

(b) the tonnage of cargo carried by the Indian shipping concerns in coastal trade in the years 1951-52 and 1952-53; and

(c) the profits earned by the Indian shipping concerns in the above years?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN): (a) The reservation of the coastal trade for Indian shipping has already been effected. This has been done by the introduction of a system of licensing under the Control of Shipping, Act, 1947, for ships operating on the coast.

(b) The figures are at present available only for the calendar years 1951 and 1952. They are 23,06,101 and 24,62,460 deadweight tons respectively.

(c) The total profits earned by all the Indian shipping companies both on the coastal as well as on the overseas trades, were of the order of Rs. 250 lakhs during the year 1951-52. The figures for 1952-53 are not yet available.

SHRI GOVINDA REDDY: What are the figures of profits for 1951-52?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: I said Rs. 250 lakhs.

SHRI GOVINDA REDDY: When was this reservation policy enunciated by the Government?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: From 15th August 1950.

SHRI GOVINDA REDDY: How does the position compare to the times previous to the enunciation of this policy?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: Sir, 53 per cent. of the coastal trade was carried by Indian shipping in 1948 and now 99½ per cent. of the trade is carried by Indian ships.

SHRI GOVINDA REDDY: What is the proportion of Indian shipping and foreign shipping?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: With regard to the coastal trade only Indian shipping is permitted—occasionally other shipping is permitted, which is only an *ad hoc* arrangement.

SHRI GOVINDA REDDY: In the matter of chartered tonnage have the Government done anything to induce the Indian coastal shipping rather to increase their work?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: I do not actually catch the meaning of the question, Sir.

SHRI GOVINDA REDDY: The coastal shipping companies which have been doing coastal trade have taken to chartered tonnage in recent years. Have the Government done anything to encourage this tendency?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: Perhaps the hon. Member suggests that we should entrust coastal trade to chartered ships. Only when there is need, that is done, Sir.

AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE SYSTEMS

*6. SHRIMATI SHOILA BALA DAS: Will the Minister for COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are having automatic telephones established in all the States; and

(b) if the answer to part (a) be in the affirmative,—

(i) the States in which this scheme is already in operation; and

(ii) the date by which Government hope to cover all the States with this scheme?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR): (a) and (b). No, not in all the

States. It is intended that at the outset schemes for installing automatic exchanges in big towns and capitals of States should be taken up. Out of the 26 capital towns 11 have already got automatic exchanges. The rest will be provided with automatic exchanges gradually as funds permit and equipment becomes available.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: What is your definition of a big town?

(No reply.)

SHRIMATI SHARDA BHARGAVA: What is the approximate limit fixed for the installation of the automatic exchanges at the other capital towns?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: Under the Five Year Plan we propose to instal automatic exchanges at four more places.

SHRIMATI SHOILA BALA DAS: May I know if any time has been fixed for completing the work at Cuttack?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: No time has been fixed.

SHRI H. N. KUNZRU: Are the Government aware that the telephone facilities in Calcutta are quite insufficient? What steps are they taking to introduce the automatic system there very soon?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: Perhaps the hon. Member may be aware that we are in the midst of a very ambitious programme for automatising the entire telephone system in Calcutta. Two exchanges have already been opened and a large part of the city has been brought under the automatic system, and even with regard to the manual system, we are taking adequate steps to see that it is properly maintained.

SHRI H. N. KUNZRU: What proportion of the city has been brought under the automatic system?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: I think about 1/5th.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: It should be less than 1/5th considering that only by the end of 1955-56 or 1956-57 the Government expect the whole of Calcutta to be automatised.

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: Yes, we expect the whole of Calcutta to be automatised by the end of 1956 or the beginning of 1957.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: What are the towns under contemplation for automation of telephones?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: They are Lucknow, Patna, Jaipur, Coimbatore, Ajmer and Gwalior.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Has any timetable been fixed?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: Yes, a timetable has been fixed.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: May I know what it is?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: It ranges from year to year, depending on the availability of equipment, etc.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Is the timetable dependent on the availability of equipment or have the Government fixed a time-table which they want to pursue?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: It depends on the availability of equipment.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: What are the towns included for this year?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: Our hands are full at the moment with Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Hyderabad.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: Is the Minister aware that he is ignoring his own constituency?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: I will not be partial to it.

DIVISIONAL HEADQUARTERS IN THE EASTERN RAILWAY ZONE

***7. SHRIMATI SHOILA BALA DAS:** Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) (i) the number of Divisional Headquarters in the Eastern Railway Zone; and (ii) the names of the places and the States where they are located;

(b) whether Government propose to have some new headquarters in the Eastern Zone; and

(c) if the answer to part (b) be in the affirmative, the States and the places where such headquarters are proposed to be located?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN): (a) (i) Five Divisional Headquarters and one Regional Headquarter.

(ii) Sealdah, Howrah and Asansol in West Bengal, Dinapore and Dhanbad in Bihar and Bilaspur (Regional) in Madhya Pradesh.

(b) Government have at present no intention to set up new headquarters in the Eastern Zone.

(c) Does not arise.

SHRI V. K. DHAGE: May I know whether the Minister for Railways has received any representation from the people in Orissa?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: Yes, Sir. Such a representation has been received.

SHRI V. K. DHAGE: Was the representation for the purpose of opening of an office in Orissa?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: At present there are three Headquarters offices of the Eastern Railway in the State of Orissa, Khurda Road, Cuttack and Titlagarh. If any new Divisional headquarter is to be opened, they said that Orissa should be favourably considered, and we are having it under our consideration.

AN HON. MEMBER: What was the reply, Sir?

MR. Chairman: They said that if any new headquarter was to be opened, Orissa should be favourably considered. The Government are considering it.

STRIKE OF TEMPORARY GANGMEN ON THE LINE FROM SIVI AND MAHALIMARUP TO GHATSILA ON THE EASTERN RAILWAY

***8. SHRI K. L. NARASIMHAM:** Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that nearly 400 temporary gangmen went on strike from the 28th May 1953, on the line from Sivi and Mahalimarup to Ghatsila on the Eastern Railway; and

(b) if so, what were the grievances and demands of these gangmen?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN): (a) No. The Eastern Railway reports that approximately 120 casual labour working as gangmen in the Tatanagar area left work and ultimately returned after about a week.

(b) The gangmen concerned did not put forward any grievances or demands but they left work on hearing that casual labour were sought to be recruited on certain new terms.