

**EMPLOYEES OF FORMER A. K. RAILWAY  
IN WEST BENGAL**

571. SHRI PRANAB KUMAR MOKHERJEE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Railway Board had, while taking over the A. K. Railway in West Bengal from M/s Mac-leod and Company Ltd., in July 1967, agreed to maintain the service conditions of the employees of the said company;

(b) if so, the reasons for forcing the employees to retire at the age of 58 years while the age of their retirement as per the rules of the company was 60 years ;

(c) the number of persons who have been forced to retire at the age of 58 years; and

(d) whether all of them have been provided with retirement benefits such as pension, gratuity etc., and if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH) : (a) and (b) According to the terms and conditions offered to the staff at the time of taking over the A. K. Railway, Government Railway Rules were to apply in the matter of age of retirement. As the age of retirement for all Government staff (except certain categories) is 58, the same rule was applied in the case of staff belonging to this Railway.

(c) and (d) The information is being collected and the same will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

SHRI PRANAB KUMAR MOKHERJEE : May I know from the hon. Minister whether any specific assurance was given to the employees that the *status quo* will be maintained and the service rules of the company will be maintained in the case of the existing employees? If so, as per the service rules of the company the employees are to retire at the age of 60. Why have Government deviated from the assurance given to the employees ?

SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH : According to the terms and conditions of the taking over of this Railway, it was specifically made clear that the existing rules prevailing with the Indian Government Railways would be applied to the staff that would be taken over from this particular Railway. In some of the cases if it is

necessary to protect other conditions which were specific in the terms and conditions of the staff prevailing in that company, that will also be protected. So far as the age limit for retirement is concerned, it was agreed that the age limit which is prevalent with the Indian Government Railways would be applicable.

SHRI PRANAB KUMAR MOKHERJEE : May I know from the hon. Minister whether the employees' association made any representation to the authorities about certain specific cases of those who were forced to retire at the age of 50 and whether the Ministry is ready to take a lenient view of these employees ?

SHRI PARIMAL GHOSH : A representation has been received from some of the staff because as per the terms and conditions of the former A. & K. Railways, some of the ministerial staff were allowed to continue till the age of 60, and as per the Railway rules also, those staff who were in the Railways prior to 1938— their service condition also stated this— could continue till 60. But we have referred the matter to the Law Ministry and according to the advice of the Law Ministry, it is stated that normally we can retire any railway staff at the age of 55 by giving him three months' notice in spite of the fact that the retirement age in the Railways is also 58. So, according to the rule, they were given notice after the completion of 55 years of age so that they may retire. But whatever retirement benefits are there, all will be given to those staff.

572- [The questioner (Shri Nand Kishore Bhatt) was absent. For answer, vide cols. 43 '8-4321 infra.]

573- [The questioner (Shri B. D. Khobragade) was absent. For answer, vide cols. 4321 infra.]

574 [The questioner (Shri Telia Reddy) was absent. For answer, vide cols. 4321-4322 infra.]

\*575- [The questioner (Shri A. C. Gilbert) was absent. For answer, vide cols. 4322-4323 infra.]

♦576. [The questioner (Shri M. K. Mohta) was absent. For answer, vide cols. 4324 infra.]

577- [The questioners (Shri P. C. Mitra and Shri R. B. Sinha) were absent. For answer, vide cols. 4324-4325 infra.]

578. [The questioner (Shri Ram Sahai) was absent. For answer, vide cols. 4325-4326 infra.]