

So far as interest is concerned, when the reason for the claim not being settled lies with the claimant, we are not in a position to give any interest.

[*Translation*]

SHRI DAL CHANDER JAIN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, first my question regarding the payment of interest until the settlement of claim made has not been answered.

Secondly, there should be an office to assist people in the settlement of their claims. Will the hon. Minister make any such arrangements?

[*English*]

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: There is a Claim Review Committee at the zonal level as well as at the corporate level, to settle claims as also to redress the grievances; and this is functioning very effectively. Here, for the benefit of the hon. Member I may bring to his notice that in 1981-82 the pendency was 12.23%. Now that has been reduced to 5.75%. In the case of death claims and maturity claims, the percentage of pending cases was 13.85%. It has been reduced to 6.86%. In the case of death claims alone, the pendency was 26.6%, and it has been reduced to 18.6%.

SHRI HAROOBHAI MEHTA: Has the Government come across any cases where the delay in payment of this due has been attributable to the officer concerned; is so, the number of cases in which action has been taken against the officer concerned?

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Wherever it is due to the deliberate action or deliberate negligence of the officer concerned, action has been taken. The actual number of cases is not available with me.

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER: Bairagiji, do you want to put a question?

SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI: Sir, I want to ask one question.

AN HON. MEMBER: Why are you getting involved in Life Insurance?

MR. SPEAKER: Good, he has at least got rid of his involvement with opium.

SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI: I will talk about opium later on. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister in part (c) of his reply has stated that some steps to improve the situation are under consideration. The percentage of pending cases is much less. However, in view of the vastness of the country and the scope of this business, it is a substantial percentage. We expect you to accelerate the pace of the disposal of pending cases for which the entire work at the district level and S.D.O level should be computerised. Do you have any such proposal under consideration?

[*English*]

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Some of the important steps taken by LIC to expedite settlement of the maturity claims have been set out in the main reply. So far as computerisation is concerned, the process is on and we are at it.

Alleged Misuse of Foreign Exchange by Public Sector Undertakings

*854. SHRI ATISH CHANDRA SINHA†:
SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of certain cases of alleged misuse of foreign exchange by public undertakings;

(b) if so, the details thereof and whether any investigation has been conducted in this regard; and

(c) the outcome of the investigations and the action taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BRAHMA DUTT): (a) to (c). Public Sector Undertakings are expected to follow the rules and directions of Government in regard to the use of foreign exchange. All managements of public sector are required to monitor the use of Foreign Exchange carefully. In the absence of specific information as to which cases of alleged misuse are referred to in the question, it is not possible to furnish the details asked for in (b) and (c).

SHRI ATISH CHANDRA SINHA : What are the rules and directions of the government in regard to the use of foreign exchange issued to the public sector undertakings?

SHRI BRAHMA DUTT: The directions and the rules are the same which are contained in or which are part of the FERA. They should not be violated and we have asked them to monitor them strictly; that I have already said. Mal practices which arise out of violation of the FERA should not be indulged in. These are the general outlines.

SHRI ATISH CHANDRA SINHA: There is a company called 'K.F.W. - a West German Government Financial Institution. This company has extended no less than 430 million DM, that is, amounting to about Rs. 258 crores for a gigantic expansion project of Neyveli Lignite Corporation. This Neyveli Lignite Corporation, according to our information, is misusing this money by giving orders for spreaders and bucket wheel excavators to a particular West German Company called 'MAN' and its Indian counterpart WMI. May I know whether the Ministry of Finance have received any representation from the MPs of this House or from other quarters regarding the alleged misuse of foreign exchange by Neyveli Lignite Corporation; if so, is any impartial enquiry going to be instituted?

SHRI BRAHMA DUTT: It should have been better and I would have been in a

better position if the hon. member would have mentioned about the question. But, certainly, a complaint was received and we had examined it in consultation with the Department of coal; and we found that there was no basis in the complaint. Basically, it had to do with two German firms which had tendered for supplying something. This much information I have got, that this complaint was examined in consultation with the Department of Coal and it was found that there was no basis for it.

[*Translation*]

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to ask the hon. Minister as to how many such Public Undertakings are there about which you have been receiving complaints of misuse of foreign exchange for the past one or two years, and out of them, in how many cases inquiries were conducted and how many were found guilty? Which are the Undertakings against whom charges of misuse of foreign exchange have been established?

SHRI BRAHMA DUTT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have already stated that if we had received a specific complaint, it would have been possible to give complete information. Generally speaking, we have not received such complaints. I had informed the hon. Member regarding one specific complaint. He had one more complaint in which some technical lapse was found.

MR. SPEAKER: After you get the information, let us know about it.

[*English*]

Dr. P. Vallal Paruman. The hon. Member is absent.

Shri P.R.S. Venkatesan.

Launching of Indian Satellites by Soviet Booster Rocket

*856 SHRI P.R.S. VENKATESAN†:
SHRI H.N. NANJE GOWDA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state: