

not be to the detriment of our own people. Therefore, this is really an absurd policy so far as our national and fishermen's interests are concerned. The Government should review it as well as come to the House and say what all the steps they have taken to protect the interests of our fishermen. I fully agree with the views given expression to by other friends in the matter.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMSAGAR (Barabanki): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in the coastal areas of the country, the fishermen have been traditionally fishing in the sea. The Government's declaration to entrust the work of fishing at deep sea to foreign companies has given rise to the resentment among the fishermen community. In Uttar Pradesh the Government headed by Shri Mulayam Singh has framed a policy in this regard. The same policy should be implemented in the whole country. The poverty among fishermen community should be alleviated and their problem should be solved immediately.

[English]

PROF. K.V. THOMAS (Ernakulam): Sir, as a person who comes from the fishermen family I would express my anguish and agony against the decision of the Government to give about 200 licences to the foreign fishing trawlers which will sweep away the entire fish wealth of this country. A storm of agitation is going across the coastal lines of the country cutting across party lines, against this decision of the Government. My request to the Government is to cancel immediately all the licences given so far and then call all the representatives of the fishermen so that a decision is taken which will be favourable only for the fishermen and not against anybody. Thank you.

SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMCHANDRAN (Cannanore): Sir, I am in full agreement with the sentiments and views expressed by the hon. Members of this august House. I request that the hon. Minister should come forward and make a statement in this connection.

[Translation]

SHRI TEJ NARAYAN SINGH (Buxar): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the policy of the Government to give licences to foreign companies for deep sea fishing is a severe blow to the fishermen of the country. There are about one crore fishermen in the country. Their only profession is fishing. They are landless and do not have any other alternative source of livelihood. Framing of such a law by the Government of India tantamounts to treachery. I, therefore, demand from the Union Government that the decision to issue licences to foreign companies should be withdrawn. As no licence is required for fishing in Bihar, the same policy should be implemented in other parts of the country.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to put forth only one point. We have received memoranda from various fishermen's organisations in which they have mentioned about hardships of their day to day life. Since the time of

handing over the work of deep sea fishing to multinational companies, their lives have become miserable and full of sorrow. I strongly support the views expressed by Shri Ram Naik. Sir, through you, I demand from the Government that multinationals should be excluded from the jurisdiction of deep-sea fishing and their licences should be cancelled with immediate effect. In the end, I would only like to say that:

"Garib ko Mat Sata, Garib Ro Dega,
Sunega Uska Khuda, To Tumhe Jad Se Khod Dega."

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): Sir, we note with all respect the views expressed by all sections of the House about this particular issue. As rightly said by the Leader of the Opposition, I was also there and this was one of the issues on which grave concern was expressed in the coastal area. This has been said by my hon. friend, Shri Oscar Fernandes also. I assure this august House that we will request the concerned Minister to make a statement before this House and if it is to be followed by a discussion, we will leave it to the hon. Speaker or to you. We will apprise the Minister today itself and request him to make a statement. About the time and date it can be decided by the Speaker or the Dy. Speaker. (Interruptions) The Minister will make the statement tomorrow.

12.41 hrs.

RE: BOMBAY BOUND INDRAYANI EXPRESS
TRAIN RUNNING WITHOUT ENGINE DRIVER

[English]

SHRI ANNA JOSHI (Pune): Sir, in the last week of the September, the Bombay bound Indrayani Express ran without engine driver and his colleagues from Monkey Hills to Karjat Railway Station for a distance of 13 Kms. at the speed of 80 kms. per hour. The train was completely without loco running staff and without any control. It ran through the Ghats along with the double rate of the normal speed endangering the life of hundreds of railway commuters. This type of acts of criminal negligence are happening day in and day out on the Central Railway especially between the Bombay-Pune Railway track disrupting the normal routine of the railway transport and causing displeasure to the commuters which results in the loss of lives and property worth crores of rupees.

I urge upon the Railway Minister, through you, Sir to make a statement, look into the matter seriously and make arrangements for improving the condition of Central Railway as well as set up enquiries for all such matters and punish the guilty persons.

SHRI SHARAD DIGHE (Bombay North Central): Sir, the incident that has taken place to Indrayani Express is a very serious incident. It would have been the worst tragedy of this century as far as even the world is

concerned. Hundreds of commuters were travelling by this train and for about 40 kms. there was no driver, no guard and nobody was there. Of its own the train was running at a high speed from Thakurwadi to Karjat Station. It is a very serious thing.

