

As inquiries held into railway accidents reveal that failure of railway staff is the largest single factor responsible for causing accidents, a four-pronged safety drive, educative, psychological, punitive and technological has been launched to arouse the safety consciousness of the staff and to prevent accidents. Other action as is found necessary on scrutiny of inquiry reports is also taken.

The following measures have been/are being taken to check the incidence of thefts of Railway property and Public Property :

- (1) Plain clothes Railway Protection Force staff are deputed to collect crime intelligence with a view to tracking down known criminals.
- (2) Special detective staff are detailed to collect intelligence regarding receivers of stolen property and raids are organised on their shops with the assistance of the Police.
- (3) Zonal Headquarter's as well as Railway Board's Central Crime Bureau staff are deployed to conduct surprise raids to effect red-handed capture of culprits.
- (4) Basic security measures are provided at all Workshops and stores.
- (5) Close co-ordination between the Railway Protection Force and Government Railway Police and police Officers is also maintained to deal with the criminals and receivers of stolen property.
- (6) Anti-theft measures exist in the shape of locking of compartments, welding and encasing electrical equipment, cleating and troughing of under frame wiring, shifting of theft prone equipment inside the coaches, so as to make their removal difficult by anti-social elements.
- (7) All loaded covered wagons are secured with rivets. Wagons carrying valuable commodities are, in addition, secured with Ellis patent locks and are escorted by armed guards of Railway protection Force in affected section by night;
- (8) all important goods trains are escorted by Railway protection Force armed staff.

- (9) Affected sections are also at times patrolled by Railway Protection Force armed staff.

Intensive and frequent checks including incognito checks and surprise checks by Flying Squads and Railway Magistrates are being conducted to minimise ticketless travel and other forms of irregular travel.

12 00 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION OF MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Misuse of National Awards

SHRI GIRRAJ SARAN SINGH : (Mathura) : Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Home Affairs to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon :

The misuse of national awards like Padmashri, Padmabhusan etc. in violation of the code by awardees for commercial and personal aggrandisement and misuse of these in Government of India's Notifications *Vide* Ministry of Information and Broadcasting-announcement No. 14935064-FC of the 28th March, 1968 as title.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN) : Sir, Soon after the Padma awards were announced on the last Republic Day, a few instances did come to our notice where the awardees or some other persons had used the name of the award like a title. The Padma awards are given in recognition of distinguished service rendered by individuals in different spheres such as art, science, literature and humanitarian work. Awards of this type are the State's appreciation of the services rendered by individuals to the people and it is wholly wrong to treat an honour conferred for such service as a title.

From time to time we have, therefore, been informing the public through Press Notes that the awards are not intended to be used as titles. The last such Press Note on the subject was issued on 17th April 1968. Some of the recipients of the awards in their communication to my

[Shri Y. B. Chavan]

Ministry had used also the award as a title perhaps because they were not aware of the correct position. Whenever such instances come to notice, the individuals concerned were advised not to pre-fix the award to their names.

There is also a reference in the Calling Attention Notice to a notification issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. This too had come to our notice and the Ministry was advised to issue a corrigendum omitting the word "Padma Shri" prefixed against a name mentioned in the notification. They have informed us that this mistake crept in through inadvertence and that the notification has been corrected.

SHRI GIRRAJ SARAN SINGH : In view of a fact that the framers of the Constitution advisedly came to the conclusion that no Indian citizen should be allowed to accept a title and use it and in view of the continued misuse and abuse of these national honours and titles for self-aggrandisement, will the Government not consider the whole basis of awarding these honours and cancel them altogether in view of the past experience? We have noticed that considerations other than merit are taken into account for the award of these titles. We have seen the misuse of honours and we have also witnessed the spectacle of these awards being brusquely and abruptly refused by the nominees as well as being returned by people who disagree with one policy or other of the Government of India. In view of this, would the Government consider the question of scrapping these titles altogether? Secondly, may I know whether is a fact that a playwright, Utpal Dutt, who specialises in producing pro-Mao anti-national plays like 'Kalol' had been offered the title of Padma Shri which he turned down in a cavalier fashion?

SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN : Well, Sir, as I explained the position, as far as the awards are concerned, they are not titles and those who are making use of them as titles are wrong. Therefore, efforts are being made continuously to educate them and educate the public. There is no intention of discontinuing this practice of giving

awards because this is the only way of showing our appreciation of the good work and service to the country done by a large number of people. So, there is nothing wrong about the awards. While some people have as a form of protest returned these titles, I should not be the judge for forming any view about this particular matter. I leave it to the people at large to decide it.

