

Concessional Postal Rates

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

(a) whether Government have received any representations from the publishers of periodical papers for concessional postal rates, and

(b) if so, the decision taken in this regard?

The Minister of Transport and Communications (Shri S. K. Patil): (a) Yes

(b) Final decision has not yet been taken, but in the meanwhile such publications have been allowed to avail themselves of the existing concession for a period of three months from 1st January, 1959

Import of Rice from China

*291. { Shri Assar:
Shri Rami Reddy:
Shri Ram Krishan:

Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that the Chinese Government have agreed to supply rice to India,

(b) if so, whether any agreement has been signed in this regard, and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. P. Jain): (a) to (c) It is not in the public interest to disclose information regarding offers of foodgrains, prices, etc

Air Freight Rates

*292. { Shri Ram Krishan:
Shri D. C. Sharma.

Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No 587 on 1st December, 1958 and state the nature of the decision taken regarding the implementation of

recommendations made by the Air Transport Council concerning reasonable freight rates?

The Deputy Minister of Civil Aviation (Shri Mohiuddin): The Indian Airlines Corporation are still making a critical study of the movement of freight between various points served by them and their proposals regarding revision of freight rates are likely to be finalised in the first quarter of the next financial year

Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organisation

*293. { Shri Rameshwar Tantia:
Shri Raghunath Singh:
Shri Vajpayee:
Shri Rajendra Singh:
Shri Bibhuti Mishra:
Shri Aurobindo Ghosal:
Shri Shivnanjappa:

Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India was debarred from voting during the proceedings of the United Nations Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organisation Assembly held at London recently,

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any protest was lodged in this regard,

(d) if so, the result thereof,

(e) whether India has recently become a member of this Organisation, and

(f) if so, what advantages are expected by this Membership?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) to (f) A statement is given below

Statement

The Government of India have ratified the Convention of the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organisation subject to a reservation

which, according to the established practice of the Organisation, had to be circulated to the Member States on whose acceptance India could become a full member. The instrument of acceptance was deposited with the Secretary-General on the 8th January, 1959, while the first meeting of the IMCO Assembly was in session in London. Our representative pointed out that since India had ratified the Convention and complied with the formality of depositing the instrument of acceptance with the Secretary-General of the U.N., India had become a full member. However, pending the circulation of the reservation, the Assembly of the Organisation allowed the Indian representative to fully participate in the deliberations and to take a seat on the Council but without the right to vote. In this respect the Assembly followed the precedent established in the case of all those States that ratified the Convention with a reservation.

IMCO is going to have the status of a specialized agency of the United Nations and is the first international maritime organisation of its kind. It is going to deal with problems of maritime safety in which maritime countries of the world including India would be interested.

Pension Scheme

*294 Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state

(a) the number of staff on the Railways who have opted in favour of the Pension Scheme so far, and

(b) the reasons for such a poor response?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): (a) 23,722

(b) The last date for exercising option is current up to 31st March, 1959 but the response is decidedly improving. It is expected that with greater interest on the part of Trade Unions, besides Welfare Inspectors, to

explain the benefit of the scheme to Railway employees especially of Class IV, larger number will opt in its favour.

Pollution of Indian Rivers by Industrial Discharges

*295. { Shrimati H. Falchoudhuri:
Shri Vajpayee:
Shri Raghunath Singh:
Shri C. E. Narasimhan:
Shri D. C. Sharma:

Will the Minister of Health be pleased to state

(a) whether the attention of the Government of India has been drawn to the view expressed by one Mr. George A. Robussow—an American Engineer and businessman—recently in Delhi as reported in newspapers—that the waters of Indian rivers face the imminent risk of contamination by industrial discharges unless timely and planned efforts are made to counter it, and

(b) if so the nature of action taken or proposed to be taken in this regard?

The Minister of Health (Shri Karmarkar): (a) Yes Sir

(b) A statement is given below—

Statement

The Government being seized with the problem of pollution of rivers by industrial waste have under the Indian Council of Medical Research a unit which was established at the All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health, Calcutta, in September, 1957. Since then the unit has been carrying on studies on this problem in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal. It is hoped that as a result of work of the unit it will be possible to establish a proper organisation and laboratory set up for carrying out work in industrial waste and water pollution and to evolve proper administrative procedure for mitigation of insanitary conditions arising out of improper disposal of waste. Extensive surveys and research