

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

[Shri Shahnawaz Khan]

are making preliminary enquiries. From the nature of the evidence collected so far, it is suspected to be a case of tampering with the track. The Government Inspector of Railways would be holding his statutory enquiry into this accident.

The Government have issued necessary instructions to the Railway administrations that all possible steps should be taken to provide the maximum relief and succour to those who have suffered in this unfortunate accident.

The Hon. Minister of Railways is flying to the site of the accident today.

12.35 hrs.

APPROPRIATION (NO. 2) BILL,
1961

The Minister of Finance (Shri Morarji Desai):* Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 1961-62, be taken into consideration."

Mr. Speaker: Motion moved:

"That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 1961-62, be taken into consideration."

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao (Khammam): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have to raise this discussion under the shadow of a tragedy which has occurred. Yesterday when I gave notice that I would be raising certain points concerning the Ministry of Transport and Communications, under which is the Railway Inspection Department, little did I know that as I rise to speak,

I would hear from the hon. Minister that a tragic accident has taken place.

Sir, on this Department of Railway Inspection to a great extent depends the safety of passengers who use the railways. Nearly four million passengers are on the wheels every day. On the efficiency and on the frequency of the inspections that are carried out by the Railway Inspection staff depends the safety of these people.

Sir, it is often said in this House that the rate of accidents has come down. I have some figures here. The number of accidents in 1958-59 was 7,797; in 1959-60 it was 7,719. This shows the figures are the same. We have just now heard the unfortunate account of a derailment. In 1958-59, 177 there were derailments; the number killed in 1959-60 was 206.

Mr. Speaker: May I ask the hon. Member, how all these are relevant under this Bill?

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Whenever an accident occurs, under section 83 of the Railways Act, the Government Inspector of Railways is to carry out an enquiry and inspection.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. I would like to know from him whether it is a normal duty. Whenever an accident occurs, the authority is given to the Minister for Transport to appoint an inspector to make an enquiry into the accident. Is it his normal duty to carry out inspection of railway lines?

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: I am coming to that.

I have mentioned in my note also, that inspection was carried out over a route mileage of 15,000 miles, as against the total route mileage of 35,000 miles. The Senior Inspector of Railways has to regularly carry out inspection. If the track is not all

*Moved with the recommendation of the President.