

- (i) The Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 has been invoked and compulsory inoculation has been introduced thereunder;
- (ii) 61,54,695 anti-cholera inoculations were performed during the period from July, 1964 to October, 1964 (part).
- (iii) All drinking wells have been disinfected.

12 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

(i) DISLOCATION OF INDIAN AIRLINES SERVICES

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur (Jalore): I call the attention of the Minister of Civil Aviation to the following matter of urgent public importance, and I request that he may make a statement thereon:

Dislocation of Indian Airlines services.

The Minister of Civil Aviation (Shri Kanungo): On the 9th September, 1964, with your permission, Sir, I had made a statement in the House in the course of which I had explained the circumstances in which the services of the Indian Airlines Corporation were disrupted from 22-8-1964 because of the reduced availability of Pilots for flying its fleet as a result of the enforcement by the Indian Commercial Pilots Association, of their own flight and duty time limitations. I had indicated then that Government themselves found that the unsatisfactory state of services since 22nd August, 1964 was creating an increasing state of uncertainty and hardship to the hundreds of passengers who were the innocent victims of the deadlock between the Corporation and the Pilots and that Government had, therefore, asked the Corporation to work out a schedule of operations which could be maintained with definiteness and certainty so long as the

dispute lasted. I had expressed the hope that it would be possible for the Corporation to resume normal operations again. I am glad to say that although the Caravelle services and a number of other services were cancelled with effect from 9th September, 1964, as a result of the further efforts made by the Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, to bring about a settlement between the management of I. A. C. and their pilots, the latter agreed to give up their unilateral observance of flight and duty time limitations and to work in accordance with the regulations in force prior to 22nd August, 1964. Accordingly, the Corporation resumed normal operations with effect from 13th September, 1964. I may add here that efforts made so far to reach a settlement with the pilots on the question of flight and duty time limitations have not yet resulted in a formal agreement though understandings have been reached. In any case, the matter is before the National Industrial Tribunal, presided over by Shri G. D. Khosla and it is hoped that soon an agreement would be reached and placed before the Tribunal.

2. On the 24th and 25th October, 1964 a number of services emanating from Bombay had to be cancelled or operated with considerable delay due to a large number of Pilots reporting sick all of a sudden and even the stand-byes not being available.

Some Hon. Members: We can't hear the Minister.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. Even my voice does not reach hon. Members and they continue talking in spite of my requests again and again.

Some Hon. Members: We cannot hear him.

Mr. Speaker: That is my difficulty also. The House should always remain delightful to the eye and pleasant to the ear. It becomes rather difficult to follow the proceedings.

Shri Kanungo: The circumstances in which the Pilots had absented

themselves by reporting sick and the action, if any, that can be taken against them is under investigation by the Corporation. I might add that the rule of the Corporation is that an absence on sickness upto 48 hours is not required to be supported by a medical certificate.

3. In the first week of November, 1964, some services were disrupted as a result of the Pilots resorting to what has been described by them as "work to rule". I am glad to report, however, that normalcy has since been restored in this regard also on the intervention of the Chairman of the Corporation.

4. Apart from these interruptions, occasions do arise when, due to defective working of certain essential equipment such as radar, wireless equipment, engine snags etc., aircraft is delayed and there is consequential operation of flights behind schedule. Some times the time required to deal with them by the engineering establishment is quite considerable in which event flights have to be cancelled; otherwise delays depend on the time required. These are, however, unavoidable in mechanical operations of this kind and are not peculiar to Indian Airlines Corporation.

5. I deeply regret the inconvenience caused to passengers by these delays and have asked the Corporation to look into these more closely. The delays due to snags and mechanical failure are being scrutinised periodically and wherever possible action is taken to ensure that they are minimised. The House would be interested to know that in any one month the delays vary between less than 1 to 5 per cent of the operation of different types of aircraft. The engineering system and procedures are going to be shortly reviewed and I hope that as a result these would be reduced. As regards delays which have been occasioned by the action of the pilots in reporting sick and in adopting work-to-rule methods, I

have told the Corporation to ensure that delays of this kind which involve hardship and inconvenience to large bodies of passengers are taken serious notice of. There are other ways of ventilating grievances than methods, which result in such hardship and inconvenience and I hope the Corporation will succeed in instilling in their employees an attitude of service to passengers at all costs and inducing them not to resort to methods which constitute a disservice. I am very glad to report that as a result of the talks between the present Chairman and the Executive Committee of the ICPA the latter have passed a resolution regretting the inconvenience and hardship caused to the passengers and enjoining upon their members the avoidance of any inconvenience and hardship to passengers whilst ventilating their grievances or asserting their rights. I hope that as a result of this development instances of the nature which we experienced recently will not recur.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: Even after the assurance which was given to the effect that the services would improve, is it not a fact that there have been recurring troubles, technical troubles even with our new Caravelles and young pilots reporting sick? May I also know whether Government have taken any action against anybody even to this date in respect of all that has happened? And what is their assessment of the situation during the last month?

Shri Kanungo: As I have said in the statement, mechanical snags are inevitable, but as regards the indiscipline of the staff, I think for the last three weeks, it has been set right.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: My question was different. Is it Government's assessment and conclusion that the mechanical defects were genuine or they were otherwise?

Shri Kanungo: No, mechanical defects were genuine.