

Shri Bal Raj Madhok (South Delhi): I want your guidance on one matter. This session is meeting after a long time. In the meanwhile, a number of developments have taken place in the whole world, and we have tried to draw your attention to these matters through a number of calling-attention-notices. For instance, there is a menacing situation in West Asia. There are many other things also which we want to raise. But you, Sir, in your discretion, have not allowed any of them. May I know how we can raise these issues in this House, issues which are of vital importance to the security of this country, which are of vital importance to the well-being of this country? How can we raise these issues if you are going to disallow all the notices?

Mr. Speaker: There are about eighty calling-attention-notices and adjournment motions which I have received today. Till 10-30 A.M. they were coming in, and at 10-35 they came to me. There were, eighty of them, and not just one or two. I cannot decide in the few minutes that were at my disposal which one of them was important and which one was urgent and which one was not. Therefore, I wanted to discuss the matter with the Leaders of the parties and that is why I have called for a meeting at 4-30 P.M. today. What am I to do if about 80 such notices are received? I can only admit one of them. Today, we are taking up one adjournment motion. Yesterday when I discussed, I thought that food was the most urgent problem. Therefore, I have admitted the adjournment motion regarding food, and leave has been granted for it and it is being taken up today. Actually, I wanted to allow the adjournment motion relating to the police, but then food takes precedence, and it is more important than even the police etc., and, therefore, that is being taken up today. When we meet today at 4-30 P.M. we shall discuss what is to be done, and how we are to proceed. I would like to be guided by the Leaders of the various parties on these points.

डा० राम मनोहर लोहिया (कन्नौज) :
पुलिस घाय कल ले रहे हैं ।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : हम लोग 4 बजे मिलेंगे । उसके बाद हम इसके बारे में डिमांड करेगे ।

डा० राम मनोहर लोहिया : बहुत धन्यवाद । लेकिन घाय कह चुके हैं कि घाय पुलिस ले रहे हैं ।

Mr. Speaker: Therefore, I am saying that we shall be meeting at 4-30 P.M. And hon. Members may give me guidance, and I am prepared to accept whatever is good. Actually, I have no pre-conceived ideas about rejecting anything or accepting anything. If 80 or 90 notices are there, and each one of them may be very important—only one can be admitted on a day. I would certainly like to have the guidance of all the leaders of the various parties before I take any decision about it.

12.19 hrs.

RESIGNATION OF MEMBER

(Dr. Basant Narain Singh)

Mr. Speaker: I have to inform the House that Dr. Basant Narain Singh, an elected Member of the House from the Hazaribagh constituency of Bihar has resigned his seat in the Lok Sabha with effect from the 13th May, 1967.

12.19½ hrs.

COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES

FIRST REPORT

Shri Khadihar (Khed): I beg to present the First Report of the Committee of Privileges.

STATEMENT RE: RAILWAY ACCIDENT AT KUPPAM STATION

The Minister of Railways (Shri C. M. Ponnappa): Sir, it is with profound regret that I rise to make a statement

[Shri C. M. Poonacha]

on the derailment of train No. 26 Up Island Express at Kuppam station on the Bangalore-Jalarpet single line Broad Gauge section of Madras Division of Southern Railway.

At about 21.52 hours last night while the train was being received on the loop line at Kuppam station where it is booked to stop, it overshot the starter signal and ran into the sand hump. As a result the train engine alongwith three bogies next to it got derailed.

According to the latest information available, 22 dead bodies have been recovered and rescue operations are still in progress. 64 persons have been injured of whom 7 are reported to have sustained grievous injuries.

Immediately on receipt of information the Medical Relief Special was rushed from Jalarpet and it reached the site at 23.15 hours. The General Manager alongwith Chief Medical officers and other senior railway officers have reached the site to supervise relief and rescue operations.

