

[Shri Anil K. Chanda]

concerned with the control of these premises. Enquiries by the local authorities are in progress. A detailed report is expected in a day or two. According to reports, not verified, 17 died and over 50 were injured.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: Recently certain explosions took place at Firozabad which happens to be the centre of the glass bangle industry. I want to know whether this shop, which is reported to be a glass bangle shop was owned by some body from Firozabad, and if so the man who owned that shop.

Shri Anil K. Chanda: So far as the Central Government is concerned, we are responsible only for the working of the Indian Explosives Act of 1884 and the Petroleum Act of 1934.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister is not aware of those details.

Shri Anil K. Chanda: These details, of course, I am not aware of.

Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kanpur): In the case of such accidents, how is it that we have always to table adjournment motions and get statements? When a serious accident takes place anywhere, is it not possible for the Minister to make a statement *suo motu*?

Mr. Speaker: I am really sorry that there is always an attempt on the part of some Members to vest this House with jurisdiction over matters over which this House has no jurisdiction. We forget very often that there are other representative institutions in this country. It is a federal structure, not a unitary Government. Therefore, whatever might be the temptation, and however serious an accident might be, I am not going to allow enlargement of the jurisdiction of this House and make hon. Members responsible for things for which they are not, under the Constitution, responsible at all.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao (Khammam): May I ask for some information?

Mr. Speaker: I am not going to allow. They can ask for information about what happens in Los Angeles. I do not give my consent to this adjournment motion.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: Can I seek some information from the hon. Home Minister?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. The hon. Minister has definitely stated that this does not come under the Explosives Act.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: How does he know it?

Shri Vajpayee (Balrampur): Without making a proper enquiry.

Mr. Speaker: To the extent they have made enquiries, this does not come under the Explosives Act. It is bangle manufacture for which the licence ought to have been taken from the Corporation. I do not know why the Corporation did not give the licence. Hon. Members who are in the Corporation will put that question and elicit the answer.

OVERTURNING OF DREDGER IN THE HOOGHLY

Mr. Speaker: I will proceed to the next adjournment motion:

"Immediate need to discuss the Dredger disaster in the Hooghly river on Friday the 18th November, 1960 resulting in loss of lives of nearly 18 people including foreigners."

Some Hon. Members rose—

Mr. Speaker: I would like to remind hon. Members that after they table the adjournment motion, if, in addition to what they have stated there, they want a clarification on any particular point, they may ask for it. At this stage I am not going to allow

them to discuss this matter, and state anything more.

Shri Chaudhuri may ask a question if he wants an answer with respect to any particular matter.

Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri (Berhampore): Some of us were privileged to be on board this dredger in 1959 and we know that this was a very sturdy dredger. Not only was it at anchor....

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri: I am asking a question, but in order to make the question intelligible, I have to say something.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister.

The Minister of Transport and Communications (Dr. P. Subbarayan): The fact is that this dredger did not belong either to the Central Government or the Calcutta Port Trust. It belonged to a Dutch firm who are under contract to clear one of the things which are interrupting the passage in the Hoogly. It was not a dredger worked by machinery at all. It was tied on both sides, but unfortunately, the spring tide which arose at the time was much higher than was anticipated. I do not think even the Dutch firm anticipated it, because it went up as much as 19½ ft., which is unusual; and a rope having cut aside from the star-board side, the dredger turned over and is now lying on the star-board side. The result was that 12 Dutchmen—because it was a Dutch firm which was doing this dredging for the Calcutta Port Trust—died and also six Indians. One of them was Ceylonese really, not Indian. Out of this, only three bodies have been recovered so far. That is the report I have had from the Port Trust. As soon as this happened, we telephoned the Chairman of the Calcutta Port Trust, and this is the information we have received. They were in the fifth stage of the dredging operations, and this is no doubt unfortunate, but an enquiry is being made by the Port Nautical Advi-

ser, and then we will get fuller details which I will place before the House.

