

Cardamom Act, 1965. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-6118/66.]

# FIFTY-SECOND REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (1965-66)

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA (Uttar Pradesh) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Fifty-second Report of the Public Accounts Committee (1965-66) on action taken by Government on the Recommendations of the Committee contained in their 27th, 28th, 29th, 31st, 33rd, 34th, 35th, 36th, 38th, 39th and 40th Reports (Third Lok Sabha) relating to Civil Defence and Finance Accounts and Revenue Receipts as well as a Review of action taken by Government on Recommendations made by the Committee from time to time.

## ALLOTMENT OF TIME FOR CONSI- DERATION OF THE APPROPRIA- TION (NO. 2) BILL, 1966

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have to inform Members that under rule 186(2) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I have allotted 10 hours for the completion of all stages involved in the consideration and return of the Appropriation (No. 2) Bill, 1966 by the Rajya Sabha, including the consideration and passing of amendments, if any, to the Bill.

## STATEMENT ON THE POLICY RE EMERGENCY AND THE APPLICA- TION OF THE DEFENCE OF INDIA RULES

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Gulzarilal Nanda.

SHRI M. N. GOVINDAN NAIR (Kerala) : Sir, he may read it after the lurch. We may have some questions to ask him.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI GULZARILAL NANDA) : Sir, in my statement made on the floor of the House on the 25th February, 1966, I had announced certain decisions of Government on the use of the Defence of India Act and Rules in the changed circumstances. The matter has since been further considered and the various implications closely examined.

Government are fully aware of the criticism in various quarters of the continuance of the Proclamation of Emergency and I would like to assure the House that it is the intention of Government not to continue the Emergency a day longer than it is absolutely necessary for the defence of the country. The hon. Members are aware of the situation in some of our border areas. There has been a chain of incidents involving sabotage and attempt at subversion. Government would be guilty of inaction if adequate steps were not taken to bring the situation quickly under control, and for such steps the special requirements of these border areas must be kept in view. As the powers that are required for dealing with the situation that exists in these areas will not be available once the Proclamation of Emergency is revoked, and since we are advised that it is not permissible under the Constitution to limit the operation of the Proclamation to certain parts of the country only, the Proclamation cannot be revoked for the present. Moreover, an emergency even in some border States may require action by the Central Government, for which special powers may be needed. However, the following decisions have been taken to ensure that while the Proclamation of Emergency may continue, the application of the Defence of India Act and Rules is curtailed drastically and is confined only to certain limited areas and for purposes that are essential for defence :—

- (1) Some powers under the Defence of India Act and Rules are still required in and for certain border States and Territories, and

some powers may, for the present, also be needed by the Central Government for certain other purposes connected with defence. These powers will not include the power of preventive detention except when it is necessary to take action to meet the needs of border States and Territories and Defence.

- (2) The Defence of India Act and Rules should be amended so as to provide that the Act and the Rules shall extend to such area or areas, and may be applied in whole or in part, as the President may, by order in the official Gazette, specify and that different orders may be made in respect of different area or areas or for different purposes. The necessary legislation should be introduced in current session of Parliament.

- (3) The decision regarding restricted application of the Defence of India Act and Rules should be given effect to without waiting for the amendment of the Act and Rules, and the State Governments should also be advised accordingly.

- (4) For the various purposes for which the Defence of India Act and Rules are at present being used, the normal laws should be used with any amendments that may be necessary. This change-over to normal laws should take place as early as possible.

It is also the intention of the Government to sponsor such amendment of the Constitution as may be found necessary after careful consideration of all aspects including the need to indemnify Government servants for acts done during the period that a Proclamation of Emergency is in force.

I may add that we have already started taking action in the light of the decisions taken. Out of 153 persons who were under preventive detention under

orders of the Central Government until a few days ago, all except 11 detained with a view to checking espionage and other similar disloyal activities, have been released, and a further review is being made of the cases of these also. With the exception of a few border States and Territories, we have also advised the States and Territories to release all detenus, other than those detained to prevent espionage, etc., and several States have already released all their detenus.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE (Uttar Pradesh) : Would you allow questions now or later on ? I have given notice of a motion seeking your permission to raise a discussion on the statement of the hon. Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I will allow questions if you sit for some time more, but I hope it will not be too long.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : After the lunch hour or just now ?

