

[Dr. Subramaniam Swamy]

and one persons from Sri Lanka. One of the Indian crews is the only son of Shri B. L. Sharma, Secretary-General of the National Government Employees' Confederation (State and Central), Shri Praveen Sharma, Chief Officer of the missing ship

It is understood that the ship sailed from Dubai on 27th August, 1978 for Bombay via Karachi loaded with Iron scrap. It was expected to reach Karachi on 4/5 September, 1978, but it did not. It appears to have disappeared from the sea between the coastal Waters of Dubai and Karachi. According to the Agents of the ship, it might have drifted towards Iranian coast due to engine breakdown and detained there by the Iranian Government probably due to the current internal disturbances going on in the country.

I have come to know that Shri Chand Ram, Hon. Minister of Shipping and Transport, in his D.O. letter No. 5444/MST/78 dated 23-12-78, has intimated to Shri H. N. Bhahuguna, Hon. Minister of Petroleum and Chemicals, that this ship along with the Master of the Ship, Capt. Kaparwan, was arrested in one of the Iranian ports for suspected smuggling and all the crew members are reported to be safe and sound.

Another unconfirmed information received by Shri B. L. Sharma, father of Shri Praveen Sharma, the Chief Officer of the ship is that it has been detained at Bunder Kanarak (Lat. 25° 22'N Long. 60° 28'E.) near Chah Bahar. There is also a rumour that the Ship has sunk in Gulf Waters but the crew members are safe. The address of the agents of the ship is as under:-

Captain Harpal Singh Sahi.
M/s. Ilyas Shipping Ltd.,
Khorshed Buildings,
Sir Ferozeshah Mehta Road,
Bombay-400 001.

The owner of the ship is Capt.

Satnam Singh brother of Capt. Harpal Singh Sahi, of M/s. Ilyas Shipping Limited, Bombay.

The mystery of the sudden disappearance of this ship is a surprise to the entire Shipping world. It is now over six months that the families of fifteen Indian and one person from Sri Lanka have been worried and spending sleepless nights in anxiety. The lives of 15 Indian nationals are involved. In addition to this, the mental agony of near and dear relatives of the crew members cannot be imagined by others. In order to mitigate the distress of so many Indian nationals, I appeal to the Government to find out the actual facts about this ship and communicate these to the concerned persons, as early as possible

MR. SPEAKER: No addition, only the approved text.

(iii) REPORTED CRIMINAL ASSAULT ON NURSES IN BASTI TOWN. (UP).

SHRI V. M. SUDHEERAN (Alleppey): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to invite the attention of the House to the reported rape and assault on five Malayali nurses in Basti town of U.P. on 25th February, 1979. This tragic incident is a shocking news to the society and an eye-opener to the deplorable situation prevailing in that area near Indo-Nepal border. On 25th February, 1979, at 10.15 p.m. five persons belonging to a smuggling gang entered the nurses hostel in Basti and wanted to know the whereabouts of two nurses who are alleged to have connections with their rival smuggling gangs. When the nurses told the gangsters that they did not know the whereabouts of the the said nurses, the gangsters started threatening and within a few minutes, five nurses were raped. The watchman of the hostel remained at a distance helplessly because he was threatened by pointing pistols. Though the

watchman filed a complaint about this incident, the local police did not even register a case. It is alleged that the District police officials and the hospital authorities tried their best to suppress and hush up the whole affair and it is widely reported in the press that the police and the gangsters were in collusion in this case. This was reported.

MR. SPEAKER: Please confine to the approved text. Only the approved text would go on record.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: What has happened to my request for making a statement under Rule 377?

MR. SPEAKER: It has not been selected. You are in a very aggressive mood today.

SHRI V. M. SUDHEERAN: Even the district medical authorities helped in covering up the matter. The two senior doctors in Basti hospital, who are notorious for their immorality do not want any inquiry as it will only lead to their exposure.

When the first news report appeared on 27th February in a Hindi daily Dainik Jagran, the district information officer totally denied it. The D.I.G. of Police, Gorakhpur Division also contradicted the stories appearing in the Dainik Jagran. The Nurses' Association in its meeting decided to go on strike till the issue is properly looked into. As a result of immense pressure, the State Government ordered an enquiry by which the District administration and police officials were exposed.

It is established beyond any doubt that the rivalry between the two smuggler gangs led to the rape though the victims were not the ones originally intended to. Many members of the smuggling gangs used to visit the nurses hostel regularly to see the two nurses who are friendly to them. Even the hospital authorities allowed the smugglers to visit the hostel to meet these two nurses. The

Chief Maron of the Hostel, who was supposed to stay in the hostel, was staying.

The reports evidently convinced us that the smugglers were patronized by the Police and other district officials. Many smugglers are operating in Basti and its neighbouring district Gorakhpur. All the e gangs smuggle goods from Nepal through the border. The Central Government has totally failed to check the smuggling in this area.

The incident which occurred in Basti is a matter of deep concern to the whole nation, particularly the people of Kerala from where a large number of nurses hail. Many stories have appeared in various newspapers and the issue was raised in U.P. Assembly also. But even now, no proper action has been taken to provide adequate protection to the nurses and to check the Smuggling.

In view of the deplorable situation prevailing in Basti, I would urge upon the Government to take immediate steps as follows:

- (1) Order a CBI enquiry immediately into the whole incident taken place on 25-2-1979 and after.
- (2) Punish the guilty medical and Police officers.
- (3) To provide adequate protection to the nurses in Basti.
- (4) To launch an intensive anti-smuggling drive on the Indo-Nepal border to suppress the smugglers.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Please hear me for half-a-minute, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: I cannot. I must listen to others also, if I do it.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: I am a Member of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Undoubtedly you are.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: What happened to my matter under 377?

MR. SPEAKER: It is safely there. It is being looked into.