

when it does not know as to who those culprits are?

SHRI S. V. RAMASWAMY: Well, so far as our staff is concerned, we can safely say 'that they are not the culprits, and the culprits are only outsiders. Generally, Sir, these things find their place in the nearby secondhand goods markets, chiefly in big cities like Calcutta and Bombay.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: In spite of the Vigilance Force and the Railway Force being increased, how is it that these thefts are taking place, and how is it that they take place on the platforms—is there nobody to check these thefts which are taking place on the platforms?

SHRI S. V. RAMASWAMY: Sir, we have got every kind of check. As the Statement says, so many steps have been taken. But in spite of those steps, Sir, thefts do take place. Of course, we will pay greater attention to see that these thefts do not take place.

SHRI B. K. P. SINHA: May I know, Sir, whether the specifications of these railway electric fittings are the same as those of the ordinary fittings or they are different?

SHRI S. V. RAMASWAMY: Sir, Railways have got their own specifications and their own special fittings.

SHRI B. K. P. SINHA: May I know, Sir, whether Government are considering any proposal to have some different specifications for railway fittings, because that will be the best way of avoiding these thefts?

SHRI S. V. RAMASWAMY: As I said, Sir, Railways have got their own specifications and they are also marked as railway property, for example, belonging to 'R.', etc. Unfortunately, the Railway Stores (Unlawful Possession) Act of 1955 does not cover this type of goods and we are thinking of amending that Act.

DR. W. S. BARLING AY: How many of these cases had gone to the court during the year 1959, and is it not a fact that it had been shown that primarily the railway employees themselves were responsible—mostly—for these thefts?

SHRI S. V. RAMASWAMY: I do not have any figures of the cases that were taken up, but I can assure the House that it is not the railway staff who are thieves.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What they want to know is this: If the investigation is still proceeding, how can you exclude any category of persons?

SHRI S. V. RAMASWAMY: Sir, I do not have any statistics with me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question.

•208. [*Potponed to the 25th February, 1960.*]

PRICE OF FERTILISERS

*209. SHRI P. S. RAJAGOPAL. NAIDU: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the landed cost of the imported Ammonium Sulphate is cheaper than the ex-factory price of Ammonium Sulphate produced by the Sindri Fertilisers:

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether any steps are being taken by Government to bring down the cost of the fertilisers manufactured by the Sindri Factory?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (DR. P. S. DESHMUKH): (a) Yes, currently.

(b) No specific reasons can be assigned as world prices depend upon a variety of factors, such as cost of production and marketable surplus in different countries, supply and demand, the export policy of different countries, etc.

(c) Information is being collected and will be furnished later

SHRI P. S. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: May I know, Sir, the exact reasons for the Sindri fertilisers being more costly than the imported fertilisers?

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: If we analyse the figures since the year 1952-53 we come to the conclusion that on the whole up to the year 1956-57 our prices were slightly lower than those of the imported stuff. It is only latterly that the prices prevailing in Sindri are slightly higher. The reasons are that Japan has entered into the fertiliser market. They are selling it far cheaper than others. Then, there is the decrease in freight charges on ships and liners, and the world production also of fertiliser has gone up.

SHRI P. S. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: May I know, Sir, whether the Government of India is charging anything -by way administrative charges, and if so, how much it works out? What percentage does it work out?

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: We have a system of pooling by which we levy some charge for railway freight, our intention being that at all the rail heads in the country fertiliser should be available on a uniform basis. The other thing is that a certain allowance is made for the purpose of distribution to the various co-operatives, and so on.

SHRI P. S. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: In view of the enormous profits made by the Sindri Fertilisers this year, may I know, Sir, whether the Government of India is considering reducing the price of fertiliser so that it would be available at cheap rates to the farmers?

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: The Ministry of Agriculture is always interested in lowering the price of fertilisers. We always press the Sindri Fertilisers to bring it down to the minimum.

FREE AND UNRESTRICTED TRAVEL BETWEEN JESSORE AND LAHORE

"210. SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of India have decided to allow free and unrestricted railway travel between Jessore and Lahore through the Indian territory;

(b) if so, what are the details of the agreement; and

(c) when the decision is to be given effect to?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: May I know, Sir, whether the attention of the Minister has been drawn to a Press report recently published in one of the Delhi papers to the effect that such a proposal is under the consideration of the Government and, if so, whether there is any basis whatsoever for it?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: I have not seen the Press statement, but I have read a statement which was supposed to have been made in East Pakistan by President Mohammad Ayub Khan. I have read that, but I have not seen the other statement.

SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: May I know, Sir, whether the Pakistan Government is in negotiation with the Government of India in respect of a proposal like this?

SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN: Those negotiations would be carried on by the Government of Pakistan with the Ministry of External Affairs and in the Railway Ministry at this stage we are not aware of any detailed proposals.

*211. [The questioner (*Shri S. C. Deb*) was absent. For answer, vide col. 1361 infra.]