

CONSTRUCTION OF RAILWAY LINES IN SARAN-SONEPUR

*358. **Shri Jhulan Sinha:** (a) Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state whether there is any scheme of expansion of railway lines or construction of new ones in the district of Saran (Bihar) under the O. T. R. (now the N. E. Railway) and the district of Sonepur?

(b) If the answer to part (a) above be in the affirmative, what progress has been made towards its execution?

The Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri L. B. Shastri): (a) and (b). There is no scheme of expansion of railway lines or construction of new ones in the district of Saran (Bihar) under the N.E. Railway except a small portion of the Railway project, Chakia-Alwalia-Sidhwalia, which passes through the district of Saran. The main feature of this project is the bridging of the river Gandak, for which two sites are under investigation, one at Bagaha and the other at Sidhwalia. Further consideration of this project has been held up for the present pending finalisation of the bridge site.

Shri Jhulan Sinha: May I know if there is another project also for running a new line from Taawe-Kateye to Bhatni?

Shri L. B. Shastri: No such line is under consideration.

Short Notice Question and Answer

Mr. Speaker: Short Notice Question; Dr. Ram Subhag Singh.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Will the Minister of Home Affairs be pleased to state...

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. There are a few other questions on the same subject by other hon. Members. Naturally, they have to be disallowed as being repetitions. But, I propose to give every one of them a chance to put supplementary questions. He may put his question now.

RIOTS IN DELHI ON 26TH MAY, 1952

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Will the Minister of Home Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that riots occurred in Delhi on Monday, the 26th May, 1952;

(b) the number of persons injured in those riots;

(c) the number of persons arrested; and

(d) whether tension still exists?

The Minister of Home Affairs and States (Dr. Kojia): Sir, with your permission, may I read a statement in reply, covering practically all the questions that have been put.

On the 6th of May this year, the Registrar of Marriages, Delhi, received a notice signed by one Sikandar Bakht of his intended marriage under the Special Marriage Act, 1872, with a girl of the name of Raj Sharma. In the notice the age of the bridegroom was stated to be 33 years and that of the bride 22. No objection to the marriage was received during the period of 14 days specified in the Act and the date of the marriage was fixed for the evening of the 24th May, 1952; at the Constitution Club, New Delhi. At 3 o'clock in the evening of the 24th, the father of the girl, Ram Narain, presented an objection to the Registrar on three grounds:—

(i) that the girl was below 20 years of age and that his consent had not been obtained;

(ii) that, as she was a Hindu by religion and Sikandar Bakht a Muslim, the marriage could not be celebrated under the Act, and

(iii) that the 14 days' notice prescribed under the Act had not been given.

The Registrar rejected this application on the grounds that the required notice had been given, that a period of 14 days within which objection could be taken had expired on the 21st of May, that the notice of marriage said that the age of the girl was 22 years and that both the parties had declared that they professed no religion. Thereafter Ram Narain approached the Court of the Senior Subordinate Judge, Delhi, and obtained a temporary injunction restraining Sikandar Bakht and Raj Sharma from solemnising their marriage till the 26th of May. Intimation of this injunction was received later in the day by the District Registrar.

2. In the meanwhile, a certain amount of publicity had been given to the proposed marriage and there was some degree of tension in the city. When the parties to the marriage appeared at the Constitution Club, there was a demonstration by a number of persons including the father and the brother of the bride. The injunction of the Court having been served on Sikandar Bakht, the marriage ceremony was not performed and indeed

the Registrar himself was not present as he had already received intimation of the injunction. The guests and the demonstrators all dispersed and no other event of any importance took place on the evening of the 24th.

3. On the 25th, there was increasing tension in the city. A public meeting was held in the Dewan Hall where speeches were made which had the result of causing excitement in the audience. The audience, towards the end of the meeting, formed itself into a procession in the city and made demonstrations before the Congress Office and the residence of Mrs. Subhadra Joshi who was the hostess at the reception arranged on the 24th.

4. It was known in the city that the question of issuing an injunction would be heard by the court on the 26th. Small parties of men from different parts of the city gathered within the court compound from early hours. There was much excitement in the crowd and they smashed a few window panes of the court room and snatched and burnt caps popularly known as Gandhi caps. In view of the fact that the demonstrators were mixed up with a number of litigants who were present for legitimate purpose and of the fact that the violence soon spent itself out, the local authorities decided not to use force to disperse the crowd. The court passed an order granting an injunction till the 9th of June and asking the defendants to appear and show cause on that day why the injunction should not be made absolute till the disposal of the suit. After the court passed this order, the crowd broke up and dispersed through the City in small parties. In the meanwhile, the riot scheme had been introduced all over the city and police parties were out. Nevertheless, stray assaults occurred resulting in minor injuries to seven Muslims and serious injuries to two, of which, I deeply regret to say, one has since proved fatal. The situation was soon brought under control and there were no incidents after 1.00 o'clock on that date. The Mahasabha and Jan Sangh leaders then announced a public meeting on the Gandhi Ground for the afternoon. In view of the tension in the city and the fact that two persons had already been seriously injured, the local authorities banned the public meeting. The meeting was, however, held in the Dewan Hall. The speeches made in this meeting again had the effect of rousing a great deal of excitement in the audience gathered inside and outside the Hall. After the meet-

