

MR. CHAIRMAN : This question does not arise.

SHRI RAJAGOPAL NAIDU : Is the price we pay to our agriculturists in our country lower or higher than the price at which we import these foodgrains ?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA : Day before yesterday I replied that the indigenous rice is always cheaper than the imported rice.

SHRI RAJAGOPAL NAIDU : At what proportion does it work out ?

MR. CHAIRMAN : He cannot give the price.

SHRI B. RATH : Did the Government of China ask the Government of India to make arrangements to transport the rice that they had sold to India and did the Government of India make arrangements through their High Commissioner in London ?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA : That is always the case. For the import of foodgrains we ask the High Commissioner in London and he is the man who usually charters ships for the import of foodgrains from various countries ; and whichever ships he finds cheaper he charters.

SHRI B. RATH : Did the Government ask the Chinese Government whether they can make arrangements for the transportation of foodgrains to India ?

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH : We have not found the attitude of the Government of China so obliging as the hon. Member thinks.

SHRI B. RATH : What was the actual reply of the Government of China ?

(Time bell rings.)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Next question.

DUTY HOURS OF DRIVERS AND FIREMEN

*116. SHRI B. RATH : Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of hours drivers and firemen with headquarters at Tatanagar are required to work daily ;

(b) what arrangements exist for ensuring relief to them after completion of their duty ;

(c) whether it is a fact that these drivers and firemen are required to report one hour and twenty minutes before their duty hours begin in order to get the engines ready and are also made to work for half an hour after their duty hours end for cleaning up the engines ; and

(d) if the answer to part (c) above is in the affirmative whether they are paid overtime allowance for the extra one hour and fifty-five minutes ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN) : (a) Drivers and firemen at Tatanagar, like other running staff on Railways, are rostered for 8 to 10 hours of work daily and they are required to do 231 hours on an average in a month. These staff are not ordinarily employed for more than 54 hours a week on the average in any month. Their duty hours are fixed so as to give them four periods of rest of not less than 30 consecutive hours or five periods of rest of not less than 22 consecutive hours in a month.

(b) Adequate number of railway staff are employed at present to ensure the relief of this staff after 12 hours of duty at a stretch provided prior notice is given by the staff concerned after 10 hours of duty expressing their desire to be relieved after the 12th hour.

(c) and (d). Drivers and firemen are required to report 45 minutes before the departure of the engine from the

engine shed in order to get the engine ready and to stay on 15 minutes after arrival at the engine shed at the end of a trip in order to book repairs, hand over charge of tools etc. This engine attendance time is included in the ceiling limit of 231 hours of duty in a month which these staff have to put in. Over-time allowance is admissible under the extant orders but is paid to the staff only if the total monthly duty hours exceed the limit of 231 hours.

SHRI B. RATH : Has the Government made enquiries to the effect that the statement that is being made by them is not incorrect ?

MR. CHAIRMAN : To the best of their knowledge.

SHRI B. RATH : Is it a fact that the drivers and firemen are to work for 12 hours and, before that, they are asked to come one hour and twenty minutes before the time of taking over work and also they are asked to leave after 30 minutes of the arrival of the engine in the shed ?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN : Sir, I have explained the entire position. They are not asked to come one hour and twenty minutes earlier, but only 45 minutes earlier and, after leaving the engine, they have to remain for 15 minutes, not for 30 minutes.

SHRI B. RATH : I submit, Sir, the answer that is being given is not according to the facts that are obtaining there. I submit that the matter may be enquired into properly and the correct position ascertained.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Next question.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR : They may not be asked to go into it officially, but is it.....

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Rath said that the information was not quite right and asked for further enquiries. There, the matter ends. Next question.

RAILWAY REST ROOMS AT TATANAGAR

*117. **SHRI B. RATH :** (a) Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state whether it is a fact that separate Rest Rooms for Anglo-Indian and Indian drivers and firemen continue to be maintained on the Railways at Tatanagar, if so, why ?

(b) Whether Government propose to abolish this discrimination ; if so, when ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN) : (a) It is correct that there are two types of Rest Rooms for running Staff at Tatanagar—one in Indian style and the other in Western style. But the staff are permitted to use either of these types according to their convenience and desire without any discrimination.

(b) Does not arise.

SHRI B. RATH : Is it a fact that those members of the staff who wanted to use the Rest Rooms that are reserved for Western style persons have been refused to do so and they have been forced to use other rooms that are meant for Indian style persons ?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN : Anybody who chooses to go to the Western style rooms can go, Sir.

SHRI B. RATH : Is it a fact that some persons were refused entry to the Western style rooms at Tatanagar when they wanted to use them ?

SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN : I am not aware ; but if they are brought to our notice, I am prepared to enquire into them.

SHRI K. S. HEGDE : Will the hon. Minister try to impress upon the Anglo-Indians that they are either 'Anglo' or 'Indian' and not both ?

MR. CHAIRMAN : Question time is over.