

Increase in Railway Passenger Fares

188. Shri Nambiar: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 2nd and 3rd class passenger fares for short distance travel, particularly between three to ten miles, have been increased by more than 10 per cent contrary to the proposals made in his Budget speech; and

(b) the formula by which these increases are effected?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Railways (Shri S. V. Ramaswamy): (a) and (b). The relevant portion of paragraph 8 (page 4) of the Railway Budget Speech in the Parliament on 19th April, 1962, regarding revision of passenger fares, reads as follows:—

"8. The bases of the proposed fares, class-wise, are shown in the Supplement to the Explanatory Memorandum on the Budget which is being circulated with the Budget papers. The percentage increase proposed in first class fares averages to about 15 per cent, while that for second and third class fares would be a little under 10 per cent."

The proposals made in the Railway Budget Speech were therefore to be considered in conjunction with what was clearly indicated in the Annexure to the Supplement to the Explanatory Memorandum on the Railway Budget circulated to the Parliament with the Budget papers in April, 1962. In the aforesaid Annexure, the following remarks were given:—

"The overall average increase on existing Second Class fares approximates to 8.65 per cent."

"The overall average increase on existing Third Class fares approximates to 9.85 per cent."

It was therefore made quite clear that the fares for second and third classes were to be revised in such a manner that the overall average increase worked out to a little less than

10 per cent. It was not stated that for no distance would the increase exceed 10 per cent. While in some cases, particularly for short distances, the increase is more than 10 per cent, there are also cases where there has been no increase at all or an increase of very much less than 10 per cent.

Seed Multiplication and Distribution Programme

189. Shri Inder J. Malhotra: Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state what steps have been taken by Government to bring seed multiplication and distribution programme on sound footing and on uniform basis in the country?

The Deputy Minister of Food (Shri A. M. Thomas): A statement giving the required information is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix I, annexure No. 21].

Central Water and Power Commission

190. Dr. K. L. Rao: Will the Minister of Irrigation and Power be pleased to state:

(a) how many posts of members of Central Water and Power Commission are still vacant and for how long;

(b) if the period is long, does the work suffer; and

(c) whether steps will be taken to fill the posts early?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Irrigation & Power (Shri Alagasan): (a) In the Water Wing of the Commission two posts of Members are vacant. One vacancy occurred on the 17th December, 1961 and the other on the 10th July, 1962. In the Power Wing of the Commission, one post of Member is vacant since the 1st of April, 1961.

(b) The work is being looked after by the Chairman and other members in addition to their own duties, and work has not been allowed to suffer.

(c) Steps are being taken to fill the vacancies as early as possible.