

12.09 hrs.

12.10 hrs.

MESSAGES FROM RAJYA SABHA

SECRETARY-GENERAL : Sir, I have to report the following messages received from the Secretary-General of Rajya Sabha :

(i) "In accordance with the provisions of rule 187 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to inform the Lok Sabha that the Rajya Sabha, at its sitting held on the 2nd August, 1984, agreed without any amendment to the Multi-State Co-operative Societies Bill, 1984, which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 23rd, July, 1984."

(ii) "In accordance with the provisions of rule 111 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to release a copy of the Sales Promotion Employees (Conditions of Service) Amendment Bill, 1984, which has been passed by the Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 2nd August, 1984."

SALES PROMOTION EMPLOYEES
(CONDITIONS OF SERVICE)
AMENDMENT BILL

As passed by Rajya Sabha

SECRETARY-GENERAL : Sir, I lay on the Table of the House the Sales Promotion Employees (Conditions of Service) Amendment Bill, 1984.

STATEMENT ON BOMB EXPLOSION IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARRIVAL HALL OF MADRAS AIRPORT ON 2ND AUGUST, 1984

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI KHURSHEED ALAMKHAN) : It is with deep sadness that I have to inform the House about the tragic incident which occurred at Madras Airport on the night of 2nd August, 1984 when, consequent on an explosion, 29 innocent lives were lost and injuries caused to 328 persons. The Prime Minister has condemned the outrage and has expressed her deepest sympathies to the bereaved Sir Lankan and Indian families.

On 4th August, I visited the scene of the explosion and the hospital where the injured are receiving treatment. I am taking the first opportunity to share the information available with Government relating to this incident. Before I narrate the events which led to this incident, I am sure the House will join me in expressing our heart-felt condolences to the bereaved families and sympathy with those who have suffered injuries in this incident.

In conformity with the existing practice at Madras Airport, all baggage prior to its being loaded on the aircraft is required to be identified in the Customs enclosure by the passengers travelling on the flight. On 2nd August, 1984 the identification of the baggage of passengers travelling by Air Lanka Flight UL-122 was carried out by the Customs authorities. With the exception of two suit-cases, all the other baggage was identified by the passengers and loaded into the aircraft. The suit cases which had not been identified in the Customs enclosure, were also taken to the aircraft for identification but no passenger claimed them. These were, therefore, taken into custody by the Customs authorities and kept near the rooms of the Customs Duty Officer in the arrival hall.

On Flight No. UL-122 of Air Lanka 97 passengers were booked whereas only 96 passengers travelled. One passenger did not board the flight which left at 8.15 P.M., after having checked in.

At about 9.50 P. M. Shri Lila Singh the Airport Officer (Operations) received an anonymous call informing him that the two suit-cases which were then in the custody of the Customs authorities contained explosives of the type used for blasting rocks. Immediately on receipt of this call, the Airport Officer is reported to have informed Shri K.K. Gulati, General Manager, Madras Airport, Shri K. Kasim, Deputy Commissioner of Police and Shri Kalimulla Khan, Assistant Commissioner of Police, Airport Security, Shri, Shiv Prasad, Deputy Chief Controller of Explosives and Shri Tamhane, Deputy Director (Operations), Madras Airport, about the anonymous call. This information was also conveyed to the Fire Station and the office of the Indian Airlines.

A second anonymous call was received by Shri Lila Singh, the Airport Officer at approximately 10.40 P.M., presumably from the same person who had called earlier, informing him that the suit-cases would explode at about 11 P.M. On receipt of this call, the Airport Officer rushed to the departure hall to contact the Police personnel on duty in order to get the premises vacated and also warned the customs officials. While the arrival hall was being vacated and the Customs authorities, after placing the two suit-cases in a trolley, were in the process of removing them, an explosion occurred at about 10.50 P.M. in the arrival hall, which has resulted in 29 deaths and injuries to 38 persons. It has also caused extensive damage to the airport building.

A case under section 302 of the I.P.C., section 9B (1) (a) (b) of the Indian Explosives Act, 1884, and sections 3 and 4 of the Explosives Substances Act 1908, has been registered by the State Police and investigation is being conducted under the supervision of Shri K.

Mohandas, Director General of Police, Tamil Nadu. The Government has ordered a high-level enquiry by the Director General of Civil Aviation into this incident. The terms of reference of the enquiry are :—

- (a) To ascertain the circumstances leading to this incident.
- (b) To determine whether on receipt of information of the bomb threat, the personnel on duty of the various concerned agencies at Madras Airport discharged their duties and responsibilities in conformity with the prescribed procedures and with the urgency warranted by the situation.
- (c) To examine and review the adequacy of the existing systems and procedures to deal with such situations and to make recommendations for effecting improvements thereof, with a view to making them more effective.

Normal domestic air services at the airport have continued uninterrupted. The international services were temporarily suspended but have been restored with effect from today.*

Members would kindly appreciate that pending an enquiry by the Director General of Civil Aviation and a full investigation by the State Police, it will not be correct on my part to speculate on the motives and designs behind this tragic incident. Members will also kindly appreciate that it is for this reason that I am not in a position to make a very elaborate statement as all the facts have first to be established conclusively.

I will conclude by requesting the House to join me in placing on record our deep sense of shock and profound sorrow at this dastardly act and condemn those responsible for this crime

(Shri Khursheed Alamkhan)

against society which has resulted in the tragic loss of innocent lives.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRA-BORTY (Calcutta South) : We cannot wait for the completion of the inquiry. It will take a long time. We want to have a full discussion. We want to ask the Minister certain questions.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I do not know why you are shouting like this. I have not debarred you from giving a motion. Who is holding you back ? You are welcome to give notice of a motion. Why are you shouting unnecessarily ?

SHRI K. MAYATHEVAR (Dindigul) : Sir, are you admitting any motion ?

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : When I have asked you to give your motion, you are welcome to give it. There is no problem. Who is holding you back ? There is no problem.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL (Jaipur) : How much time will be taken to complete the inquiry ?

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRA-BORTY : We want to know from the Minister one thing. Has he given any time for completion of the inquiry ?

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL : Will he agree to make a statement before the House adjourns ? That is important.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please sit down. We are going to have a discussion. In the Business Advisory Committee we shall decide about it.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRA-BORTY : We have to know something from the hon. Minister which is very vital for the nation.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : This has to be done by the Business Advisory Committee. Your representative is there. You talk to him and he will talk in the Business Advisory Committee, and we will decide accordingly.

(Interruptions)

SHRI K. T. KOSALRAM (Tiruchendur) : Will the discussion be tomorrow or the day after ?

MR. SPEAKER : Have you ever read the rules ?

SHRI K. MAYATHEVAR : Under rule 193 it can come.

MR. SPEAKER : Who has asked you not to put it under rule 193 ? Who has debarred you ?

(Interruptions)

SHRI CHANDRAJIT YADAV (Azamgarh) : Unclaimed baggages should not be taken to the building. At least they should learn some lesson from this. Terrorism is growing...

MR. SPEAKER : There are many more things to be learnt. The Inquiry Committee will come out with some conclusions. Something is very much apparent here.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL : It is not a question of unclaimed baggages only. Even the baggages cleared are not checked up properly.

(Interruptions)