

## LOK SABHA DEBATES

### LOK SABHA

Wednesday, December 6, 1995/Agrahayana 15, 1917 (Saka)  
*The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock*  
 [MR. SPEAKER in the chair].

#### ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

#### Theft of Goods

+\*141 SHRI KUNJEE LAL :

SHRI MOHAMMAD ALI ASHRAF FATMI :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether a number of incidents of theft of goods have taken place in the Railways in recent years;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the value of goods

stolen during the last three years, zone-wise;

(c) the loss suffered by Railways on account of theft;

(d) the number of Railway Officials involved therein and the value of goods recovered out of the goods stolen; and

(e) the remedial action taken by the Government to check such thefts?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH KALMADI) : (a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

#### STATEMENT

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Details of the cases of theft / pilferage of booked consignment over Indian Railways during the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95.

Railways	Years	No. of cases	Value of property (in Rs.)		Arrest	
			stolen	recovered	Outsiders	Rly. Emp.
Central	1992-93	1001	40,26,391	8,51,926	175	19
	1993-94	795	36,93,895	13,00,487	158	23
	1994-95	702	1,69,04,483	1,22,73,737	207	24
Eastern	1992-93	5253	1,71,76,132	20,53,801	262	6
	1993-94	4123	1,60,56,780	11,20,824	150	5
	1994-95	3275	1,81,82,971	17,35,916	295	2
Northern	1992-93	1780	71,55,586	12,23,696	370	81
	1993-94	1182	82,92,251	11,24,947	294	56
	1994-95	1039	75,23,249	14,14,159	299	26
North-Eastern	1992-93	1163	59,56,200	1,41,978	76	5
	1993-94	847	40,00,179	77,478	57	13
	1994-95	644	52,26,498	2,16,840	35	3
Northeast Frontier	1992-93	1698	73,20,495	9,89,301	157	9
	1993-94	1306	1,13,00,194	2,86,790	79	7
	1994-95	1212	67,68,456	1,86,722	70	-
Southern	1992-93	2089	63,47,682	2,56,093	61	15
	1993-94	1564	40,23,746	99,520	68	8
	1994-95	987	32,61,388	2,27,613	67	10
South-Central	1992-93	647	16,96,061	1,67,886	112	11
	1993-94	439	14,81,682	3,78,455	111	19
	1994-95	296	15,86,437	9,13,201	187	29
South-Eastern	1992-93	1927	1,36,86,462	8,77,680	237	8
	1993-94	1816	46,56,294	14,22,634	191	8
	1994-95	1228	67,19,359	17,68,051	225	11
Western	1992-93	997	47,37,093	15,49,572	233	13
	1993-94	730	60,94,282	4,97,653	176	21
	1994-95	670	32,72,454	3,18,368	177	15
Total	1992-93	16555	6,81,02,102	81,11,933	1683	167
	1993-94	12802	5,95,98,503	63,88,828	1284	162
	1994-95	10053	6,94,45,295	1,90,54,599	1562	120

Details of the cases of theft / pilferage of railway materials and fittings over Indian Railways during the financial years 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95

