

SUNKEN INDIAN SHIPS

*2150. **Shri D. C. Sharma:** Will the Minister of **Transport** be pleased to state:

(a) whether any attempt has been made to salvage the three Indian Coastal Ships, 'Ramdas', 'Lakshmi' and 'Deepavati' which had sunk off the **Bombay Harbour**; and

(b) if so, what has been the result?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shahnawaz Khan): (a) Yes.

(b) Messrs. Precious Salvage Ltd., London, who undertook the work, failed in their efforts. It is proposed to invite fresh tenders.

Shri D. C. Sharma: May I know the causes for the sinking of these two ships?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: There are different reasons. Sometimes, the ships collide with each other. Sometimes, they go aground on sands. I have not got the exact details, but they are general causes.

Shri D. C. Sharma: What was the approximate value of these ships?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: These ships belonged to private companies. We have not ascertained the exact value of these ships.

Shri Raghunath Singh: What was the weight of these two ships?

Shri Joachim Alva: May I know whether the officers of the Ministry of Transport, or even the Ministers, have seen in the Children Film Festival during the last session, a film showing boys and girls towing a ship from underneath the sea? The film was a Russian film entitled "Indispensable Friends". I want to know why the Ministry cannot strain every nerve to see that our sunken ships are also towed in this manner from the waters?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: I do not know whether the hon. Minister and the hon. Deputy Minister have seen that film, but I have not seen the children's film.

Shri K. C. Sodhia: Will Government consider it their duty to collect figures, when such national calamities occur?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: Certainly, the Ministry consider it their duty, and I am sure the figures have been collected. But in this particular case, I do not have the exact details with me in the House now. If the hon. Member wants them, I can collect them for him.

(Re: Q.No. 2151)

Mr. Speaker: Next question. **Shri Muniswamy.** The hon. Member is absent.

Shri M. D. Ramasami: May I put that question?

Mr. Speaker: That will come in the second round. The hon. Minister will stay in the House.

VENDING CONTRACTS ON RAILWAYS

*2152. **Shri Bibhuti Mishra:** Will the Minister of **Railways** be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a practice in the North Eastern Railway, that after the death of a vendor the contract is given to the deceased vendor's family; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shahnawaz Khan): (a) Yes, the practice is to award vending contracts to legal heirs or successors of deceased vendors if such legal heirs or successors are in a position to carry on the business satisfactorily.

(b) This practice is adopted as it is conducive to efficient and smooth working and is also considered fair and reasonable to the deceased contractors' heirs or successors who are already experienced in the running of the contracts concerned.

श्री बिभूति मिश्र : एक वेंडर स्टेट में यह कहाँ तक जायज है कि कोई जगह बपोती कर दी जाय ?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. That question does not arise out of this.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad: May I know whether such contracts are sub-let to the small vendors who are charged as much as Rs. 60 to Rs. 70 per contract, while Government charge only Rs. 5 or so per contract?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: Allegations that vending contracts have been sub-let have been made from time to time. This practice is strictly prohibited under the rules, and the Railway Board will take strong action, if any definite evidence and proof are brought to our notice. In fact, we shall be very grateful, if any definite proof is given to the Ministry.

Several Hon. Members rose—

Mr. Speaker: I am afraid it is not possible to call all the hon. Members.

Shri Sinhasan Singh: The hon. Parliamentary Secretary has stated that the vending contracts are given to the heirs of deceased vendors, out of compassion. May I know whether the same principle will not apply in the case of the services also, so that when an employee dies, his son may be employed, when there are no other facilities...

Mr. Speaker: Order order. Next question.

CHOLERA

*2153. **Shri S. C. Samanta:** Will the Minister of Health be pleased to refer to the answer given to starred question No. 1580 asked on the 23rd April, 1953 regarding cholera and state:

(a) whether the W.H.O. Expert Study Group for Cholera submitted any report; and

(b) what help was given to this Study Group by Government?

The Deputy Minister of Health (Shrimati Chandrasekhar): (a) The hon. Member presumably refers to the World Health Organisation Expert Committee on Cholera, which submitted a report.

(b) An officer of the All-India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health, Calcutta and an Officer of the Indian Council of Medical Research which is financed by the Government of India, were members of the World Health Organisation Expert Committee on Cholera. Besides, several Central Government Officers attended the sessions and participated in the deliberations of the Expert Committee.

Shri S. C. Samanta: May I know, Sir, whether any other places in India excepting West Bengal have been referred to in the report as endemic areas of cholera?

Shrimati Chandrasekhar: Sir, in a former question answered on the 23rd April 1953, it was said that the Ganges Delta in Bengal, a small area associated with the Ganges and its tributaries in Bihar, the Mahanadi Delta in Orissa and the Krishna and Cauvery Deltas in the South were highly endemic.

Shri S. C. Samanta: In reply to a question put by me in April 1953, just now referred to by the hon. Minister, it was said that with reference to parts (b), (c) and (e) information would be collected and laid on the Table of the House. But unfortunately I have not found it out as yet. May I expect that it will be supplied very soon.

Shrimati Chandrasekhar: Yes, Sir. We hope so. The State Governments have not sent their replies yet.

Shri S. C. Samanta: Since endemicity in West Bengal is so high, are Government taking any steps other than preventive steps taken by the West Bengal Government?

Shrimati Chandrasekhar: In the report that the Member mentioned in his question, item No. 9 also lays stress on the importance of a general programme of environmental sanitation in the campaign against cholera. Other than that, nothing very effective can be done to get rid of cholera all at once.

Shri S. C. Samanta: Is it not a fact that in the summary of the report it was said that water supply should be taken up so that the root cause may be