The injured were given prompt medical attention by the Railway Doctors who reached the site by the Medical Relief Special, the doctors of the Government Hospital, Kuppam and of Employees State Insurance Hospital, Kuppam and by the local doctors. The injured were later on removed to the hospitals for further medical attention. The Minister of State for Railways and Member, Engineering, Railway Board have flown to the site this morning. Ex-gratia payment is being arranged to the injured and the families of those killed.

The Additional Commissioner of Railway Safety, Bangalore, who is the statutory authority under the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation is holding an enquiry into the accident tomorrow.

Shri Rama (Srikakulam): I am sure the whole House joins the Minister in mourning the death of so many of these innocent people who had not

bargained for this terrible disaster. But I would like my hon. friend to enlighten the House as to why is it that medical assistance has not been rushed from Jalarpet and Bangalore where such doctors and medicines are available and why they depended only on that miserable local hospital which is a very small establishment and the so-called local doctors who are so very few and not so very competent.

Shri C. M. Poonacha: On receipt of the information, medical specials were rushed from Jalarpet and Bangarpet on either side of the site of this accident; in addition to that, the Chief Medical Officer came from Madras. That is the position.

Shri Ganesh Ghosh (Calcutta South): Will the Minister explain as to how 22 persons got killed when the train was not moving very fast and when only three bogies got derailed?

Shri C. M. Poonacha: This is a matter which is to be investigated.

Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kanpur): The hon. Minister has said that an inquiry has been instituted by one of the officers who is not concerned with the Railway Board but is in the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation. In view of the gravity of the accident, is the Minister prepared to have a judicial probe into this because this accident has happened even after so many minor accidents and even after we have had the report of the Kunzru Commission?

Shri C. M. Poonacha: The matter requires to be investigated and statutory provisions exist in this regard according to which the Railway Safety Commissioner has to take up the matter for immediate investigation because they are the competent people to do that. That particular organisation is under the control of the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: I only asked whether he would agree to a judicial probe.

Shri F. Venkatasubbalak (Nandyal): This is a most unfortunate accident in which 22 people have been killed. May I know whether this was due to derailment or whether there is any suspicion of sabotage? Has he got any such information?

Shri C. M. Poonacha: It would be rather difficult for me to say immediately as to what has been the immediate cause of this accident, but looking at the information—this accident happened on the station itself—it seems to be a case of derailment.

Shri Vasudevan Nair (Peermade): This train was running to Cochin. This train generally carries mostly passengers to Kerala. The traffic might have now been disrupted because of the accident. What special steps are the Railways taking to see that the relatives of the dead and the wounded from that side of Kerala are brought to this place, how they can travel to this place because there is now disruption of traffic? Are they taking immediate steps to inform the relatives and help them to come to the place?

Shri C. M. Poonacha: This would certainly be done. Steps would have been taken already, I am sure.

Shri F. Ramamurti (Madurai): We know that statutorily the Government is obliged to have an inquiry through the railway safety committee or something like that, but in a case where about 22 people have been killed, it may be even more, does not the Government think it necessary, in order to assure the public that everything proper has been done, to have this matter referred to the findings of a judicial tribunal? Government will be placing itself in a better position as regards the public. After all, justice must not only be done, but must also seem to be done. Why should not Government agree to have the matter referred to a judicial tribunal?

Shri C. M. Poonacha: The hon. Member is suggesting that instead of the statutory provisions, why not a separate independent judicial inquiry. The matter will be looked into.

Shri Jyotirmoy Basu (Diamond Harbour): We see that accidents are taking place in this country very often. Once before I suggested insurance cover for the railway passengers. Would the Railway Minister consider it?

Mr. Speaker: This can be discussed in the budget, not now. He can ask details about the accident.

Shri Jyotirmoy Basu: Those who travel by air in most places get an automatic cover. The insurance is a part of the value of the ticket.

Mr. Speaker: I know, I agree with that, but I do not think that on a policy matter the Minister can give any answer now immediately.

