

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR: I have already replied in detail to all these questions. If the hon. Member wishes to have any more details, she can write to me.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: We will have to have a half-an-hour discussion.

STRIKE BY MANGANESE MINE WORKERS IN ORISSA

*606. SHRI S. PANIGRAHI: Will the Minister for LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the manganese mine workers in Barbil in Orissa have recently gone on strike; and

(b) if so, what are the causes of the strike?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR LABOUR (SHRI ABID ALI): (a) and (b). The workers of 7 contractors in the Thakurani Mines of the Orissa Mineral Development Company struck work, on various dates commencing from the 16th June 1955. The reasons for the strike are:

- (i) Disparity in wage rates, and
- (ii) Union rivalry.

The strike was called off on the 19th September 1955, following a settlement brought about by the Conciliation Officer (Central), Asansol, between the parties.

SHRI S. PANIGRAHI: May I know whether the Government is aware of the fact that there was firing on the strikers?

SHRI ABID ALI: On the 12th September, the workers surrounded the agent when he was explaining the reason for the lay-off. Subsequently, the male workers withdrew and the female workers were left to surround the agent and some of his officers. The local authorities were contacted and a second class magistrate came. Then the women workers withdrew

and the male workers started throwing stones. Then there was firing in the air but no one was injured.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: It was non-violent firing?

SHRI ABID ALI: Yes; it was nonviolent.

SHRI S. PANIGRAHI: Is it a fact that the number of casualties is 10?

SHRI ABID ALI: According to my information, no one was injured because of firing.

SHRI S. PANIGRAHI: May I know whether this dispute has been referred to any adjudication; and, if so, who are the adjudicators?

SHRI ABID ALI: I have already submitted that the matter was amicably settled between the parties themselves, with the help of our Conciliation Officer.

SHRI J. V. K. VALLABHARAO: In view of the fact that the conditions of work in manganese mines all over India are the same and several disputes are arising regarding workers' wages and other thing; why does not the Government consider the question of implementing the Award of the Madhya Pradesh Tribunal so as to apply to all the manganese mines?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is a suggestion for action.

SHRI ABID ALI: Yes; of course. But we cannot make that Award applicable to other areas unless it is referred to adjudication and there is no settlement between the parties.

AID FROM RUSSIA FOR MANUFACTURE OF DRUGS

*607. SHRI S. PANIGRAHI: Will the Minister for HEALTH be pleased to state:

(a) whether any help or assistance was sought for from the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist

Republics for the manufacture of drugs in India; and

(b) if so, the nature of the help sought for and the result thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR HEALTH (SHRIMATI M. CHANDRA -SEKHAR) : (a) No such assistance or help has been sought.

(b) Does not arise.

SHRI S. PANIGRAHI: May I draw the attention of the Government to one of the statements of our hon. friend, General Sokhey, that he would submit a report on this matter to the Government and ask whether the Government have received any report from him?

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR: General Sokhey has submitted a note and it is being considered.

WOMEN'S MEDICAL SERVICE FUNDS

•587. DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND (ON BEHALF OF SHRIMATI VIOLET ALVA) : Will the Minister for HEALTH be pleased to state:

(a) how the Women's Medical Service, since disbanded, was financed and administered; and

(b) whether it is a fact that Pakistan has demanded a share of the Women's Medical Service Funds?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR HEALTH (SHRIMATI M. CHANDRA -SEKHAR) : (a) The Women's Medical Service was financed by grants-in-aid from the Central Government to the Countess of Dufferin's Fund Council which was responsible for the administration of the service.

(b) Yes.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: Is it a fact that the amount of this Countess of Dufferin's Fund is Rs. 13 lakhs and if so, what is being done with this amount for the benefit of the women medical officers of this Service?

SHRIMATI M. CHANDRASEKHAR: The total amount is nearly Rs. 13 lakhs and odd.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: And what is being done with it?

SHRIMATI M. CHANDRASEKHAR: It has been earmarked for the Service.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: How is it being utilised, as the Service has been disbanded?

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR: May I say that these funds have been earmarked to meet certain liabilities like leave salary, contribution to provident fund, cost of study leave, passages and difference in the pay allowed in the Service and the pay allowed in the service of the State Governments.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: Is the Government aware that the Pakistan Government has retained the W.M.S. and, our Government not having retimed it, the women medical officers of that Service have been downgraded more or less in so far as the conditions of their Service are concerned?

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR: I do not think that any downgrading has been done. Just as in the case of the I.M.S. for men, which was also abolished here, the women medical officers were offered certain conditions and they accepted them.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: Is it a fact that women officers of this Service, though possessing higher qualifications than men, are serving under Civil Surgeons and none of them has been made even a Civil Surgeon, while the men have been given equal rank in the Army?

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR: Members of the W.M.S. are now under the State Governments and the question that the hon. Member has put should be addressed to the State Governments concerned.