

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: I only regret the inconvenience caused to the hon. Member.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Enough with 'chair cars' now.

SHIPPING SERVICE BETWEEN INDIA AND THE UNION OF THE SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

*119. DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: Will the Minister for TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the time by which the cargo shipping service, for which an agreement was entered into between the Government of India and the Government of the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics on the 6th April, 1956, will begin to operate; and

(b) the route on which this service will operate and what will be its frequency in the first instance?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN): (a) Russian ships have already started the service. The first Indian ship is expected to sail from India about the middle of May 1956.

(b) The service will operate between the Indian ports of Bombay and Calcutta on the one part and the Soviet ports of Odessa and Novorossiisk on the other part and it is expected that the normal frequency will be one sailing in about a fortnight in either direction.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: May I know if the second ship has already left the Russian shores?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: We do not have that schedule of sailings. Sailings are arranged.....

PROF. G. RANGA: We are not able to follow even though we are nearer. Kindly speak a little louder.

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: The schedule of sailings is framed in consul-

tation with each other by both parties. Both parties draw up this schedule and as per that, sailings are arranged. Every three months, they are expected to meet and arrange the sailings.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Will the ships touch ports on the way also?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Will they touch any other intermediary ports? That is the question.

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: I am not quite sure. If the cargo is full, they may not touch any intermediate ports.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: Not even for fuelling purposes?

(No reply.)

*120, *121 and *122. [The questioner (Shri M. Govinda Reddy) was absent. For answers, vide cols 1169-1170 infra.]

RESERVE STOCK OF WHEAT AND RICE

*123. SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Will the Minister for FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently approached any foreign countries for the purchase of wheat and rice with a view to building up a reserve stock in the country.

(b) if so, which are the countries that have been approached; and

(c) what results have so far been achieved in this connection?

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (DR. P. S. DESHMUKH): (a) No, Sir.

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

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Has the Government's attention been drawn to a report which was in the papers, even commercial journals, to this effect?

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: Such news items appear in all sorts of papers.