

Shri Braj Raj Singh (Ferozabad): Then that becomes more serious.

Shri Shah nawas Khan: We have introduced continuous patrolling of the line. The G.R.P. and the R.P.F. are patrolling the line and all necessary precautions are being taken.

Mr. Speaker: When an accident took place in January, it was said that it was the result of a sabotage. This accident is not said to be in any way connected with the other incident. The hon. Minister has made some enquiries, and he is awaiting some further information. As soon as he gets some more information, he will place it before the House, and if any such need arises from the facts elicited, I shall certainly consider the desirability of having a discussion on this matter, if necessary. At present, I am not called upon to give my consent to this adjournment motion.

12.18 hrs.

RE: EXPLOSION IN ASANSOL.

Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kanpur): Yesterday, I gave notice of an adjournment motion about the explosion in Asansol, and it was brought up in the House. There was also reference as to whether it was a Central subject or not. The subject was raised in the West Bengal Legislative Assembly, and the Chief Minister of West Bengal has said that it being a Central subject, he has already written to the Central Government. The death-toll in this accident now stands at 46.

Shri Braj Raj Singh (Ferozabad): More may die in view of the serious injuries caused.

Mr. Speaker: When this matter was brought up yesterday, the hon. Deputy Minister said that full information was not yet available. To the best of his

recollection, no permit was given, and it seems to have been a case of unauthorised storing of ammunition. Therefore, the explosion must have occurred. It is also open to the State Government to give permits upto 50. I do not know all the units there, and they may be of a smaller account. Now, the Chief Minister of West Bengal seems to have stated that this is a Central subject and so on. In view of the large casualties that have resulted, may I know what exactly the hon. Minister has to say in this matter?

Shri Narayanankutty Menon (Mukandapuram): Licensing is subject to the Central Government's inspection and comes within the duties of the Inspector of Explosives. It is not the absolute power of the State Government.

The Minister of Works, Housing and Supply (Shri K. C. Reddy): I have not received any detailed report from the Inspector of Explosives who has proceeded to the spot. The Chief Inspector of Explosives who is at Nagpur has also been asked to go to the spot. We are awaiting a report from these authorities. According to the Explosives Act, the District Magistrate also has to make a preliminary enquiry when an accident like this takes place. We have not received any detailed report till now. We are awaiting a report. As soon as I get a report, I would be able to make a statement on the matter giving the reasons for this accident and other particulars.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: In such matters, there must be quick action. At present, 46 people have died, and more may die because serious injuries have been caused. They have not yet received a report. They must be very quick in these matters.

Shri K. C. Reddy: I quite agree that this has been a very serious accident,

and quite a number of people have died, and several have been injured. I would like to take this opportunity of conveying to the members of the bereaved families our condolences. We are doing everything possible to expedite the report. As soon as the report is made available to us, I will make a statement.

Shri Hem Barua (Gauhati): The Chief Minister of West Bengal has written about it to the Central Government saying that it is a Central subject. May I know what the Central Government has got from the Chief Minister of West Bengal?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister says he is making enquiries and is trying to expedite the report.

Shri Narayanankutty Menon: When a serious accident like this happens, it is not that we are much worried about the accident alone. What we are worried about is the mechanism and the functioning of the Central Government. The Chief Inspector of Explosives is functioning from Nagpur, and the Government are taking all possible steps. What we want is an assurance from the Minister that the machinery of the Central Government and of the Inspector of Explosives is tightened up so that this sort of unlicensed ammunition and explosives will not be permitted hereafter. That is the preventive aspect of it. We are stressing today the preventive aspect.

Shri K. C. Reddy: It is these aspects about which we have no definite information. It is not definitely known whether there were unauthorised licensees or whether there were unauthorised persons who were storing these goods. It is not known whether the District Magistrate issued licences or whether the Inspector of Explosives issue licences. All these facts are yet to be ascertained. We are awaiting the report.

Shri Hem Barua: I want to know specifically what the Chief Minister of West Bengal has written to the Central Government on this matter.

Mr. Speaker: After the accident, they are making enquiries.

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): It is obvious that there has been a very serious accident or incident, whatever it was, involving so many deaths. It is totally immaterial, so far as this House is concerned, whether it is the Central Government's responsibility or the State Government's responsibility. This House is interested in knowing all the facts, and it is right that we place them even if it falls within the purview of the State Government, and it is not only the facts of this case, but also the facts in regard to the other questions that have been raised by some hon. Members as to who issued the licence, how this kind of thing can be prevented, etc. I am sure at the present moment, it is pretty difficult to discuss it when all the facts are not before us. Those facts should be obtained as rapidly as possible after full enquiry.

Mr. Speaker: Yes, in two or three days.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee (Calcutta-Central): In the West Bengal Assembly, an adjournment motion was brought in in order to secure from the West Bengal Government particulars about what exactly has been done, or is proposed to be done, and in answer to that motion, the Chief Minister said that he had informed the Central Government about it, because it falls, for some reason, within the jurisdiction of the Central Government. We come to the Central Government and ask for particulars as to what exactly has been done about it and we are told that the Chief Inspector of Explosives is at Nagpur or somewhere, and certain things, mysterious things, are being

[Shri H. N. Mukerjee]

done about which we are not to be taken into confidence. This is a very undesirable state of affairs. The Prime Minister is very keen on informing us about this matter, and I am very happy about it. He said that it is immaterial whether it was within the ambit of the West Bengal Government or the Central Government, but let us find out with more expedition as to what has happened.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: We admit that it must be done with full speed and full competence and even if the West Bengal Government is holding an enquiry the Central Government should also do it.

Mr. Speaker: Even though it will take some time, I hope the hon. Minister will make a statement before the end of this week.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: It is not a question of time. It should be done as soon as possible. An enquiry is being made, and as soon as it is completed, it should be made available.

12.22 hrs.

STATEMENT RE: CHINGHAI-TIBET
 HIGHWAY

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): On the 27th of November, the hon. Member, Shri Goray, tabled an adjournment motion in the House, based on the newspaper report about the Chinghai-Tibet highway. In that newspaper report, it was suggested that this was across Indian territory. I stated in the House that, according to my information, this did not pass through Indian territory, that it was an entirely different route and had

nothing to do with the other route which might be in the people's minds, which goes across the Aksai-Chin area. In fact, the Chinghai-Tibet highway goes through the north east of Tibet. We have enquired about this matter further, and what I have stated in this House has been confirmed. The Chinghai highway is nowhere near Indian territory.

12.24 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON
 ASSURANCES

The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs (Shri Satya Narayan Sinha): I beg to lay on the Table a copy of each of the following statements showing the action taken by the Government on various assurances, promises and undertakings given by the Ministers during the various sessions of Second Lok Sabha:

- (i) Supplementary Statement No. II—Eighth Session, 1959. (See Appendix II, annexure No. 38.)
- (ii) Supplementary Statement No. IX—Seventh Session, 1959. (See Appendix II, annexure No. 39.)
- (iii) Supplementary Statement No. XV—Fifth Session, 1958. (See Appendix II, annexure No. 40.)

AMENDMENTS TO INDIAN POLICE SERVICE
 (PAY) RULES

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs (Shri Datar): I beg to lay on the Table under sub-section