MR. CHAIRMAN : We will disperse by 1.30.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : Why not allow a discussion on the statement ? All the opposition parties supported when the emergency was proclaimed. But now it is only the ruling party which wants to continue the emergency and particularly the Chief Ministers who cannot rule without the Defence of India Rules. Sir, I pointed out this morning a case of gross misuse of the D.I.R. . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN : I will allow you questions and then we will see whether the Government would also like it to be discussed.

SHRI G. MURAHARI (Uttar Pradesh) : I would like to ask for a clarification. The Minister has . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN : I hope that this time it would be asking for clarifications.

SHRI G. MURAHARI : I am asking only for a clarification. You might allow a discussion.

[Shri G. Murahari.]

I would like to ask the Minister what guarantee there is for the State Governments not misusing the Defence of India Rules or the provisions of the Emergency. He has said in the statement that it will be specifically used in the border areas and for the purpose of strengthening the defence of the country. But it is common knowledge that wherever the Defence of India Rules have been misused, they have been misused not for the defence of the country but in defence of the ruling party, with the elections only a few months off. It is regrettable that the Government should still think of continuing the emergency because I do not think the Central Government can guarantee that no State will misuse these provisions of the Emergency Proclamation to bolster up the ruling party and to place impediments in the way of the opposition parties during these election months and therefore the Government will be well-advised to lift the emergency. If they want a specific Act or a Bill for the security and the defence of the border States, they can bring forward a specific enactment for those specific areas where that Act will be in force. That will be a much better way of dealing with the situation than trying to continue the emergency and also the provisions of the DIR.

SHRI ABID ALI (Maharashtra) : I also want a clarification.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Would you like to deal with the questions as they come or at the end ?

SHRI GULZARILAL NANDA : At the end.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : सभापति जी, मैंने अभी आपसे निवेदन किया कि जब संकटकाल की घोषणा की गई थी तब देश को विश्वास में लिया गया था, विरोधी दलों को विश्वास में लिया गया था और हमने सर्वसम्मति से यह घोषणा की थी लेकिन आज परिस्थिति बदल गई है। जिस ढंग से संकटकाल की स्थिति और भारत रक्षा अधिनियमों का उपयोग हुआ है उससे विरोधी दल, सब, इस राय के हो गये हैं कि अब संकट काल की स्थिति

चलनी नहीं चाहिये। किस तरह से इनका दुरुपयोग हो रहा है। हमने आज आपके सामने सवेरे इसका उदाहरण रखा था और मैं गृह-मंत्री के सामने यह रखना चाहूंगा कि क्या उन्हें मालूम है कि बिहार सरकार ने एक सप्ताहिक पत्र "रांची एक्सप्रेस" से डिफेंस ऑफ इंडिया रूल्स के अन्तर्गत जमानत मांगी है, तीन हजार रुपये की जमानत जमा करने की अंतिम तारीख आज है और जमानत मांगी गई है एक कार्टून को लेकर जो कार्टून कि आठ महीने पहले उस पत्र में प्रकाशित हुआ था, जो कार्टून आठ महीने पहले पत्र में प्रकाशित हुआ था उसके लिये आज जमानत मांगना और वह भी भारत सुरक्षा अधिनियम के अन्तर्गत—क्या यह संकटकाल का दुरुपयोग नहीं है। गृह मंत्री जी बतायें कि क्या यह सच नहीं है कि मुख्य मंत्री चाहते हैं कि संकटकाल की स्थिति जारी रहे जब कि प्रधान मंत्री महोदया, गृह मंत्री महोदया—संकटकाल की स्थिति को खत्म करना चाहते हैं।

