

locust invasion. On the whole we have not been very successful.

Shri S. N. Das: May I know whether any charge is made for lending the equipment for control measures to the various States, or are they lent free?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: At the most, we charge only the transport charges. We do not charge any rent. I am, of course, talking from memory. But the equipment with the Centre is not sufficient. We want to enlarge it.

Shri T. N. Singh: With special reference to losses in storages in Government godowns, may I know what steps have been taken by the Government to reduce these losses due to rodents etc., and how far they have succeeded? I want to know the measure of the money spent and the measure of the success gained.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: The question really refers to damage of crops by pests and diseases.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Not to storage.

Shri Boovaraghasamy: May I know the area which suffered the greatest destruction of crops by these enemies of crops? What is the total quantity of crops destroyed in that area?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: As I have already stated, it is very difficult to make an estimate. I at least have no information whether any particular area is subject to any particular pest. Of course, about locusts we know that Rajasthan gets infested earlier than any other part.

Kumari Annie Mascarene: May I know, Sir, whether any scheme or apparatus has been submitted by any person from Travancore-Cochin for the destruction of these insects and pests?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Locusts, is it?

Kumari Annie Mascarene: Insects and pests.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Generally.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: At least if the hon. Member means this year, we have not received any.

Shri Muniswamy: In view of the fact that it has come to the notice of the Government that large quantities of agricultural crops are destroyed by the pests, may I know whether any examination was made to find out at what stage such destruction takes place generally?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: I do not know what period or what area he means.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: What is the height of the crop when these pests come in, whether there has been rain already, at what stage?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: For various crops, the pests come in at various stages.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Each pest has got its own time.

Shri S. N. Das: Have arrangements been made to do research with a view to prevent these plant diseases?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Researches are always going on. We have got more than one institute.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: This is a general question. He gives a general answer and nobody is enlightened. Next question.

SUPPLY OF WAGONS

*1280. **Shri A. M. Thomas:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in some parts of the country wagons are available but there is no adequate booking compared with the supply.

(b) the position of availability of wagons in the various Railway Zones; and

(c) what steps have been taken by Government recently to improve the supply of wagons and to avoid transport bottle-neck?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) Since about the middle of August, wagons have been available in excess of the overall demand for traffic on the Broad Gauge of the Northern and Eastern Railways and the Metre Gauge of the Southern Railway.

(b) On all the Railways except the North Eastern Railway, the movement of traffic for the free routes i.e., routes, the line capacity of which is not a limiting factor, is more or less current generally. As regards routes with limited capacity, the movements are subject to limited quotas though in some of these cases also the demands for general goods are being fully met.

On the North Eastern Railway the rail transport available is not adequate to meet all the demands currently, due to inadequacy of wagons.

(c) More new wagons and locomotives are on order and are proposed to be ordered. Line capacity of some of the difficult routes is also in the process of augmentation.

Shri A. M. Thomas: We have laid down in the Five Year Plan a target of 30,000 wagons to be produced within the country. May I know what production has been achieved so far during the period of the Plan?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Have they not circulated the progress on the Plan?

Shri A. M. Thomas: The production so far made.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Is it not contained there?

Shri Alagesan: Our orders on the indigenous industry regarding wagons have been to the tune of 8,000 per year. They are able to meet this demand.

Shri P. C. Bose: Some time ago the Railway authorities proposed to introduce a scheme called "Rationalisation of Wagon Supply Scheme". What has happened to that scheme for equitable distribution of wagon supply?

Shri Alagesan: We are not aware of any such scheme.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: No rationalisation is undertaken?

Shri Barman: In view of the admission by Government that there is shortage of wagons in the North Eastern Railway and that there is some surplus in some other Railways, is it proposed by Government to divert some of the wagons to the North Eastern Railway?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: These are small things which they will naturally do.

Shri Alagesan: I said with reference to part (a) of the question that the wagon supply is equal to or more than the demand on the Broad Gauge of the Northern and Eastern Railways and the Metre Gauge of the Southern Railway. The North Eastern Railway is entirely Metre Gauge.

Shri Dabhi: May I know, Sir, whether it is a fact that the position regarding the availability of wagons is very unsatisfactory in the Western Railway?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: In all Railways other than those mentioned, it is unsatisfactory.

Shri M. L. Dwivedi: I want to know the system for the allocation of wagons to different regional Railways. Are these allocations made on actual requirements, or on a par for all the Railways?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Does it depend upon the length of the Railway or the demand? That is what evidently the hon. Member wants.

Shri Alagesan: It depends, of course, on the requirements of each Railway, and it is done by the Railway Board.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: On what basis?

Shri Alagesan: On the basis of requirements.

Sardar A. S. Saigal: May I know whether it is a fact that at the time

of allotting wagons, the authorities do not allot wagons according to the indents?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: They delay—is it? What is the question? The hon. Member must make himself understood.

Sardar A. S. Saigal: The question is this: whether it is a fact that at the time of allotting wagons, the authorities do not allot wagons according to the indents?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Where? In the stations?

Sardar A. S. Saigal: Indents for the wagons.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: It is not possible to understand. There are various authorities allotting wagons.

Sardar A. S. Saigal: Indents placed by the traders.

Shri Alagesan: As far as indents are concerned, these indents are not to be taken as genuine in all cases. There have been instances recently when we made bulk supplies of wagons, many of these indents fell through and were withdrawn. They were exposed to be very bogus indents. I can give the figures also. In Delhi Division 218 wagons were withdrawn for destinations *via* Bezwada when we placed wagons at their disposal, and *via* Secunderabad 71 wagons were withdrawn; *via* Raichur 132 and *via* Botgi 37. On the Southern Railway also similar things have happened, and the merchants have had to surrender Rs. 30,000 over a period of a few months.

Shri K. C. Sodha: May I know, Sir, whether any such scheme as "Own your wagon" has been put before the public?

Shri Alagesan: Yes, Sir. Certain trade interests have been asked to give their opinions and reactions to this scheme.

Shri T. K. Chaudhuri: The hon. Minister stated that the availability of wagons in the Eastern Zone is ade-

quate. But we find that the availability of wagons, at least to collieries, has been half the number of the daily averages indented by the collieries. Why is it so?

Shri Alagesan: Even with regard to movement of coal, Sir, we have got sufficient wagons. In fact, at one time there were more wagons than could be utilised.

Shri P. C. Bose: May I know, Sir, whether there is any provision in the Railways Act to punish those who indent wagons and do not load them with materials?

Shri Alagesan: As I said in my reply to another supplementary question, the deposit money placed with the Railways is forfeited.

ERNAKULAM-QUILON RAILWAY LINE

*1281. **Shri A. M. Thomas:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) how far the earth work on the Ernakulam-Quilon rail link has progressed;

(b) when is the line likely to be thrown open for traffic between Ernakulam and Kottayam;

(c) whether the work in connection with the construction of bridges has started;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the possibility of electrification of the line is being investigated; and

(f) If so, with what results?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): (a) 124 lakhs Cft. of earth work have been carried out on Ernakulam-Kottayam section i.e. roughly 25 per cent. of the work under this Head.

(b) It is programmed to be opened in 1955.

(c) Yes.