

advisability of placing their time tables under the usual commission rates at Railway bookstalls so that they would be more easily available to the people?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: I gave the assurance that it will be considered.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: May I know in what languages the All India Railway time table is published?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: In English.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: Is it to be published in other languages also?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: Not the All India time table, Sir.

DEMANDS OF THE INDIAN SEA-MENS LEAGUE

*390 SHRI E. K. IMBICHIBAVA: Will the Minister for TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any Memorandum from the Indian Sea-men's League, Bombay, forwarding the charter of demands of the Indian sea-men, and

(b) if so, what action Government have taken or propose to take in the matter?

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

(b) With the exception of a few demands most of them relate to service conditions of seamen such as pension, gratuity, pay, leave, hours of duty, etc. These can be settled by negotiations between seamen and their employers

As regards the other demands which concern Government directly, the Government of India are already concerting measures for the setting up of Employment Offices for seamen, and have already relaxed suitably the standards of medical examination for seamen.

SHRI E. K. IMBICHIBAVA: (In Malayalam) †[Do the Government propose to amend the Merchant Shipping Act as demanded in the Memorandum?]

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: (In Tamil). †[I do not understand the question.]

KHWAJA INAIT ULLAH: What was the question, and what was the answer?

SHRI K. C. GEORGE: The question asked is: Is the Government thinking of making any change in the Merchant Shipping Act, which is one of their demands?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: No, Sir. They want Government to amend the Merchant Shipping Act. But the question of wages, etc. is not covered by that Act. It is only payment of agreed wages that is covered by the Merchant Shipping Act. Improvement of conditions regarding wages, etc., have to be settled by negotiations. Once these questions are settled, the Merchant Shipping Act will come to them and so far as payment of those wages is concerned

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Has the Government received any complaints from Indian seamen engaged in foreign ships about discriminatory treatment?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: I do not have the information.

(Questions Nos. 391 and 392 were put together.)

DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE LABOUR MINISTERS' CONFERENCE ON PLANTATION LABOUR

*391. SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Will the Minister for LABOUR be pleased to state the steps which have so far been taken towards the implementation of the decisions arrived at the tenth session of the Labour Ministers' Conference in respect of the problem of surplus labour in tea plantations?

[English translation.]

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR LABOUR (SHRI ABID ALI): The Conference desired that in addition to examining methods of dealing with the problem of surplus labour in tea plantations, the question of surplus itself and also the allied matter of conversion of foodgrain concessions into cash should be discussed by a tripartite committee. It was agreed that the members of the Standing Plantations Committee from Bengal and Assam, should meet at Shillong for this purpose on the 27th and 28th February 1953. A special meeting of the Committee was accordingly held at Shillong on the 27th February 1953.

DECISIONS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANTATIONS

*392. SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Will the Minister for LABOUR be pleased to state the decisions which were taken at the meeting of the Standing Committee on Plantations held at Shillong on the 27th and 28th February 1953?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR LABOUR (SHRI ABID ALI): There was general agreement at the meeting on the principle of conversion of foodgrain concessions into cash payments. But no agreement could be reached on the exact quantum of compensation to be paid in lieu of the concessions. However, the difference between industry and labour was considerably narrowed down as a result of the discussions.

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SHRI ABID ALI: Sir, Questions Nos. 391 and 392 pertain to the same subject and may be taken up together.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: If there was agreement on principle, may I know why there could not be agreement as regards the quantum of compensation?

SHRI ABID ALI: The principle was accepted that workers were entitled to conversion compensation.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Full?

SHRI ABID ALI: The quantum was in dispute.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: If there was agreement about full compensation where does the question of quantum come in?

SHRI ABID ALI: I said that it was not agreed that compensation should be in full. The principle of giving compensation was agreed to. The difference was with regard to the quantum.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: What attitude did the representative of the Central Government take up?

SHRI V. V. GIRI: The workers' demand was 10 annas, whereas the employers were prepared to pay up to 7½ annas. I put forward the proposition that they should accept 9 annas. The whole matter is still being pursued.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Is it not a fact that the official team which was appointed for conducting an inquiry into the condition of the tea industry recommended full compensation?

SHRI V. V. GIRI: I stated the position actually as it is. That is being pursued, and we are trying to see if any agreement can be reached.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Was there any discussion about the setting up of a high-powered committee to inquire into all the aspects of the tea industry?

SHRI V. V. GIRI: That is a matter which is before the Commerce and Industry Ministry.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: But I understood from a reply given on a previous occasion by my hon friend the Deputy Minister for Labour that this aspect would also be considered in the Shillong Conference.

SHRI ABID ALI: That arose out of the proceedings of the Calcutta Conference.