

DISRUPTION OF RAIL TRAFFIC AT HOWRAH STATION

1361. **SHRI BANKA BEHARY DAS : SHRI MULKA GOVINDA REDDY :**

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that train services were disrupted at Howrah station on the 16th September, 1969;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) the period for which the rail passengers were inconvenienced due to the disruption?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND SOCIAL WELFARE AND RAILWAYS (SHRI P. GOVINDA MENON) : (a) to (c) As a sequel to an altercation between the members of two rival groups of railway staff of the Mechanical Department, a demonstration was staged by a group obstructing the track near Howrah Steam Shed from 5.30 to 10.15 hrs. on 16th September, 1969 resulting in disruption of Eastern Railway's suburban trains for this duration.

LOOTING OF WAGON AT ASANSOL

1362. **SHRI KALYAN ROY :** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a wagon of the 398 Dn. Asansol Puri Passenger was broken and many parcels were looted at about 6 A.M. on the 12th October, 1969 in the Asansol Yard;

(b) if so, the number of parcels looted and the details of the articles thus taken away; and

(c) whether the guard of the train has made any complaints that the Railways Protection Force refused to divulge the details of the missing parcels and articles?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND SOCIAL WELFARE AND RAILWAYS (SHRI P. GOVINDA MENON) : (a) and (b) Yes. There was a case of theft of 5 packages from a wagon attached to 398 Dn. Passenger train, of which 2 packages were recovered. The 3 packages valued in Rs. 550 were taken away. They contained gift cloth, tea chest and salad oil respectively.

(c) No.

LOOTING/THEFT OF GOODS FROM TRAINS IN ASANSOL RAILWAY YARD

1363. **SHRI KALYAN ROY :** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of wagons looted in the Asansol railway yard between July and October, 1969 and the total value of goods looted and stolen ;

(b) the dates on and the trains from which the goods were looted ;

(c) what steps have been taken by Government to check these thefts and looting from the Asansol railway yard ; and

(d) the results thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND SOCIAL WELFARE AND RAILWAYS (SHRI P. GOVINDA MENON) : (a) There were 11 cases of thefts and 1 case of looting in Asansol Yard between July and October 1969. The total value of theft/looting was Rs. 20,090 and Rs. 800 respectively.

(b) No case of looting took place from a train, but on 27-9-69, at 11.00 hours 20/25 criminals removed 8 packages from a wagon standing on line No. 2 of the Asansol down marshalling yard by breaking open the seal and rivet of the wagon.

(c) The following special steps were taken to check thefts and looting from the Asansol railway yard :

(i) Armed Railway Protection Force staff has been deployed at vulnerable points.

(ii) Joint raids were conducted with the help of Government Railway Police/District Police.

(iii) Close co-operation with the State Police has been maintained in order to deal with such crime.

(d) As a result of the effective measures taken by the Railway Protection Force, the position has improved. During November, 1969 an attempt made by armed criminals to loot the property and attack Railway Protection Force men was foiled when Railway Protection Force personnel had to resort to firing killing one notorious criminal and recovering the entire stolen property. There has been no case in December, 1969 so far.