

Government may be circulated to all hon. Members.

Mr. Speaker: Very well, the hon. Minister may place some copies in the Notice Office.

Shri Tangamani: The report of the Ad hoc Committee was circulated. I, therefore, request that the decisions of the Government thereon may also be circulated.

Mr. Speaker: If he has got further copies he may place them in the Notice Office, so that whichever hon. Member wants a copy may take it from there.

12-16 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

DELHI EARTHQUAKE

Shrimati Ila Palchoudhuri (Nabawdip): Mr. Speaker, Sir, under Rule 197, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Home Affairs to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:—

“The damage caused by the earthquake which rocked Delhi and other surrounding areas on the night of 27th August, 1960.”

The Minister of Home Affairs (Shri G. B. Pant): Sir, an earthquake shock of moderate intensity was felt at about 9:30 in the night on Saturday, the 27th August, 1960. It was preceded by a rumbling sound and followed by two further shocks of slight intensity at about 23:00 hours in the night on the 27th and just about midnight on the 28th. Some slight tremors were also reported to have been felt on subsequent days. This generally happens after an earthquake shock though the tremors become milder with the lapse of time.

The epicentre of the shock on the 27th has been determined to be about

30 miles East to North-East of Delhi. The shock has been recorded by most of the Indian Seismological Observatories.

Delhi lies in the seismic zone which has experienced only slight to moderate damage during earthquakes in the past. The immediate cause of the present earthquake is attributed to the development of strains in the interior rock structure and the slipping of rocks in that region.

The Meteorological Department have stated that while it is not possible to forecast the earthquakes, there seems to be no reason to be alarmed about recurrence now of another shock at Delhi.

One person aged about 40 years sustained serious injuries while jumping from the first floor in a house in Karolbagh, and died in the hospital on the 28th August. A five year old girl was seriously injured in village Palam as a result of house-collapse. She has been admitted in the hospital.

A few persons are reported to have been hurt due to fall of plaster and stones.

The present reports indicate that about ten buildings have been seriously damaged belonging to the Government—I am not giving the names; I have them with me, but if hon. Members are interested I shall read them out—well, all of us are safe luckily.

Amongst the important public buildings which have suffered minor damage or cracks are the kitchen and dining room in the family-wing in the Rashtrapati Bhavan, the Central corridor of the Prime Minister's House, six rooms on the Attic Storey of Parliament House, Palam Airport terminal building, Safdarjang Airport and the Raisina Road Hostel including the Press Club.

There have been hair/plaster cracks in the Janpath Hotel, Asoka Hotel and the Reserve Bank buildings.

[Shri G. B. Pant]

A number of bungalows in New Delhi have developed cracks, the worst affected being on the Hastings Road. Amongst the important ones are the houses occupied by the Minister of Information and Broadcasting, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Minister for Labour, and the hon. Speaker of Lok Sabha; two M.P.s' houses in Ferozeshah Road, one M.P.'s flat in North Avenue and one in South Avenue.

Government quarters in a number of other localities in New Delhi are also reported to have suffered minor damage.

A Committee consisting of the Director of Estates, Superintending Engineer, First Circle, and Superintending Engineer, Second Circle, had been set up to visit the affected areas and has since arranged alternative accommodation, where necessary.

It is estimated that the approximate cost of the extra repairs rendered necessary to the Government buildings as a result of the earthquake will be under Rs. 5 lakhs.

Reports received show that a number of private houses in various parts of Old Delhi and New Delhi have developed cracks. Some old houses have also collapsed but their number is very small.

Shrimati Ila Palchoudhuri: May I seek one clarification?

The hon. Minister has been kind enough to give a full list, but it has been pointed out in the press that the Red Fort has also been damaged. That is a national monument and it is of great historical importance. I would like to know what the Government is doing to safeguard any portion that may have been damaged and whether that work has already been taken in hand.

Shri G. B. Pant: I have made the statement so far as my information

goes. If the Red Fort has been damaged, and the damage can be repaired, certainly suitable action will be taken.

Shri Joachim Alva (Kanara): May I just place one aspect of the matter before the hon. Minister? The hon. Home Minister said that it is not possible to forecast earthquakes. There are a number of countries which have faced earthquakes and they have at their disposal a vast amount of scientific knowledge which, if analysed, may perhaps enable one to forecast these things also. In view of this, may I know whether the Government have done anything to exchange scientific information with those countries and also whether they have increased the personnel in these departments?

Shri G. B. Pant: I earnestly hope that there will be no more earthquakes in the time of Shri Joachim Alva or my own!

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty (Basirhat): We heard that the seismographs and other machines of the meteorological department had been dismantled just at that time and that really we do not have even any records of the recent earthquake.

Shri G. B. Pant: These questions do not arise out of my statement.

श्री लुचबत राय (खेरी) : मैं एक बात कहना चाहता हूँ कि जो सूची माननीय मंत्री जी ने पढ़ कर सुनाई है, वह बहुत ही अच्छी है। बहुत से मकान ऐसे हैं, जिन में एम० पी० रहते हैं, जो क्रेक हो गए हैं। मेरा मकान भी क्रेक हो गया है। मैं यह चाहता हूँ कि जो कमेटी बनाई गई है, उसको आदेश दिया जाये कि जितने मकान ऐसे हैं, वह उन का निरीक्षण करे और बताए कि कौन कौन से मकानों को नुक्सान पहुँचा है।

श्री गो० ब० पन्त : यह तो उन को आदेश दिए गए हैं। माननीय सदस्य ने जो कहा है, उस के मुताबिक मैं फिर मिनिस्टर आफ़ हाजर्सिंग को लिख दूंगा।

श्री लक्ष्मण राय : उन को तो मालूम है।

12:22 hrs.

PREFERENCE SHARES (REGULATION OF DIVIDENDS) BILL*

The Minister of Finance (Shri Morarji Desai): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to regulate dividends on preference shares of certain companies.

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to regulate dividends on preference shares of certain companies."

The motion was adopted.

Shri Morarji Desai: I introduce the Bill.

12:23 hrs.

INDIAN POST OFFICE (AMENDMENT) BILL*

The Minister of Transport and Communications (Dr. P. Subbarayan): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Post Office Act, 1898.

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Post Office Act, 1898."

The motion was adopted.

Dr. P. Subbarayan: I introduce the Bill.

12:24 hrs.

DRUGS (AMENDMENT) BILL—
contd.

Mr. Speaker: The House will now take up further consideration of the following motion moved by Shri Karmarkar on the 30th August, 1960, namely:—

"That the Bill further to amend the Drugs Act, 1940, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

Out of four hours that have been allotted, three hours and ten minutes have already been taken. Is the consideration stage over?

The Minister of Health (Shri Karmarkar): Not yet; some hon Members wanted to speak.

12:25 hrs.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Shri Braj Raj Singh (Firozabad): Sir, before you proceed with the Bill, may I make a suggestion? There was a motion to be taken up today, and it has been postponed. The motion about the floods in Orissa is to be taken up tomorrow. In Punjab also, there have very extensive floods. Since we have saved time on the No-Day-Yet-Named Motion on the Direct Taxation Enquiry Committee Report, would it be possible to allow more time for discussing the flood situation? Floods have occurred all over India. Could not all these things be discussed in the motion that is coming up?

Mr. Speaker: I am sure the matter will be communicated to the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs. So far as I am concerned, if there is time, I will allow more time. The Punjab floods may also be discussed then.

*Published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary, Part II, Section 2, dated 6.9.60.

†Introduced with the recommendation of the President.