

16.25 hrs

**RAILWAY PROTECTION FORCE  
(AMENDMENT) BILL, 1991**

(Substitution of new long title for long title etc.)

**By Shri Basudeb Acharia -**

[*Translation*]

SHRI SUBRATA MUKHERJEE (Raiganj) : Mr. Chairman, Sir I fully support the Bill introduced by Shri Basudeb Acharia. The RPF has been assigned the job of protecting the property of railways and their right to form an association is nothing new. They were enjoying this right to form an association is nothing new. They were enjoying this right earlier also but in 1985 it was withdrawn and the reason given was its nature of work is similar to that of military and para-military forces. But the nature of work of RPF is in no way comparable to military or para-military forces. It is simply a force which protects the railway property.

The right to form an association is a democratic right now and such a democratic right cannot be withdrawn. Therefore, it is very essential to restore this right. When Shri George Fernandes was the Minister of Railways, the matter was taken up with him and he assured that this right will be restored.

Today the hon. Minister Shri Kumaramangalam also raised the issue and expressed his opinion in favour of the recognition of its association. The entire House is of the view their right for forming an association should be restored. Both S/Shri George Fernandes and Janeshwar Mishra have made their statements in the House in favour of the restoration their right to form an association. I too demand for recognition of its association. With these words I conclude.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA (Andaman and Nicobar Islands). Mr. Chair-

man, Sir, I support the Bill presented in the House. This issue has been raised a number of time earlier also in this august House and hon. Members from both the sides of the House expressed their desire for tackling this issue particularly those aspects which are concerned with the Government at the earliest. I am thankful to Shri Acharia and especially to Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal who have brought this motion before the House. The question is under what category the RPF should be classified whether it is comparable to Active Force, Police Force, para-Military Force, or it is mere a watch and ward organisation, responsible for protecting the railway property.

The RPF Act, dates back to 1957. It was enacted with the sole objective of providing a watch and ward organisation for the protection of railway property. Today this Force is not vested with the powers of investigation or prosecute someone. The Railway protection Force have no powers under the law. The Railways have millions of acres of land in the country. Their land adjoining railway stations have been encroached upon. Since the Railway Protection Force does not have any power under the law the Department of Railways is unable to get back possession of their land from encroachers. While replying, the hon. Minister should deal with this. Why are they not being provided with the powers as have been given to the state police or to the para-Military Forces? Many Acts have been amended since Independence but why no amendment was made to this Act so far. The hon. Minister must come out with reasons for it in his reply. The Railway Protection Force should be accorded the same status as has been given to other forces in the country. They should be given similar facilities, What is the need of formulating separate rules for them? I feel there is no requirement of framing separate rules for them. Many important points have been mentioned by the hon members. The Police Force has been given right to form an association. Just now my hon. colleague pointed out that the Dharmaveer Commission has recommended that the armed forces can form their associations. It appears that the Government is backing out. They must be

given their minimum rights. We will be very happy if Government accepts their demand. If an assurance from the Government is given to the force comprising of seventy thousand personnel, it will be a matter of gratitude for them. In such a situation, they can be asked to prove worthy of their work. The responsibility of protecting the railway property lies upon them. The pilferage of railway property can be checked to a large extent.

The hon. Minister of state in the Ministry of Railways Shri K.C.Lenka looks after the welfare of the people and has great sympathy for them and the interest of weaker section is supreme for him. He is always actively concerned with the welfare and interest of Railway employees too. At times he keeps silent and does not express his views. Through you, I would like to request him that rising above all these considerations he should state the truth and should also give this right to others. In this bureaucracy, there are some high level bureaucrats, who do not want to get this job done. It would go against their position. This august House is supporting you, so you should fight against them. In this parliamentary democracy, Lok-Sabha is Supreme so you need not have any sense of fear because in respect of all the directions from the administration, the Government will have the support of Lok Sabha. You can take it for granted.

If the Members of the ruling party and he Members of opposition think that this is wrong, then you should given them this right. I would like to know whether the decision in this regard had been taken by the ministers of the previous government without discussing the matter with the officers and whether such orders had been issued without a discussion? This is not possible. So while replying to the debate, kindly make it clear as to at what level and on what dates these discussions were held to come to a conclusion and what were the reasons that the Government had gone back on their decision. The minister should kindly enlighten us on this point so that we are able to understand as to what was the reason for

which on this one topic there had been a lot of heated discussion by members of all the parties in the House. Responding to the demand of all sections of this House, the Government came forward with a Bill on which we are having a discussion for the third consecutive day today. If some action is not taken on it then it would again come up for discussion. So we would like to know as to what has been the policy and intention of the Government in this matter.

Shri Panigrahi and other Members have also raised this issue and through you I would also like to know under which rule the officers have been conferred the right to form their association. They can form association and put forth their demands but why has the Government denied this right to the low level officers? Why have all these things been allowed to the higher level officers and denied to the low-level officers? It does not seem justified. I hope that you would enlighten us on this point.

The personnel of R.P.F. have complained that at times some corrupt officers help the people engaged in pilferages of railway property and obstruct the persons who have been entrusted to check such cases. When the Railway Protection personnel do not pay any heed to those corrupt officers, they think that they can pressurise them only when some such law is there which may prevent them from forming an association. I think it is something wrong. The hon. Minister should enlighten us.

I would also like to inform you that in the recent past, many people have been dismissed from service on one or the other charge. I hope you would furnish the details of such cases giving the number the place of work and the allegations levelled against such persons which formed the basis of their dismissed from the service. I would also like to know about the number of such persons who have been reinstated alongwith the dates of their reinstatement and those who have not been yet reinstated. A detailed account thereof should be presented in the House.

[Sh. Manoranjan Bhakta]

Again I would like to request the Government not to make it a prestige issue because Railway Protection Force have a work force of seventy thousand persons. They are the citizens of this country and also our brethren. If any atrocity has been committed on them the Government should come out with there stand on it in the House. If some wrong action is taken against a person, it comes in the knowledge of the Government and they give relief to the person against whom that wrong action has been taken. Such a message should reach the masses and Government should not make it a prestige issue. All the Officers of the Railways are not bad. Some of them are very good and work quite efficiently. They also take care of the interests of the forces as well. I praise them for their goodness. But there are some people who bring bad name to their department through their wrong deeds done for their selfish ends. Here I would like to state that this is a question of a principle or a rule and not that of prestige. So the Government should make it clear whether they would give them this right to form their association. I think, we should give them the right at all costs. And if any wrong action has been taken against them, that thing should be corrected and proper compensation should be given to the aggrieved person.