Recently, there have been several incidents of disruption of the suburban Railway in Bombay. During the last four months there have been such incidents, practically every week and no serious steps are being taken.

Now, as far as this incident is concerned, the railways have not still come out with as to what were the facts. They some time even deny that there was no driver. But all the passenger who were travelling, have confirmed that they travelled without any driver. It was a providential escape. Otherwise, hundreds of people would have died. Ultimately, because of chain pulling and several other devices, the train stopped at Karjat and everybody heaved a sigh of relief at that station. It is a very serious thing and the Railway Ministry should take it very seriously and disclose all the facts as to how this has happened and what measures they are going to take.

SHRI RAM KAPSE (Thane): Hon. Deputy-Speaker, Sir the Indirani Express ran without driver in the Ghat which would have been the worst tragedy in India because it is a very hard drive there. Another factor which should be noted is in the fifth compartment of the train, there was fire. When it was searched in Karjat, it was found that there was not a single passenger in the fifth coach. There was no luggage also left. It happened on 5th December and there was some evil design as far as the train running without driver, without guard, without assistant driver is concerned and at the same time, there was fire at different places in the same train. It would have been the worst tragedy ever experienced. By the grace of God only, they were saved at Karjat.

I want the Railway Minister to react and make a statement immediately for the enquiry in the Indirani Express incident.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN (Rosera): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Joshiji has stated that a train ran without a driver and guard and I feel that the Government should give a reply to that... (Interruptions).. I feel nothing can be more tragic. It is surprising that the Government is keeping mum on such issues. That is why I feel that you should give guidelines to the Government as it is not a simple matter. It is alright that no accident occurred but if there had been an accident several people would have got killed. Why did this happen?... (Interruptions).. If the crossing gate is left open, you suspend and discharge people responsible for that but in this case the train remained running without a Driver. Will the Government, the Hon. Minister not be held responsible for this? Will they be left scot-free? This is not a simple matter. The Minister of Home has left the house. This matter does not concern the Ministry of Railways alone, the Ministry of Home should also be answerable and the Central Government should also give a reply to that. I feel that of all the rail mishaps occurred so far this incident is of the most serious nature that the train ran sans a driver or a guard. Who is

responsible for this? I submit that the hon. Minister should give a statement on it. Otherwise, you must direct the Hon. Minister to come here and give a statement.

[English]

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE (Calcutta South): I appreciate the point raised by Mr. Anna Joshi regarding Indirani Express. People have been luckily saved by the grace of god. Like Indirani Express, Chakradarpur rail accident also took place last month. The Railway Minister visited the spot. After that, he said, without going into the details, without going into the investigation, "Their Ministry is not responsible for the Chakradarpur rail accident." You will appreciate that after the accident, even the family members of the victims were harassed like anything. They have not yet got any cooperation from the Railway Ministry. They said, "It is the law and order situation. So, the State Government will look into all these matters."

After that, I took up the matter with the Railway Ministry at night, around 12 O'clock because the family members of the victims told me: "We have been harassed like anything. We are not getting the death certificates or bodies. Even the Railways are not cooperating with us." You will be surprised to know that the Railway Ministry have said, "They are not responsible." Even the GRP people are not able to issue death certificate to the victims. These things are going on.

Therefore, my request is, regarding the Indirani Express and regarding Chakradarpur rail accident, the Government must investigate the matter and make a statement so that this thing should not happen in future and the families of the victims should get compensation and death certificates in proper time.

I think it is a serious matter. So many lakhs of people travel every day by train. They do not have security. The Railway Minister should make a statement and investigate the matter promptly and the guilty should be punished. They should see that the families of the victims are given compensation at right time and in proper manner so that this type of thing should not happen in future.. (Interruptions)

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: What is the reaction of the Government?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Wasnik, would the Government like to say something on this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS) AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MUKUL WASNIK): Sir, I will convey to the hon. Railway Minister the feelings which have been expressed by the hon. Members in regard to the Indirani Express incident so that a statement on the factual position is made in the House.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Regarding Chakradarpur Express incident also, a statement should be made. It is a very serious matter. It has been made outside the House. For instance, take the Chakradarpur Express incident. These statements imply that the Railways have nothing to do with it and all these things that happened are

independent of the railway system. That is how they have come out in the Press. So, the point is that, on their own, they should have come here to make a statement both in regard to the implausible incident that occurred in Maharashtra and also the incident relating to Chakradharpur Express. Instead of trying to deny it, they have to say how the Railways are responsible, apart from what compensation they are giving.

