already mentioned earlier that these are stray incidents happening now and then in certain Sections and in certain vulnerable areas.

So we have thought of having a meeting of the Chief Ministers of these States to see how best we will be able to co-ordinate and to prevent the recurrence of these incidents.

I assure the House that we are equally concerned as the Hon. Members even more concerned with these matters. There need be no misapprehension that this commitment would not be fulfilled.

In regard to the cases of rape, we cannot go by mere verbal statements. If there is a written complaint to that effect, we take it up and verify the case.

**SHRI CHARANJIT YADAV:** These incidents on Railways should not be regarded as isolated ones. It is a fact that today on many running trains robberies, dacoities and loots have been taking place. Many innocent passengers have been injured. They have been looted. People today feel insecure while travelling by the trains. This is the situation all over the country and it has been happening for quite some time. It is not just a recent occurrence. I can cite two or three incidents which occurred only during last September.

In one train from Howrah, several passengers were robbed of their belongings and two of them were injured when armed miscreants raided a

[Shri Charanjit Yadav]

second class compartment of Howrah-Delhi Janata Express early in the morning between Madhupur and Asansol stations.

This was in last September. This has happened in the Indore region in Madhya Pradesh.....

**SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN:** (Badagara): In south-bound trains also.

**SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV:** These things happen in south-bound trains also.

Again:

"The passengers of a second class compartment of the Ajmer-Kachiguda passenger train were looted at gunpoint by seven unidentified men, about 40 kilometres from here".

It was from Indore side. Again: "Armed dacoites killed one person and decamped with goods and cash worth several thousands from the second class compartment of the Delhi-bound Mussoorie Express on the Najibabad-Moradabad section.....".

These things happen in so many south-bound trains also, as Mr. Unnikrishnan says.

In U.P., in the last several months, many such occurrences have taken place. This has been happening for more than a year in different parts of the country. It has really become a scare and most insecure to travel in trains. I am not saying only about women and children; any passenger travelling today in the train feels quite insecure. These incidents are not to be seen in isolation. Today the law and order situation all over the country is rapidly deteriorating. Rail rob-

beries and dacoities are a part of the whole deteriorating country-wide law and order situation today. About dacoities, you are reading in the newspapers every day. In this House very often things are brought to your notice and to the notice of this august house how people are being killed. Robberies and dacoities have become a common affair all over the country. Particularly in U.P. and Bihar, the situation is very serious. If you go to villages—I was in villages in the last ten days; I had been touring extensively in the last three months—everywhere, wherever you go, they say that it is unsafe, whether you are working in the field or sleeping in the village house or travelling—even bus-travel has become most unsafe—in U.P., Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and many other parts of the country. And nothing is being done. It is not a question of only train robberies and dacoities. The Cabinet must give a serious thought and serious consideration to this, why the situation is so rapidly deteriorating all over the country and particularly in U.P. and Bihar. Has the Minister at the Cabinet level, taken up this matter with the Home Minister and his other colleagues and also with the Chief Ministers recently, why the law and order situation is deteriorating and what steps are being taken? It is also a part of the rapidly deteriorating socioeconomic situation in the country. What is happening today? The police has become totally indifferent; the police people do not want to endanger their lives; they see things happening before their very eyes, but they keep quiet; they do not take any action; they feel why they should do anything at the cost of their lives; there is a kind of apathy in the entire police force today in the country; that is also a serious situation because their salaries and dearness allowance have be-

come very meagre seeing the mounting rise in prices all over the country; this is a part of that.

Therefore, I will ask the Minister whether the Government is really giving any serious thought to take certain effective measures to improve the economic situation and also to improve the situation in regard to the police force and also to take effective measures against the anti-social elements. Many fake encounters are being done; the real dacoits, the real culprits, are not caught; if the police is pressed, they will catch hold of some innocent people and kill them and show that they were the dacoits. In my own district of Azamgarh people have demonstrated. People have been taken away from their houses during the day and people have gone and registered reports at the Police stations that this man is being taken away. An old man, father of six children, was taken away and was shown as killed in an encounter between the dacoits and the Police. Such things are happening and nobody is giving any attention. No attention is being paid. Therefore, the result is that the real culprits, the dacoits and the anti-social elements are at large. They are in league with the Policemen. They are being encouraged in certain cases. It is brought to our notice that the Policemen are in league with the dacoits and the robbers and they are being regularly paid. Even the Police Sub-Inspectors and the Superintendent of Police are being regularly paid by the robbers and dacoits. The result is that this situation is prevailing. I would like to know from the Railway Minister what is being done on this score.....

