

State has a vast area with a population of more than 4 crores. The development of railway line there is quite disproportionate to the area. It has a total of only 300 kms. railway line. Karnataka is split among 3 railway zones, namely, Southern Railway (HQ at Madras), South Central Railway (HQ Secunderabad) and Central Railway (HQ Bombay) resulting in total neglect of railway development activities in the State. The State has only 60 kms. of broad gauge double line, but there is no trace of triple or quadruple lines either in broad gauge or metre gauge as in other States like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

Railway Reforms Committee had recommended the creation of the South Western Railway (SWR) Zone for Karnataka with Headquarters at Bangalore, constituting Bangalore, Mysore, Hubli and Sholapur Divisions. The Railway Ministry had agreed to this in principle and in fact, while laying the foundation stone for the divisional office at Bangalore, the future requirements of housing the railway zone office was kept in view and 9-storeyed building had been planned. Owing to certain tragic events which took place in 1984, this proposal is still hanging fire in the National Planning Commission. Karnataka satisfies all the parameters required for setting up of a railway zone as recommended by the Railway Reforms Committee.

I, therefore, request the hon. Minister to set up South Western Railway Zone for Karnataka with its Headquarters at Bangalore at the earliest.

(viii) Need to construct Rehabilitation Centre for the leprosy cured at Koratty Leprosy Hospital in Trichur district, Kerala

PROF. SAVITHRI LAKSHMANAN (Mukundapuram): Koratty Leprosy Hospital, Trichur District, Kerala is one of the oldest hospitals in the State. A proposal for open-

ing of a Rehabilitation Centre there was in the process and even foundation stone thereof was laid a few years back.

The patients from the Hospital after treatment are not accepted by the society. The proposed rehabilitation centre is the only place where the cured leprosy patients can work and live.

At present 25 wards in this Leprosy Hospital are occupied by nearly 800 patients. Out of this, about 4 wards are filled with those patients who are totally immobile. The conditions of these leprosy patients are very pathetic and they run from pillar to post for maintaining their livelihood.

As a representative of the Koratty, I urge upon the Government to take immediate steps to issue necessary directions to start the long pending construction work and rehabilitate the patients who are totally cured from the Leprosy in the rehabilitation centre.

14.38 hrs.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Position of Indians in Kuwait

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH): I wish to revert once again to a matter which has caused deep concern to all of us in this House, that is, the condition of our nationals in Kuwait. On August 2 itself, the day the Iraqi troops entered Kuwait, we issued instructions to our Ambassador in Kuwait to take all possible measures for the safety and security of our nationals. He was specifically instructed to devise a suitable mechanism to keep in touch with our community, especially so in view of the large numbers involved. As the House is aware, we have about 172,000 of our nationals in Kuwait. Simultaneously, our Ambassador in Baghdad

[Sh. Hari Kishore Singh]

approached the Iraqi authorities to ensure that appropriate instructions were sent to the Commander in Kuwait in regard to the protection of our nationals. Our Ambassador was assured by the Iraqi authorities that such instructions had been sent. Since then, we have been taking up this matter on a daily basis with the Ambassador of Iraq here and our Ambassador in Baghdad has been doing so with the Government of Iraq on a continuous basis. Our Ambassador in Kuwait is also in daily contact with the local authorities there in order to ensure the security and safety of our nationals.

The communication links between Kuwait and the rest of the world became inoperative starting from August 3. At first, the telephone lines went dead, and then the telex lines. Within two days, there occurred a total breakdown of communication which is still continuing. We have managed to establish a communication link which is not entirely reliable and cannot take much load. This explains our inability to transmit individual enquiries and get replies from our Embassy in Kuwait.

It is not only the telecommunication link that has been snapped; the airports and sea-ports were closed on August 2, and to this day they remain so. There can, therefore, be no exit from Kuwait and Baghdad except through Amman, which is the only route kept open by the Iraqi authorities.

We have kept the House and the general public regularly informed on the basis of the scanty information that we have been receiving from our Ambassador in Kuwait through the communication link that was established and on the basis of the information we have been receiving from the Iraqi Ambassador in India and our Ambassador in Baghdad. After the last statement on this subject made by the External Affairs Minister on August 10, we have received further reports which indicate that our community is generally safe and

sound. Water and electricity are available. Essential food items are available, though there are indications that there might be shortages of some items. Since banks are closed, there may not be enough money left to buy essential items. Law and order situation is generally satisfactory, but with the passage of time, there are signs of deterioration. Some cases of thefts and looting have come to the attention of our Ambassador in Kuwait. At the same time, he was reported that offenders have been severely dealt with on the spot.

In the unusual conditions currently prevailing in the area, we are trying our best to evacuate our nationals who are stranded or in distress. We had over 700 Haj pilgrims stranded in Baghdad. There are other Indians in a similar position, like the passengers of the British Airways flight which reached Kuwait on 1/2 August, members of Air India crew who were on lay-over at that time, etc. Since all the airports and sea ports in Iraq and Kuwait remain closed, and it is approximately 2,000 KMs drive from Kuwait to Amman via Baghdad, the task of evacuation becomes extremely difficult. It is difficult to mobilise transport for such a long journey. Besides, in the current conditions, it is a difficult task to ensure safety during the journey.

My colleague, Mr. Arif Mohammed Khan flew to Amman on August 13 to see for himself the arrangements made for evacuation from Amman and seek the cooperation of the local authorities. He met the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Interior, Mr. Salem Masa 'deh, and Minister for Transport and Civil Aviation Mr. Nabil Abu Al-Huda. He was assured of full cooperation by the Royal Jordanian Government. The first Air India flight carrying 210 Indian pilgrims and over 70 other Indians who had managed to reach Amman from Kuwait by road, landed in Bombay in the early hours of the morning of August 15. The next day another flight carrying 375 passengers

reached Bombay. Shri Arif Mohammed Khan is today proceeding to Saudi Arabia to have discussion with the local authorities on the question of the evacuation of Indian nationals from Saudi Arabia. According to the latest report, Some 500 Indians have crossed over from Kuwait to Saudi Arabia. Some of our nationals living in Saudi Arabia also want to return to India. Shri Khan would meet our nationals in Saudi Arabia in order to assure them of the Government's determination to do all that is possible to ensure their safety and security.

We have taken steps to strengthen our Missions in Amman and Saudi Arabia. We shall strengthen our Missions in Baghdad and Kuwait as soon as we are enabled to do so by the local authorities.

The External Affairs Minister (EAM) left for Moscow on August 14 and met his Soviet counterpart Mr. Shevardnadze the same afternoon. The main points covered in his discussion were the safety and security of the Indian nationals in Kuwait and the adverse impact on India's economy of the problem of finding alternative sources of supply of oil and of the increase in oil prices. Approximately 50% of our total oil imports used to come from Iraq and Kuwait until they were stopped following the mandatory sanction applied by the UN Security Council.

While in Moscow, the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mr. Tariq Aziz had a telephonic conversation with our EAM in which, apart from inviting EAM to visit Baghdad, he assured that the Iraqi Government would take the necessary measures to protect Indian nationals in Kuwait and Iraq and facilitate the evacuation of those who are stranded or in distress.

EAM went to Washington from Moscow on 15th August and met Secretary of State Mr. James Baker the same evening. There also, the principal focus of his discussion was the problems created by the current

situation in the Gulf for the Indian economy and Indian nationals in this region.

EAM is expected to visit Baghdad either tonight or tomorrow morning. In Baghdad, he will pursue with the Iraqi authorities the question of the safety and security of Indian nationals there and the evacuation of those who are in distress or stranded.

There is yet another matter relating to the Indian nationals in Kuwait which is causing concern to us. The UN Security Council has imposed economic sanctions against Iraq. Under the Security Council Resolution, the only exceptions are food and medicines on humanitarian grounds. Kuwait is heavily dependent on imported food; so is Iraq. I mentioned earlier about the signs of possible food shortage in Kuwait. We are worried that if this occurs, our nationals in Kuwait will suffer most. There are provisions in the UN Charter which enables a member State confronted with special economic problems arising from the implementation of sanctions imposed by the Security Council, to consult the Council with regard to the solution of these problems. We have instructed our Permanent Representative in New York to get in touch with his colleagues from countries placed in a similar position in Kuwait, to explore the possibility of convening a meeting of the Security Council for this purpose. Some of these countries have reacted positively to our suggestion. I also took up this matter with the UN Secretary General when I met him in New York on August 10 when he agreed that this issue could be raised under the relevant provisions of the Charter. But, as the House knows, the Security Council can act only if all the Permanent Members agree. We are, therefore, consulting these countries also before taking a final decision on this matter.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN (Mavelikara):

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I want to.....

