

present to airmail Bhopal or any other place in Madhya Pradesh.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: Sir, is it a fact that the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh asked the personnel of the Indian Airlines Corporation to see him with regard to the opening of the line that was stopped and even in respect of the loss incurred? Sir, Madhya Pradesh is such a huge State and its capital is separated from all the other States.

SHRI S. K. PATIL: There have been persistent demands from Bhopal and many other places that this line should be resumed, and the Chief Minister did, of course, do that. The matter is under consideration because the loss is very heavy and we have got to find out as to how we can really improve the situation.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: Sir, may I know whether the Government has considered the desirability of opening this line at least once or twice a week, in view of the fact that the loss sustained was about Rs. 12 lakhs only and also in view of the fact that the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh impressed on the officers the need for opening this line, as also the fact that the Indian Airlines Corporation is not running at a profit anywhere? Sir, the loss involved would not be so heavy.

SHRI S. K. PATIL: I once said in the course of a debate that the whole question was under examination. We have got to make a difference between the two sets of routes, one which is economic and the other which is not economic but has got to be operated for other reasons. And the Government have got to take some decision as to the extent to which they will have to bear the loss. The whole question is under examination and the examination is not yet complete.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: Which are the other States where the Airlines are operating and where some loss is not sustained?

SHRI S. K. PATIL: That is a different matter altogether, Sir. Because some loss is sustained, that is no argument that more loss should be sustained.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: May I know, Sir, if these Herons cannot be used for connecting Bhopal with Delhi and other places in Madhya Pradesh?

SHRI S. K. PATIL: By experience it has been found that it is not so good, Sir.

AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE EXCHANGE AT BHOPAL

*435. SHRI NIRANJAN SINGH: Will the Minister of TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any complaints have been received about the working of the telephone exchange at Bhopal; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to replace the present system by an automatic telephone exchange?

THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI S. K. PATIL): (a) No.

(b) Replacement of the present system by an automatic system during the 2nd Five Year Plan at a cost of nearly Rs. 24 lakhs has been approved. The automatic exchange is likely to be ready by 1961.

*436. [The questioner (Shri M. Valiulla) was absent. For answer, vide col. 2447, infra.]

EXAMINATION OF THE PRICE OF TELCO LOCOMOTIVES

*412. SHRI P. C. BHANJ DEO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the question regarding the price to be paid by Government for the locomotives manufactured by TELCO has been examined afresh by Government;

(b) if so, what is the result thereof; and

(c) what is the price now agreed to be paid for such locomotives?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN):

(a) Yes; an examination has been done to determine the prices payable for locomotives to be supplied by TELCO after 31st March, 1958.

(b) As a result of such examination, the Railway Board offered a price of Rs. 3.75 lakhs per locomotive, but the Company have not accepted this.

(c) Does not arise yet.

SHRI P. C. BHANJ DEO: Is it a fact, Sir, that the price of about Rs. 7 lakhs recommended by the Railway Board was considered by the Government to be on the high side, and if so, what does the Government consider to be a reasonable price?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: The Railway Board never recommended Rs. 7 lakhs, Sir. They recommended Rs. 3.75 lakhs.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: The hon. Minister has just now stated that new price was offered by the Railway Board to TELCO, and he has also stated that the price has not been accepted. What is the present position? Would they continue to supply these locomotives or whether they would cease to be supplied?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: Sir, of course, the manufacture of locomotives will not stop. But there is a provision in the agreement that if the parties do not agree upon the price, the matter has to be referred to arbitration.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: May I know whether the price of locomotives manufactured at TELCO is higher or cheaper than the price of those manufactured at Chittaranjan?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: It is cheaper, Sir.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Manufactured at TELCO or Chittaranjan?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: Sir, at Chittaranjan we manufacture broad-gauge locomotives and at TELCO we manufacture metre-gauge

locomotives. But if you are referring to the price question, the price of a broad-gauge locomotive is more than that of a metre-gauge locomotive manufactured at TELCO.

SHRI T. S. AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIAR: What is the price paid for similar locomotives that are imported, and what was the price paid to TELCO before this investigation was made?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: Sir, we have not imported any metre-gauge locomotives since 1955. The price paid to TELCO varies with different periods. There was a time, Sir, when we were paying Rs. 6,90,000 odd. Then later on, it came down to Rs. 6,37,000 odd, and the last price that we paid to them was Rs. 4,44,000 and something.

SHRI AMOLAKH CHAND: May I know, Sir, the number of locomotives that are to be purchased in the financial year 1958-59? May I also know whether the terms have not yet been settled, and if so, whether it is a fact that a High Court Judge has been appointed to look into the question of prices?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: Sir, for the period 1958 to 1960 the TELCO have to supply 200 locomotives. It is quite true that an arbitrator has to be appointed to settle the exact price.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: May I know, Sir, what price was paid for the last metre-gauge locomotive that was imported in India?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: Sir, the lowest price that we paid for the last metre-gauge locomotive imported was—it was from Japan in 1955, and the price was—Rs. 3,02,000.

SHRI V. PRASAD RAO: Has that been referred to arbitration?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: The matter is being referred to arbitration.

SHRI V. PRASAD RAO: Suppose the TELCO is not agreeable to arbitration, then what happens?

(No reply)

DR. R. B. GOUR: May I know, Sir, whether the Tatas will be asked to refund the extra price that they have charged the Government in case the arbitrator decides upon some lower price?

MR. CHAIRMAN: A hypothetical question.

DETERIORATION OF NAVIGATIONAL FACILITIES OF THE SEA ROUTE FROM CALCUTTA

*414. SHRIMATI MAYA DEVI CHETTRY: Will the Minister of TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that navigational facilities of the sea route from Calcutta are deteriorating from year to year; and

(b) if so, what is the reason therefor and what action Government propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR): (a) in the opinion of technical experts, there are indications of a gradual deterioration of the Hooghly river from the point of view of navigation.

(b) A statement is laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha.

STATEMENT

Deterioration in the navigability of the Hooghly

1. The navigability of the Hooghly has deteriorated due to the following factors:—

(i) Absence of perennial head water supply to the Hooghly. Perennial head water supply is necessary for maintaining adequate depths and ensuring that the river is cleared of huge accumulations of silt from time to time.

(ii) Existence of fourteen bars on the waterway between the Calcutta Port and the Sea and their deterioration owing to the absence of perennial head water supply.

(iii) Increase in frequency and duration of bore tides due to the silting of the river which also is due to reduction in head waters.

2. To arrest the general deterioration of the river, the construction of a barrage across the Ganga at Farakka is considered to be the only permanent solution, thus providing perennial head water supply to the Hooghly. The scheme is under technical examination.

3. Meanwhile, the Port Commissioners continue to effect short-term improvements by intensive dredging in the worst-affected stretches.

4. On the basis of model experiments conducted at the Central Water and Power Research Station, Poona, the following local river training works to improve the bars have also been undertaken:

(i) A spur has been constructed at Akra to improve the Sankral and Munikhali bars.

(ii) Training Works at Fulta point estimated to cost Rs. 5.5 crores have been sanctioned. It is expected that this work will improve the Fulta, Ninan and Nurpur bars and the Eastern Gut.

(iii) Model experiments are being performed at the Poona Research Station to devise suitable training works to improve the Balari bar.

SHRIMATI MAYA DEVI CHETTRY: May I know, Sir, whether navigational facilities of the sea route from Calcutta are deteriorating most rapidly, and if so, what are the steps taken by the Government to check this rapid deterioration?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: Sir, we have taken certain steps in this direction. The first step that has been taken is the regular dredging of the channel and controlling the bars and making