Shri C. M. Poonacha: Provisions for payment of compensation do exist under the present arrangement. Claims are entertained, and up to a figure, Rs. 20,000 or so is being paid, but that is after a certain procedure of verification and claims having been established. There are authorities before whom the claims have to be preferred, and there are certain statutory requirements to be gone through.

Shri Jyotirmoy Basu: They do not move.

Shri C. M. Poonacha: Who says?

श्री हुकम चन्द कच्छबाब (उज्जैन) :
 जिन लोगों की मृत्यु हुई है उन लोगों की सार्ने क्या उनके परिवार वालों को सोंप दी गई है, यदि नहीं, तो क्या उनके परिवार वालों को बुसा कर इन मामलों को उनके सुपई करने का सरकार का विचार है। मैं यह भी जानना चाहता हूँ कि कितनी सार्ने उनके सुपई की गई है? संजी महोदय ने कहा है कि न

[श्री हुकम चन्द कडवाय]

लोगों को सहायता दी गई है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि तत्काल कितनी राशि सहायता के रूप में उनको दी गई है। मंत्री महोदय ने बताया है कि चालीस हजार रुपये हूब बैसे हैं। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि जो लोग मरे हैं उन में से कितने लोगों के परिवार वालों को चालीस-चालीस हजार रुपये दिये गये हैं ?

Shri C. M. Poonacha: I was just explaining the procedure whereby claims are entertained and paid. There are separate authorities who look into these claims and assess the actual amounts that are payable in such accidents which happen. As for the disposal of the dead bodies and handing over the dead bodies to the kith and kin, the matter is being attended to at the site. The Minister has proceeded there, and I am sure those matters would receive all the attention they need.

श्री हुकम चन्द कडवाय : तत्काल सहायता क्या दी गई है ?

अध्यक्ष महोदय : रेल को तो वह दुर्घटना हुई है।

श्री हुकम चन्द कडवाय : मंत्री महोदय ने अपने वक्तव्य में बताया है कि सहायता दी है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि कितनी सहायता दी है ? तत्काल कितनी सहायता दी है ?

Shri C. M. Poonacha: The immediate need is relief rescue operation on now. After rescue operations are over such of those in need of immediate treatment and medical facilities will have to be afforded the same.

श्री रामसेवक शारदा (बाराबंकी) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, यह एक बहुत बड़ी रेल दुर्घटना है और इस से पहले भी बहुत ही दुर्घटनाएँ होती आई हैं। एक बार रेल मंत्री, स्वर्गीय साहू बहादुर

बाल्सी, में एक रेल दुर्घटना होने पर अपने पद से इस्तीफा दिया था। मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि जब इस प्रकार की दुर्घटनाएँ होती रहती हैं, तो क्या रेलवे मंत्री या रेलवे विभाग के किसी बड़े अधिकार पर यह जिम्मेदारी आवेगी कि जब कोई इस प्रकार की दुर्घटना होती और मोंतें होती, तो वे अपने पदों से इस्तीफा दे कर हट जायें, अन्यथा ये दुर्घटनाएँ होती रहेंगी।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : श्रीमती नदमी-कान्ताम्मा।

Shrimati Lakshminakthamma (Khammam): There are accidents even while the trains are running. The friend by my side was hurt as he fell when the train was in motion. This shows the inefficiency of the railway administration. What purpose would be served by the railway authorities enquiring into it. Would the Government have an altogether different enquiry?

श्री अब्दुल हमीद दार (गुड़गांव) : क्या बजौर साहब क्रमशः कि क्या वे तीनों बोगीज बर्ड बलास की थीं या इन में से कोई फर्स्ट क्लास की बोगी भी थी, इन तीन बोगीज में कुल कितने पैसेंजर्स थे, उन में से कितने पैसेंजर मरे कितने जखमी हुए और क्या मरने वालों या जखमी होने वालों के नाम उन के पास था गए हैं ?

