

SHRI S. V. RAMASWAMY: Because they are now having short distance and medium distance routes. Then they are having some long distance buses also. They are proposing to extend more and more of these routes.

ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ASIAN HEALTH CENTRE IN COLOMBO

•63. SHRI A. D. MANI: Will the Minister of HEALTH be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Ceylon has approached the Government of India for the establishment of an Asian Health Centre in Colombo; and

(b) if so, what are the purposes for which this Centre is to be established?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH (SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The purpose of establishing the Centre, according to the Government of Ceylon, is to conserve and develop the Eastern systems of medicine.

SHRI A. D. MANI: May I know, Sir, whether it is a fact that the Government of India have informed the Government of Ceylon that indigenous systems of medicine have not been developed during the last five hundred years and that they were stagnant?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I could not get the last part of the question.

SHRI A. D. MANI: Has the Government of India informed the Government of Ceylon that the indigenous systems of medicine, both in Ceylon and India, have not been developed for the past five hundred years?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Sir, their Prime Minister wrote to our Prime Minister and our Prime Minister wrote to the Ceylonese Prime Minister expressing his doubts about the utility of having some kind

of an Asian research centre for this purpose. He said that it was worth while making research in the indigenous systems of medicine but he doubted the utility of having an Asian research institution. That was the purport of our reply.

SHRI A. D. MANI: A newspaper report says that the Indian reply is understood to have been that while the Western medical science has made great strides, the indigenous systems have been stagnant for almost five hundred years. Was this the statement in reply by the Government of India?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: My friend knows doubtless from his experience that all that appears in the press is not always well-founded.

SHRI A. D. MANI: Did Mr. Jaisoorya come and meet the Government here in this connection?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: He did not come. The Health Minister of Ceylon had a programme to come here on the 8th and 10th August and we were prepared to receive him but he eventually did not come.

RETIREMENT PASSES TO NON-GAZETTED STAFF

•64. SHRIMATI SAVITRY DEVI NIGAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the non-gazetted staff on the railways are allowed, lesser number of passes after retirement as compared to the number admissible to the gazetted staff;

(b) if the reply to part (a) above be in the affirmative, whether the Railway Board propose to consider the desirability of bringing the two categories of railway employees on par for the purpose of granting such concessions, in consonance with Government's general policy to remove discrimination in such matters; and

(c) what are the special reasons for allowing lesser number of retirement passes to non-gazetted staff, who in consideration of their meagre resources and other handicaps deserve more liberal concessions?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI S. V. RAMASWAMY) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The whole question of the grant of passes to Railway staff during active service and after retirement will be reviewed when the recommendations of the Second Pay Commission are considered.

SHRIMATI SAVITRY DEVI NIGAM: Sir, I would like to know the views of the hon. Minister whether he himself thinks that the non-gazetted staff should be given more passes or not?

SHRI S. V. RAMASWAMY: There is no question of any personal views. It is the view of the Government that has got to be taken into consideration.

SHRIMATI SAVITRY DEVI NIGAM: Should I understand, Sir, that the hon. Minister will give sympathetic consideration because these people who are poor deserve more number of passes than the gazetted staff?

SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM: The Railway employees are already being liberally treated in the matter of passes as compared to other government employees.

ENGINE or ILL-FATED HOWRAH-RANCHI EXPRESS

*65. SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the engine of the ill-fated Howrah-Ranchi Express that met the disaster between Dalbhum Garh and Ghatsila was "over aged";

(b) whether it is a fact that this engine was regarded as "pagla engine" by the workers in the Kharag-pur Loco Shed;

(c) whether it is a fact that this engine often used to get out of order and needed repairs;

(d) whether it is a fact that the driver Rao refused to take it on the day of the disaster;

(e) what has happened to the engine Repair Book containing the particulars about the condition of this engine; and

(f) whether it is a fact that the railway authorities had received complaints about this engine from a number of drivers prior to the accident?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI S. V. RAMASWAMY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The query is not clear. If, however, the query means whether this engine habitually "misbehaved", the answer is in the negative.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) The current Engine Repair Book has been lost in the accident.

(f) No, Sir.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: How many 'Noes' and how many 'Yes'? Let me start with the "pagla engine". May I know, Sir, whether it has not been brought to the notice of the Government that certain people working in the Kharagpur Loco Shed made statements to the effect that this engine misbehaved and, therefore, they call it "pagla engine"? I would like to know whether any such information came to the Government's notice.

SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM: No such information formally came to the Government's notice. I visited the