

Shri C. D. Pandey: May I know if Government is aware of the fact that even on the broad gauge, in the Delhi station proper, the caterers refuse to serve meals in the compartment and many Members have been put to inconvenience because meals are not served?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: I am sorry I am not aware of this. If the hon. Member would let me know any details of this, I will have it looked into.

श्री सुशान्त राय क्या मैं जान सकता हूँ कि मीटर गेज में जो पानी पिलाने वाले रेल्वे गेज के स्टेशन मास्टरो के घरों पर काम किया करते हैं और स्टेशन पर नहीं रहते हैं ?

Shri Hem Barua: May I know if the facilities of sleeping arrangements granted to the passengers on the broad gauge lines are also granted to the passengers on the N.E. Railway?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: Yes, Sir.

Wooden Sleepers for Railways

*179 **Shri Bishwanath Roy:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state whether it is a fact that Government have decided to import wooden sleepers for the Indian Railways?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shahnawaz Khan): The proposal is under consideration.

Shri Bishwanath Roy: May I know whether the wood available in the Andamans and in India is not fit for this purpose?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: The wood that is available is very insufficient for our requirements. Our requirements are something like 71 lakhs sleepers a year and the wood available locally is about 22 lakhs.

Shri Ranga: Including the Andamans?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: Yes.

Shri P. Ramaswamy: May I know whether it is a fact that the Government of Andhra Pradesh offered to supply the necessary wooden sleepers cut into size when the Railway Minister was on tour to Hyderabad?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: We are trying to step up the procurement of sleepers locally. The main difficulty has been one of price. The State Governments are asking a higher price. We are trying as much as we can to procure sleepers locally.

Shri B. S. Murthy: How does the rate offered by the Andhra Government compare with the imported price?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: The general price of local sleepers is between Rs. 19 to Rs. 21 per sleeper for the broad gauge. The imported price is a little higher.

Shri Punnoose: How does it compare with the imported one?

Mr. Speaker: He has said that the imported price is higher.

The Minister of Railways (Shri Jagjivan Ram): The position is this. We are short of sleepers and I have taken up the matter with the State Governments personally and I have had discussions with the Chief Ministers on this point. I have been promised all co-operation from their side. But the position of timber in our country is that in spite of the best efforts of the State Governments and Conservator of Forests, there is no chance of the requirements of the Railways being completely met from internal resources.

Raja Mahendra Pratap: Can we not use iron sleepers?

Mr. Speaker: It is something like saying There is no cake eat the cake.

Shri Dasappa: Is it not a fact that the Andamans Government was prepared to supply wooden sleepers to

them but the Government of India and the Railway Board would not purchase the same on the ground that the prices were high, and the Andaman Government shipped a lot of timber or used to ship a lot of timber to foreign countries?

Shri Jagjivan Ram No, Sir Very recently, we have sent an officer to the Andamans and we have explored the possibility of the maximum supply from the Andamans. We are going to get a few lakhs from there.

Shri Ranga Now there were two answers given by the hon Minister of Railways and the hon Deputy Minister. Arising out of the answer given by the Deputy Minister are we to understand that although the price of imported sleepers is higher than the price at which we can obtain them from our State Governments, the Government have preferred to import these things and expend their foreign exchange?

Shri Jagjivan Ram No Sir that is not the position. The position as I have explained is this. After exploiting all the available ripe timber at present in the country the requirements of the Railways will not be completely met. Even though the price of imported sleepers is higher than the indigenous sleepers we have in the circumstance to import them even at a higher price.

Shri Ranga May we have an assurance that the Government are not turning down any offer made by the State Governments to supply sleepers simply because the price which some of the State Governments demand is higher than the price at which they can obtain it from other States in our country?

Shri Jagjivan Ram We are prepared to accept every sleeper available in the country we will not refuse a single one.

Railway Accident at Chata Station

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*180. { **Shri Raghunath Singh:**
 Shri P. C. Bose:
 Shri D. V. Rao:
 Shri R. J. Rao:
 Shri Vajpayee:

Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state

(a) whether there was a Railway accident at Chata Station on the Central Railway on the 22nd June, 1957 involving heavy casualties and

(b) if so the details thereof?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (**Shri Shahnawaz Khan**) (a) and (b) On 22nd June 1957 at about 4-30 hours No 3 Down Pathankot Express on its way from Mathura to Delhi, while approaching Chata station, entered the Up Main line and collided head on with No W 20 Up Goods train which was coming on the same Up Main line in the opposite direction. Three persons received grievous injuries and 44 received minor or trivial injuries.

Shri Raghunath Singh Was there any enquiry and if so what was the result of the enquiry?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan An enquiry was held by the Government Inspector of Railways.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Light Railways

*171 **Shri Jhulan Sinha** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state

(a) the names of the light railways in the country and the route mileage, capital investment and rough estimate of their recurring expenditure per annum

(b) whether the public inconvenience and discontent with the working of these Railways have come to the knowledge of Government, and