

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): Instructions have been issued to the State Governments to plant a second row of trees on National Highways to replace the old trees in due course, and to arrange for planting of shrubs and flowers near major bridges on these Highways as far as possible.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: May I know whether any schemes have been worked out about the amount of money that is going to be spent during this year and the next five years on this land-scaping?

Shri Alagesan: We have told the State Governments that the expenditure incurred with reference to national highways can be met from the maintenance charges.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: My question was whether any estimate has been made about this expenditure.

Shri Alagesan: We do not have the information, but we have told the State Governments that it could be met from that source.

Shri N. M. Lingam: Apart from land-scaping, are Government aware that along long stretches of national highways the sites are subject to heavy erosion, and may I know whether Government have laid down any specifications for the width and strength of these highways; if not, how do Government propose to maintain these sites and protect them from erosion in future?

Shri Alagesan: All these things come under maintenance. Of course, there are specifications laid down for width, etc. When erosion takes place, naturally it is being set right.

Shri Mathen: May I know whether the hon. Minister expects to maintain the tempo of the highways and roads in spite of the cut in the targets?

Shri Alagesan: There is a certain contradiction in the question itself—I am expected to maintain the tempo in spite of the cut. We propose to go

ahead with the works that we have already taken in hand. We may have to slow down a little as far as new works go.

RAILWAY TRIBUNAL

***496. Shri Nambiar:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) the terms of reference now left pending with the one-man Tribunal in the disputes between the Railwaymen's Federation and the Railway Board;

(b) whether the withdrawal of certain references from the tribunal by the President of the Federation has been approved by the Railway Board and the General Secretary of the Federation; and

(c) whether the enquiry on all subjects continues as demanded by the General Secretary of the Federation?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) to (c). Out of the 5 terms of reference, agreement was reached between the Federation and the Railway on 3 which were withdrawn from the Tribunal. This was done with the approval of the Federation and as such the approval of a particular office-bearer does not arise. The remaining terms of reference are:—

(i) Re-distribution of grades for various categories of staff decided upon as a result of the recommendations of the Joint Advisory Committee, should be reviewed.

(ii) The orders that in workshops, leave with or without allowances, shall not be for less than half a day should be reviewed.

Shri Nambiar: May I know whether the General Secretary of the Federation, who is a non-official who advised the Tribunal, was consulted when these items were withdrawn?

Shri Alagesan: We consult the Federation as a whole. It is not possible to consult individual office-bearers. The office-bearers consist of the President, the General Secretary, the Vice-President and others also. I do not

think we should be called upon to consult each and every individual office-bearer. We consulted the Federation as a whole and the representatives of the Federation carried on talks with the Railway Board, and in a record time of three or four days agreement has been reached on three out of the five terms of reference. I think it is a matter for appreciation.

Shri B. S. Murthy: Now that the union has been split into two wings, which of them will be consulted—both or one of them?

Shri Alagesan: I propose to deal with it in the course of today.

Shri Nambiar: May I know whether the non-official adviser has been removed by the Federation or the old non-official adviser continues on behalf of the railwaymen—the non-official assessor.

Shri Alagesan: I do not know what the hon. Member has in mind. He knows about these things much more than I do.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: From adviser it came to assessor and something in the nature of an assessor.

Shri K. K. Basu: The hon. Minister said that he consulted the whole of the Federation. May I know how many persons actually were consulted or who are the office-bearers of the Federation who were consulted and who are supposed to have spoken on behalf of the Federation?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I am not going to allow it.

Shri K. K. Basu: He said the whole of the Federation.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The whole of the Federation is always represented by the Executive Committee.

Shri K. K. Basu: He said "I need not consult the General Secretary". Let us know who was consulted.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I am not going to allow this question. Hon. Members know fully that when there is an institution the letter is written to the institution and on behalf of it somebody writes back.

Shri K. K. Basu: Here is a case where he says that the General Secretary was not consulted. I would like to know who has been consulted.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Next question.

Shri Nambiar: I want to ask one question.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Next question.

METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT STAFF

*498. **Shri K. K. Basu:** Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether an order was issued in 1949 by the Home Ministry for fixation of seniority of Government Servants;

(b) whether the seniority of the Scientific Assistants in the Meteorological department have not yet been fixed; and

(c) if not, when the matter was referred to the Ministry?

The Minister in the Ministry of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). On the amalgamation of the old cadres of Meteorological Assistants and Assistants into a common cadre of Scientific Assistants, the question of fixation of their relative seniority was referred to Government. A decision was reached in but before it could be given effect to, another representation was received from the old Assistants and the matter is being re-examined in consultation with the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Shri K. K. Basu: I would like to know what is the specific answer to part (c), when the matter was referred to the Ministry?

Shri Raj Bahadur: I have said, it was referred to the Ministry.

Shri K. K. Basu: I used the expression, "when".

Shri Raj Bahadur: It was referred to in 1951.