

because what greater reason can there be for altering the law than that it is inefficacious. If 9,000 murders were committed in spite of your death punishment, it belies its deterrent effect and should be changed.

My motion is for consideration of the Bill and I submit it should be given effect to. At any rate, there is no harm in accepting the motion for circulation that has been moved by my friend Shri Raghubir Sahai. This is a country of non-violence and Ahimsa. Even if you do not accept my motion straightaway, what harm can there be if this motion for circulation is adopted and the Bill goes before the country to elicit opinion. If the opinion is in favour of the punishment, that would strengthen the hands of the Government.

It was said by Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava that the burden of proof is on those who want to abolish it. No, Sir. I would respectfully differ and say that the burden of proof is on those who want to keep it because they cannot prove that this is a unique deterrent and that on account of its existence on the statute-book the murder rate is kept within bounds.

With these remarks I request the hon. Minister of Legal Affairs to accept if not my motion at least the motion of Shri Raghubir Sahai.

Mr. Speaker: Need I put the motion for circulation to the vote of the House?

Shri Raghubir Sahai: I beg to withdraw my motion.

Some Hon. Members: No, no.

17 hrs.

Mr. Speaker: When there is an objection even from a single hon. Member, I will have to put the motion to the House.

The question is:

"That the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the end of April, 1957."

The motion was negatived.

Mr. Speaker: What about the other amendment of Shri Raghavachari?

Shri Raghavachari: In view of the first amendment, mine was not accepted.

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Penal Code, 1860, and the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898, to provide for the abolition of capital punishment, be taken into consideration."

The motion was negatived.

MADRAS-TUTICORIN TRAIN DISASTER

The Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri): Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is extremely unfortunate that a serious accident took place this morning between Ariyalur and Kallagam near Trichinopoly. The information received so far is incomplete and we are getting it in bits. We hope to get authentic reports by this evening. Here is the report prepared by the Railway Board.

At about 5-30 hours this morning, No. 603 Down Tuticorin Express of the Southern Railway, which left Madras Egmore last night at 21-50 hours met with a serious accident at the Trichinopoly end of the abutment of bridge No. 252 over the river Marudayar at mile 170/14-12 from Madras between the stations Ariyalur and Kallagam. The engine and seven bogies next to it fell down behind the abutment as a result of the approach bank having been washed away due to heavy rains. The eighth coach was derailed of all wheels but kept standing on the bridge. The rear four bogie coaches were safe on the track.

According to the latest information available 68 dead bodies have been recovered so far and further salvage operation is progressing. Sixty persons have been injured and were removed from the site by a special train, which left at 10-30 hours for Trichinopoly Junction. This train has

[Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri]

been held up near Lalgudi station due to water overflowing the track. However, ambulance cars have been requisitioned from Trichinopoly and they are expected to be moved by ambulance vans to hospital at Trichinopoly. Relief trains, both from Trichinopoly and Villupuram, were rushed to the site of accident and it is learnt that adequate medical aid and relief have been provided. The last four coaches of the train, which were intact have been brought back to Ariyalur with all the passengers. Telegraphic communication between the site of accident and the adjoining stations has been disrupted.

Through communication is expected to be restored by the 26th instant. Transshipment of traffic is not possible as about 6 ft. of water is running in the river Marudayar and the bridge is 500 ft. in length.

Mr. Speaker: Six ft. of water in the river over the bridge.

Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri: No, Sir. There is 6 ft. of water over the bed. The length of the bridge is 500 ft.

The Deputy Minister, Shri Alagesan, who reached Madras this morning has reached the site of the accident with other railway officers. Doctors have also reached there with medical relief van and all that is possible by way of help and relief is being done. I have all my sympathies for the injured and the relatives of those that are dead and I know how all of us feel deeply concerned over this tragedy.

Shri Vallatharas (Pudukkottai): May I know whether the hon. Minister is aware of the names of those persons dead or injured?

Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri: Not yet; I have no information so far.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao (Khammam): It is really very sad that within a couple of months.....

Mr. Speaker: What does the hon. Member want?

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: I seek information, Sir. I want to know what further steps are going to be taken.

Mr. Speaker: Let us not embark upon a debate here. What does the hon. Member want?

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: The hon. Minister has not said what steps he is going to take. The accident is not a small thing. Every time the train is falling and so many lives are lost and so many people injured. Nearly 3 million people are travelling every day. In any other democracy the Minister would have gone.

An Hon. Member: No, no.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Why not?

Mr. Speaker: We shall go into these matters later. If the hon. Member himself were the Minister what can he say now?

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: I would have tendered my resignation immediately.

Mr. Speaker: Now, that is the statement. So far as the Hyderabad matter is concerned, I have allowed a discussion on that matter—the draft report that has been placed before this House. Similar things can be done.

Shri Veeraswamy (Mayuram—Reserved—Sch. Castes) rose—

Mr. Speaker: The House will now stand adjourned till 11 A.M. on Monday.

17-05 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Monday, the 26th November, 1956.