

of Estimates Committee on the Ministry of Finance—Foreign Exchange.

12-31½ hrs.

STATEMENT ON RAILWAY ACCIDENTS

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH): It is with deep regret...

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS *rose*—

श्री रवि राय (पुरी): लोगों को मार डाला, दो सी लोग मार डाले गए और फिर आप दुख प्रकट करना चाहते हैं।

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Let them listen to his statement first. This is not the way to raise this matter.

श्री रवि राय: इनको इस्तीफा देना चाहिए। इनको भी निकालना चाहिए।

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE (Kanpur): I rise to a point of order.

श्री रवि राय: इनकी गलती से लोग मर रहे हैं और ये दुख प्रकट कर रहे हैं। दो सी लोग मर गए हैं। क्यों ये इस्तीफा नहीं देते हैं? कब देंगे? इसके लिए ये जिम्मेदार हैं।

SHRI VASUDEVAN NAIR (Pessmade): This is a serious enough matter. You will agree with us that these railway accidents which took place are not ordinary accidents. Several members have tabled adjournment motions on this subject. We would like to know what has happened to them. I am told that you have disallowed them. We want to argue with you and say that it is really regrettable that you take a decision to disallow these motions...

SHRI NATH PAI (Rajapur): very arbitrarily.

SHRI VASUDEVAN NAIR: We would urge you to reconsider your decision and allow these adjournment motions. We should have a discussion on the adjournment motions. We do not want the Minister to make a statement and get away with it like this.

SHRI SURENDRANATH DWIVEDY: (Kendrapara): Such statements have

almost become a ritual. People are dying while the Minister comes here, makes a statement and regrets. Repeatedly such accidents are happening. Therefore, you must agree that this is a matter of urgent importance and we must have a discussion on it. We have already given notice of adjournment motions. We knew that the Railway Minister would come forward with a statement. But this series of accidents that have happened are so frequent that the House should have an opportunity to discuss the matter and censure Government. I do not know why you in your wisdom, as is done always, have disallowed these adjournment motions. This is rather unfortunate.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: On a point of order. The hon. Minister is making a statement on a particular subject on which many members have tabled adjournment motions and also given notices calling attention. Adjournment motions have been tabled because today is the opening day of the session after two major accidents have occurred killing 90 persons in one and 130 in the other, that is, over 220 persons.

The first was attributed to some sabotage. The second involved a collision. The matter is very serious and I would request that the adjournment motions be admitted for discussion.

We want to ask the hon. Minister to resign gracefully.

SHRI RANGA (Srikakulam): It is shocking that an adjournment motion on such an urgent matter of public importance has not been accepted by you. I would like to endorse the plea put forward by so many of our friends in favour of your kind reconsideration of this particular matter and giving an early opportunity for the House to discuss this. May I suggest to my hon. friend in charge of these railway accidents that he should be good enough to get into immediate communication with LIC and bring forward a Bill to introduce compulsory insurance for all railway passengers in this country?

SHRI UMANATH (Pudukkottai): The purpose of the discussion with regard to these accidents is to see whether we can exercise our influence and see that they are stopped and people are saved. This form of

[Shri Umanath]

discussion by means of calling attention and statements by the Minister has been going on for a long time, but more and more accident are taking place. We will not be satisfied even if you say that there will be a separate discussion on this on some motion because we had in the past similar discussions and they had no effect. So, the only alternative for you to accept an adjournment to censure the Government and see whether anything happens.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I know there were adjournment motions on the railway accidents. The demand has been again voiced on the floor of the House. Let us hear the statement, and I will consider...

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No, no.

SHRI SURENDRANATH DWIVEDY: If you had not disallowed adjournment motions and kept them pending, after hearing the minister you should have given a ruling whether the adjournment motions would be discussed or not. You have disallowed the adjournment motions. What are we going to hear him for? We know what has happened. I do not think we should waste the time of the House.

