

SENIORITY OF RAILWAY EMPLOYEES

*1010. **Shri Kelappan:** (a) Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state whether it is a fact that due to the merger of several Railways in the formation of the Western Railway, employees of smaller units like the Rajasthan and Saurashtra Railway have lost their seniority of service?

(b) Is it not a fact that assurances were given at the time of the merger that the seniority of no railway employee would be allowed to suffer by the merger?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) No.

(b) The assurance given was that every effort would be made to ensure that the staff of the ex-States Railways do not suffer in any way and that their existing and future position in the new order of things would be secure.

TOBACCO RE-DRYING MACHINE AT GUNTUR

*1012. **Shri S. V. L. Narasimham:** (a) Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state when, at what cost and under what circumstances a tobacco re-drying machine for installation at Guntur in Madras State was purchased by the Central Tobacco Marketing Committee?

(b) When and at what cost was the site acquired for installation?

(c) Why the machine has not so far been installed?

(d) Is it a fact that the Guntur Tobacco Marketing Committee requested that the machine may be given to them for operating?

(e) How is the machine sought to be disposed of?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): (a) The Tobacco Re-drying Plant was purchased by the Indian Central Tobacco Committee, Madras, in December, 1949, at a cost of Rs. 2,82,000/-. It was purchased because adequate re-drying facilities were not available to the grower exporters and small exporters at that time and the charges levied by private re-drying plant owners were considered to be exorbitant.

(b) The site was acquired in May, 1952, at a cost of Rs. 82,472/-.

(c) Firstly, the question of location of the plant and secondly the acquisition of land for erecting the plant took a considerable time. In the meantime the capacity for redrying tobacco

at the privately owned re-drying plants in the area had increased and became adequate for the available quantities of tobacco to be re-dried. Consequently it was decided to dispose of the plant.

(d) Yes.

(e) The plant is proposed to be handed over to the Guntur Tobacco Market Committee if suitable terms are offered by them; failing which it will be disposed of through the Directorate General of Supplies and Disposals.

YIELD OF SUGAR-CANE IN U.P.

*1015. **Shri H. S. Prasad:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether the yield of sugar-cane per acre has been decreasing in Eastern districts of U.P. for the last ten years; and

(b) if the answer to part (a) above be in the affirmative, what steps Government propose to take to increase the yield of sugar-cane per acre?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): (a) No. The yields have been varying from year to year, depending upon the amount and distribution of rainfall, and the extent of infestation of the crop with pests and disease, etc. During the past five years for which separate data are available for Eastern U.P., in the first three years the average yield of sugar-cane per acre rose from 281 maunds in 1947-48 to 312 maunds in 1949-50, while during the next two years they ranged between 259 and 265 maunds.

(b) A Five Year Sugarcane Development Scheme has been in operation since 1948-49 in the important sugar producing States. This scheme provides for increased irrigation facilities, supply of improved varieties of seed, adequate supply of fertilisers, etc. Appreciable increase in yields has been achieved in the concentrated areas of development, and it has been decided to extend the scheme for another 3 years upto 1955-56.

FOOD SCARCITY IN TINNEVELLY DISTRICT OF MADRAS

*1022. **Shri A. V. Thomas:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that distress and scarcity conditions exist in Tinnevelly District of the Madras State;

(b) if so, what remedial measures have been taken by Government;