

और कम्पनियों से टेंडर ले कर के लोएस्ट टेंडर की बुनियाद पर यह आर्डर दिया गया था या बिना टेंडर मंगाए हुए यह आर्डर दिया गया ? किम बुनियाद के ऊपर यह आर्डर दिया गया ?]

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: As per ordinary procedure, all that should have been observed by the Directorate General of Supplies and Disposals. That is what I meant.

REGIONAL TRAINING CENTRES

*11. **DR. RAGHUBIR SINH:** Will the Minister for COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to refer to paragraph 24 on page 26 of the Activities of the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department for 1955-56 and state:

(a) whether it is proposed to open any new Regional Training Centres for the training of engineering personnel by the Department; if so, how many;

(b) where and when they are going to be opened; and

(c) the number of engineering personnel these new centres are expected to train per year?

THE MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR): (a) Two more Regional Centres are proposed to be opened.

(b) Opening of a Centre at Deolali or Nasik and another at Rachi is under consideration. These Centres are expected to be opened during the latter half of 1956-57.

(c) Each Centre will train approximately 200 candidates per year.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: May I know whether, after the opening of these two Centres, the entire requirements of the Department will be met completely?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: I do not think so; we will require many more centres to be opened as our system grows.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: Will our requirements be met immediately or at a distant time?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: At a distant time; however by and large, we will be able to meet our present requirements from these two Centres for the Eastern and Western Zones.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: What about the Central Zone?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: We have got a big Training Centre at Jabalpur, as the hon. Member is aware.

WINDING UP OF THE BENGAL PROVINCIAL RAILWAY AND SUSPENSION OF SOME TRAIN SERVICES

*12. **DR. RAGHUBIR SINH:** Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the proposed winding up of the Bengal Provincial Railway Company and the reduction in the number of train services that were formerly being run by that Company.

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take to provide the area served by that Railway Company with suitable means of communication when that Railway Company is finally wound up; and

(c) whether the Government are taking any steps in response to the appeal made to them by the Light Railwaymen's Union to intervene in this matter?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN): (a) Yes; it is understood that the Bengal Provincial Railway was closed down for traffic on 20th March 1956.

(b) The State Government of West Bengal will no doubt consider this

question of providing adequate road transport arrangements.

(c) No such request has been received.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: In answer to part (c), the hon. Minister said that no request was made; but may I bring to his notice a report published in the "Hindustan Times" of the 9th March, wherein it has been said that the Light Railwaymen's Union, in a telegram to the Union Railway Minister, requested him to intervene in this matter? May I know whether he denies this or says that this is completely incorrect?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: What I meant to say was that there was no request to intervene. A request from the Union was received and it simply wanted that some representatives of the Union should be interviewed by the Minister. That is under consideration.

SHRI B. K. MUKERJEE: Was there any chance for the Government to take over, while other Railways were nationalised, this Bengal Provincial Light Railway?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: This question of acquiring privately owned Railways, these narrow-gauge Railways, was considered and a policy decision was taken that it is not profitable in any sense to take over these old obsolete Railways.

SHRI B. K. MUKERJEE: May I know if the Government took over these other Railways to make profit only or to provide service to the people of this country?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: The service relates to the provision of transport for the area concerned, and it is no more economical to continue this means of transport. It has to be done either by providing road transport or by constructing an alternative line, whether it be narrow, metre-gauge or broad-gauge.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Have the Government of West Bengal made

any representation in this matter to the Central Government and further have the Central Government considered the question of providing an alternative Railway in view of certain enquiries that were undertaken by certain officers deputed by the Central Government?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: This question has been under the consideration of the West Bengal Government; we are directly not aware as to when the Railway was closed. In fact they should have done it in consultation with the West Bengal Government. As far as the provision of an alternative railway line, either metre-gauge or broad-gauge, is concerned, a survey was undertaken by the Railway and it was found to be not paying. So we have to fall back on providing only road transport for the needs of the area.

DR. P. C. MITRA: May I know, Sir, whether the Company has ever approached the Government for financial help in view of their difficulties?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: As far back as 1950 this matter was gone into by a high-power Committee, which was presided over by no less a person than the Chief Minister of West Bengal and they made certain recommendations in accordance with which a sum of Rs. 1.5 lakhs was advanced but that did no good to rehabilitate that Railway.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: The answer given was that it was not paying to have the narrow-gauge Railway and that is why it was not acquired. My question is: What is the existing narrow-gauge mileage on the Railway and whether Government has taken any step to replace it by either broad-gauge or metre-gauge lines?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: The latter part of the question I have already answered. As far as the mileage is concerned, it is 33 miles.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: May I know as to whether a portion of this

Railway, from Dasghara to Jamalpur-ganj, which has a length of 8 miles, has not been guaranteed by the Government of India?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: Yes, Sir, that is a small line for which some such guarantee existed—I speak subject to correction—but the right of acquisition of the rest of this line, if the choice has to be exercised at all, vests in the District Board of Hooghly and not in the Central Government.

SHRI B. K. MUKERJEE: May I know, Sir, the exact number of employees of this Railway who are thrown out of employment due to closure of this line, and is Government thinking of providing them with jobs in the existing Railways run by the Ministry of Railways?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: This question was considered, Sir, and the Railways would be prepared to entertain applications from the employees of this Railway—I don't have their number before me; I do not know how many are serving under this management—and the Railways will consider their applications subject to their suitability, etc.

SHRIMATI MAYA DEVI CHETTRY: Which are the places in West Bengal where the Railway is going to be abolished?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: I do not know exactly the places through which this Railway runs.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: I wanted to enquire whether, even though it may be a private Railway, when it closed down, the Government had no responsibility of providing alternative transport or whether they should have permitted the private Railway Company to close down without examining whether that could not be carried on profitably, in view particularly of the fact that, as I understand, the Railway workers' Union has suggested that they themselves were prepared to take up the Railway and run it economically

if the Government should so permit them.

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: That position. I thought I had already made clear. There is the responsibility cast on Government to provide proper means of transport. It can be either by a metre-gauge or broad-gauge line or by the provision of road transport. In case it is to be road transport, as it is in this case, it has to be done by the West Bengal Government and I stated in my answer that they should be looking into this matter already. As far as the workers taking over the management and running the Railway is concerned, we are not aware of any such proposal. Perhaps this might have been received by the State Government.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: It was wound up on the 20th of March 1956. I wanted to enquire if the Government is aware that it was so wound up and did they enquire if alternative transport services were provided before it was wound up?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: I thought I had sufficiently answered both.

TRAVEL AND SHIKAR AGENTS

*13. **DR. RAGHUBIR SINH:** Will the Minister for TRANSPORT be pleased to refer to paragraph 83 on page 39 of the Report of the Ministry of Transport for 1955-56 and state:

(a) the names of the (i) seven new travel agencies and (ii) five new Shikar Agents which were granted recognition during 1955-56; and

(b) the names of the three Shikar Agents whose recognition was cancelled after the publication of the rules for recognition?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN). (a) and (b). A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.