I would also like to submit that the personnel of Railway Protection Force should take action against a person who is found engaged in pilferage's of railway property or misusing the Railway Property. This House lends its support to government for any legal measure to be taken by them. I would like to request the hon. Minister to approve of this Bill and not to make it a prestige issue.

With these words I conclude.

MAJOR D.D. KHANORIA (Kangra) :  
Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak. I am here to support the Bill introduced by Shri Acharya in respect of Railway Protection Force. At the same time I would like to make out some

points before the Minister so that he may clarify it during his reply to the debate.

At present, there are seventy five thousand persons who have been working in the Railway Protection Force and the Railway police. People working in the R.P.F. take care of the Railway property. Though they are expected to function as a force they have not been well equipped for that purpose. Responsibility of protection of all sorts of railway property, be it a railway station, railway track or any other place or thing belonging to railways lies with the Railway Protection Force. Even for night patrolling duty, they have not been provided any weapon or even a stick. I think these personnel should be given arms as in the case of paramilitary forces so that they are able to protect Railway property as well as their own life. Some such cases have come to light when in case of an attempt on their life, they had to run away from the place of their duty and the Railway property was looted by the gangsters.

I would request the Minister to express his views in this regard because it is a matter pertaining to seventy five thousand personnel of the railway force. It is the bounded duty of the Government to provide arms to the people so that they are able to defend themselves. RPF people have not been given any power under the law to punish anyone or to file a suit against anyone. I would like the Government to provide them with such powers. It has been said here that in 1972, RPF used to have an association but due to certain reasons, its recognition was withdrawn in 1986. At present in all the parts of the country, in all departments, the employees have their associations to ventilate their grievances, to take care of their welfare, to ensure betterment of service conditions of their members and to get their demands conceded by the Government. I have not been able to understand the reasons of granting recognition to the RPF Association in 1972 and then withdrawing the same in 1986. I would like the Government to allow the RPF to form their association so that those seventy five thousand people of this force could bring their de-

mands to the notice of the Government and get the facilities of welfare of their family members and better service conditions for themselves. Their service conditions are also very poor. Their service conditions should be improved so as to encourage them to work in future. I think that the Government should concede their demands on humanitarian grounds and should not make it a prestige issue so that we may also protect the interests of these people.

Sir, there is almost 200-km long railway track in my constituency and there are several stores of railway at various places. Railway wagons are lying at the railway stations. So far as I know that generally personnels of Railway Protection force do not go there to discharge their duties on those hilly areas due to spread of terrorism there as they have not been given arms. I would like that they should be provided arms for their protection so that they may protect Government property. With these words I thank you very much. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Its time is over. If the House is willing, its time can be extended.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI : Its time should be extended.

MR. CHAIRMAN : How much An hour?

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI (Saidpur) : Its time should be extended by two hours.....(*Interruptions*)

PROF. PREM DHUMAL (Hamirpur): If the hon. Minister is ready to reply, we may stop discussion (*Interruptions*)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K.C. LENKA) : There are several Members yet to speak. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you extend time

now, then should it be extended by two hours?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes, it should be extended by two hours. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI TEJ NARAYAN SINGH (Buxar) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support this Bill. The R.P.F. and the GRP are the only two departmetns which protect railways all over the country. There is no other department in the country except these two, which is entrusted the responsibility of protecting the railways.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, earlier the personnel of these two departments had the right to form their unions and to fight for their rights but later on this right was withdrawn through an amendment in this law, and this Bill has been brought to restore this right to them. If this Bill is adopted, children of poor people who work in these departments will hve a right to put their grievances before the Government.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, 90 per cent of the employees in this departmetn are those whose parents work in fields. The Government should not have imposed ban on the right to form union of these departemtns. But it seems that the Government wanted that poor people should not have right to raise their voice, therefore, the law was amended to withdraw that right.

Right to form Union is a constitutional right.

According to the provisions of the constitution, a citizen of the country has right to raise his voice if his rights are violated but this right was withdrawn by this law and hon. Acharia has introduced this Bill to restore it so, I would like to thank him for this.

This Government calls itself a socialist Government but the fact is that this Government only talks of socialism and does not implement its principles. Before it, Shri George Fernandes was the Minister of Railways and after him Mishra Ji had held this

[Sh. Tej Narayan Singh]

office. Both these persons were of the view that the Bill against the right to form union, should have not introduced and passed. These people give slogan of socialism, fight for it, and agreed with these things, so, there is no question of their criticism. This criticism is of those people who talk of bringing socialism in this country, to give rights to the poor but do not want to change or amend this law, they do not want to amend it so that poor people cannot ask for their rights.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to inform that these people used to discharge their duty round the clock and protect valuable railway property. Today criminals have acquired various types of sophisticated arms but nothing else has been provided to them except 303 rifles. They can't face modern sophisticated arms by this rifle. They have also not been given enough power to enable them to take legal action against the criminals. They try to check crimes with the few power given to them and try their best to protect railway property. The important issue is that they are not able to curb corruption in railways because of the fact that the Railway officials are generally themselves involved in the railway thefts and they are not vested with sufficient power to take action against the culprits. If such powers are vested with them, I think that the railways running in loss, will not remain in the red. There is a saying in Bhojpuri that god is mighty but the protector is very weak. Therefore, inspite of RPF and GRP, the railways are not running in profit which weakens the economy of the country. If the RPF and the GRP are given full powers the loss will be reduced in the Railways - Approximately 70 thousand employees working in these forces, protect railway property. They are not vested with the power which they should have and this is the reason that they are not in a position to discharge their duty of protecting railways to the extent which they should do. The objects and reasons given in the Bill are that they should be given the right to form union, which has been withdrawn earlier. I also agree with it that both the Railway Protection Force and the GRP should be given the

right to form union. There is no organisation in the country which has not the right to form the union.

Teacher's unions, as well as the employees unions have also right to raise their demands. We can also form a union to raise our points and if the government does not concede to our demands, we can also stage demonstrations and dherana against the Government. But these personnel have not this right, therefore, they cannot raise their voice for their dress, boots and to her facilities. There was British rule in the country before independence but after independence, there is our own Government in the country and inspite of that these people have not been given right to raise their voice. The Government should adopt the Bill introduced by Shri Basuded Acharia. If there is any defect in it, Government can bring a Comprehensive Bill in order to given them right to form union.

