

17.59 hrs.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

(iv) Non-interlocked working of the Sahibabad Railway Station on the Ghaziabad Sahibabad Delhi Section

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, I will call upon Shri George Fernandes, the Minister of Railways to make the statement. Let this be finished.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): Some hon. Members this morning raised the question of trains being diverted or cancelled on the Ghaziabad-Sahibabad section to thwart the efforts to organise a rally in Delhi on August 9, 1990. In order to meet the increasing demand of traffic, two additional lines (3rd and 4th) were planned in the year 1986-87 between Ghaziabad and Sahibabad, a distance of 6 kms.

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The work of construction of 3rd and 4th line was completed in March, 1990. These lines have now to be connected to the station yards at Sahibabad and Ghaziabad yard. It was decided in July, 1990 to undertake this work in the current lean period. This work necessitated introduction of non-interlocked working at Sahibabad and after the work is completed at Sahibabad non-interlocked working will start at Ghaziabad. Non-interlocked working implies that points and signals cannot be worked from cabins but have to be operated from site. As points and signals cannot be operated from cabin, trains cannot be allowed to run through stations at full normal speed. Their speeds have to be considerably restricted. In addition, traffic has to be suspended for periods varying from three to seven hours per day to commission new cross-overs... (*Interruptions*)

[Translation]

DR. RAJENDRA KUMARI BAJPAI (Sitapur): Have these precautions been taken tomorrow?

SHRI R.N. RAKESH (Chail): It has all been done in view of the rally to be held tomorrow... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI JAGPAL SINGH (Hardwar): It is not done in view of the proposed rally of Shri Devi Lal? I apprehend so... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: First listen to me, after that it can be discussed if you so desire... (*Interruptions*)...

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: You wanted a statement. Let a statement be made, after that you raise your point. It is you who wanted a statement. Let him make a statement and then you make your point.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: May I seek the permission of the Chair so that I can make the statement?

Consequently, the number of trains that can be passed through in a given period of time gets reduced. Non-interlocked working at Sahibabad started from 5.8.1990 for connecting these lines with route relay cabin at Sahibabad. Since the passage through the station is restricted, it necessitated diversion of two pairs of mail/express trains via Tundla-Agra-Tughlakabad and four trains via Saharanpur-Shamli into Delhi. In addition, seven pairs of passenger trains had to be terminated or cancelled short of Ghaziabad including three pairs of EMU services.

The non-interlocked working started from 5.8.1990 and it is expected to last for 44 days at Sahibabad. In addition, another ten days are required for commissioning of third and fourth lines which will involve re-alignment of the existing lines. Another 15 days

[Sh. George Fernandes]

will be required for connecting third and fourth lines at Ghaziabad end. Thus a total of 69 days will be required to complete the work. It is a major remodelling work to be carried out in different phases in series. A Task Force of nearly 1000 workers is working round the clock.

This is one of the heaviest worked sections of Indian Railways where 100 to 120 passenger and goods trains ply every day. The diversions or cancellations have been kept to the bare minimum. Out of total 32 pairs of express trains only six have been diverted into Delhi through alternative routes, out of 18 pairs of passenger trains for pairs have been cancelled and out of seven pairs of EMUs, three pairs have been cancelled due to non-interlocked working at Sahibabad.

I may also mention here that Ch. Devi Lal had telephoned me at 7 O'clock in the morning today complaining that the Southern Railway had cancelled a coach booked by a Mr. Subramanian to bring people for the rally from Madras. I told him that it was most unlikely that such a thing could have happened. I made immediate enquiries from the General Manager of the Southern Railway who, after making the necessary verification, conveyed to me that no coach had been booked by Mr. Subramanian or any other person to bring people from Madras for the rally. (*Interruptions*)

I want to assure the House that the National Front Government will not follow in the traditions of the Congress Government and come in the way of political parties holding their rallies and meetings. (*Interruptions*)

