

Saloons, Luxury Cars and A.C. Coaches for Railway Officials

*406. **Shri Raudhir Singh:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to abolish the use of Saloons, Luxury Cars and Air-conditioned coaches by high railway officials and V.I.Ps to effect economy and austerity in the country; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

The Minister of Railways (Shri C. M. Poomacha): (a) and (b). As air-conditioned coaches are required for foreign tourists, and saloons for V. I. Ps from the point of security, and inspection carriages for inspections by Railway officers, it is not proposed to abolish their use.

As regards Luxury cars, there are none.

Relief to Railway Employees of Jamalpur

*407. **Shri Deven Sen:**
Shri Madhu Limaye:

Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railway Board have framed any Rules/Orders covering cases of famine/acute scarcity and payment of relief/grants/advance wages to the affected employees;

(b) whether any petition has been received from the Railway employees from Jamalpur (E.R.) Jhajha and other famine-stricken areas of Bihar for relief;

(c) whether the General Manager, Jamalpur Workshop has made any recommendation in this regard; and

(d) the response of the Railway authorities to this request/petition?

The Minister of Railways (Shri C. M. Poomacha): (a) Rules/Orders exist in regard to payment of advance of pay only.

(b) to (d). The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the Sabha.

Manufacturing cost of jute goods

*408. **Shri P. G. Sen:** Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) how far the manufacturing costs have been cut down as recommended by the National Productivity Council to raise the competitive strength of jute goods; and

(b) whether the price of low grade jute consumed has been taken into consideration as also of the existence of mills outside Calcutta in the jute-growing areas?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Dinesh Singh): (a) and (b). Some mill groups were devoting urgent attention to measures intended to reduce manufacturing costs even before the report of the National Productivity Council was received. However, since then, the industry by and large has endeavoured to implement the specific recommendations of the Council with regard to increased productivity; but the benefits and advantages that were expected to accrue from the implementation of the measures have been more than offset by the subsequent increase in the level of prices generally experienced throughout all sectors of the industry, mainly labour, stores, power etc.

The industry's inability to utilise its full production capacity due to shortage of fibre, and the need to use a larger percentage of lower grade fibre like Mesta have also contributed to its difficulties. However, efforts are being made progressively throughout the industry to bring about a reduction in costs and in this context mention may be made of work studies, organisation of incentive schemes, quality control and modernisation of machinery. The Indian Institute of Management is at present engaged in an inter-firm comparison study with the co-operation of a number of mills. This study may bring out what further