

## AIR ROUTE TO KABUL

\*419. **Th. Lakshman Singh Charak:** (a) Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state whether any team of officers was sent to Kabul recently to investigate the latest position regarding a direct flight to Kabul?

(b) Who were the officers sent for the purpose?

**The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur):** (a) Yes. Sir.

(b) I lay on the Table of the House a statement giving the requisite information. [See Appendix II, annexure No. 65.]

**Th. Lakshman Singh Charak:** May I know, Sir, if the efforts of officers in finding out a shorter route to Kabul have been successful? If so, what would be the distance between India and Kabul?

**Shri Raj Bahadur:** They were successful long before and the air service is already in operation.

**Th. Lakshman Singh Charak:** What is the air distance at present?

**Shri Raj Bahadur:** It has been reduced considerably, but I cannot give the exact distance now.

## GOLD MINE WORKERS

\*420. **Shri Thimmaiah:** (a) Will the Minister of Labour be pleased to state whether the Minimum Wages Act has not been made applicable to the Gold Mines?

(b) If so, do Government propose to consider the question of applying welfare measures, as have been done in the Coal Mines?

**The Minister of Labour (Shri V. V. Giri):** (a) The Minimum Wages Act is primarily intended to afford relief to sweated and unorganised labour. As labour in gold mines does not suffer from this handicap, it was considered unnecessary to bring it within the scope of the Act.

(b) This question was recently considered. In view of the welfare measures voluntarily undertaken by the owners of Gold mines, it was considered unnecessary to start a statutory scheme of welfare financed through a cess, especially as the strength of labour was only 24,000.

**Shri Thimmaiah:** In view of the assurance given during the budget session in answer to a starred question of mine that the Minister would examine the question of enforcing the Minimum Wages Act in the K.G.F. area, I would like to know whether he has examined the question, and, if so, with what result?

**Shri V. V. Giri:** We found that it is not necessary to put it into effect.

**Shri Thimmaiah:** Is the Government aware of the fact that clerks working in the K.G.F. are getting salaries equivalent to that of the Class IV employees of the Central Government?

**Shri V. V. Giri:** I take the information.

**Shri T. B. Vittal Rao:** May I know, Sir, what are the welfare measures undertaken by the K.G.F. management?

**Shri V. V. Giri:** The Labour Investigation Committee found that labour welfare measures such as medical, educational and recreational facilities were provided by the employers.

**Shri Nanadas:** May I know the reasons for not extending the Minimum Wages Act to the Kolar Gold Mines?

**Shri V. V. Giri:** There are trade unions of a powerful kind which will be able to negotiate with the employers and the workers and the workers will be in a better position to get better wages under those circumstances.

## NATIONALISATION OF AIR SERVICES

\*422. **Shri Bhagwat Jha:** (a) Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state the effect of nationalisation of air services on the traffic in