

within seven days and the matter should be disposed of within seven days. Full initiative should be given to the Committee as regards the time in which to decide it.

Shri S. A. Dange: I agree to the proposition that the time should be decided by the Committee itself.

Mr. Speaker: So, we leave it to the Committee. No question of privilege can be disposed of without giving notice and a fair opportunity to the person against whom a privilege motion is brought. Normally, if it is a small matter, I myself refer it to the Privileges Committee. But inasmuch as very serious allegations have been made, I thought that I must leave it to the House to decide whether leave be granted or not. In another case a short time ago, before leave was granted I referred it to the editor to offer his explanation. Therefore the question is whether we should leave it to the Committee or ask it to decide within a week.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh (Sasaram): It should be left to the Committee but the Committee should take the minimum possible time.

Sardar Hukam Singh (Bhatinda): It would not be possible in any case to submit the report within a week. If an enquiry is to be made, notice will have to be given. He might or might not turn up on the first day. Perhaps, he might or might not be served with the notice the first time and a second notice might have to be served. Some time would be required for that. Perhaps the gentleman also has to come from outside Delhi. That too might take some time. But a week's time would not be sufficient in any case.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: I think that this is quite a serious case. Though I fully agree that there should be freedom of the press, the press also has some obligations to the nation and to this principle of the freedom of the press. Each and every newspaper is supposed to observe certain canons of

journalism and no newspaper should be allowed to go on in this way. Therefore I think.....(Interruption).

Mr. Speaker: We are not going into those details.

Shri S. A. Dange rose—

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members will resume their seats. We are not going into those details. I understand that sufficient opportunity should be given to the person who is accused of having committed a breach of privilege, while at the same time we should try to dispose of it as expeditiously as possible.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: During this session.

Mr. Speaker: Therefore I propose that the report may be called for by the end of this month after allowing a reasonably sufficient time to the editor or whoever is responsible. If it is not possible to dispose of it by them, certainly the House will give some more time to find out what exactly has happened. But at present let us ask the Committee to report by the end of this month.

The question is:

"That this matter be referred to the Committee of Privileges for consideration and report by the 30th April, 1961."

The motion was adopted.

12.25 hrs.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT

DEATH OF FIRST SECRETARY OF HIGH
COMMISSION AT OTTAWA, BY
SHOOTING

Mr. Speaker: I have received notice of an adjournment motion and a few calling attention notices about the report in the Canadian press on the 19th April to the effect that the First Secretary at the Indian High Commissioner's Office in Ottawa had been shot dead.

[Mr. Speaker].

The hon. Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister and the Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): Mr. Speaker, Sir, if I may say it is hardly a question of adjournment but it is rather a question of a statement to be made. Anyhow, I would place such facts as I possess before the House.

It is with very deep regret that I have to inform the House of the death by shooting of one of our distinguished younger members of the Foreign Service, Shri Sankara Pillai. He was functioning as the First Secretary in the High Commission in Ottawa. We have not got all the facts yet, but such facts as we have apparently indicate no motive for the shooting except that some person who is rather demented came and asked for the visa and some kind of employment in India. He did not get that visa or any promise of employment. Then he came again for a second and a third time and shot at Shri Sankara Pillai. In fact, the odd thing first of all as to how he got in with a rifle is not easy to understand. It is said that when he was going away the receptionist saw something which he or she thought was a rifle. But he went away after the shooting. Even after he was shot there was no commotion. He was sitting in his room by himself and this man somehow managed to go in. He sneaked in, shot him and then walked out. The noise of a modern rifle is not very great. Apparently some people thought it was some children playing round about or, maybe, a tyre burst or something. Anyhow, it created no commotion for some little time. He went out and a little later this very man delivered himself up to the police.

Shri Rajendra Singh (Chapra): Is the killer an Indian?

Some Hon. Members: No, no.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: The person who shot him down is said to be a Canadian national of Yugoslav descent. His name is Shani Ferezi. Nothing is known of him except that he is of Yugoslav origin and is now a Canadian national. He delivered himself up to the police.

The matter was first mentioned in the Canadian House of Commons yesterday and the Prime Minister of Canada has expressed his great sorrow and regret at this incident. All we can say, if I may read it out, is that this is the first intimation we got of it from our High Commissioner. The High Commissioner was present in the building in his own room. But apparently he did not know of it till a little time after the shooting. It is rather extraordinary how these things happened in this way. We are going to enquire into it. But I am merely stating the facts as I know them.

This is the telegram that we received from the High Commissioner this morning:

"Deeply regret to inform you that this afternoon a man shot dead First Secretary, Sankara Pillai, in his office room. Doctor and police were called in. Death was instantaneous. Police later reported one man had surrendered and admitted having shot Sankara Pillai. Identification and police investigation proceeding. The assailant is probably demented. We are all shocked at the tragic end of a brilliant officer. The shock will be terrible for the wife who is expecting a baby."

Except, Sir, to add my sense of deep sorrow at this tragedy involving a very bright officer of ours, who had already

in the course of his twelve years' service distinguished himself wherever he had been sent, I have nothing further to add. We are carrying on our enquiries. Some facts are not clear - how did a man get in there and with a rifle of all things, which is not a small thing; how did he get in and get out without any obstruction or difficulty. There was perhaps some laxity. That has to be enquired into.

Shri Hem Barua (Gauhati): Were there no armed guards at the gate or at the premises?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: Normally, armed guards are not kept; some security men are kept. I do not know who exactly was there at the time.

Mr. Speaker: It is a pity that this incident should have occurred. I myself when I went to Trinidad had an opportunity of seeing this young-man. He was acting for the High Commissioner there.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: He was the Acting High Commissioner in Trinidad.

Mr. Speaker: He had very good reports and was extremely popular. He was quite a young man; it is unfortunate that he should have been shot dead. The House may express its sympathy so as to encourage other youngmen who may not be deterred from the discharge of their duty. Of course, it is an onerous task in a strange country.

Shri Vasudevan Nair (Thiruvella): Will the dead body be flown to his place?

Mr. Speaker: His wife is there.

Shri Vasudevan Nair: His parents are here.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: His parents are in Trivandrum or somewhere round about that.

Mr. Speaker: He wants to know whether the dead body would be flown here.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I do not think so, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: His wife is there.

The hon. Prime Minister has placed all the facts before the House. Let us hear him later as to what exactly has happened. Now it is unnecessary to pursue this matter any further.

12.32 hrs.

STATEMENT RE RAILWAY ACCIDENT NEAR SILIGURI ON NORTH-EAST FRONTIER RAILWAY.

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): Mr. Speaker, I deeply regret to apprise the House of a serious accident which occurred near Siliguri station of North-East Frontier Railway last night. At about 22/10 hours while No. 6 Down North Bengal Express was running between Sivok and Gulma stations on Alipurduar-Siliguri section of Northeast Frontier Railway, its train engine and 7 other bogies derailed and capsized at mile 8/15-18. As a result of this, according to the latest reports, 10 persons have been killed and 83 injured, of whom 28 are cases of grievous injury. The injured persons, after necessary first aid at the spot, have been sent for admission into Siliguri and Alipurduar hospitals.

Medical Relief Van, accompanied by the Railway District Officers and Railway Doctors, was rushed to the site of the accident. General Manager, Northeast Frontier Railway, along-with his Heads of Departments has also left for the site of the accident. Civil and Police officials have already reached the site of the accident and