With these words, I support this Bill.

SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI (Saidpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to express my views on the subject. First of all, I would like to congratulate Shri Basudeb Acharia for introducing this Bill and I welcome it. Indeed as some of my colleagues said that there are only two organisations in Railways i.e. GRP and RPF which are entrusted with the responsibility to protect the railway property, the RPF is directly related to the Railways and the G.R.P. is related to the State Governments.

Sir, before saying about the GRP I would like to say something about the R.P.F. Earlier the R.P.F. was known as Watch and Ward Staff. Its employees were working since it was started with the name of Watch and Ward. With passage of time, its name was changed and it is known as RPF. In 1973, According to Article 19 of the Constitution they are.....

17.00 hrs

They were given the right to form an

Association and their Association came into being. Thus the RPF personnel got organised. Thereafter an amendment was made in 1985 and their right to form an association was withdrawn. It is a matter of regret that such a thing happened in case of R.P.F. personnel. It is clearly stated in our Constitution that everybody has a right of freedom of expression and one can put forth ones demand in Gandhian way to get back his right. People can form associations and they have freedom of expression. But, Nobody knows who were the people who thought it better to withdraw their right and why did such a thing strike them but as a consequence thereof in 1985 they were denied of this right.

Sir, at present there is another organisation in Railways which is known by the name of G.R.P. I do not want to criticise it but the hon. Members present in the House will agree with me that G.R.P. is playing a very strange role in comparison to R.P.F. The hon. Minister is sitting here. If the crimes taking place in railways, are investigated in depth, one will come to know that 10 to 20 percent culprits have support of G.R.P. I will just narrate an incident in this connections.

Sir, a few days ago I had gone to Lucknow by train in second class. One shoe shiners came into the compartment I gave him my shoes for polishing. When he finished I put my hand into the pocket to make the payment. I realised that somebody had picked my pocket. I was just wondering now what to do by chance I met one of my acquaintance there who paid Rs. 2 to that boy. I was not able to decide whether to continue with the journey or not. Somehow, I reached Lucknow. From there I went to Varansi. I called one G.R.P. inspector and told him that somebody picked my pocket on way to Lucknow. I called the R.P.F. people too but they remained mum. After meeting G.R.P. personnel I become hopeful that I will get back the money but at the same time felt sad about the prevailing state of affairs. After one week, I got the exact amount back. I asked them to prove that this was my money because it was quite

possible that after knowing that I am an M.P. they may be paying the money from their own side. I told them that my purse may also be returned to me and the very next day my purse was handed over to me by G.R.P. I was very much surprised.

Incidents of thefts are quite common at Railway stations. Sir, 3-4 days ago, a man while travelling with his wife lost all his wife's jewellery, the jewellery was kept in a box. The box was stolen and he was waiting at the station. In 1981, Shri Balram Jakhar of the Lok Sabha then Speaker had gone to Jaipur. While he was being garlanded at the station he was pick-pocketed. This incident is on the record. Probably, the G.R.P. people had a hand in it. In another incident the wife of our former Prime Minister Shri V.P. Singh lost her suitcase while travelling by pair which contained jewellery worth lakhs of rupees.

Sir, this is a general feeling that G.R.P. personnel are hand in glove with the culprits. If they wish such incidents can be avoided and they can easily apprehend the culprits. The G.R.P. is unable to provide security to the crores of people travelling in our country by train. R.P.F. is comparatively a better organisation than G.R.P. To give it a better shape it was given the right to form an association but on withdrawal this right and disbanding of this association at later stage is something which is beyond comprehension.

Sir, the R.P.F. has been demanding for a long time that they should be given the right to form an Association. It should be accepted within the framework of rules as there is no harm in it. If an organisation strengthen itself by way of forming an Association on a regular basis then nobody can project to it as they are doing it in accordance with the rules of the constitution.

Sir, a Committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri Ram Subhag. It thoroughly reviewed the service conditions of R.P.F. The Committee in its report, commented that it was a good organisation

[Sh. Rajnath Sonkar Shastri]

which is providing better security to the property of Railways and is discharging its duties efficiently, therefore, they should be given the right form their own association. There is no harm in it. The Ram Subhag Singh Committee recommended for this right in its report but thereafter no need was paid to this recommendation and it was thrown into dustbin by our Government and no action was taken on it.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, everybody has a right to form an association and one can exercise this right. As I have already stated that nobody should have any objection to it. I do not want to go into the details as to how our former Minister of Railways Shri Bansi Lal Ji had denied them of their right and nor I have much information in this regard but the manner in which they were denied of their rights was a clear violation of section 33 of the constitution. I want the Government to give it a serious thought that as to how this section 33 is being violated and why they are not being given right of forming an Association.

Sir, when Janta Dal was in power, the then Railway Minister Shri George Fernandes also looked into the matter and as has been stated here my other esteemed colleagues that he had almost decided to give this right to them, for which he deserves appreciation but then this Government went out of power. Later on Shri Janeshwar Mishra took charge of the Ministry of Railways. He also gave an assurance in this regard. Subsequently an agitation was resorted to and picketing was done but he pacified one and all. Everybody was of this opinion that they should be given this right but that Government also did not remain in power for long and the right of these people could not be restored. They have been demanding for a long time for this right.

Sir, the seriousness with which you are listening to this discussion and the manner in which this issue is being discussed gives me a ray of hope. You have a soft corner for the poor. And as my many colleagues

have mentioned that generally the persons belonging to poor agriculturists families join R.P.F. The Government should show its magnanimity towards these people as the members of weaker sections mostly comprise the lower ranks. They should give them an opportunity to form an Association. It should not be made a prestige issue, on the contrary the Government should take keen interest in it. The Government should have declared before the commencement of discussion on this Bill, that it whole heartedly by welcomes the Bill moved by Shri Basudeb Acharia. if it was felt there were some shortcomings in the Bill Shri Basuded Acharia could have been consulted and in consultation with him and other member a better bill could have been presented in the House.

I once again urge that a mere reply to this Bill will not serve the purpose. Whether you support the Bill or speak against this Bill mere reply is not sufficient. But I would like you to review their service and other conditions and thereafter a clear and unambiguous Bill should be presented in the House so that their fundamental rights could be protected. With these words I think Shri basudeb Acharia for drawing the attention of the House towards such an important issue.

