

reply and does not contain something that has been added in the English version. I shall submit to the Lok Sabha in due course a revised answer in Hindi in regard to this addition.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: May I know whether the hon. Minister is aware that a hospital stoppage of Re. 1 for the employee and Rs. 3 for the members of his family is charged, because, the definition of 'family', according to the British rule, was, wife and legitimate children. So, the other members of the family are not given free medical aid. That is what I am saying. The hospital stoppage is there: Re. 1 and Rs. 3. For widowed mother, it is Rs. 8 a day. So, may I know from the hon. Minister whether any decision is likely to be taken in regard to the extension of the definition of the family so as to include a widowed mother and others?

Shri Karmarkar: I am afraid that my hon. friend is referring to some past history.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: Not past history, but recent history.

Shri Karmarkar: The present position is this. As I said, the subscriptions are ranging from 50 naya paise to Rs. 12 per month. The definition of family has been extended to father and mother of the person contributing.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: There are certain Central Government undertakings, for instance, in the Defence Department where the Central Government Contributory Health Service Scheme is not applicable. They have got their own hospital where patients are admitted. They have to pay hospital stoppage fee for father, or widowed mother or unmarried sister. It is Rs. 8 per day—Rs. 3 for hospital stoppage and Rs. 5 as doctor's fee. Will the Government kindly consider this matter which is a very serious one?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Members might send their suggestions to the

Ministers and not use the Question Hour for making such suggestions.

Dr. Sushila Nayar: May I know if there is any scheme for health insurance including the Government servants, so that after the Government servants retire, the only difference will be that the contribution paid by the Government will also be paid by them—50 per cent. by Government and 50 per cent. by the employees—and after they retire, full contribution will be made by the Government servant? May I know whether Government has any such scheme under consideration, in view of the acute distress that is being caused at present to the Government servants after they retire?

Shri Karmarkar: In the first place, there does not seem to be any reason for the feeling that there is acute distress after their retire. The present arrangement contemplates only those who are in Government service and for one month later, we are not taking, at the present moment, of extending the same facilities to people after they retire.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION AND ANSWER

Article in 'New Age'

S.N.Q. No. 15. Shri Shree Narayan Das: Will the Minister of Rehabilitation and Minority Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to an article published in the "New Age" weekly dated the 13th April, 1958, published from New Delhi, in which some allegations have been made against him; and

(b) if so, what are the facts of the case?

The Minister of Rehabilitation and Minority Affairs (Shri Mehr Chand Khanna): (a) and (b). Yes. It was in 1950 that applications were invited under the Displaced Persons Claims

Act of 1950 from displaced persons for urban immovable property left by them in West Pakistan. Applications were submitted on a prescribed form and were scrutinised in accordance with the rules prescribed under the Act. Broad principles were laid and executive instructions issued for the valuation of properties in the cities, cantonments and elsewhere.

Claims were filed by Kartas of Joint Hindu families on behalf of the families and by individual co-sharers separately for their own shares. Both methods were permissible under the Rules. Of the total claims, about 36 per cent. related to joint Hindu family properties. Of these, over 50 per cent. i.e. about 20,000—30,000 were filed by individual co-sharers.

When applications for claims were invited, the Compensation Scheme had not even been thought of. The general impression prevailing then was that the value of evacuee property left by evacuees in India was sufficiently large for compensation to be paid to displaced persons on a pro-rata basis. It was immaterial, therefore, whether the claims for joint Hindu family property were filed by Kartas or by individual co-sharers.

The Compensation Scheme was announced on the 8th of June, 1955, and the Rules under the Scheme were passed by both Houses of Parliament in September of the same year. Since the value of the evacuee property had fallen far below expectations, a graded scale was laid down and a ceiling fixed. In the Rules framed under the Act, concessions were given to joint Hindu families. The Rules had been in operation for only a shortwhile when there arose a difference of opinion between the Statutory Advisory Board which had been appointed under the Act and myself in regard to the correct interpretation of Rule 19 which governed the payment of compensation to joint Hindu families. My own view was that the sons of a living father could

not be considered for the purposes of this rule. Since, however, there appeared to be room for ambiguity in the wording of Rule 19, to clarify the issue I brought an amendment before Parliament. This amendment was hotly opposed by some Members representing displaced persons' interest in both Houses. Demonstrations were also staged. The Advisory Board even referred this matter to the Prime Minister.

In Parliament, while opposing my amendment some Members introduced counter amendments which would have had the effect of making sons during the life time of their father eligible for being considered as members of the family for the purpose of computing enhanced compensation in the case of a joint Hindu family. It will be recalled that these counter amendments were strongly opposed by me and I remember having told a Member of the Rajya Sabha who had even threatened to bring a privilege motion before the House for my alleged attempt to distort the interpretation of Rule 19, that if the interpretation put by him and some other Members was accepted, although it might be in his interest and mine as big claimants, Government could not accept it as it was bound to have serious financial repercussions on the Pool and on the national exchequer. I took the odium for this decision then. I still hold the view that my decision was a proper one.

After the amendment was passed by Parliament, instructions were issued that the claim files of all-co-sharers of joint Hindu families who had filed separate claims should be linked together and that payment should be made strictly in accordance with the revised Rule.

