

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: So, the House agrees with this.

[English]

RE: INCREASE IN RAILWAY FARE IN THE  
SUBURBAN AREAS OF BOMBAY AND  
CALCUTTA.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE (CALCUTTA SOUTH):  
Sir, yesterday, we had raised the issue regarding increase  
in railway fare in the suburban areas of Bombay and  
Calcutta. We requested the Hon. Minister that until and  
unless the Budget is passed, it should not be increased  
from the 1st April. I request the Minister to clarify the  
position because it was not cleared yesterday and see  
that it should not be increased from the 1st April.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAIK (Bombay North) : I understand  
that the issue raised yesterday was made clear Basudev  
Acharia jee, Sharad Dighe jee and myself had said  
something yesterday and you asked for an explanation  
from the Hon. Railway Minister and he replied something  
to that and then you made some comments. All that is  
on record. That day it was clarified that Rail fares will  
not be increased. In the meanwhile more issues surfaced  
and we were demanding that the fare of suburban trains  
should not be increased, then this had become clear  
and public opinion built up that fares were not going to  
be increased. I understand that no one among we four  
members were of the opinion that freight or AC fare  
should not be increased. We had not urged upon him  
to this effect. Our objective was restricted to suburban  
rail fare and that it should not be increased. We have  
got no objection to other fares whether increased or not.

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH (Aonla) : We have got  
objection to it. Train fare should not be increased.

SHRI RAM NAIK : Yesterday, I had raised the issue  
concerning the fare of suburban rails. Minister of  
Railways had clarified something in that regard only. I  
would like the Minister of Railway to give more  
clarifications. We had demanded that there should be  
no increase in the fare of Suburban trains. There must  
be some clarification about it.

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH: No, unless and until the  
report of standing committee is received, there should  
be no increase in the fare of any class.

MR. SPEAKER : Wherever there are such situations  
there is confusion. Yesterday also the same thing  
happened and there was the problem. When so many  
people speak at a time, there is always a problem. If  
they speak one by one, then the Minister can replay.

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria): This may be the  
personal opinion of Hon. Member. It is, the problem is  
not only about Suburban trains. You will have to hear  
opinions about both. There should not be any increase  
in the fare unless and until the report of Standing  
Committee is received.

MR. SPEAKER : If the fare is not increased, then

it will incur a loss of rupees 300-400 crore. Then your  
Rail lines will not be completed.

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : If the fare is increased,  
then this will send the message in countryside that justice  
is done to urbanites only, and not to the villagers  
....(Interruptions)

[(English)]

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, yesterday  
what we wanted to know is that as the Budget is not  
being passed, whether the Government is competent to  
increase the freight and fare without passing the Budget.  
Let me quote from what the Hon. Minister stated  
yesterday in reply to the points we raised. He said :

"There is no question of raising of any fare or  
price. It comes only in the next Budget."

MR. SPEAKER: You read the entire thing. You  
should not inform the House partly.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Right, Sir.

The Hon. Minister said:

"We come to the Parliament for there  
expenditure. So far as raising the resources  
are concerned, this particular Vote on Account  
and the Supplementary Grants, there is no  
question of raising of any fare or price. It  
comes only in the next Budget. The  
opportunity is going to come before the  
House..."

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, read it again.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Sir, after that you said:

"After the Budget is passed, you will do it.  
Okay, that is right."

Then Sir, you told me:

"Mr. Basudeb Acharia, now there is no point.  
You should be happy about it. You should  
thank him."

Sir, then you said:

"If you want to be more clear, you will be at  
a disadvantage."

MR. SPEAKER: Yes.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: What is that  
disadvantage, I want to know.

SHRI CHITTA BASU (Barast): Sir, here it is clear  
that this thing will be finally executed after the Budget is  
passed. ....(Interruptions)

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Sir, I have not made  
my points.

Yesterday, what we demanded was that the sub-  
urban passengers, the daily commuters, the season ticket  
holders, second class passengers should be spared in  
this Budget. But the Hon. Railway Minister has not  
spared them.