[English]

SHRI SUDHIR GIRI (Contai): Mr. Chariman Sir, the Railway Protection Force (Amendment) Bill has been moved by Shri Besudeb Acharia and Shri Pavan Kumar Bansal. The Bill seeks to empower the Railway Protection Force will the Authority of investigation as regards the crimes committed on the Railway track. In the course of their activity, they should be empowered to protect, the railway property.

They have raised one more point. It is a fact that the Railway Protection Force and the Government Railway Police are two agencies. The Railway Protection Force deserves the right to form unions and associations. These two aspects are the main contents of the Bill.

As regards the first part, take the example of an incident of crime. The baggage of one of the passengers is stolen and the Railway Protection Force has to look into it because they are entrusted with the duty of protecting the said property. In this situation if the Railway Protection Force is not empowered to make an investigation on the spot, just after the pilferage has taken place and if this power or authority is given to the Government Railway Police for investigation, then there will be conflict and as a result chaos will prevail. I say this because while the responsibility of protecting the property is given to a particular agency, in the name of law and order, investigating authority is not given to them; Then, naturally there is going to be chaos. So, this should be done away with as soon as possible. I would, therefore, request the Government to ponder over the matter and give the power or authority of investigation to the Railway Protection Force. Otherwise, the work relating to protection of railway property etc. will not be carried out as efficiently as we demand it from them.

As regards the second part, Sir, we have to speak a lot. After a long battle with the British imperialism, our great leaders, our great people have achieved the rights. During the reign of the British certain fundamental rights were denied to the individuals. Against those activities of the British imperialist forces, our heroic people fought bravely and after achieving freedom, we had enshrined in our Constitution the fundamental rights.

It may be remembered, Sir, during the pre-independence movement our Leaders promised to the people that on achievement of freedom, our people would be in a position to enjoy those rights which are fundamental to them in development of their environment and so on. Those are the fundamental rights.

In Chapter III of the Constitution those fundamental rights have been put down. Under those rights, Article (1) (C) is vocal.

"Every citizen shall have the right to

form an Association and Union".

Every Indian citizen has got this right. Though this provision is there, there are some exceptions.

Article 19 (4) has provided "that in the interest of public order or morality and in keeping the sovereignty of the Indian Union, certain rights viz. the right to form Union and Association may be denied to a citizen." There comes the question of maintaining sovereignty of our country. The Railway Protection Force is not going to do any damage to the sovereignty of India. If they form their Association or Union, they would get certain bargaining power and not more than this. In Article 33 of the Constitution, it is provided that the Indian Parliament is empowered to consider who will not be given those rights enshrined under Chapter III of the Constitution.

Sir, there has been a mention of armed forces and certain other forces and that the rights may not be given to them. There has not been any indication of the RPF or GRP. So, Article 19 (1) (4) and Article 33, if they are read together we find that the Railway Protection Force and the Government Railway Police are definitely not contravening the Constitutional provision. They are in a position to enjoy those rights. So, if the Government of India or Parliament does not give them such powers to express, to manifest their internal qualities, then we think we shall be responsible to the nation as a whole because we represent the people; we have a moral right; we have a moral responsibility to respond their rights. If the Parliament fails in its duty, We think we are failing in our duty. So, I would appeal to all the hon. members including Members who form the treasury benches to see that these fundamental rights should not be denied to the RPF.

When our heroic people were fighting against the British regime, they, in unequivocal terms, told to the people of India that India would be a nation and such a nation would definitely give to their citizens the right to enjoy property as well as other

[Sh. Sudhir Giri]

rights; and those inherent rights are with the people after their birth. So, we cannot deny them these fundamental rights, fundamental in the sense that without those rights, the development of an individual, the development of an individual - self will not be made possible at all. Under all such circumstances, it is necessary that the fundamental rights should be given to all the citizens of India.

I think that, if in consideration of the fact that they are forces, they are entrusted with the right of protecting the railway property, they are entrusted with the right of protecting the passengers' property, who are travelling by rail, then we think they should be given the right to form their own association, because without forming an association, they would not be in a position to express their grievances, to give vent to their grievances.

1722. hrs.

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

If an individual cannot express his grievances, if an individual is not given an environment to express his individual-self, then, I think all sorts of grievances will be gathered and those heaped up grievances will lead to a situation, where outburst volcano will take place. So, to avoid such a situation, we must, as responsible representatives of the Indian people, think that it should be our duty, without delay that they should be given the right in tune with the constitutional provisions as contained in Article 19(1) (c); even the restricting provision under clause 4 to Article 19 may be taken into consideration.

Our freedom struggle represented the aspirations of the Indian people for the freedom of their Mother land from the rule of the foreigners; not only this, we also fought, our forefathers also fought for the emancipation of our emotions, for the freedom of ourselves in order to give vent to our griev-

ances, and to manifest ourselves, develop ourselves in all respects. So having regard to all these promises made by our freedom fighters and our heroic people in those days, we should without delay enshrine in our Statute Book the right to form an association and union. It should be given to the Railway Protection Force.

SHRI P.C. CHACKO (Trichur): Thank you Mr, Chairman. Sir, this is a Bill brought to this House by Shri Basudeb Acharia, it is a Private member's Bill. Normally the Ruling Party Members are about to oppose the Bill moved by an opposition member, especially a Bill moved by Shri Basudeb Acharia.

Supporting that Bill in the normal circumstances is a very difficult exercise. If Mr. Basudeb Acharia were sitting in my position, on this side, I am sure he would have definitely opposed it. But this Congress party has got a tradition of not opposing good things and supporting good things, whether it has been brought to this House even by Shri Basudeb Acharia.

I think, Shri Acharia is very lucky in bringing this legitimate demand of Railway Protection Force before the notice of this House.

This has got a long history. I support the demand raised by Shri Acharia in this Bill because this has got a long history and that history is something which everyone should study not one but twice because the background is so interesting.

This is a point, how democratic system is functioning. How unnecessary and unwelcomed things are being cut into our legislation. Everytime this Bill or this issue is being taken up by successive Railway Ministers, the successive Railway Ministers were either to resign or their Governments were dissolved. So there is some bad men in this association with this who's issue.

