

while No. 73 Up Asansol-Shahajahanpur Passenger train was running between Gaya and Kashta Stations, one coach on the train caught fire. 5 passengers died, 2 received grievous injuries or burns and 14 others sustained simple injuries.

(b) *Prima facie* the fire was caused by a package containing a petrol tin, belonging to some passenger, catching fire from a lighted match thrown carelessly inside the compartment by a smoking passenger sitting nearby.

(c) First aid was rendered to the injured persons at the site of the accident and they were sent to the Pilgrims' Hospital, Gaya, thereafter. So far as compensation to the sufferers and the families of the deceased persons is concerned, this will be fixed by the *ex-officio* Claims Commissioner of the area concerned on receipt of applications under section 82(c) of the Indian Railways Act, 1890.

(d) Carriage of dangerous and inflammable articles by passengers in trains is prohibited under section 59 of the Indian Railways Act. The undesirability and the risks attendant on the infringement of this law have already been widely publicised through Time Tables, notices, posters, etc. and these measures will be continued in a more intensive form.

**Shri N. P. Damodaran:** May I know, Sir, whether the railway authorities take sufficient care to see that explosives and inflammable articles are not carried in compartments meant for passengers?

**Shri Alagesan:** Sufficient care is being taken; but in spite of it some people do it.

**Shri N. P. Damodaran:** May I know, Sir, the extent of damage caused to railway property?

**Shri Alagesan:** About Rs. 40,000.

**Shri V. P. Nayar:** Have Government ever before considered the desirability of having fire extinguishers inside third class compartments?

**Shri Alagesan:** There were fire extinguishers; but they were not sufficient to cope with the fire.

**Shri V. P. Nayar:** May I know whether in this particular case the fire extinguisher was put into operation?

**Shri Alagesan:** Yes, Sir.

**Pandit D. N. Tiwary:** What action has been taken against the passenger who carried the petrol?

**Several Hon. Members:** He died!

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**Shri G. S. Singh:** May I know whether the communication cord and the other alarm facilities were working in this carriage?

**Shri Alagesan:** Yes, Sir.

**Shri S. N. Das:** May I know whether those who had burnt faces have been identified?

**Shri Alagesan:** The enquiry is still going on.

**Shri S. N. Das:** I want to know whether the persons who were burnt to death were identified—to what part of the country they belonged?

**Shri Alagesan:** My information is that the person who threw the matchstick wanted to extinguish it; but in the attempt he himself died.

**Shri Nambiar:** May I know whether the fire extinguishers are provided in third class compartments or in guard's van?

**Shri Alagesan:** In the brake van.

#### TELEPHONE CONNECTIONS FOR AGRA

\*828. **Ch. Raghuraj Singh:** (a) Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state whether it is a fact that there is a large number of pending applications for telephone connections in Agra District?

(b) How long will it take to supply telephone connections there?

(c) Who are the members of the Committee which sanctions these connections?

**The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur):** (a) Yes.

(b) It is expected that by about 1955 it will be possible to give connections to all those who are now on the waiting list.

(c) Telephones in Agra are sanctioned on the advice of a Telephone Advisory Committee which consists of the following members:—

- |                                               |                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| (1) Director of<br>Telegraphs,<br>Lucknow.    | Chairman.                                     |
| (2) District Magistrate, Agra.                | Representative<br>of the State<br>Government. |
| (3) Seth Achal<br>Singh.                      | Representative<br>of Parliament.              |
| (4) Rai Sahib Lala<br>Ram Kishore.            | Representative<br>of Trade &<br>Commerce.     |
| (5) Divisional Engineer,<br>Telegraphs, Agra. | Secretary.                                    |

**Ch. Raghur Singh:** May I know how many applications are still pending?

**Shri Raj Bahadur:** I would like to have notice of that question.

**WAGES FOR KOLAR GOLD FIELD MINES WORKERS**

\*829. **Shri Thimmaiah:** (a) Will the Minister of Labour be pleased to state the decisions of the Wage Board regarding the wage question in respect of the labourers of Kolar Gold Field Mines?

(b) When do Government propose to give effect to the decisions of the Board in respect of wages?

(c) Have any directions been issued to the authorities of the Kolar Gold Field Mines regarding the decisions of the Wage Board?

**The Minister of Labour (Shri V. V. Giri):** (a) Presumably reference is to the recommendations of the Kolar Gold Field Minimum Wages Committee appointed under the now defunct Mysore Minimum Wages Act, 1949. A summary of the recommendations of that Committee relating to wages is placed on the Table of the House. [See Appendix V, annexure No. 14.]

(b) The Mysore Minimum Wages Act, 1949, has been replaced by the Minimum Wages Act, 1948. The gold mining industry is not covered by the Minimum Wages Act, 1948, but the question of including it is under consideration.

(c) Does not arise in view of the reply to part (b).

**Shri Frank Anthony:** Is it a fact that there is a tremendous disparity in the conditions of service as between the covenanted and non-covenanted staff in the Kolar Goldfields?

**Shri V. V. Giri:** This question does not arise out of the question tabled.

**Shri B. S. Murthy:** May I know, Sir, how long Government would take to give the benefits of the Minimum Wages Act to the Kolar Gold Field workers?

**Shri V. V. Giri:** Not very long.

**Shri Nambiar:** May I know when the benefits of the Minimum Wages Act of 1948 will be given to these workers?

**Shri V. V. Giri:** I am trying to see how best the advantages could be given to those workers under our Minimum Wages Act.

**Shri Frank Anthony:** Is it a fact that the subordinate staff in the Kolar Gold Fields do not get any gratuity?

**Shri V. V. Giri:** I take the information from the hon. member: I do not know myself.

**Shri Frank Anthony:** Is it also not a fact that the covenanted staff get pension and provident fund, while the non-covenanted staff only get provident fund?

**Shri V. V. Giri:** I shall go into that also.

**Shri Joachim Alva:** In looking into the question of meagre payment to the workers in the Kolar Gold Fields, has the Ministry of Labour examined the large amount of dividends paid to a number of share-holders, most of whom are not in this country?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** That is going away from the main question.

**WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**

**EXPORT OF ORANGES AND PINE-APPLES FROM ASSAM**

\*830. **Shri Amjad Ali:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large quantity of oranges and pine-apples in the State of Assam is wasted for want of transport facilities for exporting the same from Assam for marketing every year;

(b) what steps the Government of India propose to take to prevent this wastage; and

(c) whether the Government of Assam has been suggesting airlifting of the same?

**The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai):** (a) Yes.

(b) A team of experts on refrigeration and canning was sent to Assam to explore the possibility of profitable disposal of oranges etc. grown in the State. Certain immediate and long term measures have been suggested in their report which is under the consideration in consultation with the Assam Government.

(c) The Assam Government asked the Central Government to arrange for air-lifting of oranges in 1950 and 1951. This was done. No such request has been received thereafter.