

(b) if so, what are the reasons for delay in condoning the break in service; and

(c) by when their cases are likely to be decided?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI) : (a) to (c) A statement is placed on the Table of the Sabha.

#### Statement

Break-in-service is an immediate consequence of participation in an illegal strike by railway employees. As such, a total of about 5.91 lakhs employees had their break-in-service. Condonation is a process that involves scrutiny of the cases to decide on the merits whether the break should be condoned or not. In consideration of the fact that a number of staff may have absented themselves from their duties possibly because of serious intimidation and threat of violence, as a special case, the General Managers were empowered to condone the break-in-service after verification of the cases depending on the extenuating circumstances. So far in the case of nearly 3.37 lakhs employees, condonation has been granted, and thus 2.54 lakhs employees continue to have their break-in-service. The process of condonation of break-in-service is continuing.

#### Under charging of freight for railway

4. SHRI MOHAMMAD USMAN ARIF : SHRI MAQSOOD ALI KHAN : SHRI IBRAHIM KALANIYA : SHRI KASIM ALI ABID : SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of cases of undercharging of freight for

railway consignments have been detected in different Railway Zones;

(b) whether it is also a fact that in several cases incorrect and lower rates have been charged for various consignments by the railway staff in collusion with the consigners and consignees; and

(c) if so, what is the estimated loss to the Railways on this account and what steps the Railway Administration propose to take to prevent such leakage of revenue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI) : (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

*\*[Trans]erred to the 20th November, 1974.*

#### Prices of toilet soaps

6. SHRI K. F. SINGH DEO : SHRI JAGBIR SINGH : SHRI LOKANATH MISRA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the prices of toilet soaps have increased considerably in recent months; and

(b) if so, what action Government have taken to bring down the prices of toilet soaps?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI K. R. GANESH) : (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

#### Statement

There is no statutory control over the prices of soaps. Prior to 19th September, 1974 there was, however, an informal price control on soaps produced by the organised sector (except the premium grade toilet soap) whereby the Indian Soaps and Toiletries Makers' Association consulted