ing was over, the people assembled there wanted to go out in procession but the police made repeated lathi charges to disperse them; the crowd was successfully broken up and no incident happened during the night. In order, however, that the situation may not deteriorate any further, the Delhi authorities decided that the persons who delivered objectionable speeches in Delhi on the 25th and the 26th should be detained under the Preventive Detention Act. This was done in the early hours of the 27th morning.

5. I should add here that there was a large scale *hartal* in the city on the 26th; not all of it was spontaneous and intimidation had been resorted to in several places. Also, on the afternoon of the 26th, the Chief Minister of Delhi and Shri Onkar Nath, a Member of Parliament, who were trying to pacify a crowd, were injured by brick-bats, and the car in which they were travelling suffered considerable damage.

6. Altogether, eleven persons were detained under the Preventive Detention Act and 21 arrested under the ordinary law. As the House is possibly aware, all persons detained under the Preventive Detention Act were released on the afternoon of the 30th. The law will be allowed to take its course in regard to the other persons.

7. Raj Sharma who had gone out of Delhi, returned on the morning of the 31st and has been restored to and is now staying with her relatives.

8. Tension in the city has very considerably abated and life is now quite normal. I hope that the issues raised by this case— issues, which I know, have given rise to excitement will be settled in a normal way and public peace will no more be disturbed, and there will be no further resort to violence or intimidation.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May I know in what capacity Mrs. Subhadra Joshi was playing the part of a hostess about which the hon. Minister has just referred, whether she was related to the bride or the bridegroom or she has adopted any or both of them?

Dr. Katju: So far as I know, Mrs. Subhadra Joshi was doing that entirely in her private capacity. You had better ask her.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May I know, Sir, the names of the relatives to whom Kumari Raj Sharma has been restored?

Dr. Katju: Her aunt and her brothers. Because there is considerable fear—she herself said so, that she was afraid of violence—she went to the Deputy Commissioner and said so—therefore the Deputy Commissioner has arranged for her stay in a house where Police protection has been provided to her. Her aunt is living with her. Her brothers are allowed access to her. Her father, everybody who is related to her, is allowed access to her and she is perfectly free.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May I know, Sir, whether the hon. Minister is aware of the place where Kumari Raj Sharma was staying before 31st May?

Dr. Katju: I have no knowledge.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May I know, Sir, whether persons having connections with the Delhi State Government and Congress were in any way connected with the events which led to the riots?

Mr. Speaker: We are not going into these things. It is a matter perhaps for judicial enquiry.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May I know, Sir, the number of M.L.As. and M.Ps. who were arrested last week in connection with these riots?

Dr. Katju: Who were arrested under the Preventive Detention Act?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Whatever may be the Act.

Dr. Katju: One colleague of ours in this House and one Member of the Delhi Legislative Assembly, if I am not mistaken.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May I know, Sir, in what way they were related with the riots?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. The hon. Member will remember that legal proceedings are pending in respect of the other people and there is a Privileges Committee of the House which is sitting and making enquiries into the matter. It would not be proper to anticipate certain things or to suggest certain things at this stage and thereby indirectly influence the deliberations of the Privileges Committee.

Shri U. M. Trivedi: May I know, Sir, why the Police was drafted into the Constitution Club before the celebration was actually going to take place?

Dr. Katju: I suppose they must have gone there in the ordinary course of their duties to see nothing unfortunate happened.

Shri U. M. Trivedi: What was the number of them?

Dr. Katju: I have no precise knowledge at the moment. Maybe 50, maybe 100. I do not know.

श्री एम० एच० रहमान : मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि पन्चीस तारीख को जब दीवान हाल में इस्थ्याल अंगेज तकरीरों की गईं और वहाँ से एक हुजूम मुस्तैल होकर लाल कुआ की तरफ गया और इसने दो तीन आदमियों की पीटा और वहाँ के अस्पताल के करीब मिट्टी के बर्तनों की जो दुकान थी उसको तोड़ा फोड़ा और छन्वीस तारीख की सुबह को दस, पन्द्रह, बीस आदमियों की शकल में शहर में घूम घूम कर हड़ताल कराने की कोशिश की और इस बात की कोशिश की दुपहर को सबको कोर्ट में चलना चाहिये। इन तमाम वाक्यात के बाद भी पुलिस का ऐसा नाक्रिस इन्तजाम क्यों रहा कि एक आदमी जान से मार डाला गया और बहुत काफ़ी लोग जल्मी हुए ?