SHRI K. M. KOUSHIK (Chanda) : In view of the fact that many of the awardees declined to accept the honours proposed to be conferred on them, would it not be better if prior consent of the people concerned is taken before an award is announced?

SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN : The consent of the people who is given the award is always sought for.

SHRI N. K. SOMANI (Nagaur) : Due to the quantitative proliferation of this national honour, a certain amount of elbow greasing and machinations at the State level goes on in the matter of award selections as a result of which the quality is bound to go down. One has a lot to say about the selections made this year in respect of film industry and business for the conferment of these awards.

MR. SPEAKER : The Calling Attention is on a different aspect.

SHRI N. K. SOMANI : After the circular was issued by the Home Ministry, the Indian Statistical Institute, which is being run by the Cabinet Secretariat, has as late as yesterday once again used this by describing a person as Padmabhusan Dr. C. R. Rao, who will address on quality control and all that. I would like to know what firm steps, rules or regulations or executive orders, have been issued to prohibit the misuse of such awards as titles? Because these are national honours, may I suggest that the Government should associate Parliament in the final selection of these honours or let there be at least a Cabinet sub-committee which should go into the final selection of these national awards?

SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN : As far as the mistake in the Cabinet Secretariat publication is concerned, I am very sorry about it. It is again a question of having proper knowledge about these matters. I will certainly bring it to the notice of the Prime Minister herself so that this can be corrected. About the suggestion of Parliament going into the selection of this, I do not know how serious the hon. Member was when he made this particular suggestion. Naturally, these matters are gone into by the Home Minister and the Prime Minister. There is a sort of informal sub-committee.

12.09 hrs.

RE. RESTRAINT, REMOVAL, ARREST,
CONVICTION AND RELEASE OF
MEMBERS

MR. SPEAKER : I have to inform the House that yesterday we had some discussion and notices of some motions were given. Naturally, I then announced that I will call a meeting of the Business Advisory Committee. That Committee will have to fix the time. I am requesting the Home Minister also to attend the meeting so that we can fix the time and we do in an orderly way whatever we want to do. I know that the whole House is rather unhappy about it. The meeting of the Business Advisory Committee has been fixed at 5 p.m. today. The Committee would take a decision and it will be placed before the House.

The discrepancy in the Kutch affairs will also be considered in that meeting. So, I am requesting all the leaders and the Home Minister to be present at that meeting.

Coming to the debate, we will have to adjourn the House today at 6 O'clock because at 6.15 His Highness the Emperor of Ethiopia will address the Members of Parliament. The Deputy Prime Minister will reply to the general debate on the Finance Bill at 5.30 p.m. We will have another 3 or 4 hours left for the Finance Bill.

श्री मधु लिमये (मुंबेर) : घाप मेरी बात

सुनेगे तो अच्छा होगा। मैं अभी घाप से फैसला नहीं चाहता हूँ।

MR. SPEAKER : For that also I must have some time to consider it. I want to hear you tomorrow.

श्री मधु लिमये : यह दिल्ली पुलिस का बहुत गम्भीर मामला है। कल मेरे ऊपर भी हमला हो सकता है। मैंने तो कल नोटिस दिया था और तीन रोज पहले पत्र की कापी भेजी थी। इस से ज्यादा प्रकाशन मैं क्या ले सकता हूँ ?

MR. SPEAKER : I want to hear you tomorrow. I am giving you permission.

श्री मधु लिमये : कल दूँगे ?

MR. SPEAKER : That is what I said. I even went to the extent of saying that you come to the Business Advisory Committee meeting where also we can discuss it.

श्री मधु लिमये : प्रिविलेज का मामला इस में कैसे आयेगा ?

MR. SPEAKER : That does not matter. It is not as though I am going to shut out anything. But I must have time so that I may discuss it with you and with others also.

SHRI SHIVAJI RAO S. DESHMUKH (Prabhani) : There was a specific motion handed over about the suspension of rule... (Interruption)

MR. SPEAKER : Several Members of the Congress Party also, Dr. Sushila Nayar, Shrimati Sucheta Kripalani and so many others—I need not mention a few names—and from this side also... (Interruption)

SHRI SHIVAJI RAO S. DESHMUKH: The motion specially requested... (Interruption)

MR. SPEAKER : You can also come to the Business Advisory Committee meeting. I extend to you an invitation. Please do not waste the time of the House. You