

**Shrimati Masda Ahmed:** It is a genuine fact that crimes on the railways are increasing during the current year. In view of the growing insecurity in railway travelling, may I know what protective measures are taken by the Railway Protection Force and the number of miscreants arrested by them so far?

**Shri Shahnawas Khan:** I would like to make the position clear. The Railway Protection Force is responsible only for the protection of railway property and property entrusted to its care. The Government Railway Police, which comes under the jurisdiction of the State police, is responsible to ensure safety of travelling passengers in trains. I want to make that quite clear.

**Mr. Speaker:** I am surprised. Let this question of law be decided. My view has been different. Of course, if the culprit escapes into the country, the State police will pursue him. But so far as crimes committed within the train are concerned, is it the duty or the obligation of the local police to appoint so many persons to look after it? The Minister will kindly consider and ascertain the legal opinion regarding this.

**Dr. Ram Sabhag Singh:** Even if we assume that it is the responsibility of the State Government to take care of the railway passengers, may I know whether the Railway Ministry has approached the State Governments or requested the Home Ministers and the Chief Ministers of the States to take adequate precautionary measures? The Minister says only in some zones it is on the increase, viz. Western, North-Eastern and Northern Railways. The Eastern Railway also passes through this. So, out of 7 zones, in 4 zones, the law and order condition has become very bad. May I know whether they have approached the State Governments to give them adequate power to restore law and order in the railways?

**Mr. Speaker:** What he means is this. When the railways undertake the

liability of taking passengers, is it not their obligation to take them safe? Why not they themselves take the power? It is a suggestion that is made. The hon. Minister of Railways said the other day that from time to time he will hold conferences with the Members and call for suggestions. He offered to do so. So far as this matter is concerned, hon. Members will talk to him and if anything more has to be done in this House, we shall do it.

**Shri Tyagi:** I only want to submit that if the Government is feeling that the crime on railways is on the decrease, the nation would be shocked to know it. There is no hope of any improvement if that is the complacency of Government. I am afraid it is not on the decrease; on the other hand, it is on the increase. During the British days, we had never seen dacoities committed in the trains, passengers shot at pistol-point, etc.

**Mr. Speaker:** We are having a general discussion on this matter now.

**Shri S. M. Banerjee:** Let us have a discussion on this.

**Shri Sonavane:** On a point of order, Sir. The hon. Member, Shri Tyagi, said that no such things took place in the British regime. Is that statement correct? Can he make such a wrong statement?

**Mr. Speaker:** There is no point of order in this. He thinks similar things did not happen when the previous regime was here. It is a matter of opinion. Let me proceed to the next question. Hon. Members know how to move this House.

**Shri S. M. Banerjee:** I move . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** I cannot take notice of oral motions like this.

**Delay in Recruitment of Railwaymen**

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\*822. { Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:  
Shri Hem Raj:

Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state: ..

(a) whether delays in recruitment on railways have been brought to his notice;

(b) what are the main causes of delay; and

(c) the steps being taken to eliminate them?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). The matter is being examined.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: Is it a fact that the various General Managers have represented that the work is suffering because of these delays? May I know what was the main complaint from the General Managers when it was made and what steps have been taken in that regard?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: I am not aware of any specific complaints by all the General Managers. Some delays did occur in certain cases. We called a meeting of the Chairmen of the Railway Service Commissions and we have already initiated steps to speed up the procedure.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: From the date on which the candidate appears for interview to the date when he receives the posting order, what is the time ordinarily taken and what are the various processes through which he has to pass?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: The time-lag varies between 7 months and 1 year. There are set procedures. Applications are invited, examinations are held and those who are successful are called for interview. After the interview, there is verification of character. The lists are sent to the railways and then the railways call upon them for medical examination. Then whenever vacancies arise, they are appointed.

Shri Hem Raj: May I know whether it is a fact that this verification by the police takes months and months and the posts are never filled?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: We have laid down a time-limit of 4 weeks. If the police verification on report is not available within 7 weeks, then we accept the verification by any gazetted officer or M.P.

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: What is the main reason for delay in recruitment? Is it because qualified persons are not available or is Government failing in its duty to recruit in right time?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: We have not found any dearth of suitable persons. There has been some delay owing to the procedure. We are trying to expedite the matter, so that there is no delay.

