

(ख) यदि हां, तो इस सम्बन्ध में क्या कार्यवाही की गई है ?

गृह-कार्य उमरची (श्रीमती आल्वा) :

(क) जो नहीं।

(ख) प्रश्न ही नहीं उठता।

An Hon. Member: It may be read in English also.

Mr. Speaker: Yes.

Shrimati Alva: (a) No.

(b) Does not arise.

श्री अमर सिंह डास : क्या सरकार की इस बात का जानकारी है कि मध्य प्रदेश के झाबुआ और भार भा में भुवमरी फैल रही है ?

Shrimati Alva: There may be scarcity of foodgrains and the prices might have gone high, but there is no starvation.

Controller of Coal Accounts

*264. **Shrimati Ila Palchoudhury:** Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the office of the Controller of Coal Accounts at Calcutta has been closed from 1st May, 1957; and

(b) if so the reasons therefor?

The Deputy Minister of Finance (Shri B. R. Bhagat): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. The accounting work of the Collieries, hitherto done by the Controller of Coal Accounts, has been taken over from the 1st May, 1957 by the National Coal Development Corporation (Private) Limited.

Shrimati Ila Palchoudhuri: In view of the fact that out of the 250 employees whose services have been transferred to the National Coal Development Corporation (Private) Limited in Ranchi, 200 who were appointed before 1st of May have the option of returning to the parent body

whereas the rest have not, may I know what is the Government's policy about the rest?

Shri B. R. Bhagat: About 52 persons who were appointed on and after 2nd May, 1955 had been warned at the time of appointment that their services were liable to be transferred to any organisation which might take over the management of the Government collieries and, therefore, they do not have that option.

Shrimati Ila Palchoudhuri: May I know whether when this sort of option is not there, it has been resulting in a lot of discontentment among those people, and may I know what the Government propose to do about this?

Shri B. R. Bhagat: They have been absorbed in various Accounts and Audit Offices. So, there is no cause for any discontentment or anything of that sort.

Grant of Compensatory Allowance

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*205. { **Shri Hem Barua:**
Shri Achal Singh:

Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state whether Government have decided to grant Assam Compensatory Allowances to the Central Government employees throughout Assam?

The Deputy Minister of Finance (Shri B. R. Bhagat): No, Sir. The matter is under examination.

Shri Hem Barua: May I know why the special allowances which were paid at 25 per cent of the salary, subject to a minimum of 30 per cent, to the post and telegraph workers of Dibrugarh, Manipur, etc. in Assam and in those hilly areas, up to 1947, were withdrawn? What are the reasons for the withdrawal? May I know whether the Government have taken the realities into account, namely, that the food prices in those areas are very high?

Shri B. R. Bhagat: I could not follow the first part of the question. Which was withdrawn?

Shri Hem Barua: Up to 1947, the P & T workers enjoyed the special compensatory allowance at a rate of 25 per cent of the salary with a minimum of Rs. 30 per mensem, and that was withdrawn after 1947. What were the considerations that led to the withdrawal of this special compensatory allowance? Only if you ignore the realities that the prices in those areas are high, you can withdraw those allowances.

Shri B. R. Bhagat: That particular allowance was given in view of the risk faced by the employees owing to the war conditions. The Pay Commission which was appointed later went into the matter and recommended the withdrawal, and said that they did not think that a revival could be justified on any rational consideration. In deference to the recommendations of the Pay Commission, the allowance was withdrawn.

Shri Hem Barua: May I know if the Government are aware that the Pay Commission took the 1939 price-level as the basis for their assumption and their subsequent consideration, and they thought that the prices would stabilise at 160 to 170? But the prices have more or less stabilised at 400, and even now the prices are high in Assam, and they are uniformly high. What are the reasons for the withdrawal of the allowance?

Shri B. R. Bhagat: Nowhere have the allowances and pay-scales of the Central Government employees been considered on purely local conditions. Even the Pay Commission suggested that no local conditions could be the basis of compensatory allowance. Therefore, the question of giving special allowances in a particular area does not arise. But the matter is under consideration. The National Federation of Posts and Telegraph workers are taking up the matter with the Communications Ministry and at present, the matter is under discussion between them.

Shri Hem Barua: May I know if the Minister is aware of the fact that it was this Government that granted the compensatory allowances to the workers in Assam on the consideration of the fact that there are hills and forests in those areas and commodities and things are not easily available?

Shri B. R. Bhagat: As I said, the whole matter is under consideration. The National Federation of Posts and Telegraphs employees are having discussion with the Communications Minister. We would be able to come to a decision after the discussions are over.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: May I know if the Experts Committee consisting of officials went to Assam to make on-the-spot investigations into the living conditions there, and whether they did not recommend an enhanced rate of allowance for these Central Government employees in those areas in Assam? May I also know why the Government are delaying the publication of that report?

Shri B. R. Bhagat: The expert committee went into this question as far back as 1955 and made certain recommendations about some increase in the compensatory allowances for five hill districts of Assam where conditions were very difficult; and, the Government have implemented that recommendation.

Shri Hem Barua: Is the Government well aware of the fact that while granting increased compensatory allowances to five hill districts of Assam, they are going to drive a wedge into the workers by dividing the workers into two groups, one group of privileged few and the other group of unprivileged many?

Mr. Speaker: The question Hour is over.