बित्त मंत्रालय में उप-मंत्री (श्री ललित नारायण मिश्र) : गृह मंत्री महोदया।

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : लिंग भेद की चिन्ता मत कीजिये। महोदय, मेरा निवेदन यह है कि संसद् ने संकटकाल की घोषणा की थी, यह काम मुख्य मंत्रियों पर नहीं छोड़ा जा सकता। गृह मंत्री महोदय सीमावर्ती प्रदेशों की बात कर रहे हैं। महाराष्ट्र के मुख्य मंत्री ने कहा है कि उनके लिये बिना डिफेंस ऑफ इंडिया रूल्स के कानून और व्यवस्था बनाये रखना मुश्किल है। अब, महाराष्ट्र तो सीमा का प्रदेश नहीं है लेकिन जो अधिकार मुख्य मंत्रियों को मिल गये हैं वह अधिकार मुख्य मंत्री छोड़ना नहीं चाहते, छोड़ने को तैयार नहीं हैं और इसी लिये वह अधिकारों का दुरुपयोग करते हैं। संकटकाल की स्थिति न सरकार में दिखाई देती है न देश में दिखाई देती है। संकटकाल का वातावरण नहीं है और इस हालत में अगर संकटकाल की स्थिति जारी रखी जायेगी तो जब भी कभी

सचमुच में संकटकाल होगा तब जनता को जगाया नहीं जा सकेगा, तब लोगों का सहयोग प्राप्त नहीं किया जा सकेगा। मैं गृह मंत्री महोदय से निवेदन करूंगा कि क्या वह सरकार के निर्णय पर फिर से विचार करने के लिये तैयार है और क्या मुख्य मंत्रियों का दृष्टिकोण सामने रखते हुये उन्होंने विरोधी दल के दृष्टिकोण पर भी विचार किया है ?

**श्री आबिद अली :** क्लैरिफिकेशन के तौर पर मेरी अर्ज यह है कि जब इस मामले को गृह मंत्री साहब ने यहां पेश किया था उस वक्त उन्होंने कुछ बयान दिये थे जो कि तेलंगाना वगैरह के बारे में थे और इस बारे में थे कि कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी और उस किस्म के लोग इस देश में सैबोटेज वगैरह के सिलसिले में क्या करना चाहते थे तो क्या उनके खयालात, कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी के जो लीडरान हैं, जो सैबोटेज करने वाले हैं, जो चाइनीज के गुलामों, उनके वफादारों, इस मुल्क के गद्दारों में से हैं, उनके खयाल क्या बदल गये हैं ? क्या गृह मंत्री साहब को यह यकीन हो गया है ? उन लोगों को जिन्हें कलकत्ता में छोड़ा गया है और जिस तरीके से वहां कार्य-वाहियां चली हैं चाइना के पक्ष में और इस मुल्क के खिलाफ, क्या उससे गृह मंत्री साहब को इस बात का यकीन नहीं होता कि इन गद्दारों को मामूली कानून के जरिये इस तरह की गद्दारी करने से नहीं रोका जा सकता है। क्या उन्होंने कोई ऐसा मामूली कानून खयाल में रखा है जिससे कि इनको इस किस्म के काम करने से रोका जा सकता है।

**SHRI M. N. GOVINDAN NAIR :** Sir, the Home Minister has mentioned that because of certain border troubles the emergency has been maintained. I am not sure whether he was referring to the troubles in the Assam Hills. If that is so, even when the Naga trouble started there were no emergency provisions and still you were able to manage the situation the way in which you have done it. When this Mizo trouble started, already there was emergency but you were not able to prevent it. Therefore, to

say that because there are border troubles, so you want to continue this emergency is untenable. If you mean the trouble with regard to China and Pakistan, then I submit that the dispute with Pakistan has existed for the last so many years but you never needed this emergency to face that situation. So, under the circumstances, to say that the emergency should continue is not tenable.

Now, my friend, Shri Abid Ali, raised the question of Telengana and sabotage and all that. I would remind him that when the Constituent Assembly met to discuss the Constitution, the Telangana trouble was on. Still they felt that the fundamental rights of the people should be guaranteed and they thought that that would be the best way of preventing such kind of activities. So under the cover of Telengana or sabotage, you cannot deny the fundamental rights to the citizens of this country . . .

