

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN): (a) and (b). A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha. [See Appendix XV, Annexure No. 16.]

SHRI M. VALIULLA : May I know whether these goods trains are losing speed year by year or is there any increase in speed ?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: They are gaining speed every year.

SHRI M. VALIULLA: May I now whether it was not the case that about 6 or 7 months back they were losing and is it a fact that they have now increased the speed?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: We started off with three trains about two years ago. Today the number of these trains has increased to 67 and they are all very well patronized. That goes to prove that they are successful in satisfying the public.

SHRI M. VALIULLA: What is the time saved now per thousand miles by the express goods trains and by the ordinary goods trains? Is there any increase?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: If the hon. Member would like to know the time per thousand miles, I cannot give it, but I can give the time taken for 100 miles. For the Central Railways on an average it takes 9·7 hours per 100 miles.

SHRI M. VALIULLA: That is express. I want about ordinary trains.

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: That I am unable to give. That depends on so many factors.

#### ENQUIRY INTO THE GRIEVANCES OF THE INDIAN SEAMEN OF THE SHIP 'MASKELIYA'

\*37. SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Will the Minister for TRANSPORT be pleased to refer to the reply given in the Rajya Sabha to my Starred Question No. 528 on the 5th September, 1956 and state:

(a) whether the enquiry into the grievances of Indian seamen employed on the ship 'Maskeliya' has been completed;

(b) if so, what are the findings of that enquiry; and

(c) what action has been taken or is proposed to be taken by Government in this connection?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN): (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). The report of the Shipping Master, Calcutta who held the enquiry revealed that the Second Engineer of the ship was guilty of harsh treatment towards the crew. The matter was accordingly taken up with the local agents of the shipowners who have since removed him from the ship and repatriated him to the U.K.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Is it not a fact that the seamen who complained about the behaviour of the officer concerned were punished? If so, may I know whether that punishment has been withdrawn and they have been compensated for any injustice done to them?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: Some of them were given imprisonment for 14 days in England. But that cannot be withdrawn. They have already undergone that punishment.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR : My question is whether the offence for which they were imprisoned has been substantiated or the report of the enquiry finds that that offence itself was fabricated by the officer concerned.

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: From the finding of the shipping Master the officer who conducted the enquiry, it transpired that some of the charges which were levelled by the Indian seamen against the officer of the ship, the Second Engineer Mr. Black, were proved and as a result, he was removed from the ship.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR : My question related . . .

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** He wants to know whether the crew who complained were subjected to any punishment and, if so, what compensation has been given to them now that some of the charges have been substantiated.

**SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN:** We accept that they were given unfair treatment and as a result of that the man has been removed, but no compensation has been given to them.

**SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR:** The Ministry said that they were imprisoned. My question is whether the report of the enquiry also says something about the offences for which they were imprisoned and, if so, what is that.

**SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN:** The charge on which these people were tried in Birkenhead in England was insubordination and they were punished there for that particular offence. Later on, when they came to India and complained, the officer who got them punished perhaps unjustifiably was removed.

**SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR:** But my question still stands. It is true that that officer was high-handed in his behaviour and the charge of insubordination was actually unjustified. So, my question is whether the shipping company is going to give compensation to those seamen for the imprisonment they suffered.

**SHRI LAL BAHADUR:** In this particular instance, I am sorry I am not aware as to what the report has stated. The hon. Member has raised a new point and I think it is worth looking into.

**SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR:** May I know whether the Government, after considering the report of the enquiry, has taken any steps to see that this sort of incidents do not occur again?

**SHRI LAL BAHADUR:** Certainly we will keep that in mind. In this case our Indian officials also do not appear to have been very helpful. Therefore, we are taking up this matter with our High Commission in London.

#### COMMITTEE TO ENQUIRE INTO THE GRIEVANCES OF THE SAKRIGALIGHAT FERRY STAFF

**\*38. SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR:** Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the General Manager, Eastern Railway, appointed a committee to enquire about the grievances of the ferry staff employed at Sakrigalighat;

(b) if so, whether that committee has completed the enquiry;

(c) what are the findings and recommendations of the committee; and

(d) what action Government propose to take in this connection?

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN):** (a) and (b). Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d). A statement is laid on the table of the Sabha. [See Appendix XV, Annexure No. 17.]

#### BENEFIT OF RENT FREE QUARTERS TO EX-D. H. RAILWAY STAFF

**\*39. SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR:** Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ex-D.H. Railway staff at present working on the North Eastern Railway are given the benefit of rent free quarters;

(b) whether they enjoyed that benefit before the ex-D.H. Railway was taken over by the Indian Railways; and

(c) if the answer to part (a) above be in the negative, what are the reasons for not giving them that benefit?

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN):** (a) No.

(b) Yes.

(c) The staff of the ex-Darjeeling Himalayan Railway joined the Indian Government Railways as new entrants and like other Government Railway servants they were required to pay house rent. The fact of their having enjoyed the concession of rent-free accommodation on the ex-D. H.