




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR YEERONGPILLY

Record of Proceedings, 1 November 2016

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Moorooka, Bus Incident

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (10.19 am): Last week a senseless tragedy occurred in my electorate which has shocked so many. Mr Manmeet Sharma, a bus driver, a taxidriver, a singer and a widely respected emerging leader in his community, was at work for Brisbane Transport, driving his 125 bus along Beaudesert Road, Moorooka. He was serving the public and going about it in his usual cheerful, careful and respectful way. At 9.06 am, when he pulled in to the main Moorooka stop at Moorvale Shopping Centre, his life was suddenly taken from him in a most violent and unspeakable way. Something so extreme and so vicious occurring at such an ordinary and everyday place as Moorooka has shocked people not just in our state and our nation but also across the globe, including in Mr Sharma's original country of India. My deepest and sincerest sympathies go out to Mr Sharma's family and friends.

In response to this sudden attack, the actions of two people in particular deserve highlighting in this place. Coopers Plains taxidriver Mr Aguek Nyok, who witnessed the attack, smashed open the bus doors to assist the trapped passengers and in doing so saved the lives of at least six people. On behalf of my local community I thank Mr Nyok for his bravery and courage, saving the lives of passengers. I commend the Premier for nominating him for a bravery award. A tow truck driver, Mr Peter Buxton, also assisted in helping people to safety. I also thank Mr Buxton on behalf of the south side community and the Queensland government for his courage.

Lord Mayor Graham Quirk has agreed to a memorial in Moorooka to remember Mr Sharma, and I thank the Lord Mayor, the council and local councillor Steve Griffiths for their leadership. Councillor Griffiths was instrumental in organising the poignant vigil last Saturday night which was attended by 500 people including many council bus drivers, members of the Indian community and local Moorooka residents as well as the Minister for Transport and the federal member, Graham Perrett. The sense of loss was profound throughout the ceremony.

I welcome the announcement by the health minister that an external review of the mental health treatment of the alleged perpetrator will occur. It should be acknowledged that there is great concern in the Indian community that this was a racially motivated murder. This House knows my strong opposition to any form of racism, and I am sure that the Queensland parliament is of like view. At this early stage in the investigation it is unclear whether it was a random attack or a racially motivated one. We must allow the police the opportunity to do their job and report when their work is complete. I sincerely thank all of the emergency personnel who were first on the scene—the Moorooka and Annerley police, the ambulance paramedics and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services officers. I also acknowledge

the work of Mr Owen Doogan and the members of the Rail Tram and Bus Union who have been very supportive of Mr Sharma and his family, setting up a fund for the public to donate to help Mr Sharma's family. The details are on their website.

Our whole community feels a profound sense of grief at Mr Sharma's passing, especially all those who knew and loved him. We condemn this attack in the strongest possible terms and we commit to doing everything we possibly can as a community to learn what we can to assist us in preventing it from happening again.