Railways	Years	No. of cases	Value of property (in Rs.)		Arrest	
			Stolen	Recovered	Outsiders	Rly. Emp.
C.R.	1992-93	3612	62,99,306	16,81,459	2289	1162
	1993-94	2590	50,89,618	25,78,618	1960	111
	1994-95	2266	70,48,192	40,24,950	1693	100
E.R.	1992-93	23619	1,36,70,351	75,83,050	2264	38
	1993-94	28655	1,34,78,721	77,71,335	2077	47
	1994-95	28565	1,33,99,631	68,45,938	1948	49
N.R.	1992-93	42042	95,78,637	21,98,475	1270	201
	1993-94	30171	82,66,363	26,81,743	1273	126
	1994-95	20940	84,41,515	32,15,377	1332	144
N.E.	1992-93	1439	24,77,467	6,16,840	576	92
	1993-94	1213	19,10,661	7,10,150	535	100
	1994-95	1059	13,07,417	12,25,439	545	63
N.F.	1992-93	520	23,16,566	16,57,737	388	34
	1993-94	542	26,94,846	8,84,289	297	15
	1994-95	507	16,99,162	11,05,044	290	12
S.R.	1992-93	5662	43,11,727	14,48,207	785	47
	1993-94	6164	23,93,899	14,45,908	833	64
	1994-95	5470	28,37,646	15,64,892	771	37
S.C.	1992-93	1179	28,57,763	22,67,231	1155	73
	1993-94	937	20,20,372	17,08,190	1074	43
	1994-95	719	29,23,396	25,35,812	1027	63
S.E.	1992-93	7003	87,80,735	23,49,774	833	38
	1993-94	5392	62,88,429	18,72,571	681	14
	1994-95	5353	54,32,494	11,02,667	508	20
W.R.	1992-93	2428	22,60,460	7,98,980	1734	120
	1993-94	2242	38,29,654	18,03,668	1630	68
	1994-95	1885	31,42,687	12,40,343	1314	69
Total	1992-93	87504	5,25,43,012	2,06,01,753	11294	805
	1993-94	77906	4,63,71,990	2,14,56,472	10360	588
	1994-95	66764	4,62,32,140	2,28,60,462	9428	557

(e) The following remedial measures are being taken to check such thefts:-

- 1) Escorting of trains carrying valuables and important consignments as far as possible.
- 2) Intensive beat patrolling in yards and other vulnerable areas/sections.
- 3) Joint checking at interchange points to take stock of the condition of wagons/seals carrying consignments vulnerable to theft etc.
- 4) RPF armed pickets are posted/deployed in vulnerable sections as far as possible.
- 5) Plain clothed RPF personnel are also deployed to collect crime intelligence with a view to tracking down the criminals.
- 6) Dog squads are deployed for patrolling in vulnerable yards and areas as per their availability.
- 7) Close coordination between the RPF, the GRP and the local police is maintained at various levels to deal

with criminals and receivers of stolen property.

- 8) Based on the crime intelligence, raids and searches are conducted on the dens of the criminals/receivers of the stolen property in order to bring them to book.

[Translation]

SHRI KUNJEE LAL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is clear from the reply of the Government that there is continuous increase in the number of theft incidents in railway and even the railway employees are involved in these incidents. It is a very serious matter. What steps have been taken by the Government to check such thefts incidents?

[English]

SHRI SURESH KALMADI : Sir the cases of theft and pilferage has been coming down over the years; and also the theft and pilferage of Railway material and fittings are also coming down over the years. We are taking various steps including checking and keeping security on vulnerable trains and vulnerable areas. There has been escorting such trains. There has been intensive patrolling in the yards. We have been having plain

cloth RPF persons in various places. We have been having task forces, we have been having close reports between the RPF, GRP and the Local Police; and they have been carrying out raids and searches in the dens of criminals. We have taken various steps. I would like to say that pilferage, etc. are coming down quite a bit.

[Translation]

SHRI KUNJEE LAL : Whether the Government are contemplating to delegate special powers to the Railway Protection Force or is there any such scheme under consideration?

[English]

SHRI SURESH KALMADI : This is an ongoing process. RPF is being modernised. We are going in for wireless sets for communication. We are keen on increasing the RPF Force as well. So, a lot of steps are being taken to revamp the RPF to keep it in a trim condition.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAMMAD ALI ASHRAF FATMI : Mr. Speaker Sir, the mafia gangs are operating at different stations in the goods trains which transport various items through open racks. But the data given here, show that the theft does not exceed beyond 5-6 crore rupees. But now the question is, whether the loss due to theft is estimated properly? Secondly, it takes a long time to get the refund of the stolen goods. So, whether the Government has made such an arrangement through which the case of the client is settled soon and he may get the refund at the earliest?

