

12.04 hrs.

## RE: MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT

## DEATH DUE TO FALLING FROM TRAIN

**Mr. Speaker:** I have received notice of three adjournment motions on the same matter by Shri S. M. Banerjee and others. It says:

"Tragic death of Shri K. Rama Rao, former Editor of National Herald and Searchlight on 9th March, 1961 by falling from the 11 Up Delhi Express. His life could have been saved had the alarm chain been working."

**Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kanpur):** The news has appeared in the Press and the reason for my adjournment motion is this. After all many people die, but here the alarm chain had been blanked off and the express train did not stop. It was only the Janata Express which picked up the body. The difference between the timings of the Janata Express and the Delhi Express is two hours. So, after falling down from the train, for two hours he must have been lying there groaning under the pain. The train stopped only at the next halt at Buzar 30 miles away. This is a very serious matter, because it was an express train from Howrah to Delhi and there was no alarm chain to stop the train. It is criminal negligence on the part of the authorities.

**Shri Vajpayee (Balrampur):** The door was open. The door was not closed. Enquiries have got to be made whether the door was in a position to be closed.

**The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri S. V. Ramaswamy):** Details are being ascertained and will be made available as soon as possible.

**Shri S. M. Banerjee:** Was the alarm chain working in the express train or not?

**Mr. Speaker:** Details have been called for and the House will be informed as soon as it is available.

**Shri S. M. Banerjee:** You may withhold your decision, Sir.

**Mr. Speaker:** I will call this adjournment motion on Monday.

12.07 hrs.

## RE: SUPPLEMENTARIES TO STARRED QUESTION 733

**Shri Harish Chandra Mathur (Pali):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have a statement to make regarding observations made by you during the Question Hour, by way of personal explanation. Your observations do little credit to the intelligence and intentions of many hon. Members who wanted to rise in their seats and ask certain questions regarding the price of Russian oil. It was as if we were wanting to ask questions which were unpatriotic and anti-national, it will place the Government in an embarrassing position and the prices of oil will go up. I think the hon. Members who were rising in their seats were intelligent enough and quite clear in their mind when they were putting this question that it was in the best interests of the country that they were putting the questions and not because the prices are likely to go up. We know that those people who are supplying us oil knew very well what the prices were.

We asked the question in order to bring pressure and to expose the present suppliers. We wanted to bring public pressure to bear on the minds of those people and allow the Minister a handle to tell these people. "Here is a question which is being pressed in Parliament from time to time. Here are people who feel very strongly that we can get oil from every quarter". If I do not make this explanation and if the observations remain as they stand, the intention of all the Members who were rising in their seats to put questions could have been quite misunderstood. It is just the other way round.

**Shri Narayanankutty Menon (Mukandapuram):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, our general complaint is that more secrecy should be kept as far as the Ministry is concerned about this par-

ticular deal. Your observations are quite correct, because from our experience we find that for the last six months, the private oil companies from outside and inside the Parliament know about the price fluctuations. Our request to the Minister is there should be some secrecy in this matter, so that the private oil companies will not get to know the prices. Otherwise, they will be able to upset the entire transaction.

**Mr. Speaker:** Both sides have been represented—Shri Mathur and Shri Menon. The hon. Member, Shri Mathur, has misunderstood me. I have not impeached anybody. All hon. Members are absolutely patriotic, as patriotic as myself if not more. There is no doubt about it. If Shri Mathur wants to say that whenever a question is put by any hon. Member, I must accept and I have no right to differ from him, then I can understand. I am here to hear both sides. As soon as questions are tabled, I send them to the Ministers. Ministers have been making repeated complaints that this will interfere with the maintenance of secrecy and it is not convenient. They have got a right to tell me that before I admit a question, and I ask their opinion also. Ultimately I judge whether it is in the public interest or not.

If I say it is not in public interest, it does not mean that the hon. Member who wants to put that question is acting against public interest. Absolutely not. With respect to this matter, there was difference of opinion here. Shri Menon says this has damaged our interest and for six months the private industries have come to know about the prices from outside and inside Parliament. These are all delicate matters and no inference ought to be drawn.

