

THE BIHAR LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DEBATES.

The 21st December, 1937.

Proceedings of the Bihar Legislative Council assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

The Council met in the Secretariat Conference room at Patna, on Tuesday, the 21st December, 1937, at 11 A.M., the Hon'ble the President in the Chair.

CONDOLENCE ON THE DEATH OF RAI BAHADUR CHANDRAKETU NARAYAN SINHA.

The Hon'ble the PRESIDENT : Before the Council proceeds to the business of the day, I have to refer to the very sad death of Rai Bahadur Chandraketu Narayan Sinha, an ex-member of the old Legislative Council. The late Rai Bahadur and myself were colleagues in the old Council many many years ago and I retain to the present day the most lively recollections of his simple, genial ways and his delightful personality. He was a gentleman to his finger-tips and few who knew him could fail to be impressed by his innate courtesy and kindness. As hon'ble members are aware, the late Rai Bahadur was a big ferry-owner, in fact, one of the biggest ferry-owners in the province. But though he was very wealthy, he was also of a charitable and benevolent disposition and was ever ready to loosen his purse-strings for every good cause. I am sure, hon'ble members would like to associate themselves with the observations from the Chair and I would request such hon'ble members to do so now.

The Hon'ble Mr. SHRI KRISHNA SINHA : Sir, on behalf of Government I would like to associate myself with the observations which you have made regarding Rai Bahadur Chandraketu Narayan Sinha. Even before he came here, I had occasion to know him intimately for very long years. He spent most part of his life at Monghyr. He was a man of genial disposition; he was a man of charitable disposition; and I think by his death the province has suffered a great loss. I hope, Sir, you will convey the feelings of the members of this House to the members of the bereaved family.

Khan Bahadur SAIYID MUHAMMAD ISMAIL : Sir, I should like to associate myself with the very sad reference that has been made by you and, in doing so, endorse every word that has fallen from you. It is very melancholy and sad indeed to realise that ever since we have come into being, there had been a number of death references. I hope, we shall not be further deprived of our fellow-citizens and that there may be occasion from the beginning of the New Year to have happy news instead of such sad news. I have not had the pleasure of knowing Rai Bahadur Chandraketu Narayan Sinha of Sonapur, but from little that I have heard of him I have come to realise that he was a man belonging to a respectable

family and, though a zamindar, he had a very soft corner in his heart for his tenants and for those who depended on him. He was a man, as you have very rightly observed, Sir, of a genial and charitable disposition and, as such, the loss of such a fellow-citizen is very keenly felt by us all. I, on behalf of this side of the House, associate myself with that reference.

Mr. GUR SAHAY LAL : Sir, I knew Rai Bahadur Chandraketu Narayan Sinha from a very long time. I had occasions to work with him in the Legislative Council. As you had, Sir, I associate myself with every word which has come from your lips and I can assure you, Sir, that his genial temperament made all, with whom he came into contact, friend. He was energetic and very hardworking and his passing away at this moment is a very sad calamity for the whole province.

Mr. SAIYID NAQI IMAM : Sir, it is with great sorrow that I have heard the reference that has been made by you. It is indeed a sad thing that within a short time of the life of this Council we had to make so many death references and let us hope that a considerable time would elapse before such further references would be necessary. The late Rai Bahadur was fully in keeping with the time, for, as a zamindar, he fully realised his duties towards his tenants. This, Sir, will show the sense of sacrifice which the late Rai Bahadur possessed and the breadth of vision and the qualities of head and heart which he had. Sir, it is my misfortune that I had not known him and had not come across with his genial personality and his other good qualities. But, Sir, most of us here—at least I can say for myself—know his cousin, Mr. Nirsu Narayan Sinha, who was, as you all know, a Member of Government of this province, and was also President of the forerunner of this Legislative Council, and in that way, Sir, I feel that one of our best friends has passed away by the death of his brother.

Sir, on behalf of my party also, I associate myself with sincerity with the reference that you have made.

The Hon'ble the PRESIDENT : I desire to convey to the relations of the late Rai Bahadur an expression of this Council's sense of sorrow and sympathy in their great loss, and I request hon'ble members to signify their assent by rising in their seats. (*All hon'ble members rose in their seats.*) I shall duly convey the message of condolence to the members of the bereaved family.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION AND ANSWER.

ORDERS REGARDING THE ARREST OF THE MUSLIM LEAGUE VOLUNTEERS.

1. Khan Bahadur SAIYID MUHAMMAD ISMAIL : Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) whether their attention has been drawn to the statement made by Mr. Saiyid Jafar Imam, General Secretary, Bihar Provincial Muslim League, which has appeared in one of the local daily newspapers of December 13th, 1937; if so, under whose orders the Muslim League volunteers were arrested, and why;

(b) whether they are aware that the arrest of Muslim League volunteers is greatly resented by the Muslims as an interference with their civil liberty ;

(c) whether their attention has been drawn to the definition of civil liberty given by the Hon'ble Mr. K. M. Munshi, Home Minister of Bombay, as published in the local daily paper of the 15th December, 1937 ?

The Hon'ble Mr. SHRI KRISHNA SINHA : (a) The answer is in the affirmative. It has been reported to Government that some Muhammadans, adults as well as boys, laid themselves prostrate at the entrance of the polling booths with a view to prevent Muhammadan voters from going to the booths. This obstructed not only the Muhammadan voters, but also the Hindu voters. They were warned, but later on they were again found at the entrance gate preventing entrance to the polling booth. One Muhammadan, we are told, was actually malhandled and it was with very great difficulty that the two could be separated. Government are informed that the entrance was again obstructed by volunteers lying prostrate at the entrance to the polling booth. At this the Subdivisional Officer ordered the arrest of the volunteers. But, later on, they were released after the polling was over.

(b) Government are aware that some resentment has been caused.

(c) The answer is in the affirmative.

Maulavi SAIYID MUHAMMAD HAFEEZ : Sir, I shall put a supplementary question arising out of (a). Was not the so-called obstruction another form of *satyagrah* ; and whether *satyagrah* is cognizable by the present Government or not ?

The Hon'ble Mr. SHRI KRISHNA SINHA : *Satyagrah*, as such, is not cognizable but, when it becomes *Duragrah*, resulting in the obstruction of people from exercising their civic liberty, it becomes cognizable.

Mr. GUR SAHAY LAL : May I know whether the volunteers were exercising the function learnt from the Congress workers.

The Hon'ble Mr. SHRI KRISHNA SINHA : No ; if they had learnt it from the Congress volunteers, they would not have behaved in that way.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

ALLOTMENT OF RESIDENCES TO THE HON'BLE THE MINISTERS.

9. Khan Bahadur SAIYID MUHAMMAD ISMAIL : Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) the terms and conditions under which public buildings have been allotted to the Hon'ble the Ministers for their residences ;

(b) whether they pay any rent or the buildings allotted are rent free ;