

of taking immediate action for removing the words "permanent" and "except the Supreme Court and the other High Courts" from Article 220 of the Constitution. Reference has also been invited to the resolution passed in the General Body meeting of the Association on 1-9-1972 in which it was resolved that Government should also consider the inadvisability of appointing former Judges of the High Courts to Commissions and other positions.

(c) The Law Commission in their 72nd Report have opposed the idea of making any amendment in Article 220. Their view has been accepted by Government. Having regard to the need and availability of suitable personnel, Government do not consider it advisable to exclude retired Judges from appointment to Commissions.

New Railway line in Bastar

1385. SHRI NARENDRA SINH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has completed the final location survey for construction of a new railway line in Bastar District of Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, details thereof; and

(c) expected time by which the line is to be constructed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHEO NARAIN): (a) to (c). Final Location Survey for construction of a new broad gauge line from Dalli Rajhara to Jagdalpur has been completed. The proposed line will be 234 Kms. long and is estimated to cost Rs. 46 crores, yielding a return of 7.97 per cent with diesel traction by DCF method. The question of taking up construction of this line would depend on the availability of resources for this purpose.

12.hrs.

STATEMENT RE.

- (i) INCIDENTS IN CONNECTION WITH SAMASTIPUR POLL; AND
- (ii) REPORTED ARREST OF AND INJURIES TO SHRI VASANT SATHE, M.P.

MR. SPEAKER: The Leader of the opposition to make a statement.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN (Idukki): Mr. Speaker, Sir, with your permission, I would like to bring to the notice of the honourable House certain appalling incidents that have taken place in connection with Samastipur poll. A Minister of Bihar was arrested; his security-men were arrested; the jeep in which he was travelling was taken into custody. An MLA belonging to the ruling party was arrested. This has been reported today in the papers. These arrests took place and they have been released. These securitymen of the Minister and two drivers were also arrested. All of them were arrested on charges of forming unlawful assembly, rioting, causing injuries and attempt at murder.

Again, it is stated that there were three securitymen attached to the Minister. Normally, one securityman goes round. But, in this case the police were intrigued to find how all the three securitymen were with him at the time of the incident. The jeep that was seized was registered in Delhi; it was the one in which he was travelling. This is what has happened. As far as the Minister is concerned, after one day's detention, he has now been released on bail. All the securitymen also have been released on bail.

Further, Mrs. Premlata Rai, Janata MLA has also been arrested for her attempt to take away the ballot boxes. There has been an allegation there that ballot boxes were attempted to be taken away and attempts were made to capture the polling booths. These incidents have taken place in the past. But this is the first time that even an allegation is made that a Minister of the State concerned is involved in it.

[Shri C. M. Stephen]

In a similar incident, the security guard of Mr. Kameshwar Paswan, the Minister of Welfare, was also arrested for the same purpose because he took out his revolver to fire at the crowd....

SHRI DINEN BHATTACHARYA (Serampore): For whose welfare!

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: God alone knows, for whose welfare! The other Minister is himself the Minister of Tourism.

The point is that when the polling is going on, everybody is equal. Nobody is superior to anybody at all. You can go to the polling booth to cast your vote, not otherwise. Here, what has happened is that a Minister has gone with all the securitymen with fire-arms and the people came in clash them. The police came to arrest the Minister and the securitymen.

If this is the situation, I am only appealing to the House to consider how the peaceful of the poll is possible. That is what I have got to ask.

The House will be shocked to know that the Minister is still continuing as a Minister. The Chief Minister is reported to be untraceable: he is taking rest in an undisclosed place. No action is being taken by the Chief Minister as such. There is a break-down of law and order in the areas. This is a serious matter that I wanted to bring to the notice of the House.

There is one more thing. I checked up with your Secretariat to know whether the arrest of Mr. V. P. Sathe was reported to your Secretariat. I have been told that it has not been reported.... (Interruptions).

MR. SPEAKER: I have permitted him.

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN: The PTI says that Mr. V. P. Sathe was arrested by the police. This is the report of the PTI. It is also reported that he was injured. The report should have come to you. The report has not come to you. That is a breach of privilege of the House. I demand that these Ministers must be dismissed from the Ministry, and if the Chief Minister refuses to do that, his Ministry must be dismissed. (Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI DHANIK LAL MANDAL) rose—

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Mandal wants to make a statement. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Whenever a Minister or the Leader of the Opposition, who is of the rank of a Minister, wishes to make a statement, the Chair always permits him. This is not a precedent. This is the normal convention of the House. The Leader of the Opposition has been given the same rank as that of a Minister. Mr. Mandal (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please allow Mr. Mandal to make a statement.

SHRI DHANIK LAL MANDAL: I will make the statement later on. At this stage I refuse the allegations made against the Ministers.

MR. SPEAKER: I will permit Mr. Mandal to make a statement tomorrow.

Now, papers to be laid on the Table.