

Some Hon. Members rose—

Mr. Speaker: We are going on into a discussion as to how much land has been brought under cultivation, various other methods of improvement and so on, just like a general discussion.

Shri Shahan Singh: I want to ask only one question. May I know whether any particular facility is given by the Government to the cultivators for adopting the Japanese method of cultivation?

Shri S. K. Dey: Seeds are supplied to the cultivators, so also fertilisers. Other such facilities are also given apart from technical assistance in regard to cultivation.

Baraset-Hasnabad Railway Line

*1421. **Shri T. K. Chaudhuri:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether the final alignment for the laying of the broad-gauge Railway line from Baraset to Hasnabad via Basirhat has been decided upon in consultation with the West Bengal State Government;

(b) whether the preliminary engineering and traffic survey for this line has been completed; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): (a) The formal approval of the State Government to the final alignment is still awaited.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Shri T. K. Chaudhuri: If the survey has been completed from the railway side, may I know why it is that this year some provision has still been made for this survey in the Railway Budget?

The Minister of Railways (Shri Jagjivan Ram): There is no question of any further survey. The survey has been completed, sanction has been accorded and the work is to be taken

in hand as soon as formal approval of the West Bengal Government regarding the alignment is received.

Shrimati Benu Chakravarty: Considering that the traffic survey and the engineering preliminary report have already been completed nearly two months back, may I know the reason why the West Bengal Government has not yet given its approval?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: I cannot say. We have written to the State Government. That is a very thickly populated area and the State Government will have to acquire the land for the Railways. Therefore, we want to have their approval for the alignment. They suggested certain modifications which we have included, and now we have asked for their final approval. I do not know why the delay has occurred.

Shrimati Benu Chakravarty: In view of the fact that by the Planning Act we can start construction work even pending the land acquisition proceedings, may I know whether actually the Railway Ministry is going to start construction immediately even without waiting for the land acquisition?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: We have sanctioned certain works which we can start—construction of houses and buildings. That work has taken up, but the actual construction of the railway line cannot be undertaken until the land acquisition proceedings are over.

Shri S. C. Samanta: May I know whether the numerous complaints put forward against the alignment have been finally settled?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: The final suggestion of the West Bengal Government regarding the alignment where the railway can be most useful has been agreed to.

Shrimati Benu Chakravarty: Rs. 20 lakhs have been allotted in the budget for this year. Now, about half the year is over. May I know whether the amount is actually going to be spent, or it will be allowed to lapse again owing to the procedural rules, etc.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: In any case, it will not lapse, and we hope to spend the money as soon as we receive the approval of the West Bengal Government.

Short Notice Question and Answer

Steel Purchasing Mission

S.N.Q. No. 22. Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) Whether the Steel Purchasing Mission of Railway Board which visited Europe recently has concluded a deal for supply of steel;

(b) If so, the quantity and value of steel in Indian currency to be supplied;

(c) when they will be delivered at Indian Ports; and

(d) projects likely to be expedited on receipt of this supply?

The Minister of Railways (Shri Jagjivan Ram): (a) The Steel purchasing Mission from the Railway Board have placed orders for most of the steel requirements of the Railways;

(b) Orders have been placed for 5.22 lakh tons of iron and steel valued approximately 38 crores of rupees;

(c) Shipments have already commenced from August 1957 and are expected to be completed by March 1959.

(d) mainly track renewals.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: May I know whether the Mission observed any abnormal spurt in the prices of steel in those countries because we had announced that we are in dire need of steel?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: No. There was no rise in prices on that account and it is rather an abnormal phenomenon that lower prices were quoted.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: May I know whether, in the agreement that has been entered into, any penalty provisions have been made for short supply or delayed supply?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: I think that is a normal clause in all such agreements.

Shri Sinhasan Singh: May I know which are the countries from where these supplies are coming?

Mr. Speaker: What is the object?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: There are many countries. I can read out the names.

Mr. Speaker: No, no. If the hon. Member is interested in a particular country, he will put the question.

Shri Sinhasan Singh: I want to know.

Mr. Speaker: What is the object?

Shri Sinhasan Singh: The object is, knowing the names of the countries.

Mr. Speaker: Any particular question must be able to shed more light on the issue. The items must be purchased from some countries.

Shri Ranga rose—

Shri Sinhasan Singh: The other countries may offer at lesser prices.

Mr. Speaker: He may say which is the lowest price and which country offers it.

Shri Sinhasan Singh: I want to know wherefrom they are getting it and whether the offer was made to countries which might have quoted lesser rates.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: We have purchased from ten countries—all the important countries of the world.

Mr. Speaker: Our time is too precious for all these countries.

Shri Ranga: In the light of past experience with the railways themselves, regarding their purchases and the agreements they have reached, may I know whether the hon. Minister himself took the trouble to look into the agreement and see whether a proper penalty clause is put in there for proper deliveries. Otherwise, so