

Shri Jagjivan Ram: There is no likelihood of undertaking the construction of new lines till our financial position improves.

Mr. Speaker: All these are suggestions.

Shri Joachim Alva: Only one more question, Sir. It is important.

Mr. Speaker: Every question is important.

Shri Joachim Alva: Was the Hubli-Karwar line ever put up before the Railway Board and has the Board rejected it or asked the Mysore Government about the feasibility of this much desired line?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: There is no question of rejecting any line. There are quite a number of lines which have been surveyed and there is every chance that if our financial position and material position improve, we may undertake the construction of some of these lines. To say that the Board had examined and rejected will not, therefore, be correct.

Shri Ranga: Is it not a fact that his predecessor had announced that the Railway Board were very keen to take up this line? This was expected to be a link among the three States at that time and two States at present—Karnataka and Bombay. How is it that the Government had failed to get this thing included in the Second Plan. It is not also expected to cost too much?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: The Government has not failed to get it included in the Second Plan. As the House is aware, the Railway Ministry wanted more than Rs. 1400 crores and the Planning Commission sanctioned Rs. 1125 crores only. Many of these schemes which were included in the Railway's Second Plan had to be dropped. It is not minimising the importance of any particular line that is being suggested in this House. Let us hope that our financial posi-

tion will improve; and we will be able to undertake the construction of some of those lines.

Railway Employees Pension Scheme

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*1716. { **Shri Tangamani:**
Shri Nardeo Snatak:
Shri Vajpayee:
Shri S. M. Banerjee:
Shri Daljit Singh:
Shri Prabhat Kar:

Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Railway employees who have so far opted for pension;

(b) the number of employees who have not so far indicated their option;

(c) whether any representations have been received from Railway workers and their organisations for modification of the Pension Scheme;

(d) whether there is any anomaly as regards the applicability of the Scheme among the various classes of employees; and

(e) if so, the reasons and what steps are contemplated to remove the anomaly?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shahnawaz Khan): (a) and (b). Out of about 11½ lakhs railway servants eligible to exercise their option, 1187 have so far opted for pension.

(c) None from any recognised labour organisations.

(d) None has come to notice so far.

(e) Does not arise.

Shri Tangamani: In view of the fact that only a small fraction of the workers have preferred this pension scheme because of the more favourable facilities they get under the Provident Fund and Gratuity scheme, will the Government reconsider the question of introducing the pension scheme?

The Minister of Railways (Shri Jagjivan Ram): I will not agree with the inference that the hon. Member has tried to draw in the question. The low percentage of the number of persons whose option has been exercised up till now is due to the fact that proper publicity was not given to the Pension Scheme. We have got the Pension Scheme translated in Hindi and in all the regional languages. The period of option has also been extended. There is no doubt that the Pension Scheme is more favourable than the Provident Fund scheme. If it is properly explained to the class III and class IV employees, I am sure a very large number of them will opt for it.

Shri Tangamani: Is it not a fact that whereas other Central Government employees are getting 8 annas in a rupee by way of pension only 6 annas in the rupee is extended to the railway employees and, whereas they were getting 8-1/3 per cent. of the basic pay plus half dearness allowance as Provident Fund contribution, if the total is worked out a class IV employee will incur a loss of at least Rs. 1000?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: That is not correct. The Pension Scheme in the Railways is on a par with all other Government Departments. In the case of class IV employees, where we found that in respect of an employee who has put in more than 30 years of service the pensionary equivalent of the Provident Fund and gratuity will be slightly less, we have made provision to give Rs. 200 extra for every year of completed service and, therefore, it more than compensates.

• **Shri Tangamani:** In reply to part (c) of the question, the hon. Deputy Minister stated that no anomaly exists today. May I know whether the organisation of class III employees or some class III employees themselves have approached the Rail Ministry saying that the qualifying period of 30 years does not include the tem-

porary and officiating periods) and as such that period of 30 years must be taken as the period of service from the date on which they entered service?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: No anomaly has come to our notice, and the instance my hon. friend has quoted is not a case of anomaly but a suggestion for giving further privileges. The Pension Scheme, as I have stated already, is the same as it is applicable to all other Government servants in the various Ministries. What the hon. Member is suggesting is something like amending or revising the existing Pension Scheme; it is not a case of anomaly.

