

PROF. G. RANGA: Is the hon. Minister aware that there is an Act in our Statute Book about the de-casualisation of labour?

SHRI LAL BAHADUR: We have adopted it for some time now in regard to the Railway coolies, but we have not yet been able to adopt it for casual labour.

SHRI P. SUNDARAYYA: What is the total number of casual labour on this particular section of the railways?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: I would like to have notice of that.

SHRI GOVINDA REDDY: Are they eligible for the benefits of labour legislations?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: No.

RAILWAY ACCIDENT BETWEEN PALANA AND BIKANER STATIONS.

*9. SHRI K. L. NARASIMHAM: Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a goods train collided with a passenger train on the midnight of the 18th May, 1953 between Palana and Bikaner Stations;

(b) if so, how many persons were killed and how many were injured;

(c) whether an enquiry was made into the causes of collision; and

(d) if so, who made the enquiry and what were the findings of the enquiry?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN): (a) Yes. At about 23.00 hours on 18th May 1952, (not 1953 as stated in the question) No. 221 Up Goods and 24 Dn Mixed trains, running in opposite directions on the Bikaner-Palana section, collided head-on almost mid-way between these two stations.

(b) 45 persons were killed and 27 received grievous and 40 minor injuries.

(c) and (d). The findings of the Government Inspector of Railways Bombay, who held his statutory enquiry into the accident, are that it was caused by the trains having been allowed to leave the Bikaner and Palana line clear stations without 'Line Clear' having been received for either of them.

SHRI K. L. NARASIMHAM: Is it not a fact that these train collisions are increasing every year?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: It is not exactly so.

SHRI V. K. DHAGE: How many collisions have occurred in the U.P. this year?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: I would like to have notice of that.

DR. P. C. MITRA: How many coaches were damaged in that collision?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: In this collision, the front three carriages of the mixed train were wrecked and so also the leading portion of the fourth coach. The two engines got interlocked with the leading wheels of the goods train engine lifted 14 inches above the rail level. That is the information we have got.

DR. P. C. MITRA: How many passenger coaches were damaged?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: I said the front three coaches of the mixed train.

SHRI J. R. KAPOOR: May I know whether any compensation has been paid to the dependants of those who were killed and if so what is the amount and to how many persons?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: Compensation amounts are being paid but I should like to have notice for telling the exact amounts.

SHRI V. K. DHAGE: Among the dead were there any people employed in the Railways?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: The killed included the fireman of the goods train and among the injured 4 Railway employees were included.

SHRI RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: Has any Claims Commission been appointed for determining compensation for the injured and the deceased?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: Yes.

SHRI RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: Who is the Claims Commissioner in this case?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: I should like to have notice for that.

SHRIMATI SHARDA BHARGAVA: Is it a fact that a number of derailments have taken place this year?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: Yes, unfortunately some have taken place.

SHRIMATI SHARDA BHARGAVA: What action was taken by Government to find out the reason of this extraordinarily large number of derailments?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: After every accident, an enquiry is made and the cause is ascertained.

SHRI K. L. NARASIMHAM: May I know what measures Government propose to take to prevent accidents in the future?

SHRI LAL BAHADUR: It is true that there have been a number of accidents which took place during the last few months. I cannot give in detail the steps taken but all necessary precautions and necessary steps within our means are being taken to stop these accidents. But I may tell the House that we are not worse off than other countries like the U.K. and U.S.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Are we not worse off than we were?

SHRI LAL BAHADUR: That is not correct. We are not worse off. The number of accidents is less.

SHRI K. C. GEORGE: What is the general cause of these accidents?

SHRI LAL BAHADUR: Sometimes sabotage, then carelessness of staff. I will not say who is responsible for the sabotage. The House may judge for itself.

CENTRAL TRIBUNAL FOR NEWSPAPER AND NEWS AGENCY EMPLOYEES

*10. SHRI B. V. KAKKILAYA: Will the Minister for LABOUR be pleased to state whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the demand made at the recent meeting of the General Council of the Press Trust of India Employees Union at Calcutta for the appointment of a Central Tribunal for newspaper and news agency employees; if so, what action Government propose to take in the matter?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR LABOUR (SHRI ABID ALI): The Federation of Press Trust of India Employees' Unions, Bombay forwarded to Government a set of resolutions passed at a meeting held at Calcutta in June 1953. One of the resolutions demanded that a Central Tribunal should be set up to deal with the disputes between the employees and the management of the Press Trust of India Ltd. Under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, the "appropriate Government" for dealing with industrial disputes between the Press Trust of India and its employees is the State Government and not the Central Government. The Federation was informed of the statutory position.

SHRI B. V. KAKKILAYA: The P.T.I. being an all-India concern and as the Central Government is financing to P.T.I., is it not their duty to appoint a Tribunal?