[श्री عبدالغनी दार (गुड़गांव) : क्या

وزیر صاحب فرمائینگے ؟ کیا یہ تھلوس ہوگاہ تہوے کلاس کسی تھوں ہا ان مہوں سے کوئی فرسٹ کلاس کو ہوگی اہوں تہوں۔ ان تھوں ہوگاہ مہوں کل کتلیہ ہوسلجر تہ۔ ان مہوں سے کتلیہ ہوسلجر تہ۔ اور کتلیہ زخسی ہوئے اور کہا سولہ والوں ہا زخسی ہوئے والوں کے نام ان کے پاس آگے مہوں]

Shri C. M. Poonacha: Of the three, one was a first-class bogie; the second was a third-class bogie and the third one was also a first-class coach.

Shri Hem Barua (Mangaldai): Was any Member of Parliament in it?

Shri C. M. Poonacha: I am yet to receive information.

Mr. Speaker: It is a very serious matter. It was an unfortunate accident and 22 people have died. If you want to discuss other matters and other accidents, the Budget is going to be presented and I am sure Members will discuss these things in more detail. No. Mr. Chagla.

बी अब्दुल बनी वार : मेरे सवाल का जवाब नहीं दिया गया है। क्या बजोर साहब के पास यह इतिहास था गई है कि उन तीन बोगीज में कुल कितने पैसेजर थे ?

[श्री عبدالغنی دار (کوٹاں) -
مہرے سوال کا جواب نہیں دیا گیا ہے
کہا وزیر صاحب کے پاس یہ اطلاع آگئی
ہے کہ ان تین بوجےز میں کل کتنے
پैसेجر تھے]

Mr. Speaker: He has no details; he will get them later.

STATEMENT RE. EXTERNAL
AFFAIRS MINISTER'S VISITS TO
KUWAIT, IRAN, GENEVA, MALAY-
SIA AND SINGAPORE

The Minister of External Affairs (Shri M. C. Chagla): Sir, it is a long statement. If you want it, I can read it; otherwise, if you permit me, I will lay it on the Table of the House. I am in the hands of the House.

Shri M. L. Sondhi (New Delhi): At the time when the international situation takes a serious turn, is it fair that the hon. Minister should tell us about his visits rather than about the serious situation which is developing in the Middle-East.... (Interruptions).

Mr. Speaker: He may lay it on the Table of the House.

Shri M. C. Chagla: I place the statement on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-330/67.]

Shri Nath Pai (Rajapur): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a question. Before I do, I want your co-operation in regard to another matter. We should maintain the sovereignty of the House. What Mr. Sondhi was trying to mention has been agitating the minds of all Members. It is a very explosive situation which has developed in what is called West Asia. Yesterday, the Prime Minister took the Congress Parliamentary Party into confidence on this matter. The same thing happened about the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. Our notices at the end of last session were rejected. They were too busy to accept it. But after the House adjourned, the Congress Parliamentary Party was taken into confidence on that matter. I have no quarrel about their telling what they like to their partymen. But which is the superior body—Parliament as a whole or a little group or party? You will have to be extremely vigilant about this. This is being done repeatedly.

Mr. Speaker: There are no two opinions on that; Parliament is the supreme body. Is the hon. Minister making a statement on West Asia?

Shri M. C. Chagla: I am making a statement on Thursday.

Shri Nath Pai: Thursday is far off; why not today?

बी कंचर लाल गुप्ता (दिल्ली सदर) : प्रधान मंत्री ने जो स्टेटमेंट दिया है, वह एक तरफा है। उस से भ्रान्ति तो स्थापित होगी नहीं, लेकिन उस से देश के हितों को भी नुकसान होगा।

Shri Nath Pai: I would also like to point out that Mr. Chagla thinks, perhaps justifiably that he should reflect, ponder and then decide rather than make a statement now. But how to