

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR: They are not meant for consultations. They are meant for training purposes.

*290. [The questioner (Shri L. H. Doshi) was absent.]

RAILWAY EMPLOYEES WHO OPTED FOR PAKISTAN AND RETURNED TO INDIA

*291. KHWAJA INAIT ULLAH: Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) how many railway employees who opted permanently for Pakistan, but did not go to Pakistan or returned to India, have applied to Government for re-instatement to their posts;

(b) how many of them have been taken back into service uptil now.

(c) what procedure is being adopted for selection of individuals out of them for appointment; and

(d) whether any instructions have been issued by the Railway Board to the officers concerned for recruitment of such persons?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN): (a) No statistics are available of such persons who have applied for employment on Railways.

(b), (c) and (d). In accordance with the policy of Government, Pakistan Final Optees have no claim for employment under Government. But in some individual cases Government have agreed to re-employ such applicants after examination on merits.

KHWAJA INAIT ULLAH: With reference to Home Ministry letter No 70'052-DGS, dated the 13th August 1952 it was made known to those persons that such persons can apply to the Government and they will be absorbed. I want to know how many have applied in reply to that circular and out of those applicants how many

have been taken and what procedure is being adopted to select them?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: As I said, we have no information as regards the numbers who have applied but so far we have been able to take or re-employ 224 people.

KHWAJA INAIT ULLAH: What is the procedure of taking them, the way of selection?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: Each case is examined on its merits and the man is re-employed or rejected.

KHWAJA INAIT ULLAH: What instructions have been given to the Headquarters of every zone regarding these people because they don't apply direct to you but they apply direct to the zones?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: These are the instructions. The case of each person has to be examined on its merits and decision taken.

*292. [The questioner (Shri Channa Reddy) was absent.]

RAILWAY CROSSINGS IN GAUHATI

*293. SHRIMATI PUSHPALATA DAS: Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Railway line from Pandu Station on the North Eastern Railway passes through the heart of the town of Gauhati and crosses important roads at 4 points;

(b) whether it is a fact that the railway gates at these crossings are controlled from the station;

(c) whether it is a fact that the gates are closed long before the departure of trains from the station and the traffic on these roads is, therefore, held up; and

(d) if the answer to part (c) above be in the affirmative what steps Government propose to take for the removal of the difficulties thus experienced by the public?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN): (a) Yes. The Railway crosses important roads at 5 points.

(b) No. The gates of only two level crossings are interlocked with Station Signals and the gates of the other 3 level crossings work independently of the departure of the trains from station.

(c) According to our information, the gates are not kept closed for longer than what is absolutely necessary.

(d) Does not arise.

SHRIMATI PUSHPALATA DAS: I want to know whether the Government is prepared to construct underground roads to facilitate the removal of traffic difficulties.

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: There is no such proposal but as for the construction of these road-bridges or sub-ways—a good deal of their cost has to be borne by the road authorities and unless they are prepared to shoulder their portion of the cost, we will not be able to do it.

SHRIMATI PUSHPALATA DAS: Are Government aware that this was the main complaint made by the public to the Rao Committee that recently visited Gauhati?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: Not only in Assam but wherever there are level crossings, there are such complaints but we are trying to see that the duration of the stop is reduced.

DR. S. K. BHUYAN: May I know whether Government are aware that there are 2 hospitals on either side of the railway line and that persons going to the hospitals are very much obstructed on account of these level crossings?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: May be. I take the information from the hon. Member.

PANDIT S. DUBE: Is it not a fact that under the Railway Act the Railways are bound to provide over-bridges or sub-ways whenever there is inconvenience to the public?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: No.

KHWAJA INAIT ULLAH: May I know what is the general rule of the Railways on Railway Crossings and stopping traffic? For how long the traffic can be stopped?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN: The duration is not provided in any Act but it is not more than necessary and we do not want to harass people.

INDIAN CENTRAL TOBACCO COMMITTEE

*294. SHRI B. V. KAKKILAYA: Will the Minister for FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Central Tobacco Committee met recently; and

(b) if so (i) who are the persons who attended the meeting; and

(ii) what decisions were taken by the Committee at the meeting?

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (DR. P. S. DESHMUKH): (a) Yes, on the 19th February, 1953.

(b) (i) and (ii). A list of persons who attended the meeting and a summary of decisions taken at the meeting are placed on the Table of the House. [See Appendix IV, Annexure No. 135.]

SHRI B. V. KAKKILAYA: As per decision No. 2, how many State Governments have formed Co-operative Societies and what is the amount given by this Committee to help those Co-operative Societies.

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: This Committee, I don't believe, has much funds to give any grants or donations and it is too early to expect the State Governments to take action.

SHRI B. V. KAKKILAYA: Have Government accepted decisions Nos. 7