

13.09 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

REPORTED RECENT EXPLOSIONS IN OFFICES OF AIR FRANCE AND IRAQI AIRWAYS AND IN EMBASSIES OF USSR AND USA IN NEW DELHI

SHRI BHEEKHABHAI (Banswara): I call the attention of the Minister of Home Affairs to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:

"The reported recent explosions in the offices of Air France and Iraqi Airways and in the Embassies of U.S.S.R. and U.S.A. in New Delhi and the action taken by Government in the matter.

13.10 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. C. SETHI): Sir, On the night night intervening February 3 and 4, 1983, two powerful explosions occurred in Scindia House in Connaught Circus and at Ansal Bhawan on Kasturba Gandhi Marg, within a span of a few minutes. The first explosion took place outside the Air France Office located on the ground floor of Scindia House. The explosive material which appeared to have been kept on the marble flooring outside Air France Office completely shattered the ceiling above. Considerable damage was caused inside the Air France Office. The explosion left a crater approximately 1-1/2 feet deep and 2-1/2 feet wide and affected the glass panes of the other shops and buildings within a radius of 100 feet.

At Ansal Bhawan, the target of explosion was the Iraq Airways Office. The explosive material was kept close to the airconditioning unit of the Airways Office and the explosion com-

pletely damaged all the furniture and other article kept in the office causing minor fire which was brought under control by the Fire Brigade. The explosion also damaged the adjoining office of Air France as also the glass panes of the adjacent multi-storied building.

Two cases under Section 3/4 Explosive Substances Act read with Sections 427/436/324 IPC have been registered and the investigation is in progress.

2. On 18-11-1982 at about 10.45 P.M. a grenade was thrown in the residential compound of USSR Embassy. The grenade exploded in the verandah of the flat in occupation of a member of the staff of the Embassy. The window and the glass panes were considerably damaged but there was no casualty. A case under Sections 3/4 Explosive Substances Act read with Section 427 IPC has been registered on the basis of complaint received and the case is under investigation.

3. On 11-2-1983 information was received at the Police Station Chanakya-puri from one Swamy posted at the Reception Office of the American Embassy that a bomb like object had fallen near the gate of the Embassy. The local police officers immediately rushed to the spot and were informed that at about 6.45 P.M. an explosion was heard on Shanti Path opposite the main gate of the U.S. Embassy and some object hit the iron grill of the wall of the Embassy. One bar of the iron grill fencing broke and fell on the ground but nobody was injured. The search of the area led to the recovery of the tail portion of a rocket. Further search of the premises next morning resulted in the recovery of the rocket head which was detonated by the experts. In the opinion of the experts, the missile was a High Explosive Anti Tank rocket. A case under Sections 3/4 Explosive Substances Act read with Section 427 IPC has been registered and the investigation of the case is in progress.

4. The investigation of these cases is being carried out by the Crime Branch of the Delhi Police. A joint team of officers drawn from various specialised agencies like the Intelligence Bureau, the Special Branch of the Delhi Police, and expert from the Central Forensic Science Laboratory are associated in the investigation.

SHRI BHEEKHABHAI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am happy with the clear cut statement made by the Hon. Minister for Home Affairs and I am also satisfied that he has been kind enough to state the facts as they are. But I am sorry to remark or observe when the Minister himself says in his statement that on 18-11-1982 at about 10.45 P.M. a grenade was thrown in the residential compound of USSR Embassy. The grenade exploded in the verandah of the flat in occupation of a member of the staff of the Embassy and the window and the glass panes were considerably damaged. May I know from the hon. Minister, on this issue alone, whether he could take any action thereafter and whether the registration of an offence under certain Sections of Explosive Substance Act is there or not. That is number one. This is in fact prelude to the subsequent incidents which took place on different dates and this has brought disrepute to the Government of India in the eyes of the foreign countries. So far as the security of the foreign personnel or the foreign airlines is concerned, we can not brook any delay in internal security. Can we brook any delay in the security of the external people or the external agencies? This is one question which I have to ask. Secondly, I am asking in this connection whether it is a fact that one of the diplomats has mentioned in his statement that this was obviously an attempt to make failure the Non-Aligned Summit which is to take place very soon in our country? Several newspapers have indicated certain clues of danger by international terrorists, some people say by terrorists from India. Have the Government of India addressed themselves to the press

reports and given more serious consideration to the security aspect? If they have sincerely and seriously tried to locate them, how is it that they have not been able to apprehend the culprits so far?

Then I would like to know the estimated loss incurred by the Embassies of USSR and USA, the Iraq Airways and Air France. Have the Government been able to detect the motive behind all these explosions? Since it came to the notice of Government four months ago, what steps have the Government taken to tighten the security and safety of our citizens and outsiders and also property? Since the Non-aligned Summit meeting is going to take in the next three or four days all the dangers should have been anticipated and preventive steps should have been taken by the Home Ministry. Unless and until the security measures are tightened the people coming to attend this conference will not feel safe. So I want to know the loss incurred by these agencies; the motives behind these explosions and why the Government have failed so far to apprehend the culprits.

I have here with me so many press clippings which say:

“दो हवाई कंपनियो क दफ्तर में बम फटे”

Rockets found at the US Embassy

“एक चौकीदार मर गया”

All these paper cuttings should have alerted the Government about the motives of the terrorists and should have given them adequate clue to find out the real culprits. Why have the Government not been able to do it so far? Have they tightened the security measures?

