

sugar they could have got it at controlled prices. But, as I said, before the allotment was released, it was cancelled.

Shri Gidwai: Was the officer prosecuted in any appropriate court for making such a statement?

Shri Kidwai: As I said, we entrusted the case to the Home Department for investigation by the Special Police.

INDO-U.S. AGREEMENT FOR IMPORT OF STEEL

***1668. Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy:** (a) Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state whether India entered into an agreement with the U.S.A. in December, 1952 for the supply of 55,000 tons of steel to India during the year ending June 30, 1953?

(b) What are the terms of this agreement?

(c) How will the proceeds from the sale of this steel be utilised and for what purposes?

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): (a) The Government of India have entered into an Agreement with the U.S. Government for import of 1,10,000 tons of steel for agricultural purposes under the Technical Co-operation Programme.

(b) Copies of the relevant agreements are placed on the Table. [See Appendix X, annexure No. 29.]

(c) The sale proceeds of this steel will be utilised for the prosecution of further projects of economic development of India mutually agreeable to the two Governments as provided for in the Project Agreement. It has been agreed that the bulk of this steel will be sold to farmers and village artisans for the manufacture of implements, cart tyres and the like. The rest will be available to manufacturers of farm machinery.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: May I know what is the total dollar value of these imports?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: The agreement does not mention the dollar value, but it mentions the quantity. The agreement also mentions the total estimated cost of the project as \$8,385,000 and the rupee contribution would be 12 lakhs.

Shri C. D. Pande: May I know whether the steel imported from U.S.A. is anyway cheaper than the scrap steel that we send outside?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): It was a free gift the

sale proceeds of which would be utilised for development purposes.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May I know the agency through which this steel will be sold to the agriculturists?

Shri Kidwai: It is done by the Industries Ministry.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Is it going to be sold to the agriculturists through the Agricultural Officers as it was being done previously, or is there any special agency through which it will be done?

Shri Kidwai: This steel is allotted for the use of the agriculturists for the manufacture of implements and the allotment is made through the State Governments.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: May I know what is the amount so far imported?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: I have no information.

Shri G. P. Sinha: May I know whether it is distributed through co-operative societies?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: It is actually mentioned in the agreement as to how it should be distributed, either through the State Governments or through co-operative societies.

Shri Kidwai: It depends on the State Governments.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: In view of the fact that during post-war years whatever iron was allotted to the agriculturists was not made available to them through the agencies which were entrusted with that task, may I know whether the same agencies will be given that work now?

Shri Kidwai: As I said, the distribution is left to the State Governments and we cannot supersede the State Governments. The agriculturists have got their representatives in the State Legislatures to press their complaints, if any.

RETURN TICKETS

***1669. Shri K. P. Sinha:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Cheap Return Tickets are issued from Bombay to some summer stations nearby;

(b) since when this new system has been introduced; and

(c) whether it is proposed to give similar facilities with regard to other summer stations also?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) Cheap return tickets from Bombay are issued as follows:—

- (i) For first, second and inter classes to Abu Road and certain other Hill Stations such as Simla, Ootacamund etc., available for three months at $1\frac{1}{2}$ single journey fares.
 - (ii) For second and third classes to Nasik Road and Devlali available for six days at $1\frac{1}{2}$ single journey fares.
 - (iii) For first class only to Aurangabad available for eight days at $1\frac{1}{2}$ single journey fares.
- (b) From 1st March 1953 in the case of item (i) and from 1st April 1953 in the case of items (ii) and (iii).

(c) Issue of return tickets to other similar stations etc., will be considered if the net result is expected to increase the revenue and provided the Railways are in a position to carry the additional traffic offered.

Shri K. P. Sinha: May I know the special reason that impelled the Government to take this decision?

Shri Alagesan: To provide amenities to people who want to go and spend their time in the hill stations during summer. This started in the year 1951 and we gave the concession in 1952 and also this year.

Shri Dabhi: May I know the reason why third class return tickets are not issued to all stations?

Shri Alagesan: Under item (ii), we are issuing third class tickets also.

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: May I know if some facilities and concessions have been given to artistes who travel in groups of five, and if so, what are the concessions?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Does it come under 'Bombay to some stations'? Are artistes going to hill stations for summer?

Shri G. P. Sinha: May I know whether third class tickets are issued to other hill stations as well and, if not, why not?

Shri Alagesan: No, Sir, to other hill stations they are not being issued.

Shri Dabhi: What are the reasons for not issuing third class return tickets to all stations?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: That is an argument. They are making an experiment.

Prof. D. C. Sharma: May I know if similar tickets are issued from the Delhi station also to hill stations; if not, why not?

Shri Alagesan: They are issued from Delhi to all hill stations.

Shri N. M. Lingam: May I know if this ticket is available in respect of journeys by the air-conditioned coach also?

Shri Alagesan: Yes.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I am calling the next question.

Shri Nambiar: I want to ask only one question, Sir. We have Ootacamund and other hill stations in Madras, I want to know whether these tickets are issued to the Nilgiris and such other places.

Shri Alagesan: I have mentioned Ooty here.

RETRENCHMENT OF WORKERS

***1670. Shri K. P. Sinha:** (a) Will the Minister of Labour be pleased to state whether it is a fact that a large number of workers employed in the Jute Industry in West Bengal have recently been retrenched?

(b) What is the total number of workers thrown out of employment?

(c) What are the reasons for retrenchment?

(d) What step, if any, have Government taken to stop retrenchment?

The Deputy Minister of Labour (Shri Abid Ali): (a) to (d). This matter is mainly the concern of the West Bengal Government and they have been requested to intimate to the Government of India action taken by them.

Shri K. P. Sinha: Is it the policy of Government to see that the workers are paid for the unemployment period?

Shri Abid Ali: Yes, Sir. This matter has already been considered. Formerly, a communique was issued on this question. Again we are considering that the workers should get some relief during the forced unemployment period.

Shri K. P. Sinha: Is it a fact that in consultation with the employers' organisations Government are committed to the fact that no retrenchment should take place without the consent of the workers' organisations?

Shri Abid Ali: In case the workers feel that the retrenchment was unreasonable, there is machinery provided for to consider this matter.