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Generally it is not allowed. But as a special case, I am allowing you.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: I do not think the statement has given anything more than what has been read in the newspapers. You yourself have said that those who are in distress and are stranded should be brought back. Of course, you have taken some steps in regard to those who are stranded. But in regard those who are in distress in Kuwait and want to come back, I want to know whether your Ambassador there has made an assessment of the number of people who want to come back. According to the information which we are getting otherwise from other sources like telephone calls from U.S.A., etc., at least 50,000 of them want to come back immediately, i.e. about one-fourth of our population, mainly children and women. How do you assess that?

No. 2, what is the action plan you are taking to bring them back? You have not mentioned that at all. You have said that there is only one part Amman, only one gate-way through which we can bring our people, but it is 2,000 kms. away from Kuwait. But there are exit points in Iraq. We are in good relation with Iraq. Why don't you talk with Iraq Government, why doesn't our Prime Minister or senior Minister go to Baghdad, talk to the Iraq President so that Iraq Government can facilitate and help us in bringing our nationals from Kuwait? Kuwait is fully under the military control of Iraq. Therefore, what is the difficulty in taking up the matter with Iraq President and settling it? For bringing our people, if there is some expenditure, we should meet it, we should give the compensation.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: At 3 O' Clock, we start Private Members' Business.

P.J. KURIEN: I will be brief. Thirdly, you said actually not only that there is food shortage, you admitted that there is no money because Dinar is not exchangeable. So,

shortage of money problem is there. What are you going to do about that? You kindly clarify these three.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO (Mormugao): I have myself been to that area and there are two things that appear to be very important. One, we are not getting any information from Kuwait on specifics, on individuals. I understand that today or tomorrow Shri I.K. Gujral, the Foreign Minister, is going to be in Baghdad. He is being accompanied by a high-level delegation of officials. The important point on which I want to request the hon. Minister is this: Please send one of the Senior officials to Kuwait so that he can make an assessment, coordinate and bring us the information. He can be the Secretary himself. Shri I.K. Gujral or anybody can decide it. There is already food shortage. Therefore, will the Government send food supply to Kuwait, particularly meant for the Indian community but even otherwise. Please coordinate with representatives of different organisations like the Kerala Samaj and the organisations in Tamil Nadu and distribute food supplies. All these organisations are doing splendid work. Will you coordinate with them and will you send the representative of ours to report to us on what is happening there? These are the two things on which I want the reply of the hon. Minister. I seek a brief clarification.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (Jodhpur): I am given to understand that some other country, particularly for example, Japan has been able to take their citizens out of Kuwait, those who are stranded there, they are able to take them to Baghdad and back. There are two separate aspects of this problem. One is that such Indians or people of Indian origin or people of Indian ethnic origin as are in Kuwait, have been working in Kuwait and now wish to move out.

The other relates to the stranded B.A. Airlines. All other passengers are on British Airlines whether they are Englishmen or Americans, have been taken to Baghdad. But Indian

passengers who were in transit and who are destined to India are now stranded in Kuwait. They fall in a separate category. They do not number more than 120. If you have made arrangements for the Haj pilgrim's return, surely you can make arrangements for these 120 odd passengers also to be flown back. They are stranded in Kuwait. This is an aspect which requires an urgent and immediate clarification.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Minister please.

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH: How many people want to come back? Not only 50,000 but, we presume, the entire population in Kuwait would like to come back.

SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN (Cannanore): No.

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH: This is the present situation. You cannot be very sure. As I said, 50,000 want to come back. We have a contingency plan. There is a ship there which can carry 1,500 people at a time.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA (Midnapore): Haj people.

