

charged staff, stoppage of retrenchment, grant of certain allowances, supply of tools, uniforms, etc.

(c) The Officers of the conciliation machinery are trying to bring about a settlement and Government are waiting to see the result of the efforts at conciliation.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: May I know when the efforts of the Conciliation Officer are expected to come to a conclusion?

SHRI V. V. GIRI: I cannot give a definite date, but very soon.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Is my hon. friend aware that these demands of the C.P.W.D. workers are as much as 8 years old?

SHRI V. V. GIRI: I take the information from the hon. Member.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Has my friend any information as to the fact why this demand that tools should be provided to the workers should come in the list of demands because this should have been provided without any demand being put to Government?

SHRI V. V. GIRI: The Conciliation Officer is going into all these matters and I shall place the result on the Table of the House.

COMPENSATORY ALLOWANCE TO RAILWAY EMPLOYEES FOR UNHEALTHY SURROUNDINGS

*418. SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to the reply given to my starred question No. 439 asked on the 22nd December 1953 and state:

<a) whether the examination of the anomalies existing in respect of the grant of compensatory allowances for unhealthy surroundings to the employees at certain stations on the

North-eastern Railway has been completed; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken or are proposed to be taken to remove these anomalies?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN): (a) and (b). No, the matter is under consideration.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: How long will the matter be under consideration? It is an old question.

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: This is a usual question, Sir, and I can only inform the hon. Member that we will be able to take a decision soon.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: May I know the procedure which is being adopted to come to a decision about this matter, because these anomalies have existed for a long time and it is very strange that they should have come to exist at all.

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: We are considering the matter in consultation with the Ministry of Finance, and we are also consulting the State Governments as to the areas in which they are granting this allowance for unhealthy surroundings.

EMPLOYEES OF THE EX-BENGAL DOOARS RAILWAY

*419. SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to the reply given to my starred question No. 168 asked on the 7th December 1953 and state:

(a) whether the examination of the question of joint seniority for the ex-Bengal Dooars Railway staff now employed on the North Eastern Railway has been completed; and

(b) if so, what are the conclusions arrived at as a result of the said examination?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN): (a) and (b). Yes,

Sir. It has been decided that for the [purpose of fixing the seniority of the staff, the length of service in the grade from 1st January, 1941, the date the Bengal Dooars Railway was taken over by Government, may be taken as the basis.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: May I know the number of the employees who will be benefited by this decision?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: I am sorry, I should like to have notice.

RAILWAY TRAFFIC BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN

"420. SHRI H. C. MATHUR: Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state whether any agreement has been reached for the resumption of railway traffic between India and Pakistan?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN) : An agreement has been reached to restore passenger service between West Pakistan and India on the Lahore-Amritsar route.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: What are the terms of this agreement?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: Sir, this matter has been discussed in various conferences between ourselves and Pakistan, and as a first step, it has been decided to open this route that I have just now mentioned.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: The hon. Minister said an agreement has been reached. My question is, what are the terms of this agreement which has already been reached?

MR. CHAIRMAN: He would like to know, if possible, the terms of the agreement in regard to this particular thing.

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: It only relates to this agreement—that we will open this route.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is nothing more in the agreement than that we start with this as the first step.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: To what?

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: Have any steps been taken to restore the traffic between Gadra Road and Karachi?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: Sir, we in India wanted that we should restore the traffic on three routes, but eventually it was decided that as a first step we shall open the traffic on this particular route.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: That is entirely different. What are the difficulties in restoring the route presented from the other side? What are the arguments advanced?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: The difficulty is that there are two sides to any agreement.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: What are the objections? India, I understand, is willing to restore the traffic on this route also. What are the objections or difficulties which have been placed before the Committee by the other side?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: Pakistan feels that they would have only this route and not the others at the moment.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: Has any organisation or system been evolved when these traffic routes are renewed? What administrative set-up are you going to have at the point where we are having this link?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: All these details will be decided between our representative in the Northern Railway and the representative of the North-Western Railway of Pakistan.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: But it is not only the Railway that is concerned. Why I ask this question of the Government is because there will be