श्री मधु लिमये (मुंगेर) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, आपको 'स्थगन प्रस्ताव' पर हमको सुने बगैर कोई फैसला नहीं करना चाहिये था। मैं एक अर्से से देख रहा हूँ कि हर एक सत्र के प्रारम्भ में महत्वपूर्ण स्थगन प्रस्ताव आते हैं और सत्र का प्रारम्भ उनसे होता है ऐसी हालत में आपको उसको डिसएलाऊ नहीं करना चाहिये था। मेरा यह सुझाव है कि इसको आप परिचालित कर दें और तत्काल चार बजे हम लोग स्थगन प्रस्ताव पर बहस करके अपनी कार्रवाई करें। इसको अभी पढ़ने की कोई जरूरत नहीं है। इसको सर्कुलेट कर दिया जाए।

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBIAH (Nandyam) : We are also equally concerned with this tragic event of railway accidents. We are very unhappy at the manner in which these things have occurred quite often. The

hon'ble minister has also expressed that he has no objection if this matter could be discussed at some time, as you think fit. We also endorse that this matter can be discussed at any time, convenient to us, but not on these adjournment motions.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : As Mr. Limaye suggested, let the statement be circulated, and as there is a request from this side, supported by Shri Ranga also, after this circulation, I will consider in what from the discussion can taken place.

श्री रवि राय : आपको हम लोग एक बजे मिलेंगे।

श्री मधु लिमये : एक बजे हम लोग आपसे मिलेंगे।

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : We will meet and discuss as to what is the best way.

SHRI SURENDRANATH DWIVEDY : You would keep our motions pending.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : That is what I have already said. I am prepared to reconsider them in the light of these thing.

श्री सु० अ० खाँ (कासगंज) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, उस तरफ से इतने माननीय सदस्य बोल चुके हैं। क्या आप हमें नहीं सुनना चाहते हैं ?

SHRI P. VENKATASUBBIAH : You have yourself disallowed the adjournment motions. Once you have done so, can you reconsider them? It is for you to consider.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I shall discuss the matter with them to see if they should be discussed in the form of adjournment motion or otherwise.

SHRI J. M. BISWAS (Bankaura) I am prepared to withdraw mine if the Prime Minister gives Dr. Ram Subhag Singh the same treatment she accorded to Shri Morarji Desai... (Interruptions.)

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी (बलरामपुर) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, इससे पहले कि आप प्रधान

मंत्री को बैंकों के राष्ट्रीयकरण के सम्बन्ध में वक्तव्य देने के लिए कहें, मैं एक औचित्य का प्रश्न उठाना चाहता हूँ। मैंने आपको सूचना दी थी।

SHRI CHENGALRAYA NAIDU (Chittor) : I am standing up for the last fifteen minutes but you are not looking at me.

श्री० सु० अ० झाँ : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, क्या हम नहीं बोल सकते हैं ? कुछ सदस्यों के कहने पर आपको अपना रुलिंग इस तरह नहीं बदलना चाहिए। इस तरह फैसला बदलने से कैसे काम चलेगा ? ... (Interruptions.)

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH : I lay the statement on the Table of the House.

Statements

Sir, it is with deep regret that I rise to make a statement on two serious accidents which took place recently. In the first accident, train No. 6 Down Allahabad-Gorakhpur Express derailed at about 01.10 hours on 21.6.1969 between Jakhania and Dulahpur Stations on the Varanasi-Bhatni Jn. metro gauge section of the Varanasi Division of the North Eastern Railway, at Km 94/12-11 on the approach of Magai Bridge. As a result, the train engine capsized and fell on the slope of the abutment, the first three coaches derailed, capsized and fell on the river bed and the next four coaches i.e. 4th to 7th derailed. The last 3 coaches remained on the rails. As a result of this accident, 63 persons were killed on the spot and 136 sustained injuries of whom 46 were hurt grievously. Subsequently, 3 persons died on the way to the hospitals and 6 in the hospitals, bringing the total number of deaths to 72.

2. Immediately on receipt of information about the accident, medical relief trains from Varanasi, Mau Jn. and Gorakhpur accompanied by doctors and other medical staff were despatched to the site of the accident. After the injured had been attended to at the site, they were admitted into hospitals at Mau, Varanasi and Azamgarh. The General Manager, North Eastern Railway alongwith the Heads of Departments rushed to the site of the accident as soon as the information regarding the accident was received. I also,

alongwith the Chairman and Member, Engineering, Railway Board went to the site of the accident and visited the injured persons in the hospitals.

3. Ex-gratia payments to the next of kin of the dead and to those injured have been made.

4. The accident has been inquired into by the Additional Commissioner of Railway Safety, Calcutta. According to his provisional finding, the derailment was the result of a deliberate act of sabotage of track. The dastardly act was committed by persons unknown who opened the joints and fastenings of a rail, 39 feet in length at Km 94/12-11 and displaced it from its former intact position.

