

(b) Is it a fact that as a result of this stoppage the construction of wells in Bihar was completely stopped and it was on a representation by a large number of M.L.As. of Bihar that the Government agreed to subsidise only one thousand wells to the extent of 25 per cent. of the cost involved?

The Deputy Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Karmarkar): (a) and (b). No. The policy of the Government of India is to give subsidies for wells in concentrated areas of intensive cultivation. On that basis, the Bihar Government's proposal for a subsidy on well-sinking was rejected only in respect of wells proposed to be constructed in non-intensive cultivation areas. Actually a grant of Rs. 12.25 lakhs was sanctioned to the Bihar Government during 1951-52 for subsidizing well construction at the rate of 50 per cent. of the total cost on wells in intensive cultivation areas. From 1952-53 onwards, the total subsidy on well sinking has been reduced from 50 to 25 per cent. for the whole country. We understand that during 1950-51 the Bihar Government subsidized a certain number of wells in non-intensive cultivation areas out of their own funds as stated by the hon. Member. It is still open to them to continue this activity out of their own resources in future.

Shri Jhulan Sinha: May I know, Sir, if, in view of the great importance of these wells in the outlying areas of Bihar, there is any proposal by Government to restore the subsidy?

Shri Karmarkar: There is no proposal. We consider that the subsidy that we propose to give is very reasonable.

SHORANUR—NILAMBUR RAILWAY LINE

***825. Shri N. P. Damodaran:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) when the work of restoring the Shoranur—Nilambur Railway line which was closed during the World War II will commence; and

(b) if the work has not already been commenced, the reasons for the delay?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Shri Satish Chandra): (a) Preliminary work has already commenced and collection of materials is in hand. Actual construction work will be taken in hand after the preliminaries are completed.

(b) Does not arise.

SHORTAGE OF WAGONS IN SOUTHERN RAILWAY

***828. Shri Viswanatha Reddy:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a chronic shortage of wagons in Southern Railway;

(b) whether the shortage has been felt even in the matter of transport of free contribution of grain and fodder to Rayalaseema from Guntur and Krishna districts; and

(c) whether there have been complaints of the bad handling of the movement of the wagons and if so, what action have Government taken or propose to take?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Shri Satish Chandra): (a) The demand for wagons exceeds the wagon availability on the Southern Railway due to the overall paucity of wagons on the Indian Railways to fully meet the requirements currently.

(b) No. All traffic in grain and fodder to Rayalaseema from Guntur and Krishna districts is currently cleared.

(c) No. A representation from Chamber of Commerce, Trichur, however, was recently received and replied to. In this connection, attention is invited to the reply to Starred Question No. 538, dated 5th June, 1952.

Shri Viswanatha Reddy: May I know, Sir, whether large quantities of mineral deposits are lying on the platforms for the past three months for want of wagons in Rayalaseema?

Shri Satish Chandra: There are outstanding registrations on this Railway, but as much goods as can be carried is being carried, and there has been an improvement in the wagon loadings during the last few months.

Shri Viswanatha Reddy: May I know, Sir, whether there is any proposal to increase the wagon position now under this Railway?

Mr. Speaker: His point seems to be that in view of the peculiar conditions in Rayalaseema, is there any proposal to give special priority or precedence in the supply of wagons for foodgrains.

Shri Satish Chandra: As far as foodgrains are concerned, they are being fully carried. There are no outstanding for foodgrains.

Shrimati A. Kale: Is the hon. Minister aware that there is a lot of underground dealing in the matter of wagons?