

Phasing out Cycle Rickshaws

614. SHRI G. Y. KRISHNAN : Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government realise that in the age of automation it seems inhuman for men to be hauling passengers through cycle rickshaws ;

(b) if so, whether there is any proposal under the consideration for phasing out the cycle rickshaws ; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI LARANG SAI) : (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). The problem of Rickshaw Pullers was examined by a Special Working Group on Co-operation for Backward Classes, set up by Ministry of Home Affairs in June, 1961. This problem was also discussed in a general way in 19th Session of Labour Ministers' Conference held in New Delhi on 19th April, 1968. It was felt that abolition of rickshaw pulling could only be a gradual process. Complete phasing out of rickshaw pulling would be possible only when the pullers are provided with, inter-alia, alternative means of employment.

The Working Group on Scheduled Castes and other Backward Classes have also recommended in its report to the Ministry of Home Affairs in August, 1978 that :—

(i) Legislation should be undertaken to make rickshaw pullers and cart pullers, etc. owners of their means of livelihood and to prohibit others from owning or plying rickshaws, carts, etc.

(ii) Research and development should be required to undertake studies to bring technical improvement which will reduce the physical strain of these occupations.

Regarding implementation of the a fore-said recommendations, the Ministry of Labour is in touch with the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Allotment of Wagons to W. B. Public Sector Units

615. SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether in a recent note it has been alleged by the West Bengal Govern-

ment that public sector units invariably receive unsatisfactory treatment from the Railways in the matter of allotment of wagons for movement of Coal/basic raw materials like China clay, Felsper, fire clay transported mostly from Bihar and other provinces as well ; and

(b) if so, what are the facts thereof and action taken thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHEO NARAIN) : (a) No such note appears to have been received by the Railway Ministry.

(b) Does not arise. However, supply of wagons for loading of general goods like china clay, felsper, fire clay etc., is made by the Railways strictly according to the priority and date of registration of indents for movement of such commodities at individual stations. Movements sponsored by the Government enjoy higher priority.

Allotment of wagons for movement of coal also does not discriminate against Public Sector Units.

Functioning of P. F. Organisation

616. SHRI C. VENUGOPAL : Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Provident Fund Organisation is functioning in a dilatory manner as there being enormous delay in settling dues of retired and deceased persons ;

(b) the specific cases of delay brought to the notice of Government and the action taken therein ; and

(c) the guidelines issued to ensure better working ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. RAM KIRPAL SINHA) : (a) No. There is generally no delay in settlement of claims in cases where the papers are complete and in order.

(b) Specific cases coming to Government's notice are referred to the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation and necessary follow-up action is taken to ensure disposal and also to identify the reasons for delay.

(c) The Regional Provident Fund Commissioners have been advised by the Central Provident Fund Commissioner