

police station but in the establishment of the High Commissioner's Office at Calcutta? If it is a fact, why was it so?

SHRI AHMED MOHIUDDIN: This question had been answered by the Defence Minister on the floor of the House only last week.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: When such allegations have been accumulating year after year and when the airlines employees themselves are making these allegations and demanding action on the part of the Government, why are foreign nationals of a suspicious character kept here when one can easily find Indian pilots to fly these planes?

SHRI AHMED MOHIUDDIN: I have stated that the allegations made by the employees referred to by the hon. Member are mostly unfounded and absolutely baseless.

SHRI A. D. MANI: Will the Minister be able to inform the House the names of the two foreign journalists who were taken unauthorisedly?

SHRI AHMED MOHIUDDIN: I have not got the names. That was in 1959.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: He may remember.

SHRI AHMED MOHIUDDIN: I do not remember the names.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: He does not even remember the names. May I know how many foreign pilots, British pilots are engaged by the private airlines companies?

SHRI AHMED MOHIUDDIN: There are about 7 or 8 pilots and I.A.M.E.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Is it a fact that most of them are paid very high salaries and that some of them often take off and go to Burma and other countries and then they report? Can the Minister tell us where Captain Long is?

SHRI AHMED MOHIUDDIN: He is an employee of the Airways (India) Limited. At what place he is at the present moment, at 11.15 A.M. today, I cannot say.

*154. [The questioner (Shri M. P. Bhargava) was absent. For answer, vide col. 910 infra.]

*155 and *156. [The questioner (Shri P. N. Rajabhoj) was absent. For answers, vide cols. 910-11 infra.]

CRACKS FOUND IN VISCOUNTS

*157. SHRIMATI SAVITRY DEVI NIGAM: Will the Minister of TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the causes of the cracks found recently in two Viscounts;

(b) the year when these Viscounts were built and were commissioned into operation; and

(c) whether these Viscounts are insured?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI AHMED MOHIUDDIN):

(a) The matter is under investigation by the Manufacturers.

(b) All the ten Viscounts in the fleet of the Corporation were manufactured in 1957. While five of them started flying in 1957, the other five started flying in 1958.

(c) Yes, Sir.

SHRIMATI SAVITRY DEVI NIGAM: May I know when these cracks were first noticed?

SHRI AHMED MOHIUDDIN: On the 18th of January, Ultrasonic equipment was used in checking the spot on the star boom which was indicated by the manufacturers, and it was found that two of the aircraft had those cracks on account of which they have not yet been put into operation. The other eight Viscounts are

perfectly airworthy and they are now flying.

SHRIMATI SAVITRY DEVI NIGAM: May I know whether according to expert opinion these cracks are dangerous taking into account the safety of the passengers and the durability of the Viscounts? If not, are the cracks of a minor nature and harmless?

SHRI AHMED MOHIUDDIN: Whether they are dangerous or minor is a question which cannot be determined by the operators. There are some cracks, small cracks, and as a matter of safety these two have been grounded.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: May I know whether similar cracks were noticed in any other Viscount in any other part of the world or they were noticed only in these two planes in our country?

SHRI AHMED MOHIUDDIN: They were noticed in some of the airlines in Central Africa, and it was on account of the fact that they were noticed there that the manufacturers warned all the users of the Viscounts to check them up.

SHRIMATI T. NALLAMUTHU RAMAMURTI: May I know whether they are old or new ones, and whether the cracks had anything to do with tropical climate?

SHRI AHMED MOHIUDDIN: They have nothing to do with tropical climate. As I have already stated, they were manufactured in 1957.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: The hon. Minister has said, and very rightly, that cracks had been first detected somewhere in Central Africa. Following that, examination took place here, verification and all that. May I know how is it that when planes were examined here these cracks were not detected? And what is the guarantee in the future that even without somebody doing it outside India these would be detected here?

DR. P. SUBBARAYAN: Well, as a matter of caution we did this. But the series where the cracks were found were different from the series we are using and as the examination has shown, eight of our Viscounts are perfectly all right. In two of them there is a little crack and they are being tested and I hope they will also be flying in a short while.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: That is not the point. What I want to ask the hon. Minister is . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: His question is: Before the cracks were detected in Central Africa, why did you not detect them in India?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: The company in London sent people to India.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. He knows the question.

DR. P. SUBBARAYAN: We have a six-monthly test and we have not found anything wrong with them and they have been flying. There have been no accidents. At least, it was proved to the hon. Member that they were perfectly all right.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: May I know if that particular examination—certain types of special tests mentioned by the hon. Deputy Minister—was carried out when the last testing was done?

DR. P. SUBBARAYAN: The hon. Member must be aware that we have not got that equipment and we have to get it from Vickers.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Why Sir?

DR. P. SUBBARAYAN: Because of the high expense.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: It is a serious question.

SHRIMATI SAVITRY DEVI NIGAM: The hon. Minister has just now stated

that when the manufacturers informed them then only were these Viscounts tested again. I would like to know the version of the manufacturers, what reasons they have given for the appearance of these cracks.

DR. P. SUBBARAYAN: The manufacturers wanted to be cautious and they wanted to warn people who were flying the Viscounts. Therefore they sent their men here.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARNAND: Have the manufacturers given any reduction in price as a result of this and have they not sent their own men to examine this also?

DR. P. SUBBARAYAN: I am afraid they have not given any reduction.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: The hon. Minister has said that they do not have that equipment because it is expensive. It is a strange answer. May I know what the cost of that instrument is and whether any equation between the cost of that instrument and the cost of human lives has been made in order to come to the conclusion that this equipment is expensive?

DR. P. SUBBARAYAN: I may say that I am as much concerned with human lives as the hon. Member is. That is the reason why they were grounded as a precautionary measure.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I want to know the cost of the equipment. An explanation should be given here before the House why the Airlines Corporation does not have that equipment. Is it prohibitively costly?

DR. P. SUBBARAYAN: We are trying to acquire it.

SHRI A. D. MANI: In view of the fact that these cracks have appeared, would the Government consider having periodical checks instead of waiting for six months to have a check of the planes?

DR. P. SUBBARAYAN: We always check them periodically.

SHRI FARIDUL HAQ ANSARI: In view of the fact that there is a discussion now on that point, may I know whether the Government of India is going to buy that instrument now?

DR. P. SUBBARAYAN: Yes, Sir, we are arranging to buy that instrument.

ESTABLISHMENT OF 'GOBER' GAS PLANT

*158. SHRIMATI SAVITRY DEVI NIGAM: Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state whether Government propose to chalk out a scheme to provide cheap equipment to establish 'Gober' gas plant?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA): No. It has been decided to establish a few plants at selected Extension Training Centres on a pilot basis, since it was found that this plant is beyond the means and capacity of the ordinary farmer.

SHRIMATI SAVITRY DEVI NIGAM: May I know whether it is a fact that the 'Gober' gas plant is still under experiment or it has been proved that it can be popularised on a large scale?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: The experimental stage is almost over. The experiment was done by the Agriculture Ministry and after we have found that it can be propagated, the work has been entrusted to the Ministry of Community Development and they are doing it. But still it is found that it is uneconomical to the ordinary farmer.

SHRIMATI SAVITRY DEVI NIGAM: May I know the minimum price of this 'Gober' gas plant and which State has been able to produce the most inexpensive 'Gober' gas plant?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: The minimum expenditure for the smallest unit is about Rs. 500 and with Rs. 500