

श्री भक्त बर्लन : श्रीमन्, क्या पुलिस ने रेलवे मंत्रालय को यह रिपोर्ट दी है कि किस वजह से इस बात पर इतनी देरी हो रही है ?

श्री शाहनवाज खां : पुलिस इनकवायरी कर रही है। हमें तो उम्मीद थी कि कोई खास इतिला अभी तक नहीं है।

Inland Water Transport

*1646. { Shri D. C. Sharma:
Sardar Iqbal Singh:

Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No 1080 on the 19th March, 1958 and state the progress of work done by the Gokhale Committee so far in connection with Inland Water Transport?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): A statement is laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha [See Appendix VI, annexure No. 95]

Sardar Iqbal Singh: May I know whether there is any time limit laid down for the submission of the report of this Committee or when this Committee proposes to submit its report?

Shri Raj Bahadur: In view of the nature of the terms of reference of the Committee it is not possible to lay down any time limit for the submission of its report. It has got to go from place to place and carry on very detailed examination of the various items. We can only expect interim reports and not a final report very soon.

Sardar Iqbal Singh: In the statement it is stated that some interim reports have been submitted by this Committee. May I know the details of these interim reports?

Shri Raj Bahadur: Some broad details also have been indicated in the statement itself.

Sardar Iqbal Singh: May I know whether Government has considered these interim reports and if so, has any action been taken on these reports?

Shri Raj Bahadur: On some of them, action is being taken.

Shrimati Ila Palchoudhuri: May I know whether this Committee has at all looked into the navigation possibilities of the Hooghly and has seen as to how the navigation possibilities can be saved in the near future?

Shri Raj Bahadur: The navigation in the Hooghly, strictly speaking, comes within the province of the Port's functions and, I think, the IWT can go into it only in a general way in connection with the inland water transport.

Shri Tangamani: May I know whether this interim report has dealt with the improvement of the inland waterways between Andhra and Tamilnad, particularly, the Buckingham Canal?

Shri Raj Bahadur: I could not get the question.

Shri Tangamani: The statement says that the interim report has suggested some improvement in the inland waterways in Andhra, Tamilnad and other States. May I know whether it has considered the question of improving the Buckingham Canal and, if so, what steps have been taken?

Shri Raj Bahadur: So far as the various recommendations are concerned in regard to Madras, I can refer to a few things. The Committee has recommended that external dredging should be carried out in the Buckingham Canal by the Governments of Madras and Andhra. They have also advised in regard to the depth thereof from mile 179 to mile 181 between Kothapatnam and Munda Gundi and acquisition of a dredger each by the two State Governments. These are a

few of the more important recommendations

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: May I know whether action on the various interim reports will be initiated immediately the interim reports are received or they will have to wait the receipt of the final report?

Shri Raj Bahadur: Action is initiated as and when it becomes practicable and for that each one of the State Governments has got to make up its own mind. The interim recommendations, as may be obvious from the statement which I have laid on the Table of the House, pertain to more than one State, i.e. to the Orissa, Assam, Andhra, Kerala and the north eastern rivers. So, in each case separate recommendations have been made and they are being followed up by the State Governments concerned.

Shri Hem Barua: May I know whether the Gokhale Committee is also entrusted with the task of examining the assets and liabilities as also the balance sheets of the Joint Steamer Companies operating the boats in the Assam and Bihar rivers which they have threatened to close down and if so whether this Committee is also entrusted with the task of suggesting alternate measures for the maintenance of the river services in these two States?

Shri Raj Bahadur: I may refer the hon. Member to the Resolution under which this Committee was set up. I may briefly point out that the terms of reference include a review of the part played by the inland water transport in the country. Therefore, this generally covers the question asked by the hon. Member.

Sir, do I need give the details of the terms of reference?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The question was long. The answer should not be so long.

Shri Ranga: May I know why the proposal which was already sanctioned by the Government of India to improve the Buckingham Canal over a distance

of 300 miles connecting Andhra with Tamilnad has not been taken up and work has not begun?

Shri Raj Bahadur: With regard to that specific proposal, I may not be able to state anything without notice.

Sardar Iqbal Singh: May I know whether this Committee proposes to visit Punjab also and, if so, when?

Shri Raj Bahadur: So far Punjab has not been on its programme.

Preservation of Agricultural Produce

*1647. **Shri Subiman Ghose:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that a long term loan amounting to Rs. 6,50,000 has been granted by the Government of India to the Government of West Bengal for the preservation of agricultural produce, the rate of interest being between 4 per cent to 4½ per cent,

(b) whether it is a fact that the Government of West Bengal is charging 6½ per cent interest on that from the agriculturists, and

(c) if so, what is the reason for charging such high interest?

The Minister of Co-operation (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): (a) Yes, Sir

(b) and (c) Information has been called for from the Government of West Bengal and will be placed on the Table of the Sabha as soon as it is received.

Shri A. C. Guha: May I know actually for what purpose this money has been given to the West Bengal Government and how it is being utilised by the West Bengal Government?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: The total amount which we had given to the West Bengal Government amounted to Rs. 20 lakhs. I have got all the details for which this amount was given. They could, however, spend only Rs. 7½ lakhs and refunded Rs. 12½ lakhs. So far as Rs. 6½ lakhs are concerned, it was intended as a grant of