MR. SPEAKER: No, no. This is not a regular  
speech, Mr. Basudeb Acharia, I am not allowing these  
things to go on record.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Sir, I will finish within one minute.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: That is why we demanded that this fare increase should be postponed in regard to atleast sub-urban passengers, daily commuters, season ticket holders not only till the Budget is passed but they should not be taxed, their fares should not be increased. That was our point.

SHRI SHARAD DIGHE (Bombay North Central): Yesterday we got a clear impression that there would be no like in the season ticket as far as the sub-urban railways are concerned...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Dighe, one point you will make me clear.

Is it necessary to take the sanction of the House to increase the fare?

SHRI SHARAD DIGHE: If there is any legal difficulty it should be done. That is what I am coming to it.

MR. SPEAKER: So, let us not extract something from the Minister by creating confusion or legal difficulties in all these things.

SHRI SHARAD DIGHE: I understand, there is some legal difficulty. There are also rulings given in the past by the various Speakers on this point. But even then, I would appeal to the Minister that please find out some way so that fare is not increased immediately before the discussion takes place.

MR. SPEAKER: That is correct.

SHRI SHARD DIGHE: Sir, as a Minister he can do it, that is, not to introduce immediately on 1st of April but to introduce it from 1st of June before which the discussion will take place. Other things you can do...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM NAIK: Sir, I have some opinion. I feel and it is my opinion that the Railway Minister has a legal authority to raise the fare at any time. About that there is no doubt, at least, in my mind because once I had raised a breach of privilege and you had given ruling accordingly. So, legally there is no bar. But we feel that taking into consideration the feelings of the sub-urban commuters, the demand should be taken into consideration and that is why it should not be increased. Legally, there is no bar. But having done all this exercise yesterday, it would be in the interest of the commuters, in the interest of the country also that fare is not increased.

MR. SPEAKER: Yesterday, some Members had raised this issue and they were trying to get something from the Hon. Minister. I also asked him whether he could raise the fare even without the sanction of the House. So many people were speaking at the same time and the Minister had to pay attention to many people who were speaking one and the same time. I must say that I was also pressurising him and I was asking him whether he could do it without the sanction of the House. But legally, the correct position is while you cannot tax

the people without the sanction of the House, as far as increase in fares is concerned -- whether it be railway fare or air fare or any other fare -- sanction of the House is not necessary. I had given a considered ruling on that point when Shri Naik had raised it some time back.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria): They will never come...(Interruptions) you should not give them this right.

MR. SPEAKER: I am not giving that, this has already been given in our Constitution. We, here in the House are not giving to them.

Without sanction, fare cannot be imposed and no expenditure can be made. The reason is whenever fare is imposed on them, there is no corresponding increase in the quality of service but we do extract money from them. When the fare is increased, that is done in lieu of service. This difficulty is with Railway Ministry also.

[English]

Probably, the Railway Minister was trying to be quite helpful and in his generous attitude, he had said certain things. But I think the House should understand his difficulties also and leave it to him to decide in whatever fashion he wants to do it,

SHRI SHARAD DIGHE: He may please give an assurance.

MR. SPEAKER: He would take your view into account. At the same time, we should also take into account his difficulties and leave it to him to decide.

SHRI RAM NAIK: We appeal to the Minister to please respond. Otherwise, there will be commotion in all-suburban sections. The news has already gone and if the Minister delays the information, it will unnecessarily cause resentment.

MR. SPEAKER: He will deal with it in a fashion which will not cause any problem to anyone.

SHRI RAM NAIK: He can respond now! Let him please respond. We appeal to him because we know the feelings of the commuters.

MR. SPEAKER: It should be done in a proper manner. He has certain difficulties. Let him examine it. Let us not pressurise him to do thing in a fashion which will create problems. But he should keep the views expressed by Hon. Members here on this subject.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C.K.JAFFER SHARIEF): I thank you very much. I also thank the Hon. Members. As you have rightly pointed out, we will take the views expressed by the Hon. Members yesterday and today. We will also need to the advice given by you. We will take all that into consideration and we will see what best we can do to protect the overall interest of the people and at the same time the interest of the Railways as well.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you,

Now, a very peculiar situation has arisen. We have been working since morning. Probably, some of the Hon. Members have gone to have their lunch. I think we

can do without the lunch hour. If we have to facilitate the starting of the Private Members' Business on time, I think the House can continue without any lunch break. Now, it is 3.30 p.m. and we have to take up the Private Members' Business.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : Matters under Rule 377 may please be allowed.