**SHRI ABID ALI :** Their hopes were belied.

**SHRI M. N. GOVINDAN NAIR :** That is because you have no faith in the people.

**SHRI ABID ALI :** We have no faith in traitors.

**SHRI M. N. GOVINDAN NAIR :** That is the trouble with you. Now all the Opposition parties, all the papers of the country, all the lawyers, even the Supreme Court Judges, have all come out with one demand, namely, that this emergency should end, that this D.I.R. should be scrapped, and the Home Minister, in spite of strong Opposition against the continuance of this emergency comes out with some excuse to continue the emergency. He thinks all the States are border States. Kerala is a border State. Madras is a border State. Maharashtra is a border State and U.P. and Punjab are also border States. Tell me which State is not a border State. Therefore, this argument is wrong. And under that cover you should not continue this emergency or the D.I.R. What is needed is the scrapping of this D.I.R. and ending the emergency. It is the patriotism of the people on which you have to depend

[Shri M. N. Govindan Nair.]

for the defence of our country and not the D.I.R. or the emergency. When there is external aggression, at that time you can bring in a legislation and it will be supported by all the Opposition Parties. Therefore, the continuance of the D.I.R. or the emergency is altogether wrong and the Government should see to it that it is ended.

**SHRI CHITTA BASU (West Bengal):**

Sir, the state of emergency was declared last time in the wake of invasion by China on India or border violations by China. The object of it was to defend the borders of the country and to curb anti-national activities within the State. But, Sir, you know that the Home Minister is also agreed that there has been misuse and sometimes abuse of the D.I.R. Some abuses have been made for the partisan interest of the ruling party. These abuses have been made by the bureaucrats who wanted to run the Government on bureaucratic lines. I want to point out certain specific instances to the Home Minister and at the same time suggest that—if he himself agrees that the D.I.R. has been misused or abused by the bureaucrats and the party in power—he should agree to the institution or the setting up of a machinery to enquire into the specific cases to be brought forward by us before that committee. If a Committee of that nature is appointed, it will act as a deterrent against the free misuse of power for partisan interest and also by the bureaucrats here. I possess a photostat copy in which you will find a particular S.D.O. of West Bengal in the district of Cooch-Bihar, Toofanganj subdivision, giving notice in Bengali. It is written under the stamp of the S.D.O.'s office. Someone, by the name, Lakshmi Narayan Sarkhel, took a loan of Rs. 500 from the Government. His notice says that if the loan money is not repaid by a particular date to a particular Tehsildar, then action will be taken against him under the D.I.R. May I know, Sir, from the Home Minister whether by such notices under the D.I.R. the Government is defending the borders of the country, whether by such notices issued under the D.I.R. the Government is defending the country against the Pakistani aggression? By the issue of such notices, is the Gov-

ernment curbing anti-national activities within the State, or has this D.I.R. become the instrument of torture to the people?

Therefore my submission is that if the Government is serious to maintain democratic traditions and ensure democratic rule in the country, some deterrent measures should be taken and the D.I.R. should be immediately scrapped and the emergency immediately withdrawn. And they should appoint some committee to go into such specific cases of abuse and misuse by bureaucrats or any other elements. Then they will be deterred from using freely these D.I.R. for their partisan ends. I know there are many patriotic elements against whom the D.I.R. are used. Forward Bloc is a patriotic party. The D.I.R. are freely used to put them behind the prison bars and detain them. Never has there been an occasion when we have been found guilty of such things; we have not been found guilty of anti-national activities. It is therefore that I say that the D.I.R. should be immediately scrapped and the emergency withdrawn. A committee should be instituted to go into specific cases of this nature so that the bureaucratic officers are punished.

**SHRIMATI TARA RAMCHANDRA SATHE (Maharashtra):** The food situation in the country has become very acute. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether the D.I.R. is used against those persons who sell foodgrains in the black market and whether it is found useful in that respect, whether some cases are detected like this and whether it has helped the food situation.

Secondly, I would like to know whether some cases are dealt with under the D.I.R. in the Mizo Hills and Manipur.

**SHRI R. S. KHANDEKAR (Madhya Pradesh):** The hon. Home Minister said that emergency cannot be imposed in parts. So I want to draw his attention to article 352 of the Constitution which says:

"If the President is satisfied that a grave emergency exists whereby the security of India or of any part of the territory thereof is threatened,

whether by war or external aggression or internal disturbance, he may, by Proclamation, make a declaration to that effect."

That means the President is empowered to make a declaration for the whole of India or any part of the country. So emergency can be applied in certain parts and lifted in certain other parts. I want to know what guarantee is there that these powers will not be misused. I have got several instances in this connection. The Home Minister has assured that D.I.R. will not be used against political persons whose activities are communal but it will be used only against anti-national activities. Here is an Order from the Madhya Pradesh Government which says "...acting in a manner prejudicial to public safety and maintenance of public order." The Home Minister has categorically said that it will not be used for activities of public order, only it will be used for espionage, etc. What is the guarantee that it will not be misused, if the emergency continues?

**SHRI GULZARILAL NANDA :**  
Sir, I wish what I had put forward here had been properly comprehended. Probably it is my fault that I read the statement too fast and it was not quite clear. But whatever has been stated meets practically 90 per cent. of the objections that have been raised and the questions that have been asked. For the 10 per cent. I have an answer. In the first place there is a suspicion and apprehension that although I am making an offer here, there is no guarantee that the Chief Ministers will not transgress those limits and still have recourse to those powers contrary to the policy laid down here. That is quite important. I am sure the hon. Members are not less keen about proper defence of the border areas. I am quite sure that if I explain to them why these powers are required, they will not grudge it. On my part I can assure them that if by some other means I can fulfil that purpose, I will not for a single day retain those powers. This is my offer.

**SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE :**  
We accept that offer but why have the Opposition Parties not been consulted in this matter?

**SHRI GULZARILAL NANDA :**  
What I am doing is for both the Congress as also for the Opposition. There is no distinction in this. The steps that I am taking will satisfy all. Let me first meet the main point. I said earlier in the other House that 9/10ths—I will say more than 9/10ths—of the country is going to be entirely outside the operation of the emergency powers. So far as the States are concerned, I have advised them not to do what they should not do. But the question will be: How are you sure that this advice is going to be followed? Sometimes it is not followed. But a part of the statement was that I am going to have in the current Session an Act and it is by virtue of that legislation that they will be prevented from using it. Therefore that meets a very large part of the objection, because it will not simply be a matter of discretion or understanding; it will be a legislation which is going to be introduced in the current Session which will deprive all others of any discretion to use the powers except where the President of India says "These are the places where it can be used."

**SHRI MULKA GOVINDA REDDY (Mysore) :** It will be enacted during this Session?

**SHRI GULZARILAL NANDA :**  
Yes, this Session.

Then in the Constitution we are told we have the power of separating the two areas, i.e., confine the operation of the emergency to those few places. If it could have been done, we would not have liked to follow this rather elaborate way of another legislation. But it is not so. I have taken some legal opinion on that. If it were possible, we would have adopted that course, but it is not so. Therefore we have to keep the emergency intact for the purpose of being able to use it even in a single place. But it is only nominal. In fact the emergency operates only in those areas and nowhere else.

[Shri Gulzarilal Nanda]

Then I was reminded that some time I had felt that there was a class of people in this country whose activities and intentions were such that we could not trust them to remain free in the country, because their activities were harmful to the national security of India. Is it that things have changed that they are now being set free? It may be asked. Yes, practically almost all of them are out now, and a few more may be out tomorrow. I do not want at the moment to give the case of any particular party. But I must say that this country will have to remain very cautious. I cannot say whether they have all changed. I do not see any signs of any such particular change. Some hon. friends said that there may be different occasions when we may need different ways of fighting a menace. That is why in certain changed circumstances we will have to rely on the patriotism of the people of the country to fight in the field. Now we are not prevented, if any situation arises where larger powers are needed from resorting to them and . . .

SHRI ABID ALI: But why give poison and then call the doctor?

SHRI GULZARILAL NANDA: It may be that the poison may be administered by the people. It was asked: Why is it that we did not require it when the trouble with Pakistan was there, that we did not require it when the Naga trouble was there, that we did not require it for dealing with the Mizo situation? Well, it is wrong to say that. We have had recourse to these powers for dealing with the situation in the Mizo area. I do not want to take much time of the House and I shall sit down. But let my hon. friends please understand me. I have used them in the Mizo area along with the army. Is it that only extreme tools should be used? We may have to use extreme tools, but we can use intermediate weapons also that may be available. So we are using them also for certain purposes and not using only extreme weapons when the situation requires that. This provides us with a very flexible means for dealing with the situation. We have done it in the case of

Mizo area. Maybe that in Nagaland there may be trouble and we may have to use these powers along with other powers which the country has to take for the defence of any part of it.

Then it was asked by the opposition, why we did not agree with them. I have already answered that question.