I remember, last week when we were discussing this issue, the hon. Shri George Fernandes, as usual, was very very

voiceferous. At the hight of his voice, he was arguing for the Railway Protection Force. I can very well appreciate it and his eloquence I have to accept. But at the same time when Shri George Fernandes was the Minister of Railways, this issue came up once but Shri Fernandes could not help it. I am not saying that Shri Fernandes was against this, especially, when he is not here. I do not want to go much on that but it is a fact. The fact remains that Shri Acharia was pointing out about Shri Pawan Kumar bansal and Shri Harish Rawat.

I am sure Shri Acharia is aware of the experience Shri Bansal and Shri Rawat received or they had when they took up this matter and when they represented this matter before Shri George Fernandes.

What I want to highlight is that even Shri Fernandes when he was sitting in the Chair could not resolve this problem, with much reluctance, with the normal usual advice or the pressure from bureaucracy. All the socialists and communists when they come to the seat of power they behave like any other democratic party. We have seen that many times in this country. Because of the compulsions of the bureaucracy they were also dilly-dallying.

You can very well blame Congress. Congress is always at the receiving end. Whether it is Shri K.C. Lenka or Shri C.K. Jaffer Sharief, it is very easy to phrase allegations against them. But, Sir, many Ministers from Shri Fernandes to Shri Janeshwar Mishra, whoever has touched this subject reluetantly, unwillingly were to go out.

So, I wish that what has happened to their predecessors des not happen to Shri K.C. Lenka and Shri C.K. Jaffer Sharief, for both of whom I have got great regard and who are my very good friends. I would expect them to approach this issue with an open mind. I hope that the hon. House goes further into this subject.

This is not merely a subject of giving recognition to RPF alone. The RPF men

are being treated as an Armed Force. That itself is a question of dispute, whether it is an Armed force at all. Shri Basudeb Acharia had explained it. That other hon. Members also had explained it in detail. Merely because they are uniformed men they need not be treated as an Armed Force.

I came from the State of Kerala where the Police personnel are given the privilege to form an association. When I was in the Government in 1980, our Government in face of criticism from all the parties gave the sanction for the Police personnel to form an association. What is wrong with that? I do not understand it. This is the democratic contribution of our forefathers. This is an organisation which is 106 years old and which has sacrificed for the freedom of this country, and has contributed a system which is unequal in the world. That means, there should be democratic freedom not only for a section of the people, not only for a section of the Government employees, but also to everyone. Whoever is denying this fundamental right to them is doing them an injustice. Pandit Nehru has taught us this and the great Indian National Congress also had taught us this democratic functioning and therefore they should not be denied this freedom.

There are some dubious factors behind this. As we all know the service conditions of these RPF people are very poor. They are very poorly paid people. They are not better off compared to many other services and forces. But the bureaucrats ruling this Railway Protection Force, as it was mentioned in the House are the privileged deputationists, the IPS officers who are responsible for this. So, we cannot subject the faith and the future of 70,000 men of RPF to the whims and fancies of these IPS bureaucrats. I think that this is a issue which the Government has to decide. I am sure that Shri Lenka must have been reasonably convinced of this need by now after all the hon. Members have expressed their opinion.

I am sure that this Government is not rigid on matters like this. Our hon. Prime

[Sh. P.C. Chacko]

Minister has said in this House that it would like to work on consensus. So, I believe that the Government will view this matter with an open mind. This is a right issue which the Government has to consider. Here the controversy is that they are not an Armed Force. So, it is held that they are not given the right to form an association. The question is whether they are an Armed Force at all.

That question is still in dispute.

When Shri Panigrahi was talking I wanted to mention that events he Armed Forces are trying to form their association. I can cite the example of Kerala State where the Police associations have been formed. Not only Sub-Inspector, not only senior Police Officers but others are also forming associations. it is not merely as association. I do not understand why whichever association is there, it could not be given the right. Even zonal associations are there. But they are being sanctioned permission to form an association on one condition, that it should not have political affiliations. I do not understand the logic behind this. This force had contributed in an uninterrupted manner for more than 14 years and I do not know why this force should not be allowed to form an association. No. they never had. Then, the amendment came in 1985 contrary to the wishes of the 7000 men of the forces, not only against their wishes but the wishes of freedom loving people of this country. I do not know how these draconian laws are creeping into our system. It is the wish of all sections of this House that this law should be repealed. This association of the armed forces or the police personal which was being recommended by the Dharmaveera Commission is accepted by the Government of India. I am sure that Shri Basudeb Acharia and my hon. friends from West Bengal remember who Shri Dharmaveera was? Shri Dharmaveera was a very senior IPS officer, for some time the Administrator of West Bengal and the Governor of West Bengal also. he was appointed as the Commission by the Government of India to

look into this very basic question. The Dharmaveera Commission report is available. Have the Government gone into this question? I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether this Government, in this context, has gone into this particular question, because this is going to come up before us in some form or the other, even tomorrow also, if not in the RPF issue, in some other issue. So, the question is that one this issue was clinched, a detailed study was made into this subject and Dharmaveera had recommended categorically that the police and police personal can form their associations and unions. After Kerala in 1980, in many States subsequently the freedom of association, the liberty to form their unions is being granted to the armed forces also. Then, where do the logic stands that they are armed forces, so they cannot form a union.

I would like to go a little deep into the background of PRF functioning itself. But, I think, I may deviate from the subject, so I am not trying to do that.

I request the hon. Minister that we should discuss about the very set up of the RPF. Certain things are happening not consciously but conscientiously. Is it sufficient? Is the working of the RPF sufficient? The protection of the railway property is the duty of somebody. The law and order maintenance, even inside the compartment or on the railway platform or on the railway property is the duty of somebody else.

Many hon. Members have raised a question here about the thefts in the compartments and things like that. The dual functioning is creating a lot of problem. In a railway station itself or in a train, the law and order is under the jurisdiction of one branch and the protection of the railway property alone is under the charge of somebody else. This dual responsibility is creating a problem. How many years are we to live with it? Have we ever applied our mind to this question. Now, we are here with very great vigour and we can say that they cannot form the association.

There are many more burning issues before the PRF men. There are many burning issues, more important issues before the people of this country; before the travelling people of this country for which the Government have to burn the midnight oil. I am not on these trivial matters.

I am sure that the hon. Member, Shri Basudeb Acharia will discuss with the Government not in the form of a Bill but we have to find a solution for this because it is not always the hide and seek game which should guide the democracy, but is an understanding. The Prime Minister has said that it is the consensus and understanding which should guide our democratic functioning. It is not merely putting a Bill and the hon. member is lucky in the ballot and he is piloting it. He knows the views, the opinions of the ruling party Members also on this matter. So, there is unanimity, there is consensus on the basic subject. So, we have to find out a way as to how we can resolve this issue. When the association recognition was withdrawn after 14 years, in the amendment in 1985 and the subsequent rules which were framed in 1987, their powers were taken away.

The agitation was made illegal and they were just retrenched. So, that issue is still hanging fire. That matter is still agitating the minds of the people who are associated with that. But that is to be settled. We have to find a way out. We have to find a way out. We have to help them. It is not an issue on which we have to fight each other politically. This year also this issue has come up. I have never heard Mr. Jaffar Sharief saying no to this issue while answering the questions on a number of occasions from Shri Basudeb Acharia, Shri Somnath Chatterjee and other friends. That is why I am supporting this issue which is raised here because this Government the Congress Party, stands committed to this issue. So, we cannot afford to say no. We have said what we shall be considering it favourably. There should be a reasonable time frame for a favourable consideration of this issue. The Congress Party is for fully supporting this cause. I think it is the responsibility of the hon. Member and all

those who support this motion, to find an amicable way out. Merely defeating the Government or merely getting a Resolution passed, is not the question. This is only a beginning. We have to have an understanding.

As we all know, in the emerging political scenario in this country, probably there are people who are ignoring the development of this country, who are forgetting the hardships to the people of this country, we are running after temples and mosques. But my leftist friends know that we have to have more understanding in this country. These are matters which should unite us, these are not matters which should divide us. We have to have joint action, joint attitude on many of these issues.

I do not want to prolong my speech, but while congratulating Shri Basudeb Acharia for bringing this issue to the notice of the House, I most honestly support the issue being raised by him. Everyone knows what is the commitment of our party on this issue. But this issue is being raised in one particular form. That probably may not be very convenient, and the inconvenience needs no explanation. I am sure that Shri Basudeb Acharia is wise enough to find out an amicable settlement on this score. The hundreds of railwaymen who were subjected to torture. Who were subjected to retransference, they should be helped and this association, which was functioning as a model association for fourteen years, should get back its recognition. To achieve this noble cause, let us have an atmosphere of unit.

With these words, I once again tell Shri Basudeb Acharia that this is our common cause.

[Translation]

PROF. PREM DHUMAL (Hamirpur):  
Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the G.R.P. and R.P.F. Amendment Bill, presented by Hon. Acharya Ji.

[Prof. Prem Dhupal]

[English]

Mr. Chairman, Sir, G.R.P. and R.P.F. are the two organisations which have been established to protect Railways' property, maintain law and order and to deal with offences committed in the Railways. R.P.F. and G.R.P., both the organisations have shortcomings in their functioning resulting in their being unsuccessful in controlling crimes in the Railways. In spite of all these things, their service conditions should be improved, they should be given fundamental right of formation of a Union which should be recognised by the Government. Majority of the Hon. Members must be aware of the working of R.P.F. and G.R.P. and will agree that these have many lacunae, which should be essentially plugged. I remember that during discussion in this House, one hon. Member had said that R.P.F. means Roti, Pani Free. Corruption has increased. But there cannot be two opinions about allowing them to form association one of their Fundamental Right, which should be recognised by the Government.

Hon. P.C. Chacko was referring to the time when Shri George Fernandes was the Minister of Railways and after him Sh. Janeswar Mishra became the Minister of Railways. Mr. George had been Railway Minister for less than one year and Shri Janeswar Mishra had held the post for a few months only. At that time, the Congress Party was supporting the Chandra Shekhar Government. I have a letter with me. I would like to tell Mr. P.C. Chacko the reasons for which Mr. George and Mishraji were unable to get it done. But what your Minister is doing now and what was the attitude of your party when it was in opposition. This letter was written by the then Railway Minister Shri Janeswar Mishra ji to Shri P.R. Kumaramangalam on 27th February, 1991 who was pressing for recognition to R.P.F. Union. Shri Kumaramangalam had threatened that he would start fast unto death from 27th February at 11 A.M. if the Union is not recognised. Mr. Janeswar Mishra had written to him in this letter.

"Please refer to your letter dated 25th February, 1991 regarding an indefinite hunger fast on the 27th February, 1991 at 11 A.M. for the restoration of recognition to the R.P.F. Association. As you are already aware, during discussions with you, I have indicated the Government's sincere concern about the demand of the said association."

The next line is underlined. I quote:

"It has been decided to grant recognition to the association subject to the prescribed formalities".

I continue to quote:

"In view of this decision, you will agree that there is no need to go on any fast as contemplated. I would, therefore, request to kindly cooperate with us in the matter.

With regards.

Yours sincerely,

(Janeswar Mishra)

[Translation]

Mr. Chairman, Sir, this letter has initials of hon. Kumaramangalam, which was received by him at 10.59. Shri Kumaramangalamji was to start the fast unto death at 11 A.M. but he had received this letter at 10.59. He was satisfied with the reply of the Minister and this decision of fast unto death was abandoned. As you know this was a decision taken on 27th February but on 9-10 March, the Congress Party had withdrawn the support from the Chandra Shekhar Government and on 13th March, Government had fallen and Lok Sabha was dissolved. I would like to say that your policy should be clear and firm whether you are in power or not. It should not change with your party's position in Parliament. You are of the view that in spite of all lacunae, consti-

tution of India has given fundamental right to R.P.F. and G.R.P. to form an association and that should be given to them. It should be kept in mind that persons, who are now Ministers were ready to take fast unto death for this purpose when they were in opposition. This proposal is quite good and should be accepted. If there is any lacuna in it, that may be removed. R.P.F. and G.R.P. should be given their due fundamental rights. They had enjoyed this right from 1957 to 1985. In 1985, when this fundamental right was withdrawn your party was in power and kumaramangalam was an hon. Member of Parliament of your party. After that he had threatened to go on fast unto death and now he is again in the Cabinet. I would, therefore, like to say that get this proposal accepted. Shri Kumaramangalam has come. I would like the Minister to announce the acceptance of the proposal presented by Shri Basudeb Acharya, as it is related to the employees; fundamental right. I think all the hon. Members who spoke here have spoken in support of this proposal and when all the hon. Members are supporting it, the same should be accepted and passed so that Railways' Security Organisations could be provided their due rights and their service conditions could be improved. Although, their working system has a lot of shortcomings and there is lack of discipline also yet for that, they can not be denied the fundamental right of forming association.

With these words, I support this Bill.

