

our short history of 4.5 decades, after our freedom, we had some bitter experiences from our neighbours. We were the civtims of aggression. Perhaps in the very beginning because of our policy we did not want to spend our foreign exchange resources on the development of armaments and maintaining a large arms stock and we had to pay for that. One who will go through the debates of, this House will find that there was one time when almost the entire Parliament was against the Government and the Government was charged of neglecting, ignoring and not paying proper attention to strengthen our defence.

16.00 hrs.

But that was not out of a wrong understanding. It was out of a well thought-out understanding that India did not want to be an army power. India did not want to be a nuclear power. India did not want to maintain a large army and develop and spend its resources on armed forces. But after those expeneeces, we had to pay greater attention to strengthen our army and also to equip our army with modern armaments and very rightly the attention was also paid to research and development work in our own country so that India can be a self-sufficient country in its defence also.

But, today, I think the Prime Minister when he is heading this Ministry, he and his Government must give very serious thought to certian major policy issues. I would very shortly like to point out those major issues which require serious thought today.

A few years back our late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and the former President of the Soviet Union signed an agreement here in Delhi and we said that we want a world free from nuclear weapons and violence. I think that was a right lead given to the entire world because the most haunting problem today is the nuclear weaponry, nuclear weapons-not that they have great destructive capacity but that they are most costly weapons also. We must have a proper

policy today.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Yadav, just a minute. The hon. Minister wants to make an urgent statement regarding the air crash at Aurangabad. I will allow him. You may continue later.

16.03 hrs.

#### STATEMENT BY MINISTER

(II) *Crash of Indian Airlines Boeing 737 Aircraft near Aurangabad Airport on 26.4.1993*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): The House is aware of the tragic accident to Indian Airlines flight IC-491 on 26th April, 1993 at Aurangabad.

The aircraft, with 112 passengers and 6 crew members, had just taken off from Aurangabad for Bombay. Before it could gain enough height, its wheel gear hit a high-rse truck, loaded with cotton, passing on the road close to the runway outside the perimeter wall at the eastern end. The landing gear of the aircraft broke off under the impact and the aircraft swered to the left. Thereafter it hit a power transmission line and crashed in the field at a distance of about 7 km' from the airport. The aircraft broke into pieces and caught fire.

While 63 persons including the pilot, the co-pilot and 2 other members of the crew have survived, it is a matter for deep regret that 53 passengers and 2 members of the crew lost their lives. 12 of the surviving passengers, who had sustained injury, were admitted to the local hospital; 3 of them left the hospital after first aid and the rest are recovering.

I visited the crash site along with senior officials of the Ministry and Indian Airlines and metsome of the surviving passengers, including

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those in the hospital. Chief Minister of Maharashtra had also come over from Bombay and the State Government took all possible rescue and relief measures.

Special information cells have been set up at Delhi, Udaipur, Jaipur, Aurangabad and Bombay to provide information to relatives of the passengers. Arrangements have also been made for members of the bereaved families of Bombay, Jaipur and Udaipur to be taken to Aurangabad.

Compensation for loss of life in the accident would be paid at the rate of Rs. 5 lakhs for adults and rs. 2.5 lakhs for children to the next of kin.

The available information and the situation prima facie, do not indicate any sabotage. However, Government have decided to institute a judicial inquiry which will reveal full facts and circumstances of the unfortunate accident. DGCA has commenced preliminary investigations.

The sorrow we feel on this sad occasion cannot be describe in words. I am sure Hon'ble Members will join me in sharing the grief of the kith and kin of those who lost their precious lives in this unfortunate incident

[*Translation*]

SHRI SHARAD YADAV (Madhepura): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I was raising this issue today in the morning itself and while doing so I said one thing. It was about landing and taking off of planes at smaller airports like Udaipur. I said that as per the existing work culture in India, it is unfortunate that the persons in the public sector or in any other Government machinery do not perform their duties with a sense of responsibility. The Government has, of course, instituted a judicial inquiry, but it will take a long time for submitting its report. I have myself had an experience of going through this route. Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you, I would like to ask or say, I would

like to convey to the hon. Minister that the technicians appointed at smaller stations like Udaipur are irresponsible and inefficient in checking the airworthiness of planes while the technicians working at big stations like Calcutta or Bombay are competent and highly skilled. Whenever we undertake journey through planes, we observe that the technicians come and return within 5 minutes. What can they check in 5 minutes? They might be checking two-three things and then they return. Suppose the said plane had not stopped at 4 stations that is to say, it had not to take off on 4 stations. You know, a plane has to exercise maximum energy at the time of landing and taking off and since it has to apply all its energy at the time of landing and taking off. So the chances of accident are maximum on those two occasions. So I would like to submit that there should be an immediate review about the scheduled under which the plane has to stop at 4 stations. If the plane had taken off from here itself, then it would have had 2 take offs and 2 landings and in that case this accident could have been averted. That is why I am saying that these accidents are due to the passenger type system of flight. I would further like to know whether the hon. Minister has got the information about this or not?