MR. SPEAKER : Matters under Rule 377 will be allowed. Afterwards private members will be taken up, there is a little time left for it.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P.M.SAYEED) : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission, I would like to submit that we may pass the Indian Penal Code (Amendment) Bill which has already been passed in the other House.

MR. SPEAKER: No, no. In this House, I should not be taken by surprise in this way.

SHRI P.M.SAYEED: There is only a small amendment to be done in a single section.

MR. SPEAKER: Before allowing you, I should understand what is there. If it were really of a technical nature, I would have agreed. But I had to apply my mind. Had you talked to me beforehand, I would have applied my mind. That is a different thing.

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Yesterday, the situation was critical, that is why we have done this, it is not possible every day.

HON. SPEAKER: This is his difficulty but even then he does not want to do it.

[English]

15.30 hrs

#### MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

- (i) NEED TO GRANT ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE TO KARWAFI MEDIUM IRRIGATION PROJECT IN GADCHIROLI DISTRICT OF MAHARASHTRA

SHRI SHANTARAM POTDUKHE (CHANDRAPUR): Sir, various irrigation projects of Gadchiroli and Chandrapur districts of Maharashtra are awaiting clearance from Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India. One such project awaiting clearance is Karwafi Medium irrigation project in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra. Near about 770.25 hectares of forest land is involved in this project. The project proposals have been submitted to Government of India by Government of Maharashtra. This project has been administratively approved by Government of India with the help of the World Bank. Government of Maharashtra have spent nearly three crores of rupees till 1984 for the construction of buildings, approach roads and foundation of the project. Work has been stopped for want of Environmental clearance. Gadchiroli is a tribal district with 68% forest cover.

15.31 hrs

(MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER IN THE CHAIR)

I urge upon Minister of Environment and Forests to examine this project from all angles and take necessary steps for clearance for this project in the naxalite affected areas.

- (ii) NEED TO CELEBRATE 3RD CENTENARY OF CREATION OF THE ORDER OF KHALSA BY GURU GOBIND SINGH AS THE 'YEAR OF HUMAN SPIRIT'

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL (CHANDIGARH): Sir, it was in the year 1699 that Guru Gobind Singh established the Order of Khalsa. He emphasised on the oneness of all humanity highlighting the univiersality of the human spirt. The completion of the third centenary of the major event would obviously generate great enthusiasm in India and abroad. It will only add to the richness of India's diversity and install greater inter-faith understanding if the year 1999 is celebrated as the "Year of the Human Spirit". This would help make a new beginning in the relationship of the Sikh community with people of other faiths, transcending sectarian and any other narrow consideration.

I urge the Government to set up a National Committee for the purpose associating important national figures and also to approach the United Nations to observe the year as the "Year of the Human Spirit".

- (iii) NEED FOR EARLY SETTLEMENT OF COMPENSATION CLAIMS OF FARMERS WHOSE LAND WAS ACQUIRED FOR CONSTRUCTION OF FIRING RANGE AT MAHAJAN TOWN IN BIKANER, RAJASTHAN.

[Translation]

SHRI MANPHOOL SINGH (Bikaner): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, thirty four villages were get vacated when a firing range was constructed in Mahajan city of Rajasthan. The Farmers of these villages were given agricultural land in lieu of agricultural land and those people who wanted compensation for residential area were given the compensation for that but due to the lapses on the part of officers some agriculturists could still not covered and they were neither given cultivable land nor compensation for their cultivable land. These farmers are still running from pillar to post for compensation for their agricultural and residential land for the last 10-15 years.

Similarly, no compensation has been paid for school buildings, wells and agricultural land has not been paid so far.

We urge upon the Government to get it investigated and then the farmers should be paid compensation promptly by issuing order to this effect immediately.

- (iv) NEED TO PROVIDE BETTER TELECOM FACILITIES TO MAYURBHANJ IN ORISSA

[English]

KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIYA (Mayurbhanj): Sir, Mayurbhanj, Balasore and Bhadrak revenue districts are