

the representatives of the State Government proposed the establishment of two new medical colleges in that State during the Third Five Year Plan period. Taking into consideration the available facilities for medical education in the State, the Working Group recommended the establishment of only one new medical college during the Third Five Year Plan period at Rewa where hospital facilities are already available.

Agricultural Colleges in Madhya Pradesh

2137. Shri Birendra Bhadur Singhji: Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Madhya Pradesh State Government has addressed a communication to the Union Government requesting them to allow it to open two new Agricultural Colleges in the State during the Third Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, what are the places suggested by the State Government; and

(c) whether any decision has been communicated to the Madhya Pradesh State Government in this respect?

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): (a) No.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

12 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE EXPLOSION AT BALI FORT IN RAJASTHAN

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur (Pali): Sir, under Rule 197, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Works, Housing and Supply to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:—

The explosion at Bali Fort in Pali District of Rajasthan on the 9th March, 1961.

The Deputy Minister of Works, Housing and Supply (Shri Anil K.

Chanda): An explosion took place in Bali Fort in District Pali near Falna Railway Station, Rajasthan at about 12.20 hours on the 9th March, 1961. An officer of the Department of Explosives visited the site of explosion and made preliminary enquiries. As a result of the explosion, 3 boys were killed instantaneously and 50 others were injured. Of the 50 injured and admitted in the hospital, 3 were treated as out-door patients for minor superficial injuries and discharged from the hospital. Others admitted in the hospital are stated to be out of danger. It is reported that gunpowder was stored in three rooms inside the fort and guns and cannon balls were kept in two adjacent rooms. As a result of the explosion, the roof of the rooms and some parts of the wall were blown off. The cause of the explosion is under investigation. A magisterial enquiry into the explosion is also in progress.

2. The inside gate of the fort was opened to the public in connection with a fair and some boys and adults had gone to see the fort. It is suspected that the explosion was caused as a result of someone inadvertently throwing a lighted bidi or a matchstick near the door of the room where the gunpowder had been stored. It is reported that these rooms were used for the storage of gunpowder since the days of the ex-ruler of Jodhpur.

3. Ex-rulers of former princely States, entitled to a salute of guns, are specifically exempted from certain provisions of the Indian Arms Act and as the provisions of the Explosives Act and Rules do not affect the provisions of the Indian Arms Act, they do not require a licence under the Explosives Act and Rules for the storage of gunpowder required as ammunition for the saluting cannon or their muzzle-loading guns. An exemptee, however, is expected to store his arms and ammunition in a place of safety so that there is no risk of theft, misuse or accident.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: Is it not a fact that as back as 1955 it was ordered that all gun powder lying in forts like this be removed or destroyed? If that is so, how is it that this was permitted to lie there?

Shri Anil K. Chanda: I am not sure if there was such a blanket instruction.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: Has the Government of India any responsibility in the matter or have they no responsibility? What is their responsibility in respect of compensation and relief and what have they done in this matter?

Shri Anil K. Chanda: I have indicated it in my answer, namely, that according to the terms of accession the gun salute Princes are given certain exemptions from the operation of the Indian Arms Act. But I will draw the attention of the hon. Home Minister to this aspect of the question as has been referred to by the hon. Member.

Mr. Speaker: Shri Kasliwal.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: This is not the property of the Princes.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. Shri Kasliwal.

Shri Anil K. Chanda: It is the property of the Princes and it was the gunpowder stored by the Prince in the Fort, I should think, for the purpose of using in the salute guns.

Shri Kasliwal (Kotah): May I know whether, before the explosion took place, the Government was aware that these explosives were lying there in the Fort?

Shri Anil K. Chanda: I have no information.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: I have been to the spot myself. I have had discussions with the Collector and the District Magistrate. I wish the

hon. Minister is better informed before he makes a statement.

Shri Anil K. Chanda: I do not know what the hon. Member came to know. Obviously, my statement is on the basis of the reports which I have received from my officers as well as from the State Government.

Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kanpur) rose—

Mr. Speaker: Papers to be laid on the Table.

Shri Tangamani (Madurai): I would like to know under which circle....

Mr. Speaker: I am not going to allow.....

Shri Tangamani: Is it coming under a particular circle?

Mr. Speaker: I have allowed one or two questions to the hon. Member who gave notice for this. I am not allowing this question.

Shri Tangamani: During the last discussion also the question of explosion came in.

Mr. Speaker: I am not going to allow. Papers to be laid on the Table.

12.04 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

ANNUAL REPORT OF HINDUSTAN STEEL LIMITED

The Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel (Sardar Swaran Singh): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of each of the following papers:—

- (i) Annual Report of the Hindustan Steel Limited for the year 1959-60 along with Audited Accounts and the comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon, under sub-section (1) of Section 639 of the Companies Act, 1956.