

(c) what was the agenda of the meeting and what decisions were taken thereat?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR): (a) A meeting of the representatives of the airlines operating scheduled air services was held at New Delhi on the 23rd June 1953.

(b) All the air transport companies whose undertakings were to be taken over by the Indian Airlines were represented by their nominees. Representatives of Indian Airlines, the Ministries of Finance and Communications and the Civil Aviation Department were also present.

(c) Measures for facilitating the transfer of the undertakings of the air transport companies to the Corporation on the 1st August 1953, and for ensuring the uninterrupted operation of the services were considered generally and the advice of the representatives of the companies obtained on those points.

COLLECTIONS UNDER THE EMPLOYEES' PROVIDENT FUND SCHEMES

70. SHRI P. C. BHANJ DEO: Will the Minister for LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the average monthly collections under the Employees' Provident Fund Scheme, 1952;

(b) the balance accumulated in the Fund so far; and

(c) the rate of interest which the individual balances carry?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR LABOUR (SHRI ABID ALI): (a) On the basis of collections made during the last eight months, the average comes to about Rs. 45 lakhs per month. This includes collections from some factories which are being exempted under section 17(a) of the Employees Provident Fund Act, 1952. Collections with regard to exempted factories will be refunded to such factories after exemption.

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(b) Rs. 4,85,60,471. This includes (i) accumulations amounting to Rs. 1,22,83,819 transferred as far in cash and Government securities under para. 28 of the Employees Provident Fund Scheme and (ii) an amount of collections which are refundable to factories which have already been granted exemption or are likely to be granted exemption under section 17(a) of the Employees Provident Fund Act, 1952.

(c) Under para. 60 of the Employees Provident Fund Scheme the rate of interest is required to be fixed by the Central Government in consultation with the Central Board of Trustees. The Board is scheduled to meet on the 19th October 1953 and a decision will be taken thereafter on the basis of the recommendations of the Board.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE TO SHRI G. B. MOHTA

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have to inform the hon. Members that the following letter has been received from Shri Gopaldas Mohta:

"I very much regret to inform you that my mother died on the 16th August 1953, at Hinganghat. I have to perform the obsequies etc. and as such will not be able to attend the session. I, therefore, request that necessary permission as required by Rule 180(1) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States may be granted to me."

Is it the pleasure of the Council that permission be granted to Shri Gopaldas Mohta for remaining absent from all meetings of the Council during its current session?

(No hon. Member dissented.)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Permission to remain absent is granted.