

matter, powers have been given to the Postmaster General also.

Shri Ramanathan Chettiar: In how many places signatures are obtained from the purchaser of these certificates?

Shri Raj Bahadur: I think there is a form prescribed; I cannot give the exact number.

Shri Ramanathan Chettiar: More than 6 signatures are obtained.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member only gives information and does not seek information. If the hon. Member thinks that 6 signatures are too many, he may put a straight question as to why 6 signatures are taken instead of asking how many signatures are taken.

Shri Ramanathan Chettiar: May I know whether the Government will take steps to simplify the procedure?

Shri Raj Bahadur: It is for the Ministry of Finance to simplify the procedure for the purchase of such certificates, and to see whether lesser number of signatures can be sufficient.

Sugar Factories

*1937. **Shri M. E. Masani:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether certain claims on the part of sugar factories for additional payment by way of a revision of ex-factory prices fixed by Government in respect of sugar requisitioned by Government in the 1953-54 season are still pending with Government;

(b) if so, the number of such claims still outstanding;

(c) the reason for the protracted delay in deciding on these claims; and

(d) what steps Government are taking to expedite payment to the sugar factories concerned?

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. M. Thomas): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 39.

(c) and (d). The delay is due to the time taken in collecting and scrutinising relevant data from the factories but steps are being taken to expedite settlement of these cases.

Mr. M. E. Masani: Is the hon. Minister aware that by a letter dated 16th January this year, some of the parties concerned were assured that the matter "will be finalised by the end of February at the latest", and we are now at the end of April?

Shri A. M. Thomas: Sir, it may take about six months more because several data had to be collected. The price was first fixed at Rs. 27-2-0, then it was raised to Rs. 29 and at the rate of Rs. 29 all the factories have been paid. Some factories resisted and said that their cost of production comes to much more than Rs. 29 and, therefore, they had to be paid more. So a formula was evolved to fix the prices of different lots of sugar requisitioned on the basis of the cost of production or the price realised by the factory concerned by free sale in the open market on the date of requisitioning, whichever is lower. So, these processes take some time, and all efforts are being made to expedite settlement.

Shri M. E. Masani: May I know how the Minister explains the letter written by Government in January in reply to an enquiry whether the parties may go to a low court or whether they can get any relief, and how now the Minister goes back on the assurance given in writing to the parties who threatened to go to the law courts?

Shri A. M. Thomas: The cost of production of all the 39 factories has been worked out and duly checked by the Chief Accounts Officer. Some more minor formalities remain to be carried out. I have already said that it may be possible to settle all the accounts within a period of six months.

Shri Ramanathan Chettiar: What is the total amount involved in this?

Shri A. M. Thomas: The approximate additional price that may have to be paid will be about Rs. 4 lakhs.

Shri Subbiah Ambalam: Is there no time-limit fixed for the disposal of applications for additional payments?

Shri A. M. Thomas: There is no fixed time; but a reasonable time would have to be taken, and there is no lapse on the part of the department concerned.

Shri M. R. Masani: Would the Minister agree that the delay since 1953-54 is surely unconscionable?

Shri A. M. Thomas: This revision was made sometime later, and all these processes have to be carried on. We have to ascertain the market price then prevailing and see which is lower. Then only we can fix the price.

Shri Joachim Alva: Has the Minister called for the records of these cases and passed any orders to expedite these matters?

Shri A. M. Thomas: That is an internal matter. Of course, the Minister has called for the file, but I think it is not proper that I divulge here the orders he has passed on it.

Concessional Railway Tickets

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*1938. { **Shri Bhakt Darshan:**
Shri Nek Ram Negi:

Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that concessional railway journey tickets issued during the summer months every year are available for the journey from Delhi to Pathankot only; and

(b) whether Government propose to extend this facility beyond Pathankot towards Jogindarnagar side also?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri S. V. Ramaswami): (a) No, Sir; such tickets are issued from Delhi to a number of other hill stations also.

(b) No, Sir,

श्री भक्त दर्शन : इस तरह के जो टिकट दिये जाते हैं वे आखिरी रेलवे स्टेशन के लिये दिये जाते हैं। जैसा कि माननीय मंत्री जी को मालूम भी होगा जोगेन्द्रनगर के लिये पठानकोट होकर रेलवे लाइन जाती है और जोगेन्द्रनगर उस लाइन पर आखिरी टर्मिनल है। इसलिये मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि जोगेन्द्रनगर को इस प्रकार की सुविधा देने में क्या कठिनाई है ?

रेलवे उपमंत्री (श्री शाहनवाज खाँ) : यह सहूलियत जो दी गई है वह तमाम हिल स्टेशन्स के लिये नहीं है। कुछ कुछ हिल स्टेशन्स को यह सहूलियत दी गई है। यह सहूलियत उन हिल स्टेशन्स को दी गई है जिनका महत्व कम होता जा रहा है नाकि वहाँ जाने वालों को तकलीफ न हो।

श्री भक्त दर्शन : जहाँ तक मुझे ज्ञात है पिछले दिनों रेलवे बोर्ड ने यह निर्णय किया था कि नये हिल स्टेशन्स के लिये यह कन्सेशन न बढ़ाया जावे। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि यह बँन कब तक रहेगा और कब तक इसके उठने की उम्मीद की जा सकती है ?

श्री शाहनवाज खाँ : कुछ हिल स्टेशन छाटे गये हैं। फिलहाल इनकी तादाद बढ़ाने की उम्मीद नहीं है। जैसा कि माननीय सदस्य को मालूम है कि ओवर क्राउडिंग बहुत ज्यादा है। हम उस भीड़ को कम करने की कोशिश कर रहे हैं। बढ़ाने की कोशिश नहीं कर रहे हैं।

श्री बलजीत सिंह : पठानकोट तो मैदान में बाक है उसके लिये कन्सेशन टिकट इश्यू किये जाते हैं। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि जो पहाड़ के स्टेशन हैं उनके लिये इस तरह के टिकट क्यों इश्यू नहीं किये जाते ?

श्री शाहनवाज खाँ : जो यात्री पठानकोट होकर श्रीनगर जाते हैं उनके लिये यह रियायत दी गई है। इसी तरह से जो लोग मसूरी को जाते हैं उनको देहरादून तक यह रियायत मिलती है।