SHRI SURESH KALMADI : You have rightly asserted that there is a little pilferage in the open racks. We have been taking steps for maximum utilisation of closed racks and steps are being taken to use the open racks in a proper way. As far as the figures are concerned, I would like to submit that these are correct. The total value of the pilferage is rupees 4.5 crores and the process of the recovery is also going on. A number of persons have been arrested in the follow up action. This year we have arrested more than 10,000 persons and out of the total loss of Rs. 4.5 crores, Rs. 2.5 crores have been recovered. The rate of recovery is quite good. The loss is just a little fraction of our stock or consignment. We have fixed a deadline of 6 months for the refund. If anything is wrong with the claims, it takes much time for its final settlement. We give the claim within 6 months and if police case is there it takes much time.

SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT : Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Home Minister that even after deputing R.P.F. personnels, the coal is stolen at a large scale from there even on the Surat Bhusawal track. It is said that R.P.F. personnels are also involved in these activities and steal coal etc. after stopping the train. Secondly, the security guards are travelling in the first class due to which train robbery occur. What steps will be taken by the hon. Railway Minister to check it.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI : There is a little pilferage of coal and claims have also been made in this regard. The claim of rupees 18 crore have been made in regard to Coal. We have devised a system of search lighting to check it. We

are deputing more guards in the dacoity and theft prone areas. In this way we have taken several steps to reduce the loss. I am happy to note that every year the theft and pilferage cases are going down from 20 to 35 per cent and the same trend has followed during the last 6 years.

SHRI LAKSHMI NARAIN MANI TRIPATHI : Sir, the hon. Minister has just now raised the issue of open baggage theft cases and you have just talked about the claim of rupees 18 crore. I would like to know from the hon. Minister that the claim of the goods booked under owner's risk has not yet been made so the claim of rupees 18 crore made by the people which has been mentioned here was diverted to some other place. The reply has been given regarding that claim only. I would like to know that the goods booked under the owner's risk which are stolen mostly and against which no claim is made, what Government, is doing in this regard? Does the hon. Minister have any information about the theft of goods booked under the owner's risk.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI : I would like to submit that the total estimated loss under this head comes amount Rs. 7 crore per year. Although it was much, earlier but now it has come down.

SHRI LAKSHMI NARAIN MANI TRIPATHI : No, no.....

SHRI SURESH KALMADI : During the year 1992-93 there were total 16 thousand cases. During 1994-95 10 thousand cases have been detected and during the first 6 months of 1995-96 only 4 thousand cases have come to light. This 18 crore figure of coal was for the period of three years but what about the total claim of all the goods...

SHRI LAKSHMI NARAIN MANI TRIPATHI : I would like to have your protection sir, The hon. Minister should try to understand my question. Here the goods can be booked in two ways. One, the goods are booked at the owner's risk and secondly, it can be booked under the railway risk.

MR. SPEAKER : He has mentioned the free consignment.

SHRI LAKSHMI NARAIN MANI TRIPATHI : What is the detail of the free consignment?

MR. SPEAKER : He is explaining that only.

SHRI LAKSHMI NARAIN MANI TRIPATHI : No, Sir, That is 18 crore ....

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not argue.

[Translation]

SHRI ANNA JOSHI : Mr. Speaker Sir, besides making arrangements for the transportation of goods, you are also giving protection in this regard. It means that the faith of the people on the railway may increase and more and more goods should be sent through the railways. But it seems that even the Department of Railway is lacking that spirit. Recently due to the blockade of Pune-Baramati railway track the consignments have been sent through the private truck after paying Rs. 2 crore to the owner. Should I take it granted that so far as the traffic facility is concerned the railway officers do not feel it reliable.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: We have full faith and you know that..

SHRI ANNA JOSHI : You have faith but what about your own department?

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Sir, we are earning revenue to the tune of Rs. 22 thousand crores. Whereas Rs. 15 thousand crore comes through freight etc, as against it there is a claim of rupees 25.2 crore only. Railway has a vast network of 60 thousand kilometers, 12 thousand trains run daily and about 1.5 crore people travel in them daily. Even after such a big network the loss is nominal. Therefore, I would like to submit that the railway is always dependable.

