

(c) Yes. The number so far selected is short of the required number of 30 for this category by 3.

(d) All necessary steps have already been taken and the staffing of the expanded organisation is expected to be completed by the end of this month.

#### NAGPUR-NAGBHIR RAILWAY LINE

638. **Shri Jagan:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether a survey for the conversion of present Nagpur-Nagbhir Railway line from narrow gauge to Broad gauge was made with a view to connect this line with Bhairamgarh, Jagdalpur-Vizagapatnam route to tap Bailadila iron-ores;

(b) if so, when the survey was carried out; and

(c) whether there is any proposal for the construction of this railway line in the near future?

**The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagan):**  
(a) Yes.

(b) In 1945-48.

(c) No.

#### EMPLOYEES' PROVIDENT FUNDS ACT

639. **Shri Tushar Chatterjee:** Will the Minister of Labour be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Jute Mills Association has applied to Government for exemption of their member mills from the provisions of the Employees' Provident Funds Act 1952;

(b) if so, what is exactly the proposal of the Indian Jute Mills Association and whether Government have taken any decision on it;

(c) whether Government have also received any representation from the Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union on this question; and

(d) if so, what action Government have taken on it?

**The Minister of Labour (Shri V. V. Giri):** (a) Yes.

(b) The proposal of the Indian Jute Mills Association is that since the members of the Association have modified and are prepared to modify further, if required, their provident fund schemes in accordance with the

Employees' Provident Funds Scheme, 1952, they should be exempted from the scope of the Employees' Provident Funds Act, 1952. The applications for exemption are under examination in consultation with the Regional Provident Fund Commissioners, the State Governments and the Labour Unions. Pending disposal of applications for exemption, relaxation orders from the provisions of the Scheme have already been issued to the Jute Mills (which applied for exemption on or before 31st October, 1952) by the Central Provident Fund Commissioner in exercise of powers vested in him under paragraph 79 of the Employees' Provident Fund Scheme.

(c) and (d). The Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union have objected to the claim of the Indian Jute Mills Association for exemption being granted to their member mills from the provisions of the Act, particularly on the ground that the administrative machinery of the Funds should not vest with the managements but should be transferred to the appropriate authority under the Act. This is at present under the consideration of Government.

#### Podu CULTIVATION

640. **Shri Sangama:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether Dr. J. D. N. Vershaya, the representative of the U.N.E.S.C.O. visited Orissa in the month of September, 1952 to study the steps taken by the Government of Orissa in regard to Podu cultivation;

(b) if so, whether he has conferred with the Government of Orissa; and

(c) what are his impressions about Podu cultivation in Orissa?

**The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai):** (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) The Orissa Government report that he has made some general suggestion about the problem of podu cultivation.

#### ALL-INDIA SEAFARERS' FEDERATION

641. **Prof. D. C. Sharma:** Will the Minister of Transport be pleased to state:

(a) whether a deputation of the All India Seafarers' Federation has met the Minister of Transport; and

(b) if so, what proposals the deputationists have put before him?

**The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan):**

(a) Yes.

(b) The proposals referred to the establishment of Seamen's employment offices, delegation to the Asian Regional Maritime Conference and eligibility of Seamen who are out of employment for more than one year for free medical treatment.

#### ERGOT

**542. Shri N. M. Laxam:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are importing any ergot; and

(b) what steps have been taken to produce ergot artificially in India?

**The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai):** (a) Yes.

(b) Ergot is the dried "sclerotium" (resting stage) of a parasitic fungus, "claviceps purpurea", which infects and develops on the flower of the rye plant. Ergot is already being grown in Madras State and that Government has been advised to increase its supplies. A scheme submitted by Assam Government for financial assistance from the Indian Council of Agricultural Research is under consideration. The development of ergot is also included in a scheme of the West Bengal Government.

#### DISTRICT MEDICAL OFFICERS

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

(a) whether it is a fact that two District Medical Officers who retired on Superannuation were re-employed on the Northern Railway and if so, why;

(b) whether these postings have affected the promotions of the junior Medical Officers;

(c) whether Government propose to place on the Table of the House the names of those re-employed with the particulars of excess amount spent on that account;

(d) whether it is also a fact that they (re-employed) have applied for further extension of their employment and if so, whether their request has been granted; and

(e) whether it is the practice to re-employ those retired on superannuation and if so, whether all applications received will be similarly considered?

**The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan):**

(a) Yes; no serving Medical officers with the requisite qualification and experience were available for appointment on the Northern Railway.

(b) No.

(c) Dr. R. C. Mahajan and Dr. H. S. Chhachi; there was no excess amount spent on this account.

(d) No.

(e) Yes, for short periods, in categories where no suitable serving employee is available for appointment, or there is a shortage of trained persons. Applications received are considered on merits.

#### BRICK MANUFACTURING COMPANY AT MYSORE MINES

**R44. Shri Thimmalab:** Will the Minister of Labour be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the brick manufacturing company at Mysore Mines in Kolar Gold Fields has been closed and if so, the reasons therefor?

**The Minister of Labour (Shri V. V. Giri):** Yes; the factory was closed as it was reported to be running at a loss.

#### COW SLAUGHTER

**645. Sardar A. S. Sajal:** (a) Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state whether Government have implemented all the recommendations of the Committee which was set up to find out ways and means to ban cow slaughter in India?

(b) If the reply to part (a) above be in the negative, what time Government will take to implement the recommendations?

(c) Is it a fact that Government are further examining the matter as regards unlicensed and unauthorised slaughter of cattle?

(d) Do Government propose to make a law for prohibiting slaughter of cattle?

**The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai):** (a) and (b). The Government of India appointed an expert committee to consider and recommend a comprehensive plan of action for preserving the cattle wealth of the country and for promoting its development. The Committee submitted its report in November 1948. Copies of the report were circulated to the members of the House. The Committee recommended *inter alia*, that the slaughter of cattle was not