5. The offenders, having apparently planned to inflict the maximum damage upon the train, chose to break the continuity of the track on the approach of a girder bridge where the embankment is 22 feet in height.

6. Discontinuity of track, in day-light or in the engine headlight at night, is impossible of detection at high speed to avert an accident. The speed of the Express Train was well below the maximum of 75 KMPH authorised on the section.

7. The second accident took place at Jajpur-Keonjhar Road Station on the Kharagpur-Waltair section of the South Eastern Railway on 14.7.1969. On that day at about 21.40 hours train No. 513 UP diesel goods collided with the rear of train No. 398 UP Asansol-Puri Passenger, as a result of which the rearmost 2 coaches of the passenger train were smashed. In this accident, 69 persons were killed on the spot and 132 sustained injuries, of whom 16 succumbed to their injuries bringing the total number of deaths to 85.

8. Immediately on receipt of information of the accident, ambulance train from Kharagpur and ambulance vans from Khurda Road and Bhadrak were rushed to the site. Before the arrival of the medical relief train, 90 persons were treated by the local doctors, out of whom 70 persons were sent by road to Jajpur Town Civil Hospital and 20 to Gangadi Health Unit. After the

[Shri Ram Subhag Singh]

arrival of the medical relief train, the remaining 22 injured persons were treated by railway doctors and thereafter sent to Cuttack Medical College Hospital.

9. The Minister of State for Railways alongwith Member, Engineering, Railway Board visited the site of the accident and the injured in the hospitals.

10. The Additional Commissioner of Railway Safety, who proceeded to the site of the accident with General Manager and Heads of the Departments of the South Eastern Railway on 15.7.1969 is holding an inquiry into this accident.

11. Ex-gratia payments to the next of kin of the dead and to those injured have been made in some cases and are being arranged in other cases.

12. Claims for compensation for death and injuries in both these accident will be enquired into and determined by *Ad-hoc* Claims Commissioners who will be appointed shortly in consultation with the State Governments concerned.

SHRI SHEO NARAIN (Basti): If you call some Members from that side, you must call some from this side also.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question was a limited one. Most of the Members from this side had submitted some adjournment motions and they were disallowed. They wanted to make a plea for reconsideration and I gave them a hearing.

AN HON. MEMBER: What is your ruling now?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: They have been kept pending. We shall have a discussion and then decide the form in which it should be brought before the House.

SHRI CHENGALRAYA NAIDU: But you have to hear the point of order first before giving your ruling.

SHRI RANDHIR SINGH (Rohtak): You directed that the Minister should make a statement and within two minutes you change your ruling. He made his statement.

Mr. Madhu Limaye made certain remarks that it could be circulated.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Regarding the adjournment motion, we had disallowed it. Then I called the hon. Minister to make a statement. There was again a plea for reconsideration of my ruling.

SHRI RANDHIR SINGH: Your ruling cannot be challenged.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: It is in the fitness of things that we should see in what form it should be brought before the House. We shall discuss it. I shall call Mr. Naidu also at that time.

SHRI J. M. BISWAS: I have not received a reply from the Prime Minister. Is she considering my suggestion?

12.44 Hrs.

STATEMENT RE. NATIONALISATION OF BANKS

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी (बलरामपुर): उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, कार्य-सूची के अनुसार अब प्रधान मंत्री जी को बैंकों के राष्ट्रीयकरण के सम्बन्ध में एक वक्तव्य देना है। इससे पहले संसद-कार्य मंत्री ने सभा-पटल पर बैंकों के राष्ट्रीयकरण सम्बन्धी अध्यादेश की एक प्रति रखी है। मैं प्रातःकाल आपसे मिला था और मैंने निवेदन किया था कि जिस ढंग से यह अध्यादेश जारी किया गया है, उस के बारे में सदन को विचार करने का मौका मिलना चाहिए।

श्री जी० मो० विस्वास (बांकुरा): बहुत ठीक किया है।

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी: मैं अध्यादेश के गुण और दोषों पर नहीं जा रहा हूँ। प्रश्न यह नहीं है कि बैंकों का राष्ट्रीयकरण ठीक है या गलत। इसके बारे में अलग-अलग रायें हो सकती हैं और जब वह अध्यादेश सदन के सामने पुष्टि के लिए रखा जायेगा, तब उस विषय पर माननीय सदस्यों को अपनी-अपनी बात कहने का