It is open to me to allow a supplementary or not. If I disallow a supplementary, no inference ought to be drawn that I am casting any aspersions on any hon. Member. There is nothing personal against Shri Mathur.

I may feel that such details on the floor of the House may not be in public interest. There are many commercial undertakings and there is a norm that is observed. Otherwise, we can deal with departments of States; why should we create corporations? There are some commercial conventions which ought to be respected, however much we are entitled to ask. I have not prevented hon. Members from getting information. I have asked them to write to the Minister or to the Estimates Committee or to the Public Accounts Committee. Still, if it is of such a grave nature that it must be brought up before the House, I have no objection and I shall do so. But in the initial stages, I have got a right to say "No, these details ought not to be asked". So, there is no aspersion against Shri Mathur. He may remove all the misconceptions he has got.

**Shri Hem Barua (Gauhati):** In the present case . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** I do not want this to be prolonged.

**Shri Braj Raj Singh (Ferozabad):** This information was available outside the House. I fully agree with your view that secrecy should be maintained in certain respects. But, in the present case, the fact is that the information is available outside the House.

**Mr. Speaker:** Very often it is pointed out that the newspapers have got information. But it is one thing for the newspapers to cull out information. They will talk to everyone and get information. Even when the House is not in session, when I am in the south I read information from the lobby circles in the newspapers. Where is the lobby when the House is not in session? Therefore, the newspapers have got the right and have got also a knack of drawing out information and creating information. But if the hon. Minister is asked to make and is making a statement, it would be a responsible statement.

**Shri Hem Barua:** May I submit.

**Mr. Speaker:** No, I am not going to allow it.

**Shri Hem Barua:** May I respectfully ask you to expunge those wards from the proceedings?

**Mr. Speaker:** No, I am not expunging it at all. If hon. Members, without decorum, one after the other say "Sir", "Sir" and put questions even without my calling them, I do not want to allow this to be converted into such a place. I did not mean to say that this is a market place at all. If even in the extreme cases I am not entitled to say that a particular hon. Member or a group of hon. Members are not right, I do not know how I can conduct the proceedings. I do not know why I should expunge it. No. Of course, there is no aspersion about this House. This is a very hon. House. Now this matter is over.

12:13 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER  
 OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE  
 FLOODS IN GHAGGAR RIVER

**Shri Karni Singhji (Bikaner):** Sir, Under rule 197, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Irrigation and Power to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:

"The recent floods in Ghaggar river resulting in extensive damage to crops including Suratgarh Farm and adjoining areas and the steps taken to control the same."

**The Minister of Irrigation and Power (Hafiz Mohammad Ibrahim):** Considerable area in Rajasthan was affected by floods in the Ghaggar river during the monsoons in 1960-61. So far as winter floods in the Ghaggar are concerned, information about the damage caused has been called for

from the State Government but it has not yet been received. It has, however, been ascertained that a portion of the Suratgarh Farm was inundated during the floods last month. A report on the extent of the damage caused is awaited.

After the floods of the last rainy season, the Rajasthan Government constituted a Committee in November, 1960, under the Chairmanship of Shri Kanwar Sain, Chairman, Rajasthan Canal Board, to formulate measures necessary to control floods in the Ghaggar basin both on short term and long term basis. The Committee has held two meetings so far. For short-term proposals a sub-committee has been constituted to frame detailed proposals. The sub-committee have formulated the proposals which include (a) the construction of embankments to protect the towns and villages situated on the banks of the Ghaggar (b) the construction of suitable embankments to protect roads, railway tracks etc. and widening of culvert openings under the railway tracks and roads. As regards long term measures it has been suggested that detailed surveys etc. for preparing a comprehensive flood control scheme should be taken up.

The report of the sub-committee is under consideration of the main Committee.

Now I will request you to allow me to read a telegram, which I have received while I was sitting here, about the Rajasthan floods, for your information. It reads:

"Damage caused in floods 1960 was 30.5 lakhs. Heavy damages also caused in previous years. In February, 1961 extensive damage caused to standing rabbi crop. Floods being caused consequent improvements of drainages in Punjab without studying outfall of Ghaggar river in Rajasthan. Rajasthan Government has form-