

RAJYA SABHA

Wednesday, 11th December 1957

The House met at eleven of the clock, MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

DETERIORATING CONDITION OF THE "TAJ MAHAL"

*363. SHRI A. V. KUNHAMBU: Will the Minister of EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Parliamentary Team which recently visited the ancient monuments in Agra expressed concern over the deteriorating condition of the "Taj Mahal";

(b) if so, what are the various defects pointed out by the Team; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to remedy them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH (DR. K. L. SHRIMALI) : (a) Two Sub-committees of the Estimates Committee of Parliament visited the Taj Mahal, Agra, on the 18th October 1957. The Report of the Estimates Committee is still awaited.

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

SHRI A. V. KUNHAMBU: Was there not a press report some time back that the Parliamentary Team which visited Agra pointed out certain serious defects in the condition of the Taj?

DR. K. L. SHRIMALI: If the hon. Member is referring to the Sub-committee of the Estimates Committee, I have already said that we are awaiting their report.

SHRI A. V. KUNHAMBU: May I know which is the agency to keep 88 RSD—1.

vigil over the condition of such monuments and how are they managed?

DR. K. L. SHRIMALI: It is looked after by the department of Archaeology.

SHRI AMOLAKH CHAND: May I know whether the deterioration, if any, to the Taj, is due to natural causes or positive negligence of the department?

DR. K. L. SHRIMALI: There is no deterioration, and there is no negligence. The department is doing everything that is possible to keep this national monument in proper order.

SHRI KISHEN CHAND: May I know whether the bed of the Jamuna near the Taj is sinking and cracks have developed in the Taj on account of the sinking of the ground underneath?

DR. K. L. SHRIMALI: I am not aware of any cracking in the Taj.

SHRI AKHTAR HUSAIN: May I know whether deterioration has taken place only within the last ten years?

DR. K. L. SHRIMALI: I think there is no deterioration.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is 110 deterioration; there is no sinking of the Jamuna; and everything is going on well.

CONTINUOUS BILLET MILL FROM U.S.S.R.

*364. MOULANA M. FARUQI: Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND FUEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are procuring a Continuous Billet Mill from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; and

(b) if so, at what cost?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL, MINES AND FUEL (SARDAR SWARAN SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.