12.54 hrs.

RE: Laying on the Table of Gyan Prakash Committee's Report on Sugar Imports.

[Translation]

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (Chittorgarh): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to submit in regard to the sugar scam. It was clear in the months of February and March that there was heavy shortage of sugar, that is why the import policy was changed in the month of March and the import of sugar also started. I do not want to go in all the details. Several related questions and problems have risen. There was a demand for an enquiry into it as it was said that some bungling was being indulged in. The sugar was available abroad at the rate of 200-250 dollars per tonne whereas the Government was importing it at the rate of 350-400 dollars per tonne. It was also insinuated that several highly placed people, politicians, Government officials were involved in this bungling. When repeated demands were made to the PMO to enquire into the matter the Prime Minister perfunctorily ordered an enquiry into the whole matter. With your permission I would like to quote a couple of sentences from that order:

[English]

This is a copy of the order issued from the Prime Minister's Office.

"It has been decided to conduct a preliminary administrative enquiry to ascertain the facts and to fix *prima facie* responsibility for lapses.

The report was to examine and report on the steps taken to accurately forecast the production etc., etc; secondly, the steps taken to facilitate and monitor details of contracting by private traders; and thirdly, adequacy of contingency plan etc."

[Translation]

It became imperative to quote these lines as this enquiry was not an internal enquiry of the Prime Minister's private office. If the Prime Minister had appointed some officials to enquire into his administrative machinery to find out what went wrong and where then it would have been a different matter. When the public demanded it he ordered a public enquiry to distract their attention. This was also an administrative enquiry. We had demanded that the public enquiry be made public. It was a public enquiry and the facts were not to be suppressed. It has raised several other issues also. Several allegations have been levelled against the hon. Minister also. After the hon. Minister returned from his foreign tour he levelled charges against his officials and the Secretary. The Secretary levelled

allegations against the hon. Minister. A kind of atmosphere of allegations and counter-allegations was created which pointed a finger at the PMO also. This is a serious matter. The former Cabinet Secretary said during a T.V. Programme that this scam involved an amount to the tune of Rs. 2500 crore and not Rs. 500-550 crore. This former Cabinet Secretary was in service at that time. Such a public statement aggravates the seriousness of the matter. Earlier a report was submitted by Shri Gian Prakash, the former Chairman of CAG which should be discussed in the House.

It should not happen that it is quoted outside, reported in the news-papers, discussed by the Minister, Officials and employees but this discussion is not held in the House. The Government is not willing to do anything but if they do not give a statement on it and do not allow us to discuss it we will not accept it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have four demands—first, the Government should come out with a statement in the background of the enquiry report submitted by the CBI. Secondly, the report submitted by the Gian Prakash Committee be laid on the Table of the House. Thirdly, the Government should give a detailed statement in regard to the report of the Gian Prakash Committee and the statements made in regard to this sugar scam and fourthly, the House should allow holding of a discussion as to whether the scam involved Rs. 2500 crore or Rs. 500-550 crore.

SHRI CHANDRA JEET YADAV (Azamgarh): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, a meeting of the leaders of all the parties had been convened by the hon. Speaker before the commencement of the session where this point had been raised. This was a national issue and the public had been forced to buy sugar at the rate of Rs. 20 per Kg. in the last 3-4 months and this happened due to the ongoing sugar scam which was a result of a wrong policy of the Government. Due to this wrong policy the Ministry of Food, the Ministry of Commerce and the Prime Minister's office were involved in a kind of tussle. In fact the then Cabinet Secretary and the Secretary of Food were also involved in a tussle. As a result thereof no timely decision could be taken and since the Government could not take a decision in time the same sugar which was available at one time at the rate of 225-250 dollars per tonne had to be bought at Rs. 400-425 dollars per tonne.

Thus crores of rupees were wasted. It was the foreign traders who sold sugar to India but the most deplorable act was that allegations and counter-allegations were publicly levelled at each other. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, you may be remembering that the discussion was also held that time and it was demanded thereafter to hold the judicial enquiry of the case as the office of Prime Minister was also found involved in this case in the report.

13.00 hrs.

The hon. Prime Minister was on tour that time. He was informed that a crisis had arisen in the country due to the hiking sugar prices. The hon. Prime Minister is reported to have stated from there that further delay would aggravate the situation all the more. He added that it would cause hike in sugar price and embarrassment to the people. As