

[Shri Manmohan Mathur]

passing through three States. On that route the Halubha Bridge No. 665, 20 Kms. away from Rayagade was constructed in 1928. On 28th March 1990 a goods train with 68 wagons carrying coal was passing on the bridge. Twenty-six wagons derailed on the bridge, causing damage to three spans. Hence from that day, that is, the 28th March 1990. Bokaro-Madras express, the Bhubaneshwar-Jharsuguda-Hirakund Express, the Vishakhapatnam- Raipur- Nizamuddin-Link Express, two passenger trains, and good trains, are not running, causing hardship to the travelling public.

Every day an average of 48 to 50 goods trains are passing on that route. Mainly the Bokaro steel plant, the Bhilai steel plant and the Rourkela steel plants are provided with raw materials from Vishakhapatnam. So when this route was disrupted, the production of these factories was affected. It is estimated that nearly Rs. 25 crores national loss has already been incurred by this disruption. Even though more than one month has elapsed from that day, the 28th March 1990, no high official of the Railway Department visited the spot. Only three engineers came to the spot and tried to repair the bridge. But they could not get adequate material. So the bridge was not repaired fully. Only a temporary arrangement was made. After this passenger trains were allowed to move on that track on 9th April, 1990. Express trains were allowed to pass on 3-5-90 after nearly forty days from the accident. As the bridge was not repaired properly, the same bridge was damaged again on 10-5-90. According to my information, there is no traffic and the entire area is neglected. I think this is gross negligence on the part of the Government.

Previously also I raised in this House regarding the activities of criminals and anti-social elements on that route which is rising day by day. One lady was raped or something like that in the latrine of a passenger train.

It was reported to the Railway Police but no action was taken. Ultimately, a social organisation from Raipur took up the matter with the authorities. No action was taken at that time. (*Time bell rings*) Recently, on 8.5.1990, a passenger train was going to Raipur. The entire region is covered with forests. The criminal people destroy the forest and transport wood by train. Criminal people carrying wood stopped the 229 Passenger train on 8.5.90 and disconnected the hose pipe. When the driver went to repair, he was attacked with weapons. He was admitted to the hospital.

So, my point is that it is the only line covering 3 States, and mainly passing through hilly and forest areas. The adivasis and Harijan people are benefited by that route. But the Government is not serious about the development of that area. So, my request to the Government is that they should pay immediate attention to it. They should undertake immediate repair of the bridge. It is an old line. The Government should see that all the bridges are inspected. They should undertake repair of the bridges immediately wherever there is necessity for repairs. There should be adequate police arrangement to check the activities of the criminals. Immediate steps should be taken for all these things in the larger interest of the public.

Closure of Indian Embassy in Fiji

SHRI GAJ SINGH (Rajasthan): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to make my first intervention and it is appropriate that I am able to do it on the subject of External Affairs because I have had the privilege of serving as India's High Commissioner earlier on.

I wish to draw attention to the serious matter of the Fijian Government having shut down our Embassy there recently.

This has come in the wake of having sent home our Ambassador only some months ago. Now, we have been asked to

close down our Embassy immediately and to send home the staff within 14 days. I feel that it is not only a humiliation for our nation, but also it is a very sad day for citizens of Indian origin living overseas. A country in which over 50 per cent of the population is of Indian origin does not now have any Indian representation. It is clear that our well-meant diplomatic initiative has broken down and in retrospect with the benefit of hind sight, it might have been better if we had severed our diplomatic relationship with Fiji once the duly and democratically elected Government of Dr. Bavadra was removed by Major General Rabuka who has now, it is very clear, launched blatantly and deliberately discriminatory and racist policies directed against the Indian community. We must take serious note of this. I think this is nothing sort of apartheid against which India has been a champion and has always been fighting. Here, a large number of people of Indian origin are concerned and it is in a country at the moment which has a population of over 50 per cent. What will be the fate of the people of Indian origin in other places where they are in minority, if this incident is allowed to go unheeded.

International opinion, in the initial stages, was also against Fijian action, it appears now that over a time other countries have acquiesced and fallen in line with them and do not seem to take the matter very seriously. India stands alone. India must now generate serious international public opinion and pressure, even sanctions, against Fiji to restore representative democracy so that the people of Indian origin can take their rightful place. I would request the Minister of External Affairs, as is reported in the papers today, to make a statement on this subject and also throw some light on the reported news item in Radio Australia that one of the reasons that made the Fijian authorities take this action is that Indian officials there showed video-tape of Indian troops invading the Maldives and bringing about

a fear psychosis in that country. I do not know whether it is true or not. However this needs to be looked into. And I am sure that if already not done so in the Lok Sabha, very soon the Minister will be giving a statement on this. And as I said, action should be taken to restore the dignity of the nation and the people of Indian origin overseas.

SHRI KAPIL VERMA (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, I want to associate myself with this. This is very serious matter.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. BAPU KALDATE): There is a statement by the Minister.

SHRI KAPIL VERMA: Immediate measures must be taken by the Government to protect the interests of the people of Indian origin there. And the Minister, I hope in the statement which he is going to make will tell us which Embassy is going to look after our interests.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY (Tamil Nadu) Sir, I also associate myself with the Special Mention.

SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO JADHAV (Maharashtra): Sir, this is a very serious matter ...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. BAPU KALDATE): You will have enough opportunity to seek clarification.

SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVA-RAO JADHAV: Sir, the whole House wholeheartedly associates with the Statement of the hon. Minister about the happenings in Fiji.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. BAPU KALDATE): You will know the facts also. Shri Ahluwalia

Alleged Kidnapping of a Bride by BSF Personnel in Anantnag

श्री सुरेन्द्रजीत सिंह अलहुवालिया (बिहार):
उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, पिछली 18 तारीख को श्रीनगर से 60 किलोमीटर दूर अनंतनाग के पास 17 और 18 तारीख की रात को एक बी०एस०एफ० पेट्रोलिंग पार्टी ने एक सी०आर०पी०एफ० की बस को जाते हुए रोकने की