

recommended the improvement of these Ports?"

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: Yes, Sir. Those ports at present classified as Minor Ports, are not under the direct charge of the Central Government; it is the State Governments that are in charge.

SHRI B. V. KAKKILAYA: Is it not a fact that there was a proposal to convert the Port into a Major Port and the Government had conducted a survey?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: Yes, Sir, the various State Governments are undertaking surveys of Minor Ports under their charge.

SHRI K. S. HEGDE: Am I to understand from the hon. Minister that the report of the West Coast Major Ports Committee has been completely dropped or the consideration of it is postponed?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: In fact, that Committee recommended that Mangalore cannot be chosen as a Major Port but Government have not yet taken a decision on that point.

SHRI K. S. HEGDE: As a point of correction, Sir, if I am right, the Committee recommended by a majority that Malpe is better than Mangalore and that one of the dissenting Members recommended Mangalore and the consideration of that had been only postponed and not dropped.

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: That is exactly what I said.

SHRI B. V. KAKKILAYA: Is it not a fact that in view of the proposed Mangalore-Hassan Line it will be better if Government considered this also?

(No reply.)

#### FOOD GRAINS FOR MINE EMPLOYEES

\*585. SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Will the Minister for FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether mine owners in Bihar and West Bengal are obliged to obtain food grains for their employees through pools of their trade organisations and are not permitted individually to purchase such food grains from the market; if so, the reasons therefor, and

(b) whether as a result of such restriction, individual mine owners have to pay for food grains a price higher than the local market price?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA): (a) In order to avoid upsetting the market, the position in Bihar and West Bengal has been not to allow large employers of labour to buy in the open market. Recently, however, the Government of Bihar have allowed all mine owners, except the colliery owners, to make their purchases in the open market. The colliery owners have formed themselves into associations to obtain their food requirements from Government. The collieries in the Asansole District of West Bengal too have been allowed to purchase in the open market.

The colliery associations are also now buying Nepal rice in the open market.

(b) It is possible that such mine owners could have secured at a somewhat lower price, part of their requirements, by buying in the local market.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Is Government making it a condition that the mine owners should form themselves into a pool for the purchase of this rice from Government?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: If the question is kindly repeated.....

MR. CHAIRMAN: "Have the Government imposed a condition that the mine owners should form themselves into a pool before they purchase this rice?"

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: We did not impose any condition; but for their own convenience some of the mine owners have formed themselves into some pool.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Do I understand that the mine owners can, if they like, purchase the rice separately from the open market and not through the pool?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: Under the rules of this pool, all coal miners who receive their supplies from the pool are required to deposit cash securities on the basis of the average monthly consumption of food grains; but the non-participating members, i.e. the collieries who are not represented in the pool and as such do not advance any security, are charged Re. 1 per maund.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE. Who charges that Re. 1 per maund?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: The common pool—this organisation—will charge it.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: My question has not yet been answered. My question is, whether the mine owners can, if they like, purchase the rice from the open market and not through the pool.

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: We need not now think of the past. Now that the food position has very much improved, both in Bihar and in West Bengal; they are free to buy in the open market. There are collieries which are purchasing in the open market the rice that comes from Nepal.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: But my question is different. Am I to understand, in the first place, that this condition no longer exists? And secondly, I want to know if the pools are still functioning, if the coal-mine owners have only to purchase rice through these pools, or can they purchase it without the pool, in the open market?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: We have imposed no condition that the purchases of the mine owners should be made through the common pools; but for their own convenience, they formed common pools which charge an incidental charge of Re. 1 or so from people who had not advanced cash securities to the common pool. They are charged this extra rate. But these things arise only when there is the

question of getting supplies from Government. But as I said, the food position has very much improved now and they are allowed to buy in the open market and there would be hereafter no condition that they should be in the pool at all.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Will the hon. Minister kindly clarify what he means by "hereafter"? What is the position at present? Have the mine owners to buy through the pool or has that condition been waived at the moment?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: Except these collieries in Bihar, the others have been allowed to purchase in the open market. Hitherto they were not free to purchase in the open market, because if these big buyers come in and there are big purchases that might upset the market. When big purchasers come to the market, naturally prices go up and the market is upset. We were not allowing this and we were giving them supplies from the Government. Hereafter, since conditions have improved a great deal.....

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: What is this "hereafter"?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hereafter means from the present; and from the present means hereafter.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: He says this concession is already there, this ...

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: I told you only one or two collieries still purchase from the Government because it is convenient for them to do so.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: It is all very much confused.

#### EXCURSION TRAINS FOR STUDENTS AND PILGRIMS

\*586. DR SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state whether Government propose to resume the running of the students and pilgrims excursion trains which were run before the war; and, if so, when?