श्री वाजपेयी : श्री सरकार न तीन महीने की अवधि बढ़ाई है। इसके बीच में रेल कर्मचारी यह निर्णय करेंगे कि उन्हें पेंशन स्कीम के साथ जाना है या प्राविडेंट फंड स्कीम के साथ। इस बात को ध्यान में रखते हुये कि अभी बहुत कम रेलवे कर्मचारियों ने कोई निर्णय किया है, क्या रेलवे मंत्रालय इस अवधि को तीन महीने और बढ़ाने पर विचार कर रहा है ?

श्री जगज्वलन राय : अभी तक तो इस पर विचार नहीं हुआ है। लेकिन अगर इस सदन के माननीय सदस्य इस मामले में कुछ दिलचस्वी लें और इसके बारे में थोड़ा सा रेलवे कर्मचारियों को बतलाने का कष्ट करें और ट्रेड यूनियन वाले भी और मिनिस्ट्री की तरफ से भी उनको ठीक तरह से बताया जायेगा तो हमें आशा है कि जो अवधि अभी रखी गई है, इसके बीच में सब लोग अपनी इच्छा जाहिर कर लेंगे। लेकिन थोड़ी देर देखने के बाद अगर इस बात की आवश्यकता समझी गई और रेलवे कर्मचारियों की तरफ से इस बात की मांग की गई कि इस अवधि में कुछ और वृद्धि होनी चाहिये, तो उस पर और किया जायेगा।

Shri S. M. Banerjee: From the statement of the hon. Minister it is

found that a majority of the workmen have not opted for pension. May I know whether a discussion will be held with the representatives of the various railwaymen's unions and federations with a view to see that the Pension Scheme is a successful one and its implications are also discussed?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: I do not think there is any necessity for such a discussion. The Scheme, as has been finalised, is before the railway employees and also those who take interest in the trade unions of the railway workers. If their objective is to examine whether this Scheme is really more beneficial to the railway employees, especially to the less paid railway employees, they should educate the workers and also advise them to opt for the Scheme which will be more beneficial to them.

Shri Prabhat Kar: May I know whether the Southern Railway Labour Union after their conference have sent a comprehensive scheme for the amendment of this particular Pension Scheme?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: I have no knowledge.

Shri Tangamani: rose—

Mr. Speaker: I am going to the next question. The hon. Minister has already stated that it is the same Scheme that applies to all other Government servants. Evidently, hon. Members want to have it changed and modified. They have suggested it openly and indirectly, but the hon. Minister is adamant about his own attitude.

Shri Tangamani: There is one more point, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: I always allow four supplementary questions to be put by the hon. Member; even then he is not satisfied. He must be satisfied with the various other questions.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: You have allowed only one question, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: One to Shri Banerjee and four to Shri Tangamani between them five. We will now go to the next question.

Procurement of Rice in Andhra Pradesh

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*1719. { **Shri Rajagopala Rao:**
Shri Rami Reddy:

Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to lay a statement showing:

(a) what are the Districts in Andhra Pradesh declared by Government as 'Specified Areas' for the procurement of rice;

(b) what is the total quantity of rice and paddy offered by the millers in Andhra Pradesh since the revision of the prices of rice in December, 1957;

(c) whether there are any offers from the rice-millers from the Districts other than the 'Specified Areas' for the sale of rice; and

(d) what is the basis on which the price of paddy and rice is fixed?

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. M. Thomas): (a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha [See Appendix VII, annexure No. 110.]

Shri Rajagopala Rao: May I know whether the prices are fixed in the interest of the consumers or in the interest of the producers?

Shri A. M. Thomas: We are not fixing prices either at the request of the consumer or the producer; we fix prices having regard to the conditions existing now, and also not to prejudice either the consumer or the producer.

Mr. Speaker: Both the consumer and the producer.