

Shri A. K. Gopalan: May I know whether the Kisan Sabha, in their memorandum, have pointed out instances of arbitrary and irregular settlement orders?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: They might have complained about it but the Assam Government have discussed the matter and they have chalked out, I think, a very fair policy in regard to all these matters.

Shri A. K. Gopalan: May I know whether instances of encroachment and annexation of grazing grounds have been brought to the notice of the Government?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: These are all matters between the Kisan Sabha and the Assam Government. We are not aware of every detail as to what exactly has happened.

श्री विभूति मिश्र : क्या केन्द्रीय सरकार स्टेट गवर्नमेंटों को यह निदेश देना चाहती है कि चरागाहों की जमीनों का बन्दोबस्त न हो ?

डा० पं० शा० बेनामुख : आम तौर से तो हम इस तरह इंटरफिअर (हस्तक्षेप) नहीं करते, हां, अगर कोई सवाल पेश होता है तो हम उस के सम्बन्ध में लिखते हैं, इस से आगे बढ़ कर हम डाइरेक्टिज (निर्देश) नहीं देते ।

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. P. Jain): In fact, the Assam Government have passed a comprehensive Bill on land reforms and in that Bill they have paid attention to all these problems. That Bill is awaiting assent of the President.

Gudur-Renigunta Line

*194. **Shri Chattopadhyaya:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 884 on the 22nd March, 1956, and state:

(a) when the broad gauge line between Gudur and Renigunta will be opened to traffic; and

(b) the anticipated increase in the movement of traffic between Bezwada and Gudur consequent on this?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) It is expected to be opened for traffic by June '57.

(b) It is not anticipated that there will be any additional movement of traffic between Bezwada and Gudur on account of the Renigunta Gudur conversion from M. G. to B. G.

Shri Chattopadhyaya: May I know the total cost incurred on the conversion of the metre gauge into broad gauge?

Shri Alagesan: The cost is estimated to be Rs. 216.5 lakhs.

Shri Chattopadhyaya: May I know whether it will relieve the difficulties in the movement of rice and other commodities?

Shri Alagesan: Yes, Sir. This metre gauge was a bottle-neck and transhipment was to be done at Gudur where facilities do not exist. This conversion will reduce also the distance of haulage. So, it will facilitate the movement of commodities, and thereby the difficulties in rice movement will, to that extent, be mitigated.

Shri Ramachandra Reddi: Pending the conversion of the metre gauge into broad gauge, the remodelling of the Gudur station has been stopped. May I know when it is going to be renovated?

Shri Alagesan: I would like to have notice, when I will be prepared to give the information.

Shri B. S. Murthy: May I know why the broad gauge facilities have not been extended up to Tirupathi which is very close—about 6 or 7 miles from there?

Shri Alagesan: This work was taken in hand, as I said to facilitate the broad gauge movement throughout. Tirupathi is not on this section. But, as a matter of passenger amenities, this question has been raised by several hon. Members and also by the Chair, and we are examining it.

Mr. Speaker: I hope it will be successful.

Retrenched Defence Workers

*196. **Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) how many surplus workers recently retrenched from Ordnance Factories and other Defence Installations have been offered alternative employment by Railways.

(b) how many centres have been visited by the trade testing teams of the Railways; and

(c) how many of such persons have accepted the alternative jobs offered?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shahnawaz Khan): (a) 3415

(b) 64

(c) 2223.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad: May I know whether those who have been employed by the Railway Ministry—2,223—are all semi-skilled or unskilled. To what category do they belong?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: They belong to all categories, but an overwhelming majority of them belong to the unskilled category.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad: May I know whether those who declined the offer have given any reasons for their not accepting the jobs?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: We have offered the jobs. We do not know for what reasons some of them have not accepted them.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad: May I know whether it is a fact that, while fixing their salary, the salary that they drew when they were in the ordnance depots was not taken into consideration, and that this was the reason why they refused to accept the offer?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: The hon. Member will admit that we have had to launch a very special drive in the course of two or three months and we were able to offer about 3,400 jobs. Out of that, 2,200 or so have accepted the jobs. We have done our best, and it is not possible to do anything more.

Shri K. P. Tripathi: May I know whether it is possible for the Government to evolve any new policy whereby, instead of discharging the persons and then trying to absorb them, they could re-divert the people from one department to another directly?

The Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri): It is for the different Ministries to decide as to whether any retrenchment is to be done or not. In this case, the Defence Ministry waited, I think, for a number of years and ultimately they decided to retrench these people because there was no work at all for them. But they did try to get as many people as possible absorbed. The Railways also have been able to absorb quite a large number of them.

As regards the reason for the refusal on the part of some of the people I am not quite certain about it, but the refusal is not due to the pay that was given to them. The reason was that they did not want to move from one place to another. Generally, they wanted to get some jobs locally or somewhere nearabout their homes. So, that was also one of the difficulties, namely, the workers did not want to move from one place to another.

Shri K. K. Basu: May I know whether these workers who have been employed in the Railways are considered as newly employed, or whether their past services in the Defence installations would be taken into consideration for the continuance of their employment?

Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri: I am not quite certain, but I think they will be considered as newly employed.

Shri B. S. Murthy: May I know whether the Minister is in a position to tell the House how the scales of pay now drawn by them compare to those they were drawing before retrenchment, on an average?

Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri: I cannot say that. But the hon. Member may know that the workers themselves feel—and I also feel—that they are satisfied with the alternative jobs provided for them. Whether the pay is less or more is not their immediate concern.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad: May I know whether this move of the Ministry to give them alternative jobs is being continued or whether it has been dropped?

Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri: It will be continued. If we can absorb more, we will certainly do so.

Railway Freight Structure Enquiry Committee

*197. { **Shri †Krishnacharya Joshi:**
Shri K. S. Rao:
Pandit D. N. Tiwary:

Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 166 on the 22nd February, 1956, and state:

(a) whether the Indian Railway Freight Structure Enquiry Committee has completed its work; and

(b) if so, whether it has submitted its Report?