SHRI RAMASHRAY PRASAD SINGH (Jahanabad): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support the Railway Protection Force (Amendment) Bill, 1993 introduced by Shri Basudeb Acharya. I am supporting this Bill not just because of this fact that I am a Member of an opposition party.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the first and the foremost point is related to the fundamental rights. There is nothing special in it. In a democratic set up, every person should be given his rights. In this case their rights were also given earlier but were withdrawn by the Government in 1985. It was very important. If the people working in the

Railway Protection Forces do not get their fundamental right of forming their own association, they would not be working with the promptitude because without association, they will be deprived of a platform to make out their points and ventilate their grievances to the Government. It is therefore, the foremost duty of the Government to give their fundamental right to the personnel of this force who have been entrusted with so much of responsibilities. Now what is important is that the RPF people did enjoy the same right earlier.

Secondly, a Committee had been appointed to examine this issue. It has now submitted its report. But its recommendations have not been accepted. If the Government was not to accept its recommendations, they should not have wasted a large amount of public money on its working. It seems that intention and policy of the Government is not good. All the Members of this august House, be it belonging to the ruling party or to the opposition or the then Ministers like Shri George Fernandes and Shri Janeshwar Mishra, were in favour of recognition to this association. It has been the general tendency that when these hon. Members were in opposition they raised a voice for it but when they came to power, they did not take care of it. Infact the lust for power is so great that those who come to power, want to stick to it. These were the Ministers who were sitting on fast in those days when they were in opposition. But now when they have come to power, they are no more bothered about it. How strange it is. Such are the ways of politics.

My second submission is that under the present set up, the responsibility of the protection of Railway goods and property lies with the two Governments. It shows lack of wisdom on the part of the management. This system is coming down to this day. At present some powers have been given to the GRP while some others have been given to the Railway Protection Force. RPF is under the control of the Central Government whereas the GRP is under the control of the State Government. It is causing tremendous harm. The hon. members

[Sh. Ramashray Prasad Singh]

[English]

have pointed out that it would have been better if all these powers were given to the Railway Protection Force. The Central Government merely seeks the assistance of the State Governments. So now when the Central Government itself bears the entire expenditure on this arrangement, then why the Railway department should not given all the rights? Does the hon. Minister feel that there is any harm in doing that. The State police takes care of the property and other things pertaining to a railway station which falls under its jurisdiction. The result is that due to the involvement of two Governments, generally the situation of uncertainty about their jurisdiction or areas of operations prevails. I think that the Government should, first of all, do away with this dual security arrangement and give all the powers to the RPF. They have power to deal with all the cases. Similarly judicial powers should also be given to them so as to bring down the rate of crimes and check the extravagance and wastage of money. It is most essential. Provision of two Police forces by the two Governments at the same time and place should not be there.

Thirdly, this force must be given at least its fundamental rights so that they may ventilate without a hitch their grievances such as the undue pressures put up on them by the senior officers and other cases of atrocities committed on them, through a body and discuss the matter with the administration. The Government should also consider their demands with an open mind. Though corruption prevailing in this regard is also an important aspect, yet at this moment we are concerned only about their fundamental rights. As regards the point of corruption, we will have a discussion on it whenever a bill to that effect comes before us. However, at present I support the Bill regarding the demand for their fundamental rights and would urge upon the Government to consider this issue with an open mind, discuss the matter with their leaders and to give recognition to the RPF association at the earliest. With these words I conclude.

PROF. SUSANTA CHAKRABORTY (Howrah): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support the Bill moved by hon. Member Shri Basudeb Acharia.

The history of RPF dates back to the year, 1957 when the watch & ward Section of Railway was converted into the Railway Protection Force. The Government of the time, after considering it in all its entirety, thought it fit not to treat it as an armed force. Actually, for all practical purposes, the Railway Protection Force was treated as other railway staff only with the duty to protect the railway property and to see that the passengers travelling in railways are not unnecessarily harassed and their property is not stolen. All these functions were allotted to them.

18.00 hrs.

Now, Article 35 of the Constitution whereby they could be treated as an Armed Force was never applied to them. It is not that it was not considered in this House. It was, indeed, considered. But this House, then, in its wisdom, decided not to treat the Railway Protection Force as an Armed Force. So, for all practical purposes, they are Railway personnel. If all other railwaymen have the right to form their associations, I do not know why these people should be deprived of their rights. So, the Bill is actually related to the basic question of guaranteeing the Fundamental Right to a section of the people of our country.

Sir, it is pleasing to note that the Members of the Treasury Banches today feel that this should have been given. Some of them have criticised some of the Members. They urge of unity of thought and unity of action. But the basic purpose for which the association is formed, we should bear it in mind. The purpose is not only to wage a battle, it is not only to wage a struggle but also all the trade unions have certain welfare activities. So, if these people are denied of forming the association, of enjoy-

ing the fundamental rights; then not only that they will be deprived of waging a united battle but also they will be deprived of the opportunity to develop their own fate, to develop their working conditions, to develop their welfare activities like housing, Reversion etc.

Sir, in the year 1973, these people formed the association. But in 1985, in a hurry, the then Minister Shri Bansilal decided to withdraw it and the order was given by the Railway Board that it would not continue to operate. Once a right was enjoyed by a certain section of the people when this did not have any adverse impact on the morals of the Armed Force of our country, then, all on a sudden, if the Government or if the party in power feel that this should be discontinued, then, surely we have every reason to doubt, every reason to question the motive behind it. I do not know what the motive then was. But now the Members on my left say that they also think it fit to grant the bill moved by Shri Basudeb Acharia. It is good. But, side by side, another aspect of the thing should be considered. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Prof. Chakraborty, please continue.

AN HON. MEMBER: How long the House will sit?

MR CHAIRMAN: We shall take up the Government Business at 6.20 P.M. We will continue with this till 6.20 P.M. It has already been decided. The time of the House has been extended.

PROF. SUSANTA CHAKRABORTY: The second aspect of the matter is about the GRP. The GRP is under the jurisdiction of the State authority. But the people belonging to the RPF may feel that they have not got the authority to deal with the matter in its entirety. The GRP comes in. In case of a contradiction between the GRP and the RPF. What shall we do? Does it not affect the morals of the people?

The question of deputation of officers has been long discussed. The officers from outside get promotion. The RPF people

waged battle against it. They have expressed their displeasure against it.

