

be a traffic survey undertaken for obvious reasons, and it was on that that the traffic survey was conducted and the report submitted to the committee.

Shri Ranga: Is it not a fact that it was not because there is so much traffic at present that the scheme was conceived of and also sanctioned by the Planning Commission and the Ministry three years ago, but it was because they thought it would be useful as a subsidiary or an auxiliary source of avenue for transport that it was sanctioned by the Government, and it was three years ago? Why do Government take such a long time to complete even their examination of the scheme.

Shri Raj Bahadur: It is obvious that this particular project about the Buckingham Canal was included in the Second Plan projects. When they came for examination, for detailed examination and sanction—I would not say it was sanctioned as such as the hon Members seemed to suggest—but when they came for detailed examination and sanction, the Planning Commission itself said. . .

Shri Ranga: They provided Rs. 1,40 lakhs.

Shri Raj Bahadur: May I have my say? . . . the Planning Commission itself said that they should be properly examined for the economics involved in the whole proposition. It was on that this was done; and without it is not possible to say that it was sanctioned.

Shri Nanjappa: May I know whether the survey includes deepening and widening wherever it is found necessary?

Shri Raj Bahadur: The Gokhale Committee by itself has also advised that there should be some experimental dredging, apart from survey. About widening and deepening, it will depend upon the final recommendations of the Committee.

Air Services in Assam Sector

*2248. **Shri P. C. Borooah:** Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Airlines Corporation is running at a loss in Assam sector; and

(b) if so, the reasons for not handing over the area to independent operators who are prepared to work as associates of the Indian Airlines Corporation and offer about 50 per cent. reduction in passenger fares now charged by the Indian Airlines Corporation?

The Deputy Minister of Civil Aviation (**Shri Mohiuddin**): (a) and (b). It is a fact that a number of routes operated by the Indian Airlines Corporation in the Assam area and in the rest of India show a deficit, but this cannot be deemed to be a justification for appointing independent operators as associates of the Corporation to run such routes

Shri P. C. Borooah: In view of the fact that Assam has got to depend very heavily on air transport, will Government consider taking the help of private operators, in the same manner as the A.I.I have entered into a contract with the Sea Board and the Western Company of America in that line?

Shri Mohiuddin: It is a fact that in Assam air services are required as an easy means of transport. The I.A.C. are running a large number of services, both passenger and freight in the Assam area. The losses incurred on the Assam area are one of the heaviest, that is to say, about Rs. 21 lakhs a year, only in passenger services. Under the circumstances, the proposal that an associate should be appointed does not seem to be called for.

Shri Liladhar Kotoki: May I know whether the loss in the Assam sector is not due to the running of Dakota planes and if so, whether the Government has examined the possibility of running a Viscount service between

Calcutta and Gauhati as a trunk service and thereby reduce the cost of operation?

Shri Mohiuddin: I am not sure whether if the plane is changed from Dakota to Viscount, the losses will go down. But, still, the runway at Gauhati is being extended and it is proposed that when the runway is extended to the proper length, Skymasters may be put on that service from Calcutta to Gauhati.

Shrimati Renu Chakravarty: Is it a fact that much of the freight which has to be carried by the IAC is now being carried by private operators and that the IAC has not been able to really take up a big increase in freight service? In view of this fact, may I know whether the Government propose to go into this entire question of increasing the freight especially that of the tea gardens which are now going in for these private operators?

Shri Mohiuddin: It is a fact that private operators carry about 30 to 40 per cent of the total freight carried by air and there is competition between the private operators and the IAC. But, as far as I know, recently, in 1958-59, the proportion of the freight carried by the IAC has increased and it is expected that with vigorous propaganda and other action, their proportion will further increase.

Shrimati Renu Chakravarty: In view of the fact that some of these non-scheduled operators in the Assam sector have not been keeping to the rules as was seen in the Tezpur incident, may I know whether the Government is very clear in its mind that in a strategic sector like the North East border as Assam, Government is not going to allow new non-scheduled operators to operate?

Shri Mohiuddin: Whenever there is a breach of the rules, strict action and disciplinary action is taken against the private operators or any other operators. The hon Member perhaps remembers that in 1958, a licence was cancelled of a private operator who committed some breach of the rules

Similar action is being taken in a recent incident that happened at Tezpur. As far as the strategic area is concerned, the N.E.F.A. area has been declared a protected area and no one can fly there except with the permission of the Governor.

Shri P. O. Borooah: - May I know whether the Government propose to develop any Janata service in the Assam sector?

Shri Mohiuddin: One service was introduced from Calcutta to Agartala at a concession rate. I have already received complaints that this Janata service causes much more inconvenience. Anyhow, that service has been introduced. We are experimenting with it. We will see what are the results.

Shrimati Renu Chakravarty: May we know whether the Government propose to increase the number of Janata services right up to Dibrugarh and other areas which have got air services?

Shri Mohiuddin: I have just mentioned that this service at a concession rate is an experiment. The experiment will be watched very carefully, both regarding density of traffic as well as the reaction of the travelling public and the question of extending it to other places will be considered?

Mr. Speaker: Next question.

Shri Bangshi Thakur: May I ask one question, Sir?

Mr. Speaker: Why was the hon Member sitting quiet all along? Hon. Member, I know, comes from that area. I would have called him. Next question.

Manufacture of Papers and Boards

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*2249. { **Shri Nagi Reddy:**
Shri Parulekar:
Shri T. B. Vittal Rao:

Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether the engineering services and equipment for the pilot plant