

Shri D. C. Sharma: Is it not a fact that in the case of appointments made by the Union Public Service Commission and the State Public Service Commissions, relaxation of standard is permitted, and if so, may I know why it is not permitted by the Railway Service Commissions or Railway Selection Boards?

Shri Alagesan: I do not know whether the State Service Commissions and the Union Public Service Commission permit relaxations—perhaps, the relaxation may relate to age-limit, but I do not think it relates to substantive standards.

MERGER OF DEARNESS ALLOWANCE

*330. **Shri T. B. Vittal Rao:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to refer to the reply given to unstarred question No. 45 on the 16th November, 1954 and state:

(a) whether a decision has since been taken to treat 50 per cent. of the dearness allowance of the employees of the ex-Nizam's State Railway who have opted to retain pre-absorption terms and conditions of service, as dearness pay; and

(b) if so, whether the same will be enforced with retrospective effect?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) No.

(b) Does not arise.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: May I know whether these employees were getting before integration all the benefits of the Central Pay Commission's recommendations, and if so, why there is this discrimination for this particular category?

Shri Alagesan: What the hon. Member says is true. We have brought this fact to the notice of the Finance Ministry, and they hope to finalise the matter soon.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: In view of the fact that this matter has been hanging fire for the last two years, may I know when a decision will be reached?

Shri Alagesan: That is exactly what I said earlier. The Finance Ministry hopes to finalise this matter very shortly.

Shri K. K. Basu: When will that hope be realised?

KURNOOL-KOTHAPATNAM RAIL LINK

*331. **Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to lay a railway line between Kurnool and Kothapatnam;

(b) whether it is a fact that a large number of representations have been received to that effect; and

(c) if so, the action Government propose to take in this matter?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. Representations have been received for linking Kurnool with Ongole via Nandyal which covers only a portion of the Kurnool-Kothapatnam project.

(c) The proposal has been noted for consideration, while selecting new lines for construction during the Second Five Year Plan Period.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: May I know whether any survey has been conducted in this line?

Shri Alagesan: No.

IMPORT AND EXPORT OF FOODGRAINS

*333. **Shri Chaudhri Muhammed Shafiq:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to lay on the Table of the House a statement showing:

(a) the quantities of foodgrains and sugar exported and imported during the year 1954;

(b) the names of the countries to which the exports were made;

(c) the names of the countries from which these commodities were imported; and

(d) the value of exports and imports in respect of each category?

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): (a) to (d). Three statements containing the available information are laid on the Table of the Sabha. (See Appendix II, annexure No. 40.]

Shri Chaudhri Muhammed Shafie: May I know the dates on which the contracts were entered into with the parties concerned?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: I must ask for notice of the question.

AIR ACCIDENTS

*334. **Shri Jethalal Joshi:** Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to lay a statement on the Table of the House showing:

(a) the number of air-crashes since 1951 and the total death toll as a result thereof; and

(b) the measures adopted by Government from time to time to avert such accidents?

The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) and (b). I lay on the Table of the Lok Sabha a Statement giving the requisite information. [See Appendix II, annexure No. 41].

Shri Jethala Joshi: From the statement, it appears that there are nine points for precaution. May I know which of these precautions were not followed in the years 1951, 1952, 1953 and 1954, which may be said to be responsible for the air crashes?

Shri Raj Bahadur: It is very difficult to say which of these were not being followed, because more or less to a greater or lesser degree, they were being followed. The arrangements had to be tightened up, and these nine points represent the tightening up of those precautions and arrangements.

Shri Jethalal Joshi: Is it a fact that some of the aircraft have outlived their period of serviceability. and if so, how many are there?

Shri Raj Bahadur: No, that is not a fact. As has been mentioned in the House once before, the average life of a Dakota is supposed to be 40,000 hours; and most of ours have run for not more than 16,000 or 17,000 hours so far.

Shri A. M. Thomas: May I enquire whether there is what is called metal fatigue? If so, what precautions are being taken by the Government to avoid it?

Shri Raj Bahadur: It is tackled by aircraft maintenance engineers by various devices, accessories and instruments.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

SUGAR PRODUCTION

*281. **Sardar Hukam Singh:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of sugar produced by the factories in India during December, 1954;

(b) the quantity released for free sale by the producers; and

(c) whether any maximum price was fixed in the case of the sugar released for free sale?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. P. Jain): (a) 2.5 lakh tons.

(b) 1.24 lakh tons.

(c) No.

SERVICE CONDITIONS OF PORT OFFICERS

*282. **Shri S. N. Das:** Will the Minister of Transport be pleased to state:

(a) the progress of work of the Committee appointed to enquire into the conditions of service of pilots and other officers of the Bombay and Calcutta Ports; and

(b) when the report of the Committee is expected to be received?