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH: Haj people are coming back from other country. The main problem is how to get to Kuwait. This is the main problem.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Write to Sardar Hussein.

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH: Our Foreign Minister Shri I.K. Gujral will be reaching either tonight or tomorrow to Baghdad. He is at the moment in London. From London, he will take flight to Amman and is on the way to Amman. This is my information. Probably, he will go to Baghdad tonight or tomorrow to speak to the Iraqi Government about the security and safety of our Indian nationals who are stranded in Kuwait or Baghdad.

About the food supply, it is very difficult to arrange for food supply on such a massive scale.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: You give something.

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH: There are 1,72,000 people. How to distribute it. You cannot go to Kuwait. There is no facility to reach Kuwait at the moment. The first objective is to meet Iraqi authorities at the highest level and to plead to them so that we can ensure communication with our nationals who are there. We have sent senior officials. One of the senior Joint Secretaries has gone there with number of staff. If we are allowed, they will be stationed there to enable our Missions both in Baghdad and Kuwait to function more effectively. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: You go to Kuwait.

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH: The senior Minister has gone. He will be more effective. *(Interruptions)*

Regarding the stranded passengers of the British Airways, in spite of our best efforts, we have not been able to get any information about them except that they are lodged in a hotel. After that, we have not been able to get any information. All these things are in the agenda. That is why, the senior Minister has gone, senior officials have gone. And number of staff is there. We are trying to establish direct contact with Kuwait. So, all the efforts are being done. Government is trying to do whatever is possible within its power to secure information. That is the basic and the first necessity so that we are able to get in touch with them. We have received about 1,000 names. We have got about 1,000 enquiries from different people. All the papers have been taken by them. As soon as we are able to reach Kuwait or Baghdad, we will be able to make individual contact. *(Interruptions)*

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: I went to Cochin Inquiry Office day before yesterday and the inquiry number was 4000 something. So, one thousand number is not correct.

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH: I am talking of the full address of those people which was provided to us. (*Interruptions*)

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will you come back on Monday with the latest information?

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH: If we are able to establish contact, everything will be cleared by Monday. (*Interruptions*)

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ (Bara-mulla): I want to seek a clarification. First of all, everybody must come home. The Government is responsible for that. In fact, I do not agree with the Minister that nothing can be done so far as relief measures are concerned. Those who are infirm, old or sick must receive the priority in coming home. Second priority must go to Hajis because they had gone to perform a religious function. Would you assure the House that Hajis will receive proper facilities to come back after the infirms and old?

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH: Hon. Member must have read in the newspaper that Hajis are given the first priority and a number of them have already come. (*Interruptions*)

15.00 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE. BAN ON COW SLAUGHTER

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House shall now take up the Private Members' Business; further discussion on the following Resolution moved by Shri Guman Mal Lodha on the 4th May, 1990:

"This House is of the opinion that the Government should bring forward a suitable legislation to ban slaughter of cow and

its progeny throughout the country".

Before further discussion resumes on the subject I would like to mention that two hours and nine minutes have already been taken on this Resolution, thus exhausting the time of two hours allotted for this discussion. The House has now to extend time for further discussion on this Resolution.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the time allotted for this Resolution be extended by one hour?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes Sir.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: So the time is extended by one hour. Shri Harish Rawat to speak.

[*Translation*]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT (Almora): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the cow has always enjoyed a very important place in our country since ancient times. We recognise it also due to economic considerations. In a sense cow forms basis of our family in the same way as agriculture is the base of our life. Therefore, as far as the question of proper protection and care of cow and its progeny is concerned, I think that Government should prepare a comprehensive plan for it because just operation flood I, II or III would not do. For this we would have to take every district as a unit. Presently, the situation is so bad that if a survey is conducted it will be found that 80 per cent of the cows give nothing except cow-dung. They give very little milk. All the programmes related to cattle development are under State Governments but due to paucity of funds they are unable to take up cattle development programmes. No facility for artificial insemination of foreign breeds of cow is available in districts and if they are available, the equipments are outdated and conceiving percentage is very low and if there is some conceiving the calving percentage is still lower. For example, if conceiving percentage is 20 calving percentage is just 2. The same situation