

CAR ACCIDENT IN U.S.A.

*429. SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 82 in the Rajya Sabha on 16th August, 1963 and state:

(a) who was the owner of the truck which caused an accident to a car on February 17, 1963 near San Jose, U.S.A.; in which Shri B. K. Bhargava, Vice-Consul in San Francisco and Shrimati Bhatt (wife of another Vice-Consul) were killed and Shri Bhatt was seriously injured;

(b) whether 19th August, 1963 was the date of hearing of the case in the court; and

(c) if the answer to part (b) above be in the affirmative, what transpired in the case on that day?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DINESH SINGH): (a) Mr. Edwin Spurgeon, the truck driver was the owner of the vehicle.

(b) and (c) The case was not heard on 19th August, as the truck driver wanted a postponement. Hearing took place on 26th August, when the truck driver is alleged to have pleaded guilty. Judgement is expected to be given on 27th September.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: May I know whether any money has been received from insurance companies for the life of the late Shri B. K. Bhargava or from the accident insurance of Mr. Bhatt?

SHRI DINESH SINGH: Yes, Sir.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA : May I know where from the expenses for the treatment of Mr. Bhatt and Mr. Bhargava's brother were met?

SHRI DINESH SINGH: Mr. Bhargava's brother was insured for medical treatment through the Blue Cross Hospital Insurance Company and they

paid for this treatment. The other gentleman was a government servant and the Government must have paid for his medical treatment.

SHRI A. M. TARIQ: Sir, may I know from the hon. Deputy Minister, if when the ashes of the late B. K. Bhargava were brought to India, no representative of the External Affairs Ministry was present? If so, may I know the reasons?

SHRI DINESH SINGH: I could not say off-hand whether someone of the Ministry was present there, but arrangements were made by this Ministry for the despatch of the ashes and for their reception here.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: May I know, Sir, whether it is a fact that the expenses of the medical treatment of Mr. Bhatt were met from the money received from the insurance company on the life of the late Shri Bhargava?

SHRI DINESH SINGH: This particular insurance claim that the hon. Member refers to is an insurance claim of the uninsured 'motorists' coverage, which meant that it was insurance for the occupants of the car which met with the accident. When proposal for this money was received, it was felt that it should be shared on a 50: 50 basis, by the two families which were in the car. This was done in consultation with the father of the late Shri B. K. Bhargava and on this 50: 50 basis the money was to be given to the two families.

SHRI A. D. MANI: What is the practice in the Foreign Service in regard to such cases, in regard to cases of this nature, where a person sustains injury or meets with death in an accident? Are the expenses incurred on the treatment of the person injured borne by the Foreign Service Department or by the person concerned?

SHRI DINESH SINGH: If the hon. Member is referring to government servants, the expenses are borne by the Government.