

The motion was negatived.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The next amendment is No. 26.

The question is :

"That at the end of the motion the following be added, namely :—

"but regret that it is proposed to curtail the civil liberty by placing before Parliament a Bill dealing with Preventive Detention."

The motion was negatived.

MR CHAIRMAN : Now we are having the main motion which I am putting before the House. The motion is :

That the Members of the Council of States assembled in this Session are deeply grateful to the President for the Address which he has been pleased to deliver to both the Houses of Parliament assembled together on the 16th May 1952.

The motion was adopted.

RAILWAY ACCIDENT NEAR BIKANER

MR. CHAIRMAN : With reference to the Motion for Papers of Mr. H. D. Rajah, Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri will now make a statement.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI LAL BAHADUR) : Sir, Government are deeply shocked to learn the serious accident which took place on the night of 18th May and our sympathies naturally go to the bereaved and the injured. Relief measures were taken immediately and an enquiry into the accident will start to-morrow. We have received a report from the high officers of the Railway which I will read out :

On 18th May 1952, at about 23 hrs. there was a head-on collision between 24 Dn. mix. train from Merta Road to Bikaner and 221 Up goods train from Bikaner to Merta Road, between Bikaner and Palana stations of the Northern Railway. The site of accident is about 7 miles away from Bikaner. Deaths 45 : 36 or 35 at site and the rest on the way when they were being taken to the hospital. This includes one fireman of goods train. Injuries : at present there are 50 in the hospital.

5 C. S. D.

The first report from the site of accident issued by the guard of 24 Dn. through a spare guard reached Bikaner at about half an hour after midnight on the 19th. Relief train with two senior doctors from Bikaner hospital, full medical equipment, water for drinking, generating set for lighting and empty coaching stock for patients left Bikaner at 2.00 hrs. and reached the site at about 2.30 hrs. This relief train was also accompanied by some railway officers of the Bikaner Division and civil and police officers.

Before the arrival of the relief train, railway staff assisted by other passengers, removed some injured persons from the wreckage and the remainder were taken out by special staff on the relief train with the aid of electric light from the generating plant on the relief train. At the same time, necessary medical aid was rendered to all injured at the site.

All injured were removed to Bikaner hospital where full medical attention including transfusion of blood plasma etc., and setting of fractures in plaster, was given to all injured up to the mid-day of 19th. Full comforts for treatment including beds for all in the hospital, were ensured. Fifteen were discharged after medical treatment in the hospital by the mid-day of the 19th, and 52 were still in the hospital. Now, there are 50.

Three passenger bogies, all third class, next to the engine of passenger train were completely telescoped, and the fourth I, II, Inter and III composite bogie mounted the telescoped bogie in front and fell on one side. Both the locomotives were badly damaged. The damage to track was negligible. It appears to be a case of wrong line clear having been given to one of the two trains. The system of working on the Section is by paper line clear ticket.

Enquiry by the Government Inspector of Railways, Bombay, has been fixed for the 22nd instant at Bikaner. The General Manager, the Chief Operating Superintendent and the Chief Medical Officer, Northern Railway flew from Delhi at 9.30 hours on the 19th for Bikaner on their way to the site of the accident. They also went round the Bikaner hospital to see the condition of the injured.

The line was blocked by the wreckage. I might mention that the two engines were so badly inter-locked that it was difficult to separate them. As a result, the subsequent trains from Bikaner and to Bikaner were cancelled. According to information available now, through communication was restored at 11.30 a.m. on the 20th. That is all the information I have, Sir.

AN HON. MEMBER : All this has been published in the press. Can't you give us any additional information ?

SHRI LAL BAHADUR: There is no additional information except what was published in the press. Though communication was expected to be resumed at 12 o'clock yesterday. The information I have received is that it was resumed at 11.30.

SHRI H. D. RAJAH: Among the 60 injured, how many more have died? Can he give at least that information?

SHRI LAL BAHADUR: There is no information.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has given you all the information he has.

AN HON. MEMBER: I suggest to Government to make another statement to morrow.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House stands adjourned to 9.45 a.m. tomorrow.

The Council then adjourned till a quarter to ten of the clock on Thursday, the 22nd May 1952.