Shrimati Benu Chakravartty (Basirhat): In recent times the Port Commissioners have had quite a number of accidents, and this particular dredger was in operation in co-operation with the personnel of the Port Commissioners. I would like to know whether this dredger had got its certificate of sailability, and whether Government now proposes to set up a commission of enquiry under the Indian Shipping Act in which there is provision for it.

Dr. P. Subbarayan: I am aware of what she is pointing out, but as I have said, our Nautical Adviser is going into it, and if we find that a committee is necessary, we shall do what we think is right.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: I would like to know whether it is a fact that the tare weight, that is, the weight of the ship was 1300 tons, and the weight of the ship with all the goods in it was about 2200 tons. I want to know whether this overloading was also one of the reasons, because, according to the report that appeared in the *Anand Bazar Patrika*, the work was going on for all the twenty-four hours of the day. May I know whether arrangements were made to save the lives? Were there no arrangements actually in that particular ship?

Dr. P. Subbarayan: As I explained, the dredger overturned quickly, and they had not anticipated it. Naturally, everything was done, but the accident was so sudden that it was impossible to do anything.

Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri: May I know whether prior warning about the coming of the bore was given to all the persons concerned who were working on the Lower Hooghly, because tidal bores are quite common at this time? May I know whether prior meteorological warnings were given?

Dr. P. Subbarayan: I am aware of all that the hon. Member says, but at

[Dr. P. Subbarayan].

the same time, I would like to point out that I have given all the information that is in my possession at the present moment.

Mr. Speaker: The matter is under investigation.

Shrimati Ila Palchoudhuri (Nabadwip): Actually, the question that I wanted to ask has been partly covered by Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri's question. As you know, Sir, warnings are usually given when a bore comes; also, usually, all the connecting wires are examined...

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member is giving information.

Shrimati Ila Palchoudhuri: I want to know whether the connecting wires were examined.

Mr. Speaker: The matter is under investigation. The hon. Minister has placed before the House all the information that he now possesses. After investigation is made, he will try to keep the House informed.

I do not see any reason to give my consent to this adjournment motion.

REPORTED ANTI-INDIAN PROPAGANDA IN BORDER DISTRICTS

Mr. Speaker: There is a third adjournment motion which reads thus:

"The situation of insecurity and subversion emerging out of the fact, as reported in *The Statesman*, dated 21st November, 1960, that 'the Communists have stepped up their propaganda in the newly-created northern border districts ... The propaganda being conducted through speeches, hand-written and printed literature and at secret meetings tends to justify the Chinese territorial claims on Indian soil'."

Has the hon. Minister anything to say regarding this kind of propaganda on the border?

Shri Hem Barua (Gauhati): May I make a submission on this, before the Prime Minister makes a statement? The whole of this northern border is honeycombed with secret societies and anti-social and treasonable elements, and there are agents of Chinese expansionism that persist in the perversity, calculated perversity, I would say, that in the matter of this dispute, it is India and not China that is in the wrong; and Kalimpong, that was described by Peking once as the command centre of the rebellion in Tibet has, of late, become the spy centre for a particular country. There, all kinds of dyeing and cleaning shops, eating-houses etc. are springing up like mushrooms, not ostensibly for business purposes, because they worked as centres of espionage. At the same time, posters and subversive literature are circulated in this area and in the adjoining sensitive areas. There has been a systematic campaign against India in this particular area. If you visit Darjeeling and go to a tea estate there, in the houses of a certain community, you will find only three pictures, the pictures of Durga, the picture of Kali and the picture of Mao Tse Tung. This is the atmosphere that we are having in the northern areas.

In spite of the statement that the hon. Prime Minister made with pointed reference to this during his reply to the foreign affairs debate in August in this House and in the other House, Government have left these areas open for such infiltration. And we are afraid that a national tragedy might occur out of this negligence or because of this negligence on the part of Government.

Therefore, I want this motion to be admitted as an adjournment motion, and there must be discussion on it.

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): As the hon. Member has said, I myself, drew the attention of the