

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): (a) to (e). A statement giving the required information is placed on the Table [See Appendix III, annexure No. 21.]

NON-PAYMENT OF SUGAR-CANE PRICES

***562. Shri Gopala Rao:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) the amount paid by the sugar mills to the sugarcane growers for their sugarcane during the years 1951-52 and 1952-53 (State-wise);

(b) the total amount in arrears of these dues during the years 1951-52 and 1952-53;

(c) the carry over of the previous years separately and State-wise; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to ensure the early payment of these arrears?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): (a) to (c). A statement showing the information is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix III, annexure No. 22.]

(d) The State Governments were advised by the Central Government in January, 1953 to keep a constant watch over the position regarding payment of cane prices and take steps to ensure that payments are not unduly delayed. The State Governments have been taking all possible steps to expedite payments of arrears of cane price.

REVISION OF POSTAL RATES ON BOOKS

***563. Shri A. K. Gopalan:** Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the agitation carried on by the authors, printers, publishers and booksellers all over the country against the increase in postal rates on books;

(b) whether Government have received representations in this connection; and

(c) if so, whether Government propose to revise these rates and restore the pre-budget rates?

The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a). The Government have seen press reports of resolutions passed at meetings held at several places protesting against the revised rates for book, pattern and sample packets.

(b) Yes.

(c) No, the rates were revised only in the last Budget Session.

STRIKE BY COAL MINERS OF DHANBAD

***564. Shri Vittal Rao:** (a) Will the Minister of Labour be pleased to state whether it is a fact that Government have assured the miners of Dhanbad that they would appoint a new Conciliation Board for the coal industry?

(b) If so, when will the Board be set up?

(c) Will the Board have representatives of all the miners' organisations on it?

The Minister of Labour (Shri V. V. Giri): (a) to (c). The request of the colliery workers for the setting up of a new Board of Conciliation was under the consideration of Government for some time. It has now been decided to refer a number of disputes in the coal fields to an Industrial Tribunal for adjudication. The Tribunal will be set up as soon as the arrangements are complete.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS

***565. Shri Vittal Rao:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) (i) the number of railway accidents which have taken place in the year 1952-53,

(ii) the nature of the accidents, and

(iii) the number of persons killed and injured separately mentioning casualties among railway staff:

(b) whether railway accidents due to collisions between trains are increasing;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) what measures Government propose to adopt to prevent such accidents?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shahnawaz Khan): (a) (i) and (ii). The total number of Railway accidents by derailments to passenger trains was 196 and to the goods and other trains, 1030;

By collisions involving passenger trains was 29 and those involving goods and other trains, 61.

(iii) The number of passengers killed in accidents to trains or in train operation was 53 and the number injured, 357. The number of railway servants killed in accidents to trains, failure of rolling-stock and permanent way was 17 and of those injured, 168.

(b) No. 90 collisions to trains occurred during 1952-53 against 94 during the year 1951-52.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Steps taken include effective disciplinary action against the Railway staff held responsible for accidents, frequent and intensive inspection of permanent way and rolling-stock etc., systematic examination of the working of stations, grant of special priority for works required to enhance the margin of safety etc., education of staff in the safety rules through circular letters etc., tightening up of supervision, frequent warning to staff to remain vigilant and cautious and making them safety-minded, provision of refresher courses at training schools at regular intervals, etc., etc.

CONSULTING ENGINEERS OF PORT TRUST OF MADRAS

*566. Shri K. C. Sodhia: (a) Will the Minister of Transport be pleased to state who are the consulting engineers of the Port Trust of Madras in London?

(b) Have the other Port Trusts of India got their own consulting engineers?

(c) What amount was paid to these consulting engineers by the Port Trusts concerned during 1952-53?

(d) Do the Port Trusts consult the Government of India in these appointments?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a). Messrs Rendel, Palmer and Tritton Ltd.

(b) Yes.

(c) Madras	Rs. 34,345
Bombay	Rs. 2,48,280
Calcutta	Rs. 1,15,747

(d) The Port Trusts are required by law to obtain Government's approval before appointing any one as their Consulting Engineer. The present appointments of Consulting Engineers at Bombay, Calcutta and Madras were made several years ago.

KASHMIR MAIL

*567. Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that attempts were made to derail the Down Kashmir Mail on the night of the 22nd June, 1953 between Kalabakrad and Allawalpur railway stations of the Northern Railway;

(b) whether investigations were carried out; and

(c) if so, the result thereof?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shahnawaz Khan): (a) to (c). At about 21-45 hours on 22nd June 1953, while No. 306 Dn. Kashmir Mail was on the run between Kala Bakra and Alawalpur stations on the Pathankot-Jullundur City Section of the Northern Railway, its engine struck against a piece of rail 3 feet $\frac{1}{2}$ inch long. The Assistant Executive Engineer, Jullundur City, who investigated into this incident, suspected it to be a case of sabotage, but the Police, whose enquiries are still in progress, consider