

about that. But now it is nearing finalisation.

**Dr. Govind Das:** Which libraries will be considered in this respect? Is it public libraries and college libraries only or other libraries in the country also?

**Shrimati Soundaram Ramachandran:** So far, this scheme concerns only the Central libraries here.

**Shri J. B. Singh:** The Minister said that "it is nearing finalisation". It may take nearly a year. So, I want to know how many years it will take.

**Mr. Speaker:** Can the Minister give anything more concrete or definite?

**Shrimati Soundaram Ramachandran:** This question was being discussed among the various Ministries, especially the two wings of the Education Ministry as well as the Home Ministry. The Home Ministry did not come into the picture later on but the other two Ministries have come to some decision, and a final decision will be taken very soon.

**Votes polled by Defence Personnel by Postal Ballot**

\*433. { Shri A. K. Gopalan: +  
Shri Imbichibava:

Will the Minister of Law be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of votes polled by Defence service personnel by postal ballot in each State;

(b) the reasons for the low rate of poll of Defence personnel; and

(c) whether Government have made any enquiry into the difficulties encountered by Defence personnel in exercising their franchise?

**The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Law (Shri Hajarnavis):** (a) The general elections have just concluded and it will take some more time for collecting and compiling the information required.

(b) and (c). Do not arise until the information required in part (a) above is collected and compiled.

**Shri A. K. Gopalan:** Is it not a fact that according to the voting figures in many places there was low rate of voting of the defence personnel?

**Shri Hajarnavis:** It is not possible for us to draw any inferences before the facts are collected.

**Shri A. K. Gopalan:** May I know whether candidates are allowed to meet the defence personnel in their barracks or other dwelling places so that they may canvass votes?

**Shri Hajarnavis:** I did not follow.

**The Minister of Law (Shri A. K. Sen):** We have not heard the question.

**Shri A. K. Gopalan:** May I know whether the candidates are allowed to canvass votes by approaching the defence personnel in the barracks or other dwelling places and if not, why not?

**Shri A. K. Sen:** The law is quite clear on that matter. The candidates can approach each voter either personally or by letter or by correspondence.

**Shri A. K. Gopalan:** The question is this. The defence personnel are inside the barracks. Are the candidates allowed to go there and canvass votes?

**Mr. Speaker:** What I could understand was that the defence personnel, when they are voters, would be included in the definition in respect of the voters and they would be in the list. Therefore, the candidates can go there.

**Shri A. K. Sen:** There may be certain difficulties and that is why I think they approach generally by correspondence.

**Shrimati Renu Chakravartty.** May I know whether it is a fact that in the postal balloting—it is this which often takes place—the first two ballot

papers are given out in front of the commanding officers or the officers in charge of the police outposts and the personnel are requested to sign on them and in fear of that they often do not take the voting papers at all?

**Shri A. K. Sen:** That is not a fact.

**Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath:** Have reports or representations reached Government to the effect that the Armed Forces personnel have been placed out of bounds so far as canvassing of votes is concerned, for all political parties except the Congress Party workers? It happened in my own constituency.

12 hrs.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Question Hour is over.

**Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath:** Let him say 'yes' or 'no'. No answer has been given.

**Mr. Speaker:** Perhaps the Minister feels that the question is suggestive of the answer.

**Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath:** We do not know it on this side; the other side, the opposite side, may know.

**Shri A. K. Sen:** The way the hon. Member posed the question showed that he was not himself convinced of that assertion.

**Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath:** We know it happened in our constituencies.

**Shri A. K. Gopalan:** Shri Kamath said that he wanted to know whether the defence personnel are kept out of bounds and they are not allowed to meet the workers of other parties. Let the hon. Minister say "yes" or "no" to that question.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Minister said that the questioner himself put the question in such a manner that he was not certain of his own ground. The answer was implied. When I asked the Minister whether he wanted to answer that question, he stood up and only said that Shri Kamath himself

put the question in such a manner that the answer was evident.

**Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath:** On a point of order, Sir I protest against the Minister's attitude. It is nothing short of an insinuation to say that I was not convinced. He must have the guts to get up and say what the position is. The treasury benches are laughing; it is no matter for laughter. They won the elections. Let him say "yes" or "no". Why beat about the bush?

**Mr. Speaker:** The Minister should answer that question, because the hon. Member wants an answer "yes" or "no".

**Shri A. K. Sen:** The answer is "no", but I thought "no" could be said in many different ways and the way I adopted was quite clear.

**Mr. Speaker:** I wanted to interpret that, but that was objected to by Shri Kamath.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION AND ANSWER

#### Fire in Bhilai

**S.N.Q. 5 Shri S. M. Banerjee:** Will the Minister of Steel and Heavy Industries be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that on the 24th April, 1962 there was a devastating fire in Bhilai and as a result of which 600 workers became shelterless;

(b) if so, whether they were given any alternative accommodation;

(c) whether any financial relief has been given to them; and

(d) if not, the reasons for the same?

**The Minister of Steel and Heavy Industries (Shri C. Subramaniam):** (a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

#### STATEMENT

An accidental fire broke out in Camp No. 1 at the Bhilai Steel Works at 9.30 a.m. on the 24th April, 1962,