It is because of this movement, probably, on various occasions, demands from the outside officers, outside police personnel have been raised and its compass has been enlarged. In a country like ours, in this situation of crisis, we cannot allow things to happen in this way.

Thirdly, there is the basic question of Fundamental Right. Have we decided ever that the right to form association will not be given to a section of the people? It is certainly in exceptional circumstances, so where the question of sovereignty of the country is related. But it is not so in this case. In many States, in a good number of States, police have been given the right to form their association. The Railway Protection Force who are in other sense the railway employees, who ought to see that the property of the railway is guaranteed if they are to function properly, their demand, their psychology and their feeling of deprivations should be considered, should be given a due thought. So, I urge upon the hon. Minister to be reasonable and I urge upon him not to make it a prestige issue.

I do not know what my hon. friend on the other side means when he suggests that some other form may be evolved. I do not know that. If we all agree, why do we not pass the Bill. Why do you not ask the Minister to accept it? I do not know what is the harm in it. Anyway, it is good that all of us are agreeing on both these scores that they should be given the proper right, the proper power. And on this score that their right to form the association should not be denied and the thing which has been taken away from them should be given back to them, with this I conclude.

[*Translation*]

SHRI KRISHAN DUTT SULTANPURI (Shimla): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Bill moved by Shri Basudeb Acharia. As per my information, the total strength of RPF in the country is about 75,000 and these

[Sh. Krishan Dutt Sultanpuri]

people should not be denied their right to form their union in this democracy. Therefore, I feel it necessary that the Government should give this right to them.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the most important thing that needs mention, in this regard is that the officers appointed on deputation basis in the Railways are given a number of facilities but the class-IV employees engaged in the protection of Railway and having long duty hours have not been given their rights. Moreover, no action can be taken if they register a case of damage to or loss of Railway property. This is not justified. Therefore, I would like these workers to be given their rights in this democracy so that they may have their say.

1809. hrs.

(SHRI NITISH KUMAR *in the Chair*)

Mr. Chairman, Sir, moreover, I would like to submit that under the prevailing circumstances, the exploitation of the RPF personnel or Railway workers should be stopped herewith. I would also like to submit that some such cases have been lying pending in the Bengal Highcourt in Calcutta. These cases should be settled at the earliest so that these workers may get justice.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, it has been stated here that I had urged upon the former Minister to give those rights to the Railway personnel. However the fact is that despite repeated assurances, these persons have been subjected to exploitation.

In the Railways, right from the engine coal man to the Chairman of the Railway Board, all have got this right. They have right to appeal. But this force is not given any opportunity to raise its voice. I understand that while replying to it, the hon. Minister will keep this in mind.

This Bill has been moved by Shri Acharia. It is a Private members' Bill. But I understand that the hon. Minister will try to fulfil his genuine demands.

It has been asked here to remove the shortcomings in Section 15 of the Railway Protection Act, 1957. If the Government does not give them the right to form their union, they should be given those rights which are at par with those of police, army and navy.

I want to submit that Shri Fernandes had even tried to instigate the workers. He had invited them to launch a violent agitation. In order to collect subscription, all and sundry form trade unions but nobody talks about the welfare of the workers. Shri Acharia is worthy of congratulations for bringing this Bill. He has raised the voice of workers in this august House. If we are interested in their welfare, we should ensure that their genuine demands are considered.

The railway land is often illegally occupied. It can be checked completely only when these RPF and GPR are given powers. They should have the power to challan also like the police and other officials.

Many recommendations were made in the report of the Ram Subhag Singh Committee. No attention was paid to them. The constructive recommendations should have been accepted. The shortcomings in the Resolution should be mended and action should be taken in this regard.

I thank you very much for the time given to me to express my views. Many hon. Members have spoken on this issue. If the Government is really concerned, Shri Acharia should be asked whether he wants to withdraw it or not. If the Government proposes to bring such a Bill in a better way and the hon. Minister assures us in this regard, I think it should be far better. If he does not do so, Shri Acharia's Bill is very good and it should be passed.

With these words I conclude.

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhanjanpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support the Bill introduced by Shri Acharia. I also want to thank him for brining this Bill in the House. This Bill is out and out in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution. It has been clearly mentioned in the Article 19 (c) of the Constitution.

[English]

"All citizens shall have the right to form association or unions."

[Translation]

The hon. Members expressed their respective views in this Bill here. I remember that while Shri Chandra Shekhar was Prime Minister, Shri Kumaramangalam had raised a strong voice here that the R.P.F. and the G.R.P. should be given the right to form an association. It is very strange how a person after coming in power changes his outlook. We are taken a back to find as to how one changes one's commitment, outlook and mentality all of a sudden.

It is an important issue. Be we in Government or in opposition, all should be given their fundamental rights. The right to form an association was withdrawn from the R.P.F. and the G.R.P. in 1985. This was not justified. On October 31, 1990, the then hon. Minister of Railways, Shri George Fernandes had started in no uncertain terms that their right to form association would be restored. But unfortunately, his Government fell. After him, Shri Janeshwar Mishra became the Railways Minister. He too pronounced to implement that principle. This issue was raised very vehemently at that time also. The people of the ruling side want to traingress the limit of propriety and significance of this august House. It appears from their views expressed by the hon. Members of the ruling party today that they support this Bill, and want to give full right to the R.P.F. and the G.R.P. Then what

is the hurdle in giving it a final touch? Why this Government is trying to suppress democracy? The people in power today were raising this issue when they were in opposition at that time. Now why they took a somersault of a sudden?

One of the pillars of governance is bureaucracy. When bureaucracy has an upper hand, the entire system and administration follow, its track. If a horse rider is unskilled and the rein is weak, the horse rider loses control over his speed and direction, similarly, if people in Government are weak, their hold on the Government will be loose and in such a situation, bureaucracy will lead them in its own direction.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shir Yadavji will continue next time. The time for Private Members' Bill is over.

[English]

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: Sir, let this Bill continue. (Interruptions)

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOLI: Rule does not permit. (Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DEPARTEMNT OF ELECTRONICS AND DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT) AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARAMANGALAM): Mr. Chairman, Sir, with regard to official business, I would request that the four de laegated legislation Bills may be taken up - they have already been moved - and passed. Therefore, at least we can do one of the State budgets of Himachal Pradesh, if possible the Rajasthan budget. A lot of business has piled up. I would be obliged if the House could take that up.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Some decisions were taken in BAC - Himachal Pradesh is to be taken up first.