I should now like to say something about my own case, since it has been raised. (*Interruption*).

Mr. Speaker: If it had been long I would have allowed him to make this as a statement.

Shri Mehr Chand Khanna: Only two more pages.

Mr. Speaker: No, no. The Minister may place it on the Table and I shall treat it as read. Any hon. Members who want to put any supplementaries may look into this and table separate questions. That would be the best thing. Let it be placed on the Table of the House.

Some Hon. Members: It may be circulated.

Mr. Speaker: It will be circulated.

Shri Mehr Chand Khanna: It will be finished in five minutes and I would answer supplementaries even now.

Mr. Speaker: I will ask hon. Members to put questions if they want. Or, no supplementaries may be necessary.

An Hon. Member: Questions later on.

Mr. Speaker: Let there be separate questions. Let me consider as and when they come in.

Remainder of the answer, laid on the Table.

I should now like to say something about my own case, since it has been raised in the "New Age", one of the leading papers of the Communist Party of India, of which Shri Bhupesh Gupta, a Member of the Rajya Sabha, is the Editor. The allegations made against me in this article in the "New Age" are as follows:—

- (i) that I had ensured acceptance of inflated valuation of my claims by appointing a Special Officer to verify them;
- (ii) that I and my sons had deliberately filed separate claims so as to secure higher compensation;
- (iii) that in calculating the compensation payable to me the interpretation of Rule 19

which has been applied in other cases was not applied in my case;

(iv) that I and my sons had each received 8,000 rupees as compensation in cash as priority claimants; and

(v) that my mother had been in receipt of a maintenance allowance and had also received Rs. 8,000 as compensation in cash.

The real facts are as follows:—

My claim had been verified in the normal manner so long ago as 1952, years before I was appointed a Minister. No Special Officer was deputed solely for the purpose. According to the assessment orders, the Claims Officer who verified my claim had remarked that I had claimed less than I was entitled to, but that I could only be allowed what I had claimed. I took special care to ensure that the revised Rule 19 should apply to my case also and that myself and my sons should be treated only as one unit for the purposes of compensation.

Although the claims of about 3,15,000 persons out of 4,60,000 have already been disposed of and nearly Rs. 80 crores paid in compensation, neither myself nor my sons have so far purchased any property in satisfaction of my compensation, nor have I received as "Statement of Account". In other words, my compensation application has not even been processed. As regards payment of compensation in cash, under the Compensation Rules I am not entitled to receive such payment. As such neither myself nor my sons have received any cash compensation.

My mother is not living. She died when I was a child. I have a step-mother who lives with her son, my step-brother, in Rajasthan. Her father was one of the leading men in Lahore, and had given her some pro-

property before his death in 1931. She might have filed her claim for that property. My father died in 1914 and as a widow, my step-mother would be entitled to priority under the Compensation Scheme. If she has been paid some cash in accordance with the Compensation Rules, I have no knowledge of it.

As Minister in charge of the Compensation Scheme, my position is peculiar and difficult. There is no authority outside those prescribed under the Act who can pass orders in regard to claims and compensation. All these orders are of a judicial nature. Nevertheless, as I do not want that any matter which concerns me or the members of my family should be finally decided by officers of my Ministry, I propose to refer any such matter whenever it arises to the Prime Minister for such procedural consideration that may be deemed necessary.

It is a matter of regret to me that Shri Bhupesh Gupta, who is a colleague of mine in the Rajya Sabha, did not extend to me the ordinary courtesy of enquiring from me the facts of this matter before splashing it in his paper. If he had done so, he would have been saved the odium of having published something which was patently untrue and malicious and the time of the House would not have been unnecessarily taken.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Civil Airport at Delhi

*1717. Shri Rameshwar Tantia: Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 368 on the 20th February, 1958, and state whether any site has been selected for locating a new civil airport at Delhi?

The Deputy Minister of Civil Aviation (Shri Ahmed Mohiuddin): The matter is still under consideration.

South Delhi Municipal Committee

*1718. Shri Shobha Ram: Will the Minister of Health be pleased to state what action Government is taking on the request of the Delhi Administration to expedite the payment of about two lakhs to the South Delhi Municipal Committee as service charges for Government properties within the South Delhi Municipal Committee?

The Minister of Health (Shri Kar-markar): Out of a total claim of Rs. 2,80,459 the Municipal Committee have already received payment of Rs. 1,40,795. Under article 285 of the Constitution of India, the property of the Union Government is exempt from State taxation and the Municipal Committee therefore cannot levy any property tax on the Central Government properties within its limits. At the same time it has been decided the Municipal Committee should be paid service charges in respect of such property. The Delhi Administration has therefore been asked to fix the percentage of the property tax which represents the element of service charges due for such properties. Necessary action will be taken on receipt of the report of the Delhi Administration.

Accident near Jaulkhera

*1722. Shri Asar: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there was an accident on the 18th March, 1958 near Jaulkhera Station in Amla-Nagpur Division to the Delhi-Nagpur passenger train;

(b) the number of passengers injured and loss sustained by the Railways; and

(c) what was the cause of the accident?