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister and would like to tell him that the day before yesterday one person had come to attend a marriage in Kota city from Aurangabad and yesterday he was going back to Aurangabad via Jaipur by the same plane. The news of accident of that plane came on television at 3 o'Clock and with that I grew anxious about that fellow. I kept on trying to gather some news in this regard ever since 3 O'Clock, but I could not succeed. It was not conveyed through television as to at which place information regarding the accident could be available. I was, however, trying my best to get any information in this regard. I rang up at your residence at 6 O'Clock at last and only then I came to know that the hon. Minister had personally gone to the site of accident and I could know nothing more than that. That is to say there was

no arrangement to provide any information in this regard even at your residence. I hoped that there must be some arrangement to provide information in this regard at least at your residence. I was much worried for not getting any information from anywhere. It could be okay if information in this regard would have at least been given in the evening news at 6.05 p.m. on T.V. or radio. You should have made some arrangement of this kind. The people throughout the country were worried following this accident and the family members of the travellers had to undergo acute mental agony due to lack of arrangement to provide information in this regard. The lack of information arrangement added further agony to the already worried members of the family.

Secondly, I would like to ask whether it is a fact that there was a truck on the runway loaded with cotton bales. If it is a fact then it is another subject of inquiry as to how a truck loaded with cotton bales came on the runway. It is all right that you have set up an inquiry in this regard. But generally it has been observed at every place that people keep moving on the runway in an unauthorised way. I would like you to make a reply in this regard also. (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI E. AHAMED (Manjeri). Sir, the airworthiness of some of our aircrafts is not good. Then there is also a complaint that the maintenance was not adequate and also the over-utilisation of these aircrafts is causing this type of accidents. We have ageing 737 aircrafts. I would like to know whether the Government or the Ministry has been paying sufficient attention to take care of the maintenance when all other countries are phasing out 737 series. Will the Government apply its mind on this very important question so as to remove the apprehensions in the minds of the people?

MR CHAIRMAN. Ordinarily, we do not allow any clarifications on the statement. But since this being a very said incident, I am allowing two

or three Members to ask clarifications.

[*Translation*]

KUMARI MAMTA BANERJEE (Calcutta South). Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is a highly tragic accident. The way the incidents of hijacking and air-crash are taking place has left the people in doubts. I would like to know as to what steps are being taken by the hon. Minister to boost up the morale of the public. The inquiry will take six months to submit its report. Private Airlines are ready to give more salary to the captains than what is given by the Indian Airlines. The captains of Indian Airlines have been offered rupees five lakh by the other Airlines. The Captains of Indian Airlines are given 10-12 thousand only.

There is a possibility of internal sabotage is the accident that took place yesterday. Otherwise the accident could have been averted.

[*English*]

MR CHAIRMAN. He has instituted a judicial inquiry.

[*Translation*]

KUMARI MAMTA BANERJEE. It is very unfortunate. The judicial enquiry will take at least six months time. It is the matter pertaining to general public, M.P.s and Ministers. The M.P.s were discussing in the Central Hall yesterday whether they should travel by Airlines or not.

[*English*]

SHRI CHETAN P. S. CHAUHAN (Amroha). Sir, my first point is, so far 105 pilots of the Indian Airlines have left and they have gone either abroad or they have joined private airlines. Due to this, do we have technically trained pilots of the aircrafts? That is one point and my next point is, the 737 planes have already outlived their life of 10 years or whatever and they have been discarded all over the world. But we are still

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flogging those aircrafts. What is the Minister going to do about it because the people have lost the confidence? In the last one month, this is the fourth incident; three planes have been hijacked and the fourth is this crash. Earlier, his predecessor has resigned for only one crash. What is the Minister doing? He should resign immediately.

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): Yadvaji was saying in his question that there are accidents due to the fact that aircraft lands at 3-4 places. I am sorry that I do not share this view of the hon. Member because this is not the new arrangement, rather it is in practice for several years. I think that in our country the number of landings of a plane is least in the world, our aeroplanes are underutilised. Accident has nothing to do with it.