[**Shri M. H. Rahman:** Inflammatory speeches were delivered on the 25th in Dewan Hall wherefrom an excited crowd then marched out towards Lal Kuan, beating several persons on the way, breaking all the earthen pots in a shop near the hospital. On the morning of the 26th, groups of 10 to 15 persons were found roaming about the city asking the people to observe *Hartal* for the day. They were persuading them in the afternoon to march towards the Court. May I know why despite all these happenings, the police arrangements were so inadequate as to result in the death of one person and injuries to so many others?

Dr. Katju: Do you permit this question, Sir?

Mr. Speaker: The question is, of course, accompanied by long preamble. His question is: why did not the Police take strong action in the beginning?

श्री एम० एच० रहमान : जैसा मैंने अपने जवाब में अर्ज किया है पुलिस ने जहाँ तक उससे बन पड़ा हत्तीउल इमकान कोशिश की। मगर मेहरबानी

करके आप याद रखें कि देहली में अब कोई बारह लाख या तेरह लाख की आबादी है और पुलिस की तादाद कुछ ज्यादा नहीं है और इस बात का भरोसा है कि यहां के जो नागरिक हैं वह जरूर ऐहितजात और सब और अक्ल से काम लेंगे। लेकिन अगर वह खुद ही पागल हो जायें तो कोई पुलिस भले ही बाद में उनको चेक कर सके मगर पहले नहीं कर सकती। पुलिस ने अमव कायम रखने के लिये हठी उलझमकान कोशिश की और रायट स्कीम भी लगा दी।

[**Dr. Katju:** As stated in my reply, the police did what they could to bring the situation under control. You are, however, to bear in mind that the total population of Delhi at present is well in the neighbourhood of twelve to thirteen lacs of people, compared to which the police strength is quite inadequate. We trust the citizens of this city to behave with caution, patience and wisdom. Should they, however, choose to go crazy, no police force would be able to check them before anything happens. They can control people only afterwards. In the present case the police have done their best to preserve peace and they even enforced the riot scheme.]

श्री एम० एच० रहमान : मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि आप की मालूम होगा कि मुसलमान मजहब के एतबार से इस तरह की सिविल मैरिज को पसन्द नहीं करते और उसको जायज नहीं समझते तो फिर ऐसी सूरत में मुसलमान अवाम के साथ ऐसी कार्रवाई क्यों की गई और क्या आपने यह तहकीकात की कि यह जो उन के साथ सलूक किया गया वह किस तहरीक का नतीजा है ?

[**Shri M. H. Rahman:** The hon. Minister is aware that Muslims do not favour a civil marriage of that kind, from their religious point, of view. They do not hold it as lawful. May I know why then the Muslim masses were subjected to such a treatment and whether the hon. Minister has conducted investigations to find out if there was some organised movement behind all that.]

श्री० कपूरजी : इस बात का जवाब देना मुश्किल होता है और आप इसको ज्यादा समझ सकते हैं, इस बास्ते कि जहाँ कोई मामला फिरकेबाराणा शकल अल्लियार कर लेता है तो ऐसे लोम जिन्होंने कि कुछ भी नहीं किया होता है, क्या हिन्दु और क्या मुसलमान इन पर बेजा हमले होते हैं, हलांकि यह चीज बिल्कुल नाकिस है।

[**Dr. Katju:** It is difficult to reply to that question. You can easily guess the reasons yourself. Whenever any issue is given a communal complexion, innocent persons, irrespective of their being Hindu or Muslim, are subjected to unwarranted attacks. It is extremely reprehensible, no doubt.]

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May I know, Sir, whether the bridegroom was previously married?

Mr. Speaker: All these questions are irrelevant, absolutely irrelevant. The House will now proceed to the next item. I find a number of hon. Members standing for one question more. It has been sufficiently dealt with so far as information goes. We are not here for purposes of knowing the details of the marriage or its merits.

Shri R. K. Chaudhury: May I know, Sir, who is paying for the occupation of the bungalow as the bungalow was requisitioned by the Deputy Commissioner, and who is paying for the Police protection of the individual? Under the law there should be compensation for it.

Dr. Katju: The Police is, both under the law and morally, bound to extend protection to every citizen irrespective of religion, sex or creed. As for the rent of the house, I have no knowledge at present.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. I do not permit any questions now.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

TAPIOCA

*350. **Pandit Munishwar Datt Upadhyay:** (a) Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state what is the food value of Tapioca and in what parts of India is it used as food?