

It has a University, a very important centre of Defence Department and a big business centre. Many cement factories are also situated in Damoh. But in the absence of direct fast trains for Bombay, Calcutta and Ahmedabad, the people of this place have to go to Bina or Katni to catch the trains for these cities. Many a times the passengers miss the trains and as a result they have to face lot of inconvenience.

Therefore, two fast trains may be introduced. One between Banaras and Bombay via Allahabad, Katni, Bina, Bhopal, Itarasi and another between Allahabad and Ahmedabad via Katni, Bina and Kota.

[English]

- (vi) Need to accept the recommendations of Fourth Pay Commission regarding grant of ex-gratia payment to CPF retirees

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, I draw the attention of the House to the plight of these retired employees of the railways who had retired on Provident Fund terms and could not exercise option to pension scheme.

These handful of retired employees were happy to learn that the IVth Pay Commission had recommended grant of Ex-gratia payment of Rs 300/- per month to all CPF retirees whose basic pay was below Rs. 500, payment of 50 per cent of the above mentioned ex-gratia amount to widows of CPF retirees and another chance for option to pension scheme to such retirees.

But these retired employees are worried because so far Government have not announced acceptance of the above recommendations. I am receiving many anxious enquiries from these retired employees about Government's decisions on the recommendations of the commission relating to CPF retirees.

I may mention here that the number of PF retirees is decreasing due to death etc. I therefore urge upon the Government to immediately issue orders for grant of ex-gratia

amount and option to pension scheme etc. to PF retirees before it is too late to do so.

- (vii) Need to avoid discrimination in the matter of issuance of passports to the people of Punjab

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOO-WALIA (Sangrur): Sir, nearly about 35,000 Passport applications are pending in Regional Passport offices Chandigarh and Jullunder—for those who have to go to abroad either as visitors to see their relatives or for employment purposes. There are hundreds of applicants who have been offered employment with intimation to produce their passport upto certain date. But their passports are not being issued because Chandigarh police is not giving clearance to the applicants.

This practice of getting clarification is applicable only for applicants from Punjab. It is open discrimination against the people of Punjab, is very serious. The Government should immediately intervene and set things right.

- (viii) Demand for constructing a bridge over railway crossing at Thirupaliyar town in Tamil Nadu

SHRI P. R. S. VENKATESAN (Cuddalore): Sir, in my constituency Cuddalore N.T., the Railway Station in Thirupapuliur is situated at the centre of the town. Thirupapuliur town is a famous pilgrim centre. There is a railway crossing in the heart of the town which has been causing lot of difficulties to the road traffic due to frequent closing of railway gates for rail traffic. Many accidents have taken place at this railway crossing. Since this railway crossing is dividing the town separating mofussil bus stand, Government hospital, markets and many villages on one side and the local residents, temples, shops, offices, etc. on the other side, people living in the town are put to lot of difficulties.

Sir, the people of the town have been demanding for many years now, construction of a bridge over this railway crossing so that traffic congestion and accidents are

avoided at this point. I have also brought to the notice of the Government on various occasions, in this House, for provision of a bridge at this busy and congested railway crossing.

It is, therefore, requested that the Ministry of Railways may please take necessary action for sanction and immediate construction of a bridge at this busy railway crossing.

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13.20 hrs.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS, 1987-88—
(Contd.)

[English]

(i) Ministry of External Affairs—(Contd)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Now the House will take up further discussion and voting on the Demand for Grant under the control of the Ministry of External Affairs.

Shri Ramaiah.

SHRI B. B. RAMAIAH (Eluru) : I thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to speak a few words on the Ministry of External Affairs. We are spending so much on this Ministry. What for we are spending? The main purpose of this Ministry is to improve our relations with neighbouring countries and also to improve trade and commerce.

First of all, I want to touch upon what is happening with our neighbouring countries like Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and China. In spite of our best efforts, we have not been able to improve our relations with these countries to the desired extent. We have not been able to solve the problem of Sri Lanka nor could we reduce the tensions on the Indo Pak border. We could also not able to solve the border disputes with China. Let me go further and say what has happened in the case of Middle East countries where our people are contributing substantial foreign exchange by way of their earnings. But we are not able to look into their problems properly. We have not tried

to give them proper assistance so far as banking facilities, etc., are concerned. Our embassies have to look after those people carefully. But we are receiving complaints that the embassies are simply not issuing passports and visas to them. The contribution of our embassies is not sufficient for improving trade and commerce with foreign countries. There should be close coordination between the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of External Affairs to improve our import and export trade. What real work they are doing for the benefit of our country?

If you take some East European countries and the Common Market countries, they have a common understanding in various fields like trade and commerce, free movement of goods in order to strengthen their economies mutually. We should also have got bulk orders for our country for dress-making and other items where we have surplus manpower. This would improve the economic conditions of our people.

I would like to say that our relations with Japan and Korea should be improved so that we have a lot of foreign collaborations for development in our country. This would improve our technology and production.

Though we are leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement for a long time, we are not able to do anything in relation to Iran-Iraq war. The results are not very encouraging.

In the case of Bangladesh, still the Ganga water dispute at Farakka has not been solved properly. Infiltration of refugees from Bangladesh into our country is still there. We have not been able to resolve the issue of refugees crossing through our common border.

We should have trade relations with ASEAN countries where there is scope for improvement of trade and commerce. I hope efforts will be made in this respect as early as possible.

Coming to our relations with USA and USSR, I would like to say that we should