

of Transport for 1953-54 will be treated as subsidy; and

(b) the average rate of interest to be charged on these loans?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN): (a) No.

(b) The loans given in 1953-54 were following terms for all projects other than the marine oil terminal at Bombay:

(i) Repayable in 30 years.

<ii) Interest free for the first seven years and thereafter bearing interest at 4½ per cent.

In the case of the Marine Oil Terminal, the period of repayment is 25 years and the rate of interest 4 per cent, after the interest-free period of 7 years.

DR. R. P. DUBE: Will he kindly state the average rate of interest that has been fixed¹ by the Government?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: The rate of interest is decided taking into consideration the market conditions. The Finance Ministry does it.

DR. R. P. DUBE: Will the hon. Minister kindly state the reason why Government gave this Rs. 2270 crores to modernize this port instead of asking them to float loans?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: The works of the ports are financed in two ways. They have certain reserve funds and they also utilize it. Over and above that, we have extended this financial assistance. They have not been permitted to float loans and that is why this assistance was granted.

*225. [The questioner (Shri Prasada-rao) was absent. For answer vide col. 1571 infra.]

FEE FOR LICENSING OF STALLS ON THE RAILWAY STATIONS

*226. SHRI D. NARAYAN: Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the rates of licensing fee charged for tea, refreshment, food and other stalls at different railway stations;

(b) whether the rates charged for licensing these stalls are the same in all the railway zones; if not, why; and

(c) what was the income derived as licensing fee from these stalls in each of the years 1951, 1952 and 1953 and so far in the year 1954?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN): (a) and (b). Railway Administrations are required to charge reasonable licence fees taking into consideration the local conditions and other relevant factors including the volume of business and a reasonable margin of profit. The fees charged naturally vary from railway to railway. The question of the feasibility of securing greater uniformity in these fees is, however, under consideration.

(c) Railways maintain such statistics by financial years. These are under collection and will be placed on the Table of the House, when received.

SHRI D. NARAYAN: For how long are the present rates prevailing and will continue to prevail?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: These rates were fixed in the year 1951 or so. I am not quite sure.

SHRI D. NARAYAN: And will continue up to what date?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: Till they are changed.

SHRI D. NARAYAN: When are these rates usually revised?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: Whenever the contract is renewed it is looked into whether any revision in the licence fee is necessary. If it is thought that the same licence fee can continue, then it is continued and no revision is made.

SHRI D. NARAYAN: Are there not fixed periods for these licences?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: The duration of the licence is 3 years.

SHRI D. NARAYAN: For how many years is one holding these licences?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: These are continued as long as the service continues to be satisfactory.

SHRI D. NARAYAN: The largest number one is holding today?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: I want notice.

SHRI B. K. MUKERJEE: Is the Government aware that too many licences have been issued for vending tea etc. on every platform at every station?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: It is a sweeping statement. I cannot say that.

SHRI BASAPPA SHETTY: Is it a fact that when the railway authorities call for tenders, no tenders are received owing to the prohibitive licence fees fixed by the authorities and thus a lot of inconvenience is caused to the travelling public for want of refreshment stalls? If so, will the Government consider the question of reducing the licence fees?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: The contracts are given not on the basis of tenders. It is given on the basis of what is called the licensing system. For a short time as per the decision of the original Central Advisory Council it was decided to call for tenders but they themselves revised this decision later and now we are proceeding on the basis of the licensing system and not on the tender system.

SHRI B. K. MUKERJEE: Will Government be pleased to consider the advisability of reducing the vendors and their fees at the platforms of railway stations?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: Wherever it is felt that there are too many of these vendors, certainly the Railway Administration can look into the matter with a view to reducing the number.

DR. RAGKUBIR SINH: May I know if the licence-holders are allowed to sub-lease their contracts?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: They are bound to be removed if it is proved that they have sub-leased.

PROF. G. RANGA: A part of the question put by my hon. friend has not been answered. He was referring to the excessive licence fees.

SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI: He has been satisfied.

PROF. G. RANGA: But we are not satisfied. It is not for the hon. Food Minister to say that. The hon. Member wanted to know whether there are any proposals to reduce the fees in those places where the applications have not been forthcoming in view of the excessive rates.

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: There are at present, as I said, these vendors all over the railway stations. Wherever it is proved to the satisfaction of the Railway Administration concerned that the licence fee is working as an oppressive factor, then the Railway Administration can revise it with a view to reducing it. They are empowered to do it.

SHRI S. M. HEMROM: What is the basis of assessing these rates and is the cost of construction of the stalls taken into consideration in fixing the same?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: That has formed part of the answer.

SHRI D. NARAYAN: Will the Government please lay on the Table of the House the terms on which these licences are usually given?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: I have no objection.

SHRI RATANLAL KISHORILAL MALVIYA: In view of the fact that despite all precautions of the Government, the quality of food, tea, etc. in the railway stalls has not improved, will the Government consider the advisability of extending the services of

Annapurna run by the All India Women's Food Council and reduce the number of these contractors by and by?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: As far as Annapurna services are concerned, they are already running a dining car. In fact the dining car was made specially for them and they are using that on particular trains and they are also having a contract for running a vegetarian refreshment room at one station—I think at Lucknow or so. If they come forward to run these refreshment rooms etc. certainly their request at particular stations can be considered.

SHRI S. M. HEMROM: I wanted to know about the basis of fixing of fee for there are many stalls lying which are not rented out.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shrimati Burago-hain.

FLOODS IN ASSAM

*227. SHRIMATI B E D A V A T I BURAGOHAIN: Will the Minister for FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of people affected by the recent floods in the whole of Assam;

(b) the extent of damage caused to the standing crops by these floods in different parts of the State, particularly in the Lakhimpur, Sibsagar, Goalpara and Nowgong districts; and

(c) the total amount of Central aid given to Assam for relief measures?

THE MINISTER FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI): (a) 1,72,987 families.

(b) Crops worth more than Rs. 9 crores are reported to have been destroyed.

(c) Central Government have agreed to give financial aid on the lines of the relief work in Bihar i.e. 50 per cent, of the cost of gratuitous relief and

of the loss on the sale of food grains at concession rates provided that if the amount spent on these items exceeds 2 crores the Government of India's share on the excess amount will be 75 per cent. The Government of India will also advance loans for expenditure on rehabilitation loans to the sufferers from floods.

SHRI RATANLAL KISHORLLAL MALVIYA: There was an alarming report in today's paper that within 12 hours the town of Dibrugarh was likely to be under water. Has Government got any report about it and the damage which has been caused?

SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI: I share With him the alarm at the Dibrugarh report but so far as the rehabilitation grants and other concessions given for the sufferers are concerned, they will be extended to them also.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

LABOUR EMPLOYED BY CONTRACTORS

*203. DR. R. B. GOUR: Will the Minister for LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any representation from the All India Trade Union Congress to make all labour laws applicable to the workers employed by contractors; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to bring forward amendments to the various labour laws to meet the above demand of the All India Trade Union Congress?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR LABOUR (SHRI ABID ALI): (a) No.

(b) In all recent legislation care has been taken to extend the benefit of the legislation to contract labour. Government propose to examine all the older laws with a view to seeing what amendments are necessary.