**SHRI HARIKESH BAHADUR:**  
Some ruling Party politicians are also involved.

**SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV:**  
I am not making it a political thing. I am not introducing politics.

The second thing I would like to say is: will the Railway Minister tell this House what specific arrangements he is making on the trains and what effective measures are being taken so that armed police are also provided at least in those sectors of the railways where these things are happening on a large scale? Even at the railway stations these things are happening. It has become so serious. How do they come to the railway stations when the trains are stopping? They just commit robbery and go scot-free and the Police is simply watching.

On these issues I am just drawing the attention of the House and I would like to know what specific measures are being taken by the Railway Minister, the Home Minister and the Government to prevent this rapidly deteriorating law and order situation in the whole country.

**SHRI C.K. JAFFAR SHARIEF:**  
I am glad the Hon. Member has focused the attention of the House on a situation about which every one is concerned. The whole question, as he himself expressed, is about the general law and order situation. There was already a meeting at the level of the Home Secretary with the officers of the RPF, GRP and other high ranking Police officials. At that meeting they have thought of certain measures. In addition to that, now the Railway Minister has decided to take up the

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matter with the Chief Ministers of some of the States where these incidents are more, to have a discussion with them as to how to co-ordinate and how to take suitable measures to combat the situation.

So far as the Railway Ministry is concerned, the GRP is being asked to escort the trains. They do escort and the RPF only assist them as I said earlier.

About certain incidents at stations which he was referring to, I do agree. It does not happen at the main stations from where the trains originate. It happens unfortunately at the wayside stations which are very small stations where normally there is no Police force.

The entire question, as he himself explained, is one of a general law and order situation. Besides our own efforts, it is our intention to have a discussion with the Chief Ministers and we are also having a discussion with the Home Ministry. After the discussion with the Chief Ministers if there is anything they want us to supplement from the Government of India or from the Home Ministry, we would like to take up any issue that may come from them with the Home Ministry also.

Sir, I can assure the Hon. Members and this House that it is our endeavour and it is our sincere effort and our continuous effort to see that these things do not occur and the passengers who travel should feel comfortable and safer in their journey. With the co-operation of our friends here and with their constructive suggestions, certainly, I am confident that in the coming days, we will be able to improve the situation.

**SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER (Durgapur):** Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, already the Hon. Members have said that this cannot be discussed in isolation. This should be discussed in the background of the total law and order situation, specially of the areas of U.P., Bihar, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.

Sir, we have to locate these areas and we have also to see that the Railway Ministry at the Centre takes concrete steps to avoid recurrence of this kind of train robbery. Already, one Hon. Member mentioned that. In reply to a question, the Deputy Minister for Railways, Shri Mallikarjun has stated that in 1980, 35 cases of dacoity and robbery were reported in the Indian Railways. We find after the installation of Shrimati Indira Gandhi's Government, this kind of train robbery and dacoity had increased. I have with me the figure for 1980 which I can mention here. In the Rajya Sabha, Shri Mallikarjun, in reply to a question, answered on 20th February, 1981 that from 1st December, 1980 till 3rd February, 1981, within two months, about three passengers were killed and 35 passengers were injured. In all, thirty-eight cases were detected and the total loss suffered was Rs. 13,31,923. So, Sir, though they are saying that they are trying their best to arrest this type of criminal activity, we have seen that it is actually on the increase. The Minister of State, Shri Jaffar Sharief, in his answer, has stated that it is the duty of the State Government. You will see here that the GRP is under the State Government as mentioned by him. He said that the R.P.F. are meant to protect the railway properties. But, Sir, the railway is the



only mode of transport available for the common man, the people, travelling from Kashmir to Kanya Kumari and from Assam to Maharashtra.

This is the transport for all the people. So, if you cannot assure the Railway passengers of their safety, then, it is really unfortunate for our country and the people that you cannot save the railway passengers from robbery and dacoity.