SHRI ANNA JOSHI: Would you please conduct an enquiry into it that even when the railway wagons are available, the goods were sent by truck.....(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You both come from the same place and so, you can talk with each other later. (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRIMATI LOVELY ANAND: Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister through you that when the work of Conversion of Samastipur railway line into broad gauge and connecting it with the Saharsa district of Bihar which is lying pending is likely to be completed?

MR. SPEAKER: This question does not arise out of it.

SHRI KALKA DAS: Mr. Speaker Sir, it appears from the reply of the hon. Minister that theft incidents are on the increase in the railways. It is very sad that besides the outsiders, the departmental people are also involved in it. Their number is increasing. I would like to know from the hon. Minister the number of railway employees arrested for pilferage and what sort of punishment is given to them?

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: 1600 outsiders and 120 railway employees have been arrested for pilferage and book-consignment. Their number is going down every year. This year it is 120, whereas 9500 outsiders and 550 railway employees have been arrested for stealing railway materials and fittings. This year, i.e. during 1994-95, 81 railway employees have been convicted under the theft cases.

#### Comprehensive Lokpal Bill

\*142. SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 1304 on 22nd March, 1995 and the news-item captioned "Lokpal Ki Niyukti par Supreme Court ne sujaho mange" appearing in the 'Nav-bharat Times' dated 12.8.95 and state:

(a) the reaction of the Government thereto;

(b) whether the Government propose to bring a comprehensive Lokpal Bill of its own in the event of the political parties and leaders not coming round the table for a consensus; and

(c) if not, the justification therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA) : (a) The Govt. is not aware of any such direction of the Supreme Court seeking suggestions on Lokpal.

(b) and (c) Efforts to evolve a broad consensus are on.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI: Mr. Speaker Sir, I am sorry to say that such a serious question raised by me has been taken lightly by hon. Minister. It is generally talked that the public representatives are, indulging in corrupt practices. Politics is being treated as a means of manipulation, fraud, merry making and earning money. The bureaucracy is engrossed in corruption. Such allegations which are being levelled against Legislative, Executive and Judiciary, are marring their image. The Lokpal Bill, which has been brought to control all this, is yet to take off, even after the lapse of 27 years. Lokpal Bill was introduced 5 times in the House from 1968 to 1989. Therefore, I would like to know from hon. Minister as to what has compelled the Government to introduce this Amendment Bill once again as Lokpal Bill without appointing any Lokpal or waiting at least for its impact.

Sir, the part (b) of the question is whether any political party has opposed this Bill or the appointment of Lokpal as mentioned in the Bill? If so, the names of the parties and leaders who, in the name of consensus are opposing this Bill and the time by which this consensus will be reached?

[English]

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : Sir, the hon. Member has said that I have taken the issue lightly, but I do not think it is quite true. It is because over and over again we have been making efforts - in fact, five efforts have been made by Governments headed by different political parties who have come to power at the Centre, it has not only been made by one political party or the other — but consensus on this issue has deluded Parliament so far and therefore, the Bill has not been passed. But this issue was raised twice in this House and in the Rajya Sabha and there were two detailed discussions to which I have replied in detail and the Prime Minister himself had intervened and said that when after a national debate on this issue, a consensus emerges, we would be prepared to come to the House with a consensus Bill.

Sir, accordingly, we have been taking steps in this regard. After the last budget session of Parliament I wrote to 49 leaders of various political parties in the two Houses and requested that they might send us their comments on the earlier Bills — because we had circulated them — so that we could arrive at a consensus. Some of them, actually, out of the 49, we received replies from leaders of five political parties. Subsequently — as we had not received the written replies of the other Political leaders — yesterday the hon. Home Minister had a meeting of the leaders of political parties to work out a consensus on this issue. I think, a broad consensus is emerging. Yesterday in the meeting we have assured the leaders — earlier we had assured the House — that we would work out something and come back to the House.