

(c) the steps taken by the Railway authorities in the matter?

The Minister of Railways (Shri C. M. Poonacha): (a) to (c). Yes. It has been reported that on 31st May, 1967 at 23-45 hours on receipt of information from Station Master, Dum Dum Cantonment Station about theft near the Outer Signal, the Inspector, Railway Protection Force, Sub-Inspector, Government Railway Police proceeded to site and recovered three bags of wheat. When the party were carrying the recovered bags of wheat towards Dum Dum Cantonment Station, they were fired upon by State Armed Police personnel posted to guard nearby wireless station, alleging that wheat bags were being carried after stealing them from a train. Railway Protection Force/Government Railway Police party who were in proper uniform stopped and shouted back that they were Railway Protection Force and Police personnel but State Armed Police personnel who were in mufti continued to fire at random. Thereupon, the Inspector, Railway Protection Force had to fire in self-defence, but they were overpowered, assaulted mercilessly causing severe injury on the persons of the Inspector, Railway Protection Force, Sub-Inspector, Government Railway Police and a Rakshak, Railway Protection Force, and were dragged towards the State Armed Police camp. On getting the information 2 Sub-Inspectors from Dum Dum Police Station came to the State Armed Police Camp and rescued the Inspector, Railway Protection Force and his party.

Government Railway Police, Sealdah, have registered two counter cases, one under Section 332/307 I.P.C. against State Armed Police personnel and the other under Section 307 I.P.C. against Railway Protection Force and Government Railway Police personnel. Inspector General of Police, West Bengal has also been approached for a high level enquiry into the incident.

Tea Gardens

2341. Shri Atam Das: Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that most of the Tea bushes in the Tea gardens are more than 60 years old;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that these old bushes produce less tea and also of inferior quality;

(c) if so, whether Government are encouraging plantation of new bushes to meet the growing demand of tea both at the home and foreign market; and

(d) if so, the number of such bushes planted during the last three years?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Dinesh Singh): (a) According to the last census 21.4 per cent of the total area under tea had bushes about 60 years old as on 31st March, 1963.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The areas replanted were as follows:

1962-63	1972 29 hectares
1963-64	2167 00 ..
1964-65	2575 40 ..

Export of Tea

2342. Shri Atam Das: Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Ceylon tea is superior to the Indian Tea;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that the Ceylon tea is gaining preference in foreign markets over Indian tea; and

(c) if so, the steps Government are taking to face this competition in the foreign markets?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Dinesh Singh): (a) to (c). No, Sir. Ceylon tea has been gaining preference because of its prices being lower than India's. Devaluation of the Indian rupee and reduction in export