As for the Chief Ministers I must say that it is wrong to attribute to them any kind of malignant intention to use the powers for their own either personal whims or personal interests. There is no kind of interest involved and I must say that when the whole situation was explained to the Chief Ministers—they set out their own difficulties—and when the matter was put to them in the larger perspective, they all agreed and there was no resistance at all. Therefore it is not as if they are sticking to them anyhow and they want to keep these powers. Maharashtra certainly is not going to have such powers. Maharashtra did not say that they cannot do without such powers. No Government has said that. They explained their own difficulties. It was explained that the climate was not good for the purpose of the retention of these powers and I believe it is so. I believe, therefore, that whatever has been done is in response to the changed circumstances and also because we feel it is necessary. And that is my answer to the other question that was asked about the use of these powers for certain purposes, like dealing with blackmarketeers and profiteers and the like. Has that not been done? There is no conflict between this side and the other side on that. The use of the powers under the D.I.R. will be only restricted to the purposes of the defence of the national security and in very rare cases they will be asked to deal with other things. It will be asked how we were using these against blackmarketeers and profiteers and others, hoarders and the like. Was there not a misuse of these powers? No. I will explain it. It is in relation to an active emergency. When there is an active emergency then the internal situation also requires to be controlled in a different way because any kind of a disturbance there, any kind of an unrest there, would hamper us in the defence of the country. Therefore,

in those conditions the use of these powers for these purposes also was necessary. I do not think it is necessary when the situation is not that acute, to have them. Then we have the normal laws, the Essential Commodities Act and the like, to deal with the situation. Therefore when we come to the conclusion and when we say that the powers will be used only for national security and in a sparing way, it only means that we have recognised the change and it was in response to that that we wanted to alter our approach and our method, to deal with the situation. The question of misuse etc. has to be judged in the changed situation that we are dealing. I must say that complaints about misuse are there. I cannot here vouchsafe that in no State has any misuse occurred. It has occurred possibly and in individual cases certain officials might have exceeded their powers and might have abused their discretion. I believe it must have occurred in certain cases in haste. For example in the case when we had our hostilities with Pakistan I understand that immediately they went out and took up a large number of persons, may be as a matter of abundant precaution. I know also that sometimes things had been done which they had to undo quickly and that was done. There was sometimes an excessive use of these powers because the instrument was there and they used it. They could have used some other law. But as far as I have been able to judge and assess the situation, considering all the period and considering the whole extent of the country, these cases have been of very small magnitude. This I can say because all these years my effort was always to see that this thing was liberalised and wherever any kind of relaxation was required this relaxation was made. Therefore, I was very keen and very careful to see that there was no misuse and if any case was brought to our notice we tried to take action so that the necessary relief was given. I think hon. Members will realise that there is no vested interest of anybody here to keep these powers. We would like to take them away the next moment. Here the question is whether it is proper to do so for the national angle. There is no party angle involved. My hon. friends have

to be convinced, friends on this side and on that side, that these powers are not necessary now. Otherwise, well, national defence and national security will be jeopardised.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House stands adjourned till 3 P.M. We shall meet from 3 P.M. to 6 P.M.

The House then adjourned for lunch at forty-eight minutes past one of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at three of the clock, THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

#### REFERENCE TO EXPLOSION IN BHUSAVAL DOWN GOODS YARD OF CENTRAL RAILWAY ON THE 2ND MAY 1966

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHAM NATH) : Madam Deputy Chairman, I regret to have to bring to the notice of the House a case of serious explosion which took place at Bhusaval. On the 2nd May 1966 at about 23.15 hrs., a loud explosion took place in Bhusaval Down Goods Yard involving six wagons containing explosives which were standing on marshalling line No. 10 and which had been booked on the 23rd April 1966 from Pathankot to Pulgaon. After the explosion a fire raged in the area around line No. 10 on which the affected wagons were standing.

According to the information received so far, 11 persons have died. Seventeen persons received serious injuries out of which 13 have been admitted in the Railway hospital and 4 in the Civil hospital. Out of the 13 admitted in the Railway hospital, two subsequently succumbed to their injuries who have been included in the list of dead persons. Ninety-nine other people also received injuries out of which 81 were discharged after treatment for minor injuries Eighteen people have, however, been kept in the Railway hospital for further observation.