श्री विभूति मिश्र : पूर्वोक्त रेलवे की पब्लिक सर्विस कमीशन का हेडक्वार्टर इलाहाबाद में है। क्या सरकार का विचार है कि पब्लिक सर्विस कमीशन को डिसेंट्रलाइज करके दो तीन जगह रखा जाए ताकि लोगों को इंटरव्यू देने में और नीकरी मिलने में सहायित हो सके ?

श्री शाहनवाज खान : फिलहाल तो कोई ऐसा इरादा नहीं है। लेकिन ये माननीय सदस्य को बता दूँ कि इंटरव्यू कोई एक जगह नहीं होते हैं। बोर्ड खुद चलन चलन जगह चला जाता है और वहाँ लोग उनसे मिलते हैं।

श्री विभूति मिश्र : अध्यक्ष महोदय, यह ठीक है कि बोर्ड चला जाता है, लेकिन बूक एक ही बोर्ड होता है और कैंडिडेट बहुत होते हैं इसलिये उसकी बहुत देर लगती है और एक ही बोर्ड होता है इसलिये उसकी सारे जोन में घूमने में बहुत देर लगती है। अगर दो चार बोर्ड बना दिये जायें तो लोगों को सहायित मिल सकती, कुछ ऐसा उत्तर मिनिस्टर साहब को देना चाहिये।

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member must give notice of a separate resolution and not ask for it in the Question Hour. Let him ask for 100 Railway Commissions; what is the difficulty?

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: The hon. Deputy Minister said that some steps are being taken. May I know the nature of the steps being taken, because in some cases, after the announcement is made, it takes two

years to call the candidates for interview?

**Shri Shah Nawaz Khan:** One of the most important steps that we are taking is to hold a mass examination, prepare a panel and whenever there is a demand, we detail people from the panel.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** The hon. Deputy Minister said that the delay is from a minimum of 7 months to a maximum of 12 months. May I know how he expects a candidate to keep waiting for 12 months? Is the step he is suggesting likely to eliminate the delay and after this step is taken, what is the time that will be taken?

**Mr. Speaker:** Just as the Union Public Service Commission's report, are not the reports submitted by the Railway Public Service Commissions placed on the Table of the House? Does the Railway Public Service Commission not prepare an annual report? I am requesting the hon. Minister whether it may be placed on the Table of the House so that we will have an opportunity to discuss it.

**Shri Shah Nawaz Khan:** There are four Service Commissions, and they are not statutory bodies like the Union Public Service Commission. So, no regular report is placed on the Table of the House.

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur:** But the Railway Minister can make a report. How do they expect the candidates to wait from 7 to 12 months? Or is it their experience that most of the candidates who apply and are interviewed are not available when posting orders are sent to them?

**Shri Shah Nawaz Khan:** Some of them are not available; but a large number of them are available.

**Mr. Speaker:** If the hon. Members are anxious, let them table a motion saying let us go into the question of recruitment in railways in greater detail than now

## Rajasthan Desert

\*897. **Dr. Ram Subhag Singh:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether the scheme to establish a shelter belt of trees along the western border of Rajasthan desert has now been abandoned;

(b) if so, whether any new scheme has been evolved to fight the advance of that desert in different directions in India; and

(c) the total area of fertile land which is eaten up by the advance of the desert, each year?

**The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh):** (a) Yes, as growing of woodlots, wind breaks and development of pastures are considered more effective methods to check the spread of desert.

(b) A pasture development scheme has already been sanctioned and is being implemented. The Desert Afforestation and Soil Conservation Station at Jodhpur is being developed into a Central Arid Zone Research Institute to tackle all the problems of arid and semi-arid regions.

(c) No reliable data is available with regard to the total area of fertile land which is turned into desert, each year.

**Dr. Ram Subhag Singh:** The hon. Minister says that they have given up the creation of a sheltered belt zone in the desert area, which was undertaken about 5 or 6 years ago. May I know the amount of money so far spent on the project? Who advised the plan for creating a sheltered zone and why has it been given up?

**Dr. P. S. Deshmukh:** First of all, the original scheme itself was an experiment. It was done at the suggestion of experts themselves. I am sorry. I have not got the figures of actual expenditure. When we changed the scheme or method we were advised by a famous expert of FAO, Dr. G. Y. Goor. We have our own