

(b) whether it is a fact that much of the land acquired is not necessary for the purpose aforesaid;

(c) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the distress of people owning plots in the said land; and

(d) whether it is contemplated to release the land surplus to requirements of aerodrome construction?

**The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur):** (a) and (b). A Civil Aerodrome comprising an area of 104 bighas was constructed at Asansol long ago. During the war an additional area of 1568 bighas approximately was requisitioned under the Defence of India Rules to meet the requirements of the Allied Air Forces. After the war it was decided to acquire this area but the Government of India were advised that there were coal deposits under this area and that acquisition of the coal to be left in pillars for the support of the runway alone would cost Government Rs. 50 lakhs approximately besides the wastage of coal involved. It has accordingly been decided to abandon the idea of developing this aerodrome and to retain the old civil aerodrome comprising 104 bighas of land as it originally existed.

(c) and (d). The West Bengal Government, who were requested in January last to reconvey the surplus land to its owners, have now intimated that their Refugee, Relief and Rehabilitation Department are considering the question of taking over the entire surplus area for the resettlement of refugees and that they have referred the matter to the Rehabilitation Ministry of the Government of India. Pending a decision in the matter, the Government of West Bengal have withheld further action in regard to the disposal of this area.

#### CARDAMOM, PEPPER AND GINGER (PRICES)

\*1308-A. **Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy:** (a) Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state whether there is a precipitous fall in the price of cardamom, pepper and ginger?

(b) If the answer to part (a) above be in the affirmative, what are the real and immediate causes for the fall in prices of these commodities?

(c) What action have Government taken to stabilise the prices of these commodities?

(d) Has this price slump affected the production of these articles?

**The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai):** (a) Yes, during the last three or four months.

(b) (i) Reduction in demand outside.

(ii) Liquidation of stocks piled up under the scare of the Korean War.

(c) No ready means of stabilisation exist in the case of these crops whose price is so much dependent on foreign demands but the Indian Council of Agricultural Research has appointed a Cash Crops Enquiry Committee to examine the various aspects of production and marketing of such crops, to examine whether any centralized direction in the sphere of production and marketing is feasible.

(d) It is too early to gauge the effect on the 1952-53 crops.

#### RAILWAY PORTERS

\*1309. **Shri Ramji Verma:** (a) Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state whether Government are aware that the system of hiring Railway Porters through a contractor still exists on most of the Railway stations in Northern Railway?

(b) Is it a fact that Government have abolished this system on certain stations and are directly recruiting Railway Porters?

(c) Are Government aware that the Aligarh Coolie Union have demanded the abolition of the contract system?

(d) Will Government clarify its policy to this regard?

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan):** (a) Yes.

(b) Government have accepted the policy of decasualisation of porters and of directly licensing them.

(c) A request from the Aligarh Coolie Union to abolish the Contract System has just been received but arrangements have already been in hand to extend the system of decasualisation of porters to Aligarh and to certain other stations as well.

(d) Government's policy is generally to decasualise railway porters at all stations where the Contract system is in vogue at present.

#### ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES (TEMPORARY POWERS) ACT (SUGAR FACTORIES)

\*1310. **Dr. Ram Subhag Singh:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of India have taken over any sugar factory under the Essential Supplies