

Shri Matthen : In view of the increase in coastal trade, is it the policy of Government to encourage the chartering of vessels for coastal traffic?

Shri Alagesan : Chartering has been permitted under certain conditions to the coastal shipping companies.

Shri Chattopadhyaya : May I know whether we are going to have yet another shipping yard during the Second Plan period in order to increase tonnage?

Shri Alagesan : The other day the minister for Production answered this question and said that he is considering this question.

Shri Raghavaiah : May I know whether we are paying a greater portion, that is 70 to 80 per cent of the freight charges to the United Kingdom only?

Mr. Speaker : The question deals with quantity of cargo. Freight is not there at all.

Shri Alagesan : I do not have the figure.

Mr. Speaker : The hon. Minister has not got the details, the break-up of the Rs. 90 crores or so that is spent on freight.

Shri Raghavaiah : My question is very simple. Of the total freight charges that we are paying in our import-export trade, may I know whether the major amount is being given to the United Kingdom?

Shri Alagesan : May be.

Mr. Speaker : He wanted to know at first if it was 70 to 80 per cent.

Shri Velayudhan : In view of the shortage in shipping facilities, is there any proposal with the Government to lease out ships from countries with which they are available or our foreign and coastal trade?

Shri Alagesan : We have no information as to who is prepared to lease out ships. Of course, the overseas and coastal shipping companies, when the market conditions are favourable, charter other ships for their purposes.

Shri B. S. Murthy : May I know whether besides the United Kingdom any other country is coming forward to give us shipping facilities at a lower rate?

Shri Alagesan : I could not follow the hon. Member. What does he mean by shipping facilities at a lower rate?

Mr. Speaker : Countries that charge lower freight rates in comparison with rates charged by other countries in the world.

Shri Alagesan : If that is the hon. Member's question, the rates are fixed by conferences and they uniformly apply to the respective routes.

श्री रघुनाथ सिंह : स्वेज नहर के राष्ट्रीयकरण का भारतीय शिपिंग पर क्या असर होगा, क्या आपने इस पर भी विचार किया है?

रेलवे तथा परिवहन मंत्री (श्री सात बहादुर सास्त्री) : यह तो बड़ा नाजुक सवाल है। इसका फैसला होगा, यह हमें पता नहीं है। लेकिन कोई डर नहीं है कि हमारा कोई नुकसान होने वाला है।

Salumber (Telegraph Facility)

*1560. **Shri Balwant Sinha Mehta :** Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Salumber is a sub-divisional headquarter having no telegraph and telephone facilities;

(b) whether Government propose to expedite the work of providing such facilities there; and

(c) if so, when they are expected to be completed and come into operation?

The Minister in the ministry of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur) : (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). Proposals for providing telegraph and telephone facilities at Salumber are under examination.

Shri Balwant Sinha Mehta : When was this proposal made and how long has this been pending?

Shri Raj Bahadur : We are informed Salumber has been declared as sub-divisional headquarters as late as July 1956. Before that it was a Tehsil headquarter only. So, the question of provision of a telephone office or public call office did not arise before. We are now examining and shall try to give the facility as early as possible.

P. & T. Building Construction

*1561. **Shri S. C. Samanta :** Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to refer to the speech delivered by the Deputy Minister of Communications in the House on 11th March, 1955 on the Resolution for the Separation of P. & T. Finance and state :

(a) which of the various processes and procedural stages as regards building construction in the Posts and Telegraphs Department have been cut down;

(b) how many office and accommodation buildings have been constructed up-to-date since the 11th March, 1955;

(c) how many of them were built by the Department and how many by the C.P.W.D. ; and

(d) up to how much amount the Divisional Engineers and Departmental officers have been delegated powers of sanction for building purposes?

The Minister in the Ministry of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur) : (a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha. [See Appendix IX, Annexure No. 28].

Shri S. C. Samanta : In reply to part (b) of the question the hon. Minister says 887 units of quarters were constructed during the period 1-4-1955 to 31-3-1956. May I know what was the target for the year 1955-56?

Shri Raj Bahadur : I will require notice for that.

Shri S. C. Samanta : With the appointment of an additional Chief Engineer and a high level committee, may I know how the work is being proceeded with?

Shri Raj Bahadur : This was done because it will provide for better control. As a matter of fact, the unit in the C.P.W.D. under the additional Chief Engineer will be responsible now for the progress of the work, and there will be only one person who will be responsible for that. It provides for a specific unit in the C.P.W.D. for P. & T. itself.

Shri S. C. Samanta : The hon. Minister says in the statement that practically the entire construction work in 1955-56 was done by the C.P.W.D. May I deduce that no departmental work was done? If something was done, how much was it?

Shri Raj Bahadur : The power to construct on a departmental basis is for very small works, and the major works like construction of quarters and buildings for post offices and other postal and Telegraph buildings are all done through the agency of the C.P.W.D. That is why the answer is like that.

Payment of Wages Act

*1963. **Shri K. P. Tripathi :** Will the Minister of Labour be pleased to state :

(a) whether as reported in the "Indian Worker" of the 23rd July, 1956 the Bombay High Court in a full Bench decision has decided that the Payment of Wages Act does not apply to Railways; and

(b) if so, the steps Government propose to take to restore protection to railway workers?

The Deputy Minister of Labour (Shri Abid Ali) : (a) and (b). The judgement in the particular case does not imply that the Payment of Wages Act as such does not apply to Railway Employees.

Shri K. P. Tripathi : May I know if it is a fact that the effect of the judgement will be that Railway workers will not get the benefit of the Payment of Wages Act, and if so, whether Government want to take any step in the matter?

Shri Abid Ali : The applicability of the Payment of Wages Act to employees remains in tact. The judgement does not change the position because this particular judgement relates to an employee who was suspended and during the suspension period he was paid subsistence allowance. For that period he was governed by the service conditions of the railway organisation and not by the Payment of Wages Act. Therefore, the position is not changed.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao : At what stage is the proposal to introduce an amending Bill in respect of the Payment of Wages Act because we were given an assurance some six or seven months ago?

Shri Abid Ali : Sufficiently advanced stage.

Shri Nambiar : May I know whether the Government are aware that there was a decision of the Bombay High Court saying that cuts in increment should not be allowed under the Payment of Wages Act? If so what steps has the Government taken?

Mr. Speaker : Are we going generally into the Payment of Wages Act or in so far as it applies to the railways? The question is : "whether as reported in the *Indian Worker* of the 23rd July, 1956 the Bombay High Court in a full Bench decision has decided that the Payment of Wages Act does not apply to Railways;

(b) if so, the steps Government propose to take to restore protection to railway workers?"

Does this question concern only the railways, or is it a general question?

Shri Nambiar : It relates to the railways?

Shri Abid Ali : For other cases, we are considering the bringing in of some amendments, when the amending Bill will be introduced here.