Even though it will cost the Railway considerable amount of money, time and labour, I have asked the Northern Railway to

operate the cancelled/diverted trains on this section on August 9, 1990... (*Interruptions*)

We will not do what you were doing and what we have to do because of the exigencies of work, even that has been set aside to see that the trains that you need to bring your people are there. (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRIMATI SUBHASHINI ALI (Kanpur):
Madam, I want to say with your permission since the Railway Minister is in the House that we had raise a question about the accident near Jaipur in which nine school children were killed yesterday. In the House we all expressed our grief over this accident. Yesterday near Jaipur and accident took place because the railway crossing was an un-manned crossing. We raised a demand in the House that we should be given an assurance that all such un-manned crossings will not be manned so that such unfortunate accidents do not occur again. I would press you to ask the Minister to make a statement on that accident and give an assurance.

[*Translation*]

SHRI JAG PAL SINGH (Hardwar):
Madam Chairman, I raised this question before start of the Question Hour and submitted that 9 children died and 36 have been admitted to the hospital in serious condition. No statement has been made either by the Minister of Home Affairs or by the Minister of Railways or by the Deputy Minister of Railways. We made this demand in the House. I regret to say that though both the Ministers are present in the House yet they have not given any statement in that regard. I would like that either of the Ministers present in the House should give a statement regarding

therein causes or lapses which led to this accident.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: It has been the convention of the House that no statement is given in regard to the accidents which take place at unmanned crossings. Generally, the responsibility of such mishaps does not lie on the railways and thus no statement is given in that respect. This has been the tradition of the House.... (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Railway Minister, it seems the Members do not want the explanation. So why take trouble? ... (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI JAGPAL SINGH: Madam Chairman, it has been the practice in the House to give statement on such accidents. When school children died in the Kutub Minar stampede, the then Minister of Home Affairs had made a statement in the House on a demand made by Members. But now the Minister who is a socialist, says that there is no such convention. Attention should be paid to this... (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, the time is beyond 6 p.m. I have to take the permission of the House, if the time of the House is to be extended.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, there are ten more speakers to speak on the discussion of 'continued atrocities on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the country'. Their names are with me. The Minister for Parlia-

mentary Affairs has appealed to extend the time of the House to finish the discussion today itself. If the House agrees, then we can continue.

(*Interruptions*)

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. UPENDRA): Madam, there is a heavy schedule of business before the House. The Short Duration Discussion must be Short Duration Discussion only. You cannot go on continuing like this. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI LOKANATH CHOUDHARY (Jagatsinghpur): I object the statement of the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs. We understand that the discussion on the continued atrocities on Harijans should be a full discussion. The hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs should not forget this. He should understand it. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI P. UPENDRA: Let all the ten hon. Members speak today itself, and let it be completed today. (*Interruptions*)

PROF. P.J. KURIEN (Mavelikara): The discussion on atrocities on Harijans is not a Short Duration Discussion. It should not be taken technically. Moreover, the extension of the time of the House should be with the cooperation of all sections of the House and we do not feel that there is reason for extending the time of the House. The subject is so important that it should be carried over to tomorrow. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI P. UPENDRA: The subject is very important, I agree. Therefore, let them sit and finish it today itself. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am not able to listen to what the hon. Members are saying. Let the hon. Members take their seats first. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Why don't you take the Chair instead of me? If not, then let me at least try to come to some conclusion. You have to help me. Isn't it? Actually, the subject is very important and ten speakers are there. It is also true that the time of the House can be extended with the cooperation of all the parties. That is the convention. So, I would finally ask: Do you all response kindly to his appeal and continue?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No, no.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. If not, then I have no other alternative but to adjourn the House today and let the discussion continue tomorrow. (*Interruptions*) The House adjourns for the day. It will meet tomorrow at 11.00 A.M.

18.16 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday August, 9, 1990/ Sravana 18, 1912 (Saka)