As regards the information some other hon. Member has sought to know, I would like to say that information was not available till 6 O'Clock. Nobody was able to say as to how many persons died and how many are alive (*Interruptions*)

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI (Kota): It was not known who died there. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: We were present there till 2 A.M. It was not known till that time. Then how you can get information at 6 A.M. I was myself there till 2 A.M. and we were trying our best to take out the dead bodies. The Ministry has sent an aeroplane with doctors and medicines from here. Another aeroplane was sent from Bombay which also carried medicines. The local administration was very active. The plane caught fire so at that time the best effort was how to take out the bodies. We have left three planes there from yesterday. The Government has made all arrangements to furnish information to the relatives of the passengers in Bombay,

Udaipur and Jaipur. We had also taken the crew members with us. Some passengers have returned by morning flight. It is wrong that a truck was stationed on the run-way. I do not know how this rumour was spread.

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI: The truck was stationed on the runway.. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: In my statement I have said that the road is very close to the runway and there is a wall between the two. I have accepted this thing in my statement that the runway and road run parallel. By chance when this plane took off the truck was also passing through there and unfortunately the truck was not any ordinary truck. It was loaded with cotton. People who have knowledge of cotton know well that cotton is loaded 30-40 feet high. Due to weight the plane rose up and hit cotton. After that one of its wheels came out. Efforts were made to control the plane upto 1-2 kms. There was a high tension line and it entangled with this line and the plane fell down. Eye witness said that the plane caught fire from the back portion and then it spread to the front. Persons sitting there whether they are the crew members or the passengers, jumped out of the plane, but the passengers sitting backside could not have opened the door due to fire as a result all the passengers sitting there died of burns. The passengers who died in this plane crash did not die of injuries but of fire. Had the plane not caught fire, 55 passengers sitting on back-side could have been saved as 63 passengers sitting in the front were saved. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI: This accident occurred due to the truck and the truck was on the runway.

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: The accident occurred due to truck but, how it can be on the runway. 10 thousand people were sitting there. I was not alone there, then how the truck can be on the runway... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SHYAM BIHARI MISRA (Bilhaur):

Hon. Lal Bahdur Shastri had resigned due to a rail accident. So you should also resign.

SHRIGHULAM NABI AZAD: Do not say so for your own publicity. Kindly listen to me. *(Interruptions)*

*[English]*

SHRI AMAL DATTA (Diamond Harbour): Was the dangerous situation not known earlier? Now I understand that this road has been closed temporarily, after the event has taken place.

Why was it not thought of by the Indian Airlines and the Administration earlier?

SHRIGHULAM NABI AZAD: Yesterday, the hon. Chief Minister was also there. He has ordered that there should be some barricades so that while taking off and landing, the road should be closed.

One hon. Member has said, Boeing 737 is an ageing aircraft. Yes, some of the 737 aircraft are aged aircraft. But according to the manufacturers, as far as their life is concerned, with normal maintenance and overhaul, the minimum life is 20.. *(Interruptions)*

They have not reached even minimum life so far. Flight utilisation, I must say, cycle flown should be 60,000; it has just flown only 50,000. Hours flown should be 60,000. It has just flown only 43,000. So, ageing factor is not correct. of course. There might be other contributory things. That is why, we instituted a judicial enquiry.

*[Translation]*

SHRI CHETAN P. S. CHAUHAN: First, tell us how will you take the public into confidence. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: It is an unfortunate thing that the accident occurred but it was not in our own hands to avoid it *(Interruptions)*

SHRIDAU DAYAL JOSHI: The year is just beginning and two accidents have occurred... *(Interruptions)*

16.20 hrs.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (GENERAL)  
1993-94

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

*[English]*

SHRI CHANDRA JEET YADAV (Azamgarh): Sir, I was saying that after having signed that agreement that we will build a world free from nuclear weapons and violence, I would like to know from the Prime Minister whether, after having signed that treaty only with one country, we stop there, or we as a great country which has taken several initiatives for the total disarmament and also evolved a world free from nuclear weapons, whether we will take further initiative, may with some other neighbouring countries, may be with China, whether we have explored the possibilities of signing this kind of agreement or, may be with other non-aligned country, with Indonesia which happens to be today the Chairman of the non-aligned movement or whether we will collectively, from the non-aligned countries, will take some initiative so that this major burden which is basically on the developing countries is no more there besides the danger which continues to be annihilation of humanity.

16.21 hrs.

(SHRI PETER G. MARBANIANG *in the Chair*)

Sometimes there seems to be contradictions, in our policies, in our pronouncements and in our implementation and that creates unnecessary doubt and it also provides opportunities to our enemies and opponents to us. That situation against us. For example, on the one hand, we talk that we are against nuclear weapons. But it is