

the criminal courts in view of the fact that in almost every civil court we find continuous arrears in work?

Pandit G. B. Pant: The question so far as Kerala is concerned should be addressed to that Government and so far as the other States are concerned to the respective State Governments.

Shri Narayankutty Menon: In view of the fact that a large number of cases are pending as arrears before the High Courts and also the subordinate judiciary, may I know whether the Government will consider the curtailment of the long vacation of the courts?

Pandit G. B. Pant: Government is giving thought to the matter.

Shri V. P. Nayar: May I know whether the attention of the Government of India has been drawn to the fact that in almost every civil court in all the States there are considerable arrears of work and if so whether the Government will take any action on that?

Pandit G. B. Pant: Of course there are arrears, but those courts are under the State Governments and not under the Central Government

Shri Heda: May I know the disparity or the difference between the holidays enjoyed by the courts and other Government offices?

Pandit G. B. Pant: The State Governments, as I said, are in charge of all these matters of course, and offices situated in the States, except those which are directly under the Central Government, are working under the direction of their Governments and the holidays are fixed by them and not by us.

Steamer Service to Minicoy

*458. **Shri Maniyangadan:** Will the Minister of Home Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Government propose to start

a regular steamer service between Minicoy and other islands on the Kerala coast and the mainland; and

(b) if so, what is the scheme?

The Deputy Minister of Home Affairs (Shrimati Alva): (a) Yes.

(b) It is proposed to charter a vessel for 10 days in a month for a round trip between the mainland and the Islands during fair season i.e. October to April.

Shri Maniyangadan: When will this, be started?

Shrimati Alva: It should be started this October.

Petroleum

*459. **Shri Bishwanath Roy:** Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel be pleased to state whether drilling operations for petroleum have started in Bengal?

The Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel (Sardar Swaran Singh): Yes, Sir. The Standard Vacuum Oil Company started test drilling at Burdwan in April 1957 and the bore-hole has already reached a depth of about 7,700 feet

Shri Bishwanath Roy: May I know the time expected to be taken for the completion of these operations?

Sardar Swaran Singh: I think the discovery of oil will set the time-limit

Shri Sadhan Gupta: May I know whether so far any encouraging results have been obtained?

Sardar Swaran Singh: In this bore-hole no oil has yet been struck.

Shri Hem Barua: May I know if the attention of the Government has been drawn to an announcement made by the Chief Minister of West Bengal in the State Assembly that they are going to establish an oil refinery in Calcutta under the auspices of Stanvac?

Sardar Swaran Singh: I have not yet seen that statement.

Shri S. C. Samanta: May I know whether any other place has also been selected for the operations?

Sardar Swaran Singh: Yes. Test drilling is going on in Jwalamukhi also.

Shri Kashtwal: What is the total area of concession given to this company in Bengal?

Sardar Swaran Singh: It is 10,000 square miles.

Mineral Oil in Vypeen Islands

*460. **Shri Narayanankutty Menon:** Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the report sent by the erstwhile Cochin Government to the then Central Government regarding the existence of mineral oil including Petroleum in the Vypeen islands;

(b) if so, whether any action has been taken on that report; and

(c) whether Government have any plan to investigate the existence of mineral oil in the Vypeen islands in the Kerala State?

The Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel (Sardar Swaran Singh): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

Shri Narayanankutty Menon: May I know whether the Government will enquire as to whether there is a report by a German expert submitted in the year 1940 to the erstwhile Cochin Government about the possibility of exploring oil in that area?

Sardar Swaran Singh: The reply I have given is based upon enquiry. We have not been able to trace any such information, but Dr. Short and Dr. Wrighter, German oil experts who visited the Varkalai and Quilon areas north of Trivandrum, and also

other areas, were of the opinion that the sediments on the West coast were too thin to hold out any promise of oil.

कात्नो राय पर खर्च

*४६३. **श्री अलिनकट सिंह :** क्या बिबि. मंत्री यह बताने का रुपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि केन्द्रीय सरकार के मुकदमा लड़ने तथा कात्नो राय लेने के खर्च पहले सालों का अपेक्षा बढ़ गये हैं;

(ख) यदि हां, तो इस के क्या कारण हैं; और

(ग) इस खर्च को कम करने के लिये क्या उपाय सोचे जा रहे हैं ?

The Minister of Law (Shri A. K. Sen): (a) Comparative figures of expenditure are not readily available and I am getting them collected from the various Ministries and Departments of Government. It appears however that litigation expenses of Government have been on the increase

(b) The main reason appears to be the increase in the number of cases brought against Government, particularly by way of writ petitions in the different High Courts and the Supreme Court.

(c) Measures for reducing the expenditure on litigation are under consideration.

श्री अलिनकट सिंह : क्या यह बात सही है कि बहुत से दीवानी मामलों में सरकार का जितना पावना रहता है, उस से ज्यादा उस को मुकदमा लड़ने में खर्च करना पड़ता है और क्या ऐसे मुकदमों में कचहरी के बाहर घापसी समझौते से मामला तय करने के पहलू पर सरकार ने विचार किया है ?

Shri A. K. Sen: Yes, that is certainly under consideration and all avenues for reducing expenditure in litigation are being given due consideration.