

[Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy]

Rajiv Gandhi-Longowal accord and the Sarkaria Commission report. These documents can be made the basis. On that basis, a political initiative can be started. Today, the whole situation is frozen, frozen to death. Therefore, I call for a political initiative. Incidentally, may I ask the Government to come out with a white paper on Punjab? Let us know what is what in Punjab.

**THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHASKAR ANNAJI MASODKAR):** Mr. Chidambaram, he is asking you for a white paper. You need not waste your time with Mr. Virumbi.

**THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM):** He is continuing his special mention.

**SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY:** I am pleading for a white paper by the Government of India on Punjab. It is high time it was done.

**THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHASKAR ANNAJI MASODKAR):** You began with the CBI and are ending with a white paper.

**SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY:** Because, without political initiative, without a political settlement, this nightmare of violence will continue in Punjab for a long-long time to come. Innocent people, men, women and children, will suffer. Therefore, a white paper is necessary. A political initiative has got to come from the Government of India and they should start discussions with all elements in Punjab. Let them not take shelter under the Plea that the Akalis are not united, the Sikhs are not united, and therefore with whom they have to talk. It is not necessary. The Government of India can act *suo motu* now. There is a basis for it. Therefore, I reiterate and say that they should come out with a white paper and try to solve the issue of Punjab and the tragedy that is going on being enacted in Punjab day to day should stop immediately.

### Conversion-cum-Construction of Broad Gauge Railway line from Hospet to Ankola in Karnataka

**SHRI J. P. JAVALI (Karnataka):** Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, through you and through this House, I want to draw the attention of the Government of India to a matter of vital importance to Karnataka. The matter is the conversion-cum-construction of a B.G. Railway line from Hospet to Ankola, an urgent need of Karnataka. This B.G. network is a vital link.

Karnataka, compared to its adjoining States, has the lowest length of B.G. railway network. In spite of persistent demands and in spite of producing six Union Ministers of Cabinet rank of Railways from the State, Karnataka has been languishing with neglect. The demands for conversion from M.G. to B.G. from Hospet of Hubli and the construction of a new line from Hubli to Karwar are more than one hundred years old.

Now that the construction of the Konkan Railway line is in progress and the Vijayanagar Steel Plant along with a thermal power plant at Torangal is a certainty, linking Hospet with Ankola has become a matter of urgent necessity. The proposal is not only viable but will be very profitable for the Railways.

At present, the Hospet-Bellary sector exports about six million tonnes of iron ore through the Madras Port. The distance traversed is about 555 kilometres. From Madras the unloaded wagons return empty. This transaction has resulted in a loss of Rs. 83.81 crores to the Railways in the last three years from 1988 to 1991. On persistent demands, the updated survey of 1989 for conversion of Hospet-Hubli line to BG line a distance of 114 kms, estimated the cost at Rs. 113 crores. It states, the project was financially unremunerative. The survey, it appears, has not taken into consideration the following traffic generating potentialities, (i) Vijayanagar Steel Plant (ii) Thermal Power Plant, (iii) Konkan Railway Project, (iv) Access to the ports on the western coast, (v) Perennial losses incurred in carrying ore only through Madras, (vi) Sea Bird Naval Dock

Yard. (vii) Kaika Atomic Power Plant. While considering the conversion of Hospet-Hubli line, joining Hubli with Ankola has also to be taken into consideration. Earlier the demand was for a line, from Hubli to Karwar. Now, in view of Konkan line, the demand is from Hubli to Ankola. Here the distance is reduced by about 40 to 50 kms and proportionately the cost of construction will also be reduced. The BG link from Hospet to Ankola is not only profitable but has many advantages. It will result in increase in the line capacity by 3 to 3-1/2 times, will facilitate to and fro traffic of iron ore, coal, granite blocks and all other goods traffic from east to west and from south to north. Further, the distance from Hospet-Bellary sector of the ports on the western coast will be reduced by more than 100 kms and there will be reduction in the transport costs proportionately. The Hospet-Ankola BG line brings the hinterland of west coast and also the second biggest city in Karnataka Hubli-Dharwad on the BG network. Through this, Hubli will be linked to (i) Bangalore via Gutakal (ii) Bombay via Ankola and (iii) Mangalore via Ankola-Udupi. The BG line also will boost up the exports of iron ore from Hospet-Bellary sector by 10 million tonnes to 15 million tonnes. The Railway workshop at Hubli which is more than hundred years old has been limping for want of adequate workload. This workshop has received wards for its best work culture and Productivity. Since this workshop is attending to the maintenance of steam engines which are being phased out. It would get a new life by coming on the BG line map. The employment potential would also improve. (Interruptions).

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHASKAR ANNAJI MASODKAR): Please conclude.

SHRI J. P. JAVALI: I am concluding. Sir. Funding the conversion-cum-construction should not be a problem. The construction could form a part of Konkan project. In that event, the State Government

of Karnataka would willingly contribute its share as has been done for Konkan Railway.

In conclusion, the conversion of Hospet-Hubli line to BG line and a new BG line between Hubli and Ankola would be of vital importance to Karnataka. This project should be taken up immediately by including it in the Eighth Plan. Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHASKAR ANNAJI MASODKAR): Mr. Mathur, do you want to say something? you.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर (उत्तर प्रदेश) : श्रीमान्, मैं आपके माध्यम से इस सदन का और मंत्री महोदय का ध्यान इस समाचार की ओर आकर्षित करना चाहता हूँ—समाचार-पत्र में आ रहा है कि पृष्ठ की सीमा पर पाकिस्तान और हमारे बीच में गोलियाँ चल रही हैं।

मेरी जानकारी अभी यह है कि हमारे उत्तर सैनिक पाकिस्तान पकड़ कर ले गया है। सत्तर आदमी प्रिजनर आफ वार बना करके ले जाए गए हैं। मेरी जानकारी में यह भी तथ्य हुआ है कि आज शायद पलैंग मीटिंग होगी।

मेरा आपके माध्यम से आग्रह है कि .....

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI BHASKAR ANNAJI MASODKAR): They will make a statement. The Government has taken note of it.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : वह जो टाक है, वह तो हो, परंतु इसको डिप्लोमैटिक आधार पर तुरंत लिया जाना चाहिए। हमारे सत्तर सैनिक प्रिजनर आफ वार ले जाना कोई सामूली बात नहीं है। अच्छा है कि कल जब मंत्री महोदय आते हैं, तो वह थोड़ी सी जानकारी सदन को दें।