

(b) if so, whether any programme of research in steel-making from powder has been undertaken in India?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER in THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI P. C. SETHI): (a) Yes, Government are aware that laboratory scale research on the formation of metal strips from metallic powders are being conducted in the United Kingdom. The economics of commercial scale production has however to be established

(h) Yes, Sir.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: May I know, Sir, whether the results of the research carried on in the United Kingdom have been made available to India?

SHRI N. SANJIVA REDDY: It is still laboratory-scale research, and our people also are attempting to acquire the knowledge; they are trying to do what best they can. As I said, in the U.K. it is still in a very preliminary stage, and in our National Metallurgical Laboratory have also been working on it. I hope they will be able to achieve some results.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: May I know, Sir, whether the Ministry has any information whether their laboratory research experiments have been made available to our laboratories doing the same kind of work?

SHRI N. SANJIVA REDDY: NML, which has been associated with this, are of the view that those developments are in the preliminary laboratory-scale stage, and can be applied only for highly specialised products and cannot ad hoc be applied to replace the conventionally accepted sheet-making process. It will be very costly and uneconomic too. Nowhere in the world has it been done up to now. It is still in the laboratory stage and our people also have yet to do a lot in that direction.

श्री रामकुमार भुवालका : क्या माननीय मंत्री जी बतलायेंगे कि यह कौनसा पाउडर है जिससे स्टील बनता है ?

SHRI N. SANJIVA REDDY: It is blue dust derived from iron ore available in so many places; there is iron in that also.

*517. [Transferred to the 15th September, 1965.]

THEFT CASES ON INDIAN RAILWAYS

*518. SHRI R. S. KHANDEKAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of theft cases reported on Indian Railways during the last six months: and

(b) the comparative figure for the same period last year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH): (a) 941 from 1-1-1965 to 30-R-1965.

(b) 1,055.

SHRI R. S. KHANDEKAR: May I know, Sir, the reasons for the increase during this period? Compared to last year there is an increase of more than 200 cases.

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH: No. it has not increased. If the hon. Member reads the answer carefully, he will find that last year it was 1055 cases and this year it has been 941 cases. So it has gone down to that extent.

SHRI R. S. KHANDEKAR: May I know, Sir, if the Government and the hon. Minister have seen the various railway compartments where, almost in every compartment, either a fan is stolen or a peg is not there or a looking glass is not there? And even then the hon. Minister says that there has been no increase in thefts.. What is the reason for it?

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH: We have seen it, Sir, that some of the electrical equipment and fittings are found missing, and we are attempting to improve matters there. But "that is a different issue here.

SHRI R. P. N. SINHA: Which is the Railway where the largest number of theft cases have occurred?

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH: It is Western Railway with 178 cases.

SHRI R. S. KHANDEKAR: Is it a fact that in these theft cases the majority of the persons involved belong to the railway staff, or are their accomplices?

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH: Not all, but they are also included.

SHRI A. D. MANI, Sir, the Minister gave some figures of theft cases. What is the total value of the articles lost in the period mentioned by the Minister?

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH: Rs. 5,27,444 for the public property, and the total of railway equipment - comes to Rs. 10,78,713.

SHRI DEOKINANDAN NARAYAN: May I know, Sir, in how many cases of these thefts railway servants were found involved?

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH: As I said earlier, railway servants are not immune from such things, but I will be in a position to give accurate information only when a notice is received.

SHRI B. K. P. SINHA: In view of the large number of thefts, especially of the very delicate fittings in the higher class railway carriages, may I know, Sir, if the idea has suggested itself to the Government that, instead of providing these higher class compartments with delicate and fashionable fittings, they should have solid and utilitarian fittings, because

I find that solid and utilitarian fittings are not as much subject to thefts as the delicate and fashionable fittings?

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH: We shall take up this suggestion.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: I understand that the charge of Delhi railway yards is transferred to the Delhi police now, and may I ask the hon. Minister, since the transfer of this charge, if there has been any decrease in crime in the railway yards?

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH: I have not received an accurate figure, but the general results that have come to us seem to be quite satisfactory; there has been noticeable improvement.

श्री रामकुमार भुवालका : क्या मंत्री जी बतायेंगे कि ईस्टर्न रेलवे में 1963, 64 और 65 में कब चोरियां कम हुईं और कब ज्यादा हुईं ?

डा० राम सुभग सिंह : सन् 1964 में हो नम्बर ज्यादा है । पहली जनवरी, 1964 से 30 जून, 1964 तक ईस्टर्न रेलवे में 170 चोरियां हुईं और पहली जनवरी 1965 से 30 जून, 1965 तक 163 हुईं ।

SHRI D. THENGARI: Is it a fact that there are certain gangs that are specialists in the art of stealing? If so, has the Government located those gangs?

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH: Yes, Sir, that is correct in many cases and last year this was published also in the newspapers. One such gang which also included railwaymen was traced when this case of Prof. Mehta's jewellery theft was reported, and that gang has been broken.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: May I know from the hon. Railway Minister whether these thefts are evenly

distributed in all the States or whether there are some States where there are more thefts because according to my information, most of these thefts take place in Bihar?

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH: Actually, Sir, as you may know, Agra is famous for this, the place from where the hon. Member comes.

SKRIMATI C. AMMANNA RAJA: May I know if passengers are punished for the thefts that take place on the railways? Is it a fact that if, say, lights are stolen or something else is stolen, the passengers are told, "You have to suffer because the theft happened in your own coach." That is what we are told. So I ask if it is true and, if so, is it fair?

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH: It is true, but we do our best to replace those articles and if any passenger is traced and is found stealing something . . .

SHMMATI C. AMMANNA RAJA: No, no. I don't mean that. Ordinary passengers have to suffer if the theft takes place in their compartment. They are told that since it took place in their own railway coach, they should suffer for it. Is that so?

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH: Yes, it is true and that is what I said in the first part of my reply. We accept it. But we also try our best to replace these articles at the bigger stations. Whenever any train reaches the bigger stations, there all these things are checked and they try to replace them.

SHRI M. RUTHNASWAMY: May I know if the Railway Administration has organised any propaganda against this practice, to say that although the Railways belong to the people, the railway property does not belong to any individual, because the idea of a socialist pattern of society may , mislead people to believe that railway property belongs to individuals? I

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH: This is a very useful suggestion. Through our Public Relations Officers we are doing this, but we shall intensify that propaganda, because this is a very useful suggestion.

**REVISION OF PAY-SCALES OF LOCO
MECHANICAL ARTISAN STAFF**

*519. SHRI D. THENGARI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been any demand from Loco Mechanical Artisan staff for revision of their pay scales; and

(b) if so, what action has been taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE W THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

A demand from the Indian Railway Mechanical Artisan Staff Association was received but no action was considered necessary since it was an unrecognised union.

SHRI D. THENGARI: Sir, the hon. Minister had stated that though a general increase in wages cannot be considered, cases of particular categories might deserve consideration. I should like to ask the hon. Minister what factors would lead or induce the Government to take into consideration the case of any particular category?

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH: Actually, they are the service conditions and the conditions that obtain outside in the country. The specific reply was given with regard to the representation made by that union. Otherwise, as I said in reply to an earlier question, the service conditions and the requirements of the railwaymen will be very sympathetically examined by the Railway Ministry.