So, I would say that there must be co-ordination between GRP and RPF. The Minister has said that they are trying to coordinate between the State Government, Central Government and Home Ministry but so far nothing concrete has come about. I want to know the total number of RPF men posted in the Central Railway. I would suggest that both GRP and RPF should be posted in Mail, Express and local running trains. What is the total number of GRP and RPF personnel posted in 170 Down Bombay-Howrah Janata Express. The Minister has mentioned that eight culprits have been arrested. I would like to know whether any penal measure was taken against those officers who were responsible for the failure to protect railway passengers in 170 Down Bombay-Howrah Janata Express.

Sir, there is discrepancy in the statement of the Minister and the news reported by the journalist. He has categorically stated:

"According to the official reports here today about 36 heavily armed bandits looted over a hundred passengers including several army men".

This figure and the figure mentioned in the Minister's statement do not tally. Naturally, if a Minister does not give us the actual figure or report then it amounts to breach of privilege of the House. Shri Hari-kesh Bahadur demanded resignation not only of the Railway Minister but of the Government as a whole for the total failure to protect the lives and property of the railway passengers. Sir, it is a very serious matter. If you cannot guarantee the safety of the railway passengers I would demand that Shri Pandey, the Minister of State, Shri Jaffar Sharief and Shri Mallikarjun should resign and should make room for the able people—I do not know whether there are any able people in the Congress (I)—but I would say that they should resign. I want to know whether any penal measure was taken against those officers who were responsible for the failure to protect railway passengers in 170 Down Bombay-Howrah Janata Express. I want a categorical answer from the Minister.

#### SHRI C.K. JAFFAR SHARIEF:

It is really unfortunate that sometimes certain stray incidents do occur. It does not mean that this is happening all over. There are hundreds of trains which carry lakhs and lakhs of passengers every day to the different parts of the country, as my friend himself was pointing out. Such sorts of complaints about robberies and dacoities are not there from every part of the country. It is only in one or two areas, which are vulnerable areas, such kinds of incidents occur. Sometimes they are in the habit of demanding resignations of Ministers. That is not going to help the country or



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solve the problem. The question is this. Let us not forget this. We are in a democratic system.

**SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER:** If democracy is for robbers and dacoits, we don't want this type of democracy.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Not that everybody is a decoit or thief.

**SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF:** Kindly bear with me. Simply because some incidents happen in one or two places we cannot say that this is happening all over the country. It reflects on the entire society. So, when we level the charge, we have to do it in a responsible manner. You cannot say that everything has gone wrong in the country. I for one would not like to admit that our conditions in totality are very bad. Of course, certain things like that do happen here and there. Government are alive to the situation. Government have taken steps in this regard. With reference to this particular incident, I may say, 7 culprits have been arrested. Certain recoveries have also been effected. Certain other matters are in progress. We are further investigating. The areas where these decoities & robberies take place are in one or two States and we have invited those Chief Ministers for discussion. We are going to have a discussion with them and will be taking necessary steps in this regard. After all, we are equally concerned, and more concerned, with the responsibility which we are having today, and that is, to see that the passengers reach their destinations safely and comfortably. It is our moral responsibility. With all the humility at my command, I submit to the House that it is our sincere and

continuous effort to see that such incidents do not occur. We are strengthening the machinery and it is not as if something happens and we keep quiet. It is not so. We are trying to see that all trains (super fast, mail and express trains) particularly running in the night time are properly escorted. This is our effort. I do hope that in the coming year, such types of incidents will certainly come down.

**SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER:** I asked a specific question. I asked whether any penal action was taken against those officers who have been responsible for the failure of the system.

**SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF:** The question of failure of the officers does not arise because after all they have done their job. They have arrested the culprits; they have recovered the properties. Certain other matters are in progress.

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**13-19 hrs.**

**STATEMENT CORRECTING THE  
ANSWER GIVEN TO USQ NO. 870  
RE-EMERGENCE OF A NEW  
ISLAND OFF ANDAMANS**

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA):** In the answer given by me to the starred question No. 870 on 6-8-1980 in the House, I had stated that there was an under-water explosion about 4000 metres away in the south-east direction from the East Island situated in the north of the Andaman group of Islands and an Island about 30 metres long was visible through binoculars at low tide.