

12.06 hrs.

**ESTIMATES COMMITTEE****THIRTY-FIRST REPORT**

Shri B. G. Mehta (Gohwad). I beg to present\* the Thirty-first Report of the Estimates Committee on the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Twelfth Report of the Estimates Committee (First Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting—All India Radio

12.08½ hrs.

**DEMANDS FOR EXCESS GRANTS  
(RAILWAYS) FOR 1955-56**

The Minister of Railways (Shri Jagjivan Ram): I beg to present\* a statement showing Demands for Excess Grants in respect of the Budget (Railways) for 1955-56

12.08½ hrs.

**DEMANDS FOR EXCESS GRANTS  
(RAILWAYS) FOR 1956-57**

Shri Jagjivan Ram. I beg to present a statement showing Demands for Excess Grants in respect of the Budget (Railways) for 1956-57

12.09 hrs.

**CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER  
OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE****EXPLOSION OF BRITISH SUPER-TANKER,  
*Stanvac Japan***

Shri Ram Krishan (Mahendergarh). Under Rule 197, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Transport and Communications to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:—

"The explosion of the British Tanker *Stanvac Japan* in the

Arabian Sea and the casualties among the Indian personnel of the ship"

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): The statement runs into three pages. Shall I lay it on the Table of the House?

Mr Deputy-Speaker: Yes, it may be laid on the Table

Shri Raj Bahadur: I beg to lay it on the Table

**Statement**

It is with the deep regret that I rise to make this statement on the explosion of the British tanker s.s. 'Stanvac Japan' on the 19th October, 1958 in which 10 Indian Seamen (including one Portuguese Indian) and 10 British officers lost their lives

2 According to the information available to Government, s.s. "Stanvac Japan", belonging to Messrs Standard Vacuum Transportation Company Ltd was built in Japan in 1953 and had a gross tonnage of about 17,400. The vessel was fitted with two high pressure oil-fired boilers with turbine machinery. She was equipped with the life-saving and fire appliances applicable to her class and trade

3 The vessel left Bombay on the 17th October, 1958 with British officers numbering 17 and Indian crew 54 in number of whom 44 were Indian nationals and 10 Portuguese Indians, all of them having been engaged on Indian Articles. At the time of its departure, she carried 9,000 tons ballast

4 The unfortunate accident took place on Sunday the 19th October at about 14.00 hours while on her way from Bombay to Rastanaura, (where she was to take another load) about 30 miles south east of Karachi and over 500 miles north west of Bombay.

\*Presented with the recommendation of the President

5. According to the routine, the cargo tanks are washed down at sea and clean ballast is also taken. It is reported that various tanks according to requirements were being washed down that day. Due to an explosion, the centre-castle where deck officers are housed was completely blown away with the result 10 British officers and 10 Indian crew members lost their lives. The centre-castle which carried two life boats were also carried away with the explosion with the result only two boats were left in the after accommodation where crew and the Engineer officers are carried. As this part of the vessel was not damaged, the crew and the Engineer officers were able to lower the two after life-boats and escaped, but remained near about the vessel which was burning fiercely.

6. No contact with the outside world could be made as the main wireless equipment which was in the centre-castle together with life boat portable radio was carried away with the explosion.

7. The first news of the accident was received by the Principal Officer, Mercantile Marine Department, Bombay on the 20th October, 1958 at about 15.00 hours from the Master of s.s. "Patricia", a Panamanian tanker which had picked up 51 survivors from the two life boats ex "Stanvac Japan". Immediately on receipt of the distress message, the Principal Officer contacted the naval authorities who were already organising all possible measures for rendering assistance. A naval destroyer was preparing to proceed to the scene of the accident with medical assistance. The Principal Officer also contacted the Air Rescue Duty Officer and a liberator of the Indian Air Force was kept ready to take off. Subsequently, however, a wireless message was received from s.s. "Patricia" that assistance was no longer required.

8. The "Stanvac Japan" was towed to Karachi on the 24th October, 1958

and an enquiry was held at Karachi by the U.K. High Commissioner there. On completion of this enquiry, the Indian crew of 44 members were brought to Bombay by a specially chartered plane on the 28th October, 1958. The "Stanvac Japan" has been towed back to Bombay and has been lying in Bombay Harbour since the 3rd November, 1958. The Indian seamen were received at Bombay by the Principal Officer, Mercantile Marine Department and the Shipping Master along with the Company's representatives. All the members of the crew were found to be hale and hearty and they were taken to Seamen's Hostel and made comfortable.

9. A special officer appointed by the U.K. Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation arrived in Bombay and conducted an enquiry into the cause of the explosion, assisted by the Mercantile Marine Department. This enquiry has since been completed and the officer has returned to U.K. It is understood that a formal official enquiry will be held in U.K. A preliminary enquiry into the circumstances attending the explosion is also being conducted by the Mercantile Marine Department, Bombay. The proceedings of both the enquiries are awaited.

10. As regards steps taken to give relief to the dependents of the deceased Indian seamen, the owners of the vessel have agreed to make the following payments:

- (i) One month's salary already drawn in advance at the time of engagement;
- (ii) Fifteen days earned wages;
- (iii) One month's salary for each year of service either with the Standard Vacuum Transportation Company or with the Secony Mobil Company;
- (iv) Three months' wages as gratia payment;

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(v) Compensation as admissible under the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923.

11. Steps have already been taken by the Shipping Master to ascertain through the district authorities concerned the names etc. of the legal heirs of the deceased seamen and the payments will be made as soon as formalities have been completed. As far as the amounts due under Workmen's Compensation Act are concerned, it is understood that the Company is arranging to deposit the amounts due with the Commissioner for Workmen's Compensation for disbursement.

12.10½ hrs.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE  
(AMENDMENT) BILL

The Deputy Minister of Law (Shri Hajarnavis): I beg to move for leave to withdraw the Bill further to amend the Representation of the People Act, 1950.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The question is:

"That leave be granted to withdraw the Bill further to amend the Representation of the People Act, 1950."

*The motion was adopted.*

*Shri Hajarnavis: I introduce Act No. 11.*

12.11 hrs.

HIMACHAL PRADESH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (CONSTITUTION AND PROCEEDINGS) VALIDATION BILL\*

The Minister of Home Affairs (Pandit G. B. Pant): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to validate the constitution and proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of the New State of Himachal Pradesh formed under the Himachal Pradesh and Bilaspur (New State) Act, 1954.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to validate the constitution and proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of the New State of Himachal Pradesh formed under the Himachal Pradesh and Bilaspur (New State) Act, 1954."

*The motion was adopted.*

Pandit G. B. Pant: I introduce† the Bill.

12.11½ hrs.

STATEMENT REGARDING HIMACHAL PRADESH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (CONSTITUTION AND PROCEEDINGS) VALIDATION ORDINANCE

Pandit G. B. Pant: I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the explanatory statement giving reasons for immediate legislation by the Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly (Constitution and Proceedings) Validation Ordinance, 1958, as required under Rule 71(1) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-1041/58].

12.12 hrs.

PARLIAMENT (PREVENTION OF DISQUALIFICATION) BILL—contd.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The House will now take up further discussion of the following motion:

"That the Bill to declare that certain offices of profit under the Government shall not disqualify the holders thereof for being chosen as, or for being, Members of Parliament, as reported by the Joint Committee, be taken into consideration."

\*Published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary Part II—Section 2, dated the 24th November, 1958.

†Introduced with the recommendation of the President.