

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan):

(a) Yes.

(b) The proposals referred to the establishment of Seamen's employment offices, delegation to the Asian Regional Maritime Conference and eligibility of Seamen who are out of employment for more than one year for free medical treatment.

ERGOT

542. Shri N. M. Laxam: Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are importing any ergot; and

(b) what steps have been taken to produce ergot artificially in India?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): (a) Yes.

(b) Ergot is the dried "sclerotium" (resting stage) of a parasitic fungus, "claviceps purpurea", which infects and develops on the flower of the rye plant. Ergot is already being grown in Madras State and that Government has been advised to increase its supplies. A scheme submitted by Assam Government for financial assistance from the Indian Council of Agricultural Research is under consideration. The development of ergot is also included in a scheme of the West Bengal Government.

DISTRICT MEDICAL OFFICERS

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

(a) whether it is a fact that two District Medical Officers who retired on Superannuation were re-employed on the Northern Railway and if so, why;

(b) whether these postings have affected the promotions of the junior Medical Officers;

(c) whether Government propose to place on the Table of the House the names of those re-employed with the particulars of excess amount spent on that account;

(d) whether it is also a fact that they (re-employed) have applied for further extension of their employment and if so, whether their request has been granted; and

(e) whether it is the practice to re-employ those retired on superannuation and if so, whether all applications received will be similarly considered?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan):

(a) Yes; no serving Medical officers with the requisite qualification and experience were available for appointment on the Northern Railway.

(b) No.

(c) Dr. R. C. Mahajan and Dr. H. S. Chhachi; there was no excess amount spent on this account.

(d) No.

(e) Yes, for short periods, in categories where no suitable serving employee is available for appointment, or there is a shortage of trained persons. Applications received are considered on merits.

BRICK MANUFACTURING COMPANY AT MYSORE MINES

R44. Shri Thimmalab: Will the Minister of Labour be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the brick manufacturing company at Mysore Mines in Kolar Gold Fields has been closed and if so, the reasons therefor?

The Minister of Labour (Shri V. V. Giri): Yes; the factory was closed as it was reported to be running at a loss.

COW SLAUGHTER

645. Sardar A. S. Sajal: (a) Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state whether Government have implemented all the recommendations of the Committee which was set up to find out ways and means to ban cow slaughter in India?

(b) If the reply to part (a) above be in the negative, what time Government will take to implement the recommendations?

(c) Is it a fact that Government are further examining the matter as regards unlicensed and unauthorised slaughter of cattle?

(d) Do Government propose to make a law for prohibiting slaughter of cattle?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): (a) and (b). The Government of India appointed an expert committee to consider and recommend a comprehensive plan of action for preserving the cattle wealth of the country and for promoting its development. The Committee submitted its report in November 1948. Copies of the report were circulated to the members of the House. The Committee recommended *inter alia*, that the slaughter of cattle was not