

**Sardar Swaran Singh:** No, Sir; apparently, that would be giving information on the same question about which I asked for notice, because if the quantity is known, the surcharge can be calculated.

#### KUMBH MELA

\*638. **Shri R. N. Singh:** Will the Minister of Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state:

(a) how many hours after the Kumbh Mela tragedy, the news was broadcast by the A.I.R.;

(b) the source from which the news was received; and

(c) whether the facts of the tragedy were verified before broadcasting the same?

**The Minister of Information and Broadcasting (Dr. Keskar):** (a) The first news was broadcast nearly four hours after the actual occurrence. This was a cursory message and gave no details. A further message was received here at 4 P.M. which gave some details. Some further details were received by another telephone message at 6-40 P.M.

(b) The A.I.R. Correspondent in Uttar Pradesh.

(c) It was not necessary to verify facts because the news came from our own Correspondent.

I might add that as far as the question of agency messages is concerned, I might inform the hon. Member that the first P.T.I. message was received at 3-28 p.m. and the second at 5-59 p.m.

**श्री आर० एन० सिंह :** क्या यह सही नहीं है कि उत्तर प्रदेश के एडवोकेट जनरल के कुम्भ दुर्घटना में दबने की खबर फैली थी और उस के बाद तुरन्त यह मालूम हुआ कि यह बात गलत है। उस पर उत्तर प्रदेश के चीफ मंत्री जी उन्हें दुर्घटना से बच जाने के उपलक्ष में बर्खास्त करने के लिए उन के निवास-स्थान पर गये ?

**डा० केशकर :** मुझ से इस का कुछ ताल्लुक नहीं है। जो सवाल है वह उत्तर प्रदेश के मुख्य मंत्री और वहाँ के गवर्नर से ताल्लुक रख सकता है।

#### SALT

\*639. **Shri Morarka:** Will the Minister of Production be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Sambhar salt merchants have been displaced since the 28th April, 1950 when Government started sending salt supplies to the nominees appointed by the State Governments on their direct indenting;

(b) whether Government are aware of the unemployment caused thereby and the distress prevailing in the town of Sambhar Lake; and

(c) the steps that Government propose to take in the matter?

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Production (Shri R. G. Dubey):** (a) and (b). The system of direct indenting for salt by the nominees appointed by the State Governments, which came into force from the 28th April, 1950, has caused some distress to the Sambhar salt traders. It is, however, reported that the nominees appointed by the State Governments normally utilise the services of the Sambhar traders for placing indents for salt on their behalf for which they get a commission.

(c) A quota of 2 lakh maunds of Sambhar salt for supply to Bihar was allotted to the Sambhar traders in 1953. A similar quota is proposed to be allotted to the traders for supply to Bihar during 1954, besides another quota of 2.75 lakh maunds for supply to Rajasthan, subject to the concurrence of the State Governments concerned. The question of the abolition or modification of the nominee System so as to allow the import of 'free' salt into the States through the Sambhar salt traders is now under consideration. The State Governments concerned have been addressed in the matter.

**Shri Morarka:** May I know what benefits, if any, have accrued to the consumer by the new arrangements?

**Shri R. G. Dubey:** It so happened that before the war, the salt trade was entirely in the hands of the Sambhar traders. In the course of the war, abnormal conditions were created and the Sambhar traders took advantage of the position, which resulted in a loss to the consumers. It is since then that these restrictions came into being.

**Shri Morarka:** My question is not answered yet. What benefits, if any, have accrued to the consumer by the change of method?

**Shri R. G. Dubey:** I said that at that time some priority was granted to the nominees of State Governments so far as supplies of salt were concerned, with the result that supplies to the State Governments were assured. This was the main benefit.

**Shri Morarka:** Is the Government considering the question of employing the Sambhar Lake merchants in the Salt Department?

**Shri R. G. Dubey:** That question is not before us, but I can say that in the year 1954 also some further quota is allotted to the Sambhar traders to be supplied to Bihar. Besides, the recommendations of the Commodity Control Committee might ultimately benefit the Sambhar traders.

**Shri Radhela Vyas:** May I know the amount of commission that is being paid to the Sambhar merchants to act as middlemen between the Salt Departments of the States and the manufacturers?

**Shri R. G. Dubey:** In the beginning the commission was one anna six pies per maund, and subsequently when the duty was abolished, it was reduced to one anna per maund.

**Shri K. K. Basu:** May I know the extent of unemployment and distress prevailing in the area of Sambhar Lake? The answer to part (b) is not complete.

**Shri R. G. Dubey:** There was no unemployment as such. When there was a change in the method, the salt traders organised themselves into companies, and the traders were registered by the Salt Department and there were certain arrangements between the despatching agencies and the nominees of the States.

#### UTILISATION OF INDUS WATERS

\*640. **Sardar Hukam Singh:** (a) Will the Minister of Irrigation and Power be pleased to state whether the tripartite talks in Washington on the Indus water basin have made any progress?

(b) What are the issues that are being discussed for settlement?

**The Minister of Planning and Irrigation and Power (Shri Nanda):** (a) The hon. Member is perhaps referring to the talks at the meeting of the Indus Basin Working Party being held in Washington from September 8, 1953. If so, the talks are still in progress and have not concluded.

(b) No precise issues were set out—the function of the Working Party were stated to be “to work out, and the ultimate objective to carry out, specific engineering measures by which the supplies effectively available to each country will be increased substantially beyond what they have ever been.”

**Sardar Hukam Singh:** How were these talks initiated and how did the World Bank come into the picture?

**Shri Nanda:** I will say what happened. In August 1951 Mr. David E. Lilienthal, who was at one time Chairman of the T.V.A., expressed certain views in an article published in an American magazine regarding the best way of settling the canal water dispute. He urged that a co-operative approach on a purely engineering basis would place at the disposal of both countries much larger quantities of water than might be