

SHRI T. R. DEOGIRIKAR : May I know whether Government thinks it advisable to convert the schools into technical training schools in the new set up ?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN : Each case has to be examined and then only it can be done. All these schools cannot be converted into technical schools.

SHRI T. R. DEOGIRIKAR : Are there any technical training schools run by the Railways ?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN : I don't think.

SHRI D. NARAYAN : Is Bible compulsory taught in some of the railway schools ?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN : I am not aware of any such thing.

GOVERNMENT DEBT LIABILITIES ON PURCHASE OF RAILWAYS

*24<5. SHRI T. R. DEOGIRIKAR : Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) what are Government debt liabilities on purchase of Railways abroad ; and

(b) how many Railways, foreign owned and foreign managed, are still there in India ; whether Government propose to purchase their ; if so; when ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN) : (a) The debt liabilities on this account as outstanding on 31st March, 1952 amounted to Rs. 858 lakhs roundly.

(b) Only one, namely the Barsi Light Railway. Government is considering the question of purchasing this line on 1st January, 1954.

SHRI T. R. DEOGIRIKAR : May I know whether all the capital invested in the Barsi Railway is British ?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN : Yes—it is foreign owned railway at present.

SHRI T. R. DEOGIRIKAR : When is their contract terminating. ?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN : We can give one year's notice and take over.

The contract terminates on the 1st January next.

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA : How many Railways are still being run by companies and what is their total strength ?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN : This is the only foreign owned railway. There are other small railways which are owned by District Boards.

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA : I did not ask for foreign owned railways. I asked for the railways that are being run by private companies now.

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN : The question refers to railways owned by companies abroad.

SHRI B. K. MUKERJEE : Is it not a fact that Martin and Co. wants some of these light railways to be treated as Indian owned railways and not as foreign owned railways, ?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN : The question refers to debt liabilities on purchase of railways abroad.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS

*247. SHRI M. VALIULLA : Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of railway accidents in India from April, 1952 to the end of November, 1952 ;

(b) the causes for each of those accidents ; and

(c) the extent of loss of human life involved in these accidents ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN) : (a) Nine serious accidents i.e., accidents to trains carrying passengers attended with loss of human life and/or grievous hurt and/or damage to property to the value of

approximately Rs. 20,000/- or over in each case.

(b) A statement showing the causes of each of these accidents, as laid, on the Table of the House. /Sec Appendix III, Annexure No. 72.]

(c) SO:

SHRI M. VALIULLA : What is the compensation paid ?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN : Claims Commissioners are appointed and they go into each case and pay compensation.

SHRI M. VALIULLA : Is it a fact that out of these nine accidents four were due to failure of staff ?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN : It is given in the statement.

SHRI M. VALIULLA : What are the actions taken against the staff ?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN : I don't know exactly the action taken. In the usual course action is taken.

SHRI M. VALIULLA : Is there any reserve kept by the Railway Department to meet compensation expenses ?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN : No such reserve is kept.

LAW TO CONTROL PRACTICE OF OPTICIANS

*248. SHRIMATI VIOLET ALVA : Will the Minister for HEALTH be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any law on the control of the profession of opticians ; and

(b) whether Government have received any proposal from the opticians in the country with regard to the laying down of a standard for their training and if so, what action has been taken by Government in this regard ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR HEALTH : SHRIMATI M. CHANDRASEKHAR : (a) No.

(b) Presumably the hon. Member is referring to a Resolution passed at the third General meeting of the All India Opticians' Association held at Bombay on the 22nd April, 1949 which urged the Government of India to establish institutions at various suitable centres for imparting optical training on modern lines. The Government of India carefully considered this Resolution and came to the conclusion that having regard to the absence in the country of the necessary facilities and the difficulty, in present circumstances, of providing them, it was not practicable to give effect to the Resolution.

SHRIMATI VIOLET ALVA : May I know the number of qualified ophthalmic surgeons in the country ?

SHRIMATI M. CHANDRASEKHAR : I cannot give the information just now.

If a separate question is put, I will give the information.

SHRIMATI VIOLET ALVA : As far as statistics go, is it a fact that every 4 out of 10 Indians are weak-sighted ?

SHRIMATI M. CHANDRASEKHAR : It may be so.

SHRIMATI VIOLET ALVA : Do Government propose to undertake any law on this point to control the profession of opticians ?

SHRIMATI M. CHANDRASEKHAR : They would like to take steps but at present it is not possible to put into effect any law.

SHRIMATI VIOLET ALVA : Do other countries have laws on the control of opticians ?

MR. CHAIRMAN : Two ladies are carrying on conversation and the Members are not hearing anything. Please address the Chairman.

COACH BUILDING FACTORY AT JHARSUGUDA IN ORISSA

*249. SHRI S. MAHANTY : Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have since back finalised a scheme for the setting