

rate of sales tax at seven per cent., and whether this is in conformity with the recommendations of the Taxation Enquiry Commission?

**Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha:** All these recommendations were in the view of the Government, and they were thoroughly discussed at the conference of the Finance Ministers in November, 1957. After that discussion, a scientific formula was evolved and because of that recommendation a uniform levy of sales tax has been brought about, and most of the State Governments have agreed to that.

**Shri S. M. Banerjee:** May I know what decisions were taken in the Finance Ministers' conference, whether the uniform application of sales tax was considered and whether it was decided that it should not be more than five per cent.?

**Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha:** This question is not concerned about all the decisions. About the levy of seven per cent. of sales tax, of course it was decided as I have mentioned in my answer. As I said before, most of the State Governments did agree to this formula, and that is why it has been implemented.

**Shri S. M. Banerjee:** One question, Sir.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. Member says one thing, and the hon. Deputy Minister says another.

**Shri S. M. Banerjee:** At present there are only 15 items which are covered under the decision. May I know what more items are to be covered and when any decision is likely to be taken?

**Mr. Speaker:** That does not arise out of this question.

**Shri S. M. Banerjee:** I have been supplied with all these statements.

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Member may benefit by it, but I will not allow supplementary questions on that.

### Oil Formation near Jwalamukhi

\*2113. **Shri Hem Raj:** Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that signs of oil formations have been struck at other places near Jwalamukhi; and

(b) if so, when do Government intend to start operations there?

**The Minister of Mines and Oil (Shri K. D. Malaviya):** (a) No actual signs of oil formations have been found at other places near Jwalamukhi.

(b) It is proposed to undertake shortly structural drilling near Bathukhad. The site is being prepared.

**Shri Hem Raj:** May I know the names of the places which have been spotted in the Jwalamukhi area for purposes of structural or deep drilling?

**Shri K. D. Malaviya:** There were a number of places chosen for structural drilling for getting stratigraphical information. All the places have not yet been specifically spotted, but I have mentioned the name of one place, namely Bathukhad.

**Shri Hem Raj:** May I know whether any spot was previously taken up for structural or deep drilling but has been given up?

**Shri K. D. Malaviya:** Yes, a number of places were examined for structural and deep drilling, but as we go on getting information from this No. 1 Jwalamukhi (operation), we have to revise our assessment of the whole situation, and we are still examining the new places.

### Closure of Gummidipundi Ammunition Depot

\*2114. { **Shri S. M. Banerjee:**  
**Shri Tangamani:**

Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ammunition Depot at Gummidipundi is being closed down;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the number of employees that will be affected by this closure; and

(d) the steps taken to provide them equivalent alternative jobs without break in service?

**The Deputy Minister of Defence (Shri Raghuramalah):** (a) Yes, partially.

(b) Gummidipundi is not one of the places where it has been decided to locate Ammunition Depots permanently and there is sufficient spare accommodation in other Depots.

(c) 243 on account of partial closing down of the Depot.

(d) Efforts are being made to absorb all the surplus employees in alternative appointments in Defence installations.

**Shri S. M. Banerjee:** May I know the total number of employees who will be affected if there is total closure of this depot?

**Shri Raghuramalah:** I think it will be about another two hundred and odd.

**Shri S. M. Banerjee:** May I know whether these employees will be given alternative jobs without any break in service?

**Shri Raghuramalah:** That depends. If they are to be provided for in any of the other defence installations, I presume it will be treated as continuous service, but if they are to be given employment in some other department, then it may have to be treated as fresh employment.

**Shri N. R. Munisamy:** May I know for how long this ammunition depot at Gummidipundi has been in existence and why only a portion of it has been closed down?

**Mr. Speaker:** Does the hon. Member want total closure immediately?

**Shri N. R. Munisamy:** I want to know for how long it has been in existence.

**Shri Raghuramalah:** This has been in existence since 1945, and the Armed Forces Reorganisation Committee recommended Gummidipundi ammunition depot to be one of the depots to be closed down, and that is why we are closing it down.

**Shri M. R. Krishna:** May I know whether Government have any programme to change these ammunition dumps in order to maintain secrecy?

**Shri Raghuramalah:** Actually, this ammunition is being backloaded to another depot, that is, most of it which is serviceable stuff.

**Shri M. R. Krishna:** May I know whether there is any programme with the Defence Ministry to change the location of these ammunition dumps in order to maintain secrecy?

**Shri Raghuramalah:** This question relates to shifting of the ammunition which is in this depot. As I said, we are backloading it to another depot. And we always take the necessary measures wherever secrecy is to be maintained.

#### Accident in Bhilai Steel Plant

2115. **Sardar A. S. Saigal:** Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently two employees of Bhilai Steel Plant fell down and died;

(b) whether it is a fact that a man who was digging a trench was also a victim and died on the spot;

(c) whether any precautionary measures have been taken in this respect;

(d) whether any compensation has been given to them; and

(e) if so, what amount?

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel (Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha):** (a) On the 10th April, one worker slipped and fell from the top of the scaffolding platform in the blast furnace. On the 11th April, another worker lost