SHRI P. C. SETHI: Government are quite aware of the responsibility of the Foreign Embassies as well as the airlines who are operating here being kept safe. Therefore, wherever any such incidents have occurred, we have taken all possible precautions. In this connection, we have deputed a high

[Shri P. C. Sethi]

team of officers, drawn from different branches to go into it. If necessary, we would also take the help and assistance of the CBI. In this connection, I would like to point out that we are making earnest efforts to find out the culprits. So far 350 foreign nationals have been checked and their attendance verified, while 66 of them were closely questioned in this case. The investigation is in progress.

As far as the security and safety measures for the Non-aligned Conference is concerned, more than Rs. 6 crores are being spent and more than 1,500 officers of the SI and ASI rank have been trained from the different States and they have been posted here. All possible security measures have been taken. Apart from the Delhi Police, BISF and CRPF have been deployed for looking into the security aspect.

The losses suffered by Air France and Iraqi Airways are Rs. 94,950 and Rs. 73,350 respectively. So far as the US and USSR Embassies are concerned, the losses were negligible.

SHRI BHEEKHABHAI: What about the motive behind all this?

SHRI P. C. SETHI: The motives would not be known until the culprits are caught. But different clues are there. I would not like to spell them out at this present juncture.

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI (Sambalpur): Honourable Deputy-Speaker, Sir, The Minister has comprehensively spelt out the pros and cons on the subject and the Government action thereon. There have been a series of explosions in the city, two in foreign embassies and two in the buildings of foreign airways. Two days back in the Palika Bazar also there was an explosion. This is not a solitary incident. There is a secessionist movement in Assam, some political parties are supporting that also. Today there was a big dacoity and 17 people have been robbed away. What is the reason behind this? India is now holding

the Non-aligned Conference as its Chairman for three years. Our non-aligned policy, our anti-imperialist policy, is definitely an eyesore to some of the powers. So, definitely they want to create internal turmoil in our country so that they can harass and foil our objective of holding this Non-Aligned Conference. The Minister has replied to this point. So I do not want to go into details of this. I only want to put some specific questions.

I want to know whether the sophisticated missile which was thrown in the US Embassy and other bombs are indigenous in their origin. If they are of indigenous origin, how were they smuggled out from the ordnance factories? If they are of foreign origin, how they were smuggled in? This is the main question. That means, if they are of indigenous origin, if they can smuggle these sophisticated arms and missiles today, they can smuggle tanks also and give them to somebody else. This is the main object of my question.

The second thing is in respect of terrorist activities, maybe anti-or pro-Khomeini or other nationals, published in the papers, the foreign nationals, anti-or pro-Government, are polluting our soil. What particular security arrangements have been made and what is our policy to curb all these types of activities?

Sir, the Minister has stated that after investigation he will give the full details. But my main point is that after a crime is committed, then the police are becoming alert.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Dr. Bhoi, he has already said about the various arrangements that have been made.

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI: That I know. I want to know one thing. There is a Police Research and Development Agency which was set up in 1970 and there is another Assessment Agency headed by the Home Secretary. And this Assessment Agency met only twice for the last five years. If it is

so, what is the use of this Agency? Why not the Research and Development Wing of our Police Department, according to the Report of the Police Commission, be energised? If more funds are required, they should be given. Why not sophisticated instruments be introduced and given to the police personnel so that it will be easier for them to apprehend the culprits and to know the different types of sophisticated instruments, which are being smuggled out? What are the steps taken so that the culprits can be apprehended within a very short time? I was charmed by the process of investigation mentioned by one of my friends who was in Scotland and who narrated it. Will the Minister kindly consider these facts which are in his mind and incorporate sophisticated instruments. The police officials and the people who are crestfallen should not be to the Research and Development Wing of the Department but the most intelligent officers be sent to get all the knowledge for detailed protection of life and law and order of our country and security as a whole.

SHRI P.C. SETHI: I fully share the anxiety shown by the hon. Member. I would like to clarify because he has raised one question that one chaprasi was killed. It has appeared in the newspaper. Nobody was killed. One of the chaprasis got minor injury on account of the splinters. He was sent to hospital. There was no loss of life. The explosions in the offices of Air France and Iraqi Airways, were of crude Indian manufactured Bombs which are normally manufactured by private people by joining the two tubes and putting some explosive material there and, therefore, they are not of much consequence.

As far as the rocket which was used in the U.S. Embassy, is concerned, on that no markings were there and, therefore, it could not be found out as to where from it has come. But certainly it was powerful instrument which if it would not have been detected would have done greater harm.

In this connection I would like to point out that we are trying to equip the Delhi Police with high power wireless sets, metal detectors and explosive detectors. Forensic laboratory has been recently created to go into these crimes. We have cautioned the Delhi Police that they should be more vigilant. The night patrol should increase. At the same time they should take cognisance of these facts and make more tight security arrangements.

As far as the non-alignment conference is concerned, whatever may be the intentions of some parties or some people, we will try to see that all those who come to participate in this non-alignment summit are well protected.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: S/Shri Harish Rawat, D. L. BAITHA, Hari-kesh Bahadur are not present. We now go to matters under 377.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Many of the Members are not present since they did not know that lunch hour has been dispensed with. Such of the Members who are absent will be called again after 14 hrs.

Shri Ram Pyare Panika.

(i) FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO PEOPLE AFFECTED BY NATURAL CALAMITIES IN MIRZAPUR, U.P.

श्री राम प्यारे पानिका (राबर्टसगंज) :
उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, पिछले तीन वर्षों से लगातार मिर्जापुर जनपद सूखा, बाढ़ ओला आदि प्राकृतिक आपदाओं से अप्रत्याशित कठिनाई में पड़ा हुआ है ।