

SUGAR PRICES IN WEST BENGAL

*1029. **Shri N. B. Chowdhury:** Will the Minister of **Food and Agriculture** be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that imported sugar is not being sold at the same rate throughout West Bengal as stated by him at the time of demanding supplementary grants; and

(b) if so, whether Government have taken any steps to see that sugar is sold at the same rate in Calcutta and rural areas of West Bengal?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): (a) and (b). At the time of obtaining the Supplementary Grant during the last session of the House, it was stated that imported sugar would be supplied at 12 annas and 6 pies per seer in Calcutta and other areas in Bengal. Enquiries made from Bengal Government reveal that imported sugar is selling at this rate both in Calcutta and rural areas.

LOCOMOTIVES IN SEALDAH DIVISION

*1030. **Shri H. N. Mukerjee:** Will the Minister of **Railways** be pleased to state:

(a) what is the percentage of over-age locomotives (older than 40 years) at present utilised in the Sealdah Division of the Eastern Railway;

(b) whether Government's attention has been drawn to recent instances of drivers in the said Division refusing to take out superannuated locomotives but yet are compelled by order to do so; and

(c) whether Government's attention has also been drawn towards cases of breakdown of passenger traffic in consequence of the employment of such locomotives, and assault by inconvenienced passengers on drivers and firemen?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) Approximately 35 per cent.

(b) No such instance has been reported.

(c) A few cases of interference have been reported and certain further particulars have been called for.

CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT STAFF

*1031. **Shri Vallatharas:** Will the Minister of **Communications** be pleased to state the percentage of the staff that is temporary in the Civil Aviation Department and the reasons for keeping them temporary?

The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): 16.9 per cent. of the gazetted and 62.3 per cent. of the non-gazetted staff in the Civil Aviation Department are temporary. They are temporary partly because the posts themselves are temporary and partly because till recently the staff in the department was subject to the general ban on confirmation of personnel. This ban has recently been partially relaxed to enable a proportion of the posts in the Department to be filled substantively and action is in progress to confirm suitable persons against the available vacancies.

SULTANPUR-JAFRABAD RAILWAY LINE

*1032. **Shri Ganpati Ram:** Will the Minister of **Railways** be pleased to state:

(a) whether construction work of Sultanpur-Jafrabad Railway line has commenced; and

(b) if so, the progress made so far?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix IV, annexure No. 73.]

AFFORESTATION POLICY

*1033. **Shri Kanavade Patil:** Will the Minister of **Food and Agriculture** be pleased to state whether any steps have been taken by the Government