

KUMARI SHOILA BALA DAS: If it is what steps is Government going to take to prevent it?

SHRI ABID ALI: About this particular question I have already explained that we are considering the installation of this X-ray machine there, so far as we are concerned. Otherwise, it is a larger question.

*430. [The questioner (Shri B. V. Kakkilaya) was absent. For answer, vide column 317^ infra.]

LABOUR REQUIREMENT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF MOKAMEH BRIDGE

*431. SHRI P. C. BHANJ DEO: Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) how many labour man-days will "be required for the construction of the bridge over the Ganges at Mokameh-ghat;

(b) what will be the approximate wage-bill for the labour to be employed for the completion of the bridge; and

(c) whether the employment of labour will be larger in the case of departmental construction of the bridge than in the case of construction - through contractors?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN): (a) and (b). After the designs are finalised, a detailed estimate will be prepared and tenders called for the execution of the work. "It is not possible to furnish the required information with any degree of accuracy as many variable factors are involved and the work will be undertaken by contractors with their own methods.

(c) It is not possible to say as much depends on the mechanical equipment used to ensure that each phase is finished in time.

SHRI P. C. BHANJ DEO: In view of the lack of knowledge on the part of the Ministry, it is very difficult to put any supplementary questions.

Mk. CHAIRMAN: No comments, please. Come to your supplementary question.

SHRI P. C. BHANJ DEO: May I know approximately by how much the cost of living is likely to rise due to payment to the labour employed on this construction, at the present wage rates?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: That I shall not be able to say, except in a general way. Certainly it will provide employment to those who are around the area. I cannot calculate it and give the exact answer.

SHRI P. C. BHANJ DEO: To enable a larger number to be employed at a cheaper cost on the construction, will labour for the construction of the bridge be engaged at slightly less than the usual wage rate?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: I do not know wherefrom the hon. Member infers all these things.

MR. CHAIRMAN: "If labour is in plenty, will you employ them on lower rates?" he asks.

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: It is all hypothetical, Sir.

MIXING OF BASTARD SAGOPALM NUTS WITH ARECANUTS

*432. SHRI T. R. DEOGIRIKAR: Will the Minister for FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 'bastard sagopalm nuts' are freely mixed with pure arecanuts; and

(b) if so, to what extent it is being so mixed?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA):

(a) Yes.

(b) About 10 to 50 per cent.

SHRI T. R. DEOGIRIKAR: Are Government aware of the fact that these nuts are injurious to health?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: It is not. It is not considered by the Health Ministry to be injurious to health. Whereas in the ordinary arecanut there is plenty of fat and a little of silica, in this nut there is a little fat and more of silica.

SHRI T. R. DEOGIRIKAR: Are Government aware that a committee was appointed to enquire into these bastard sagopalm nuts and the report of that committee was that these nuts contain harmful materials?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: No, I am not aware of this. All that we know is that we have consulted the Health Ministry and their opinion is that it is not injurious to health.

SHRI T. R. DEOGIRIKAR: May I know whether this nut is covered by the Food Adulteration Act?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: That is one of the points now under consideration. The Central Government want to bring it under this Act and so they have requested the State Governments to include it among articles of food

SHRI T. R. DEOGIRIKAR: Are Government considering the question of destroying the nuts and the trees?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: Why should they be destroyed? They are useful.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If they are harmful, he asks.

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: They are useful for some other purposes. They are not injurious to health.

DR. P. C. MITRA: What is this bastard nut?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: It is also a kind of arecanut.

DR. P. C. MITRA: I know it is a nut, but what kind of a nut is it?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: It looks like arecanut and so people try to adulterate arecanut with it and sell it to the villagers.

PRODUCTION OF COTTON AND JUTE

*433. SHRI T. R. DEOGIRIKAR: Will the Minister for FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state the estimated production of cotton and jute in the year 1953-54?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA): The official estimates of cotton and jute production for 1953-54 have not yet become available.

GOODS TRAFFIC BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH BENGAL AND ASSAM

◆434. SHRI S. P. RAY: Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state the total volume of incoming and outgoing goods traffic in the year 1952-53 between the port and industrial areas of Calcutta and Howrah on the one hand, and the West Bengal districts of Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling and Cooch--Behar and the State of Assam on the other:—

(i) by railway route *via* Katihar,

(ii) by river steamers *via* Pakistan; and

(iii) by railway-cum-steamer services *via* Pakistan?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN):

(i) 242 lakh maunds both ways, (ii) Information not available.

(iii) 84 lakh maunds both ways.

SHRI S. P. RAY: May I know if Pakistan collects customs duties on any part of the goods freight for inter-State transport of the Indian Union passing through Pakistan waters? If so, what is the amount of duty so collected in 1952-53?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: They do not collect any.