

*[English]***Smuggling through Samjhauta Express**

3055. SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK:
SHRI ABHAYSINH S. BHONSLE:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Samjhauta Express has become a source of smuggling and unlawful activities and a racket operating in the Samjhauta Express at Amritsar has been unearthed during 1998;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to conduct a CBI inquiry in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the intelligence agencies have failed to check such activities;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the steps taken by the Government to check smuggling and unlawful activities being made through this train?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) to (d) According to information received from the Ministry of Finance, Department of Revenue, a consignment consisting of goods valued at Rs. 69,98,060 was seized by the officers of DRI Regional Unit, Amritsar at Attari Railway Station on 20.6.1998. This consignment had arrived by Samjhauta Express from Pakistan on 18.6.1998. The CBI has registered a case in this connection on the request of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence.

(e) to (g) 'Public Order' and 'Police' are State subjects as per the Constitution of India. The registration, investigation, detection and prevention of crimes in trains is also the responsibility of the Government Railway Police (GRP), which functions under the control of the respective State Governments. However, the Central Government has been advising the State Governments, from time to time, to take measures to curb crimes in trains. The measures suggested by the Central Government include, *inter alia*, the need for regular meetings between the GRP and Railway Protection Force (RPF), posting of mobile police force in running trains, improvement in

coordination between the police escort and the railway staff, removal of unauthorised hawkers, urchins and other undesirable elements, etc.

Village Defence Committees

3056. SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that the number of the Village Defence Committee in Jammu have not been paid salaries for the past several months;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any move to enhance their salaries keeping in view the great services being rendered by the VDCs in fighting the heavily armed terrorists including foreign mercenaries; and

(d) the total amount provided to the State Government on security related matters on different accounts during the last three years and also in the current year?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) to (c) Services rendered by Village Defence Committee members are voluntary in nature. However, Special Police Officers (SPOs) who form the nucleus of Village Defence Committee, are paid an honorarium by the State Government. The Central Government is reimbursing to the State Government for a fixed number of SPOs under Security Related Expenditure (SRE). Norms for reimbursement under SRE on this account have been reviewed recently.

(d) An amount of Rs. 571.95 Crs. has been reimbursed to the State Government by Central Government under Security Related Expenditure during the last three financial years. In the current financial year Rs. 174.94 Crs. has been reimbursed to the State Government under the above mentioned head.

Scholarships by Foreign Countries

3057. SHRI RAMANAND SINGH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state the number of Indian students granted scholarships by foreign countries during the last three years, year-wise; subject-wise and country-wise?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): A Statement is enclosed.