

**SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS :** Both are inter-connected !

[*Translation*]

**SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI :** Sir, it is really fantastic.

**MR. SPEAKER :** Since this question relates to travel, it is obvious that they have established a relationship between the two.

[*English*]

Report of Commissioners of  
Railway Safety on railway  
accidents

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\*170. **SHRI V. SREENIVASA**

**PRASAD ;  
SHRI SATYENDRA NARAYAN  
SINHA :**

Will the Minister of **CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM** be pleased to state :

(a) whether the reports submitted by the Commissioners of Railway Safety on serious railway accidents are treated as confidential;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government intend to make these reports public; and

(d) if so, when ?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL) :**

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The reports submitted by the Commissioner of Railway Safety are invariably kept confidential till all actions on the findings and recommendations thereon have been completed smoothly by the Railway Board.

(c) and (d). The Reports of the Commissioners, containing matters of general and technical interest, are always made public as soon as possible, after the follow up action has been completed.

[*English*]

**SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD :** Mr. Speaker, Sir, whenever a serious Railway Accident takes place, a Report is submitted by the Commissioner of Railway Safety. I would like to know from the Minister, since public memory is very short, whether he will consider the suggestion that at least the reasons for the accidents should be made known to the public immediately and the follow-up and other things can be taken up later on.

As soon as the Report comes out certainly the causes or the reasons of the accidents should be made known to the public. Will the Minister consider this thing ?

**SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL :** I am answering this question because the Commissioner of Railway Safety is under the Civil Aviation Ministry. They wanted to separate the Commissioner of Railway Safety from the Railway Ministry.

**MR. SPEAKER :** Our Minister will become the Minister of Accident !

**SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL :** No, Sir; Accident Inquiry Minister. Because they wanted that this part of the activity should be separated from the Railway Ministry so it was put under the Civil Aviation Ministry, to make it independent of the Railways. This Commission is expected to inquire into the accidents that take place, prepare a Report and send that Report to the Railways. After that the Railways are expected to take action on them. The reason why the Report is not disclosed to the people is that after the accident takes place the matter is also investigated into by the police. Then the Reports are filed by the police in a Court of law and the judgements are given by a Court of law. In order to see that there is no contempt of the court and to see that there is no hindrance caused to the investigation by the Police into the causes of accidents also, the report is not published in the initial stages. But after the action is taken, action is completed, the salient features of the report, and sometimes the entire report as such are brought to the notice of the public at large.

**SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI :** I am not all convinced or satisfied with the reply of the Hon. Minister for treating this report as confidential. I have got a right to know. If there are losses of life and property, then the public has a right to know as to why these losses of life and property did take place; and if there is any fault on the part of somebody, to pinpoint that fault. If there are omissions in the report, if the report is published the people can also put forth their own views and their own experiences as to why the accidents took place. Therefore, what is the rationale for keeping it confidential and making the salient features public, after the entire exercise of the action is over ?

**SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL :** I agree with the Hon. Member in the sense that between what the Hon. Member is saying, and the stand taken by this Commissioner for Railway Safety there is hardly any difference. What is actually done is that when the accidents take place—this is an independent body; it is not a part and parcel of the Department of Railways—this independent body appears on the scene, examines the causes and other things, and then prepares the report. That report is sent to the Railways. The Railways are expected to act upon the report. Then one more step is taken in certain cases, viz. to inform the Police; and the Police also start investigation. They file a chargesheet in the court of law, and the court then takes cognizance of the case. The matter becomes *sub judice*; and then the reports are not given out to the people. At this stage, if the report given by the Commissioner, the report given by the Police and everything is disclosed, and if it is not brought properly before the eyes of the people, the very fact that justice has to be done, can be negated. So, what they are actually doing is that in the initial stages they do not publish it; they send it to the Railways. Certain other steps are taken, and then the matter is taken to the court of law, and then decisions are taken. The Railways also take action. But invariably, when accidents take place and when investigation is completed, this is brought to the notice of the people.

**SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI :** Then how can the citizen go to the court ?

**SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL :** No; the Police go to the court.

#### Cancellation of Air India flights

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\*172. **SHRI M. RAGHUMA  
REDDY :**  
**SHRI C. SAMBU :**

Will the Minister of **CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM** be pleased state :

(a) whether more than 42 Air India flights were cancelled during the month of July, 1988 as reported in the Indian Express dated 12 July, 1988;

(b) if so, the causes thereof;

(c) whether the passengers going abroad were not informed about the cancellation of the flights and therefore felt harassed; and

(d) what steps Government propose to take to avoid such recurrence ?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE  
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND  
TOURISM (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL) :**  
(a) and (b). During the month of July, 1988, 10½ roundtrip scheduled flights of Air-India were cancelled on account of the overseas tour of the President of India 19½ (13½ international and 6 domestic roundtrip scheduled flights were cancelled due to the Prime Minister's visit. 15 flights were rescheduled.

(c) Since the cancellations were planned in advance, all confirmed passengers of those flights were advised by Air-India of the cancellations and alternative arrangements for their transportation were made.

(d) Air-India makes all efforts to hire extra aircraft capacity for use during the period of VVIP visits. However, when capacity cannot be met by hiring of aircraft, cancellation/rescheduling becomes necessary. Cancellations/reschedulings are planned in advance and kept to the barest minimum to minimise passengers inconvenience.