

wheat lying in our godowns—about 6 lakh tons with the Centre and 4 lakh tons with the various State Governments.

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA: Do you propose allowing this wheat to rot or how, I should like to know, do you propose to dispose it of?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: I request the hon. Member to help us to dispose it of by consuming more wheat. It is not rotten.

GRATUITY CLAIMS OF THE RETIRED EMPLOYEES OF THE EX-SOUTH INDIAN RAILWAY

*323. **SHRI B. V. KAKKILAYA:** Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the gratuity claims of retired employees of the ex-South Indian Railway are still pending; if so, for what reasons; and

(b) how long it will be for Government to take a decision on these claims?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN): (a) and (b). Yes. Payment of special contribution to provident fund (which used to be known as gratuity) is arranged only after the employee retires from service and there is always a small time lag between the employee retiring from service and payment of the claims. No case of undue delay has been reported from the ex-South Indian Railway. A special drive has been instituted on all the Railways to expedite the payment of all retirement dues.

SHRI B. V. KAKKILAYA: May I know, Sir, how many cases have been disposed of and how many are still pending?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: We ask the Railway Administrations to submit half-yearly reports, Sir. I do not have figures separately for the ex-South Indian Railway, but in respect of the Southern Railway as a whole

the number of cases pending is about 600.

SHRI B. V. KAKKILAYA: May I know, Sir, how long it generally takes to dispose of these claims? The hon. Minister said that there is always a small time lag. May I know what exactly will be the time lag?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: Sir, it may be a few months.

SHRI B. V. KAKKILAYA: May I know how many months?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: I cannot exactly give the time. I said "a few months" but it is not normally a few months. It is settled even within a few days.

SHRI B. RATH: During the last one year how many persons in the Southern Railway have retired, and in how many cases has this gratuity claim been paid?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: That figure I do not have. But as I said, the number of outstanding cases is about 600 at present. Sir, let it not be taken that it is all due to the delay caused by the Railway Administration. The parties also have to submit so many things and the courts also intervene at times, and all these things are responsible for the delay.

BAN ON USE OF MINERAL OIL TANK WAGONS FOR VEGETABLE OILS

*324. **SHRI L. H. DOSHI:** Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railway Board have banned the transport of vegetable oils in tank wagons which are used for mineral oils;

(b) whether the oil-seed crushers and their associations have made representations to Government complaining of dislocation of trade, loss to agriculturists and unemployment of labour due to substantial reduction in wagon supply as a result of the ban; and

(c) if the answer to part (b) above be in the affirmative, what action Government propose to take in the matter?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN): (a) The old practice of allowing black-oil tank wagons on their return trip to be back-loaded with vegetable oil, as and when this was found convenient, was discontinued from September 1948 in respect of edible vegetable oil and from October 1953 in respect of non-edible vegetable oil. The arrangement of temporary transfers of tank wagons from the pool for petroleum oils and lubricants to that for vegetable oil, whenever this is found feasible, has, however, continued all along.

(b) Yes.

(c) The practice of allowing back-loading of black-oil tank wagons with vegetable oil, which had been discontinued, has since been restored until the availability of vegetable oil tank wagons improves sufficiently to meet the requirements of the vegetable oil trade reasonably well.

SHRI L. H. DOSHI: Are there any conditions applied for the restoration of these oil tank wagons?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: No conditions, Sir. I may also inform the hon. Member that 50 additional wagons have been allotted for vegetable oil traffic.

SHRI O. SOBHANI: At whose instance was this practice discontinued in September and October?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: Sir, the Ministries of Food and Agriculture and also the Ministry of Health objected to this practice and they said that it was injurious to health when vegetable oil was loaded in these tanks. So they advised us to discontinue this practice.

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY: What about the vegetable oil already mixed with the mineral oil?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Time is up. Question hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

INCREASE IN THE PRODUCE OF POTATO UNDER THE G.M.F. SCHEME

*306. SHRI V. M. SURENDRA RAM: Will the Minister for FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state the increased quantity of potato produced as a result of the "Grow More Food" Scheme in Madras State in the year 1952-53?

THE MINISTER FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAFI AHMAD KIDWAI): No scheme for the increased production of potatoes under the Grow More Food Programme was submitted by the Madras Government during 1952-53 and as such no financial assistance on this account was granted to the State Government.

OIL TANK WAGONS

*325. SHRI L. H. DOSHI: Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of oil tank wagons in the different zones of the Indian Railways;

(b) how many of these wagons are used for the transport of (i) mineral oils, and (ii) vegetable oils;

(c) whether it is a fact that the tank wagons allotted for the transport of vegetable oils are inadequate to meet the demand; and

(d) if the answer to part (c) above be in the affirmative, what action Government propose to take to meet the shortage?