

tak, Jind and Sonapat by road over underbridges.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Under the extant rules, the Railways construct road overunderbridges in replacement of any of the existing busy level crossings provided the schemes are sponsored by the State Government and further the State Government Road authority agree to bear their share of the cost. The concerned State Government have not so far sponsored proposals for replacement of any of these level crossings by road overbridges.

Railway Porters

1341. Shri Balraj Madhok:
Shri Hardyal Devgun:

Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken for the welfare and security of railway porters since the independence; and

(b) the manner in which lakhs of rupees collected from railway porters annually as license fees are being utilised?

The Minister of Railways (Shri C. M. Poonacha): (a) The Licensed Porters, who were, prior to 1947, generally employed through contractors, are now licensed direct by the Railways, so that they may enjoy security of tenure as long as their work and general conduct are satisfactory.

Other steps taken for their welfare are—

(i) Free 'out-patient' medical treatment is provided to licensed porters for self only; and

(ii) Bipartite Committees are formed at important stations to redress their grievances.

The portage charges have been recently reviewed by the Railways and rates enhanced wherever necessary.

(b) The amount of licence fee collected is utilised towards the cost of supervisory staff and supply of uniforms wherever provided by the Railways. The licence fee is fixed on "no-profit-no-loss" basis just to cover the above expenditure.

Railway Employees of Chittaranjan Locomotive Workshop

1342. Shri Devan Sen: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) the names of employees of the Chittaranjan Locomotive Workshop, who have been dismissed under the President's order since 1960; and

(b) whether Government propose to revise the said order, thereby enabling the dismissed persons to resume their duties?

The Minister of Railways (Shri C. M. Poonacha): (a) None was dismissed; only one employee, Shri Shambhu Nath Dey, was, however, removed from service.

(b) No.

Pay Scales of Skilled Labour on Railways

1343. Shri Devan Sen:
Shri Madhu Limaye:

Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are two categories of skilled labour on the Indian Railways, one recruited from the Khalasis (unskilled labourers) and the other from the Trade Apprentices (after undergoing 5 to 3½ years schooling) direct;

(b) if so, whether both are paid the same scales;

(c) whether in view of several years' training and the extra expenditure involved, Government propose to give the skilled personnel recruited from Trade Apprentices, a higher scale; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

The Minister of Railways (Shri C. M. Poonacha): (a) to (d). There is only one grade of skilled workers on the Railways, namely, Rs. 110-3-131-4-143-EB-4-171-EB-4-175-5-180 and the posts in this category are filled by Trade Apprentices who are directly recruited and by promotion of Basic Tradesmen/Semi-skilled workers. The Trade Apprentices are given training and posted as skilled staff on successful completion of training period. The Basic Tradesmen/Semi-skilled Workers have to pass the prescribed skilled trade test before they are posted as skilled workers. There is no justification for allotment of two scales to skilled staff, one for the direct recruits and another for the promotees when there is no difference in the duties and responsibilities in the skilled grade.

Shortage of Jute

1944. Shri Deven Sen:
Shri Madhu Limaye:
Shri Bibhuti Mishra:

Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that our jute industry is facing an acute crisis on account of the shortage of jute;

(b) the steps taken by Government to overcome this shortage;

(c) whether the exports of jute goods are falling; and

(d) the steps proposed to check this fall in export/export earnings?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Commerce (Shri Shafi Qureshi): (a) Due to three successive short crops of jute in the country, the industry had difficulties in meeting its requirements of the fibre.

(b) Besides intensive efforts being made to increase the production of jute in the country, liberal imports of raw jute are being allowed to

meet the gap between local supplies and demand.

(c) The exports of jute goods during 1966-67 (April-January) were of the order of 619,500 tonnes compared to 768,400 tonnes during the corresponding period of 1965-66 recording a fall of 148900 tonnes.

(d) A statement is attached.

Some of the important measures being taken to increase export/export earnings of jute goods are detailed below:—

- (1) Continuous efforts are being made to increase the production of raw jute and improve quality thereof by adoption of improved methods of cultivation;
- (2) A vigorous research programme to find out new and diverse uses for jute goods is being formulated to provide greater outlet for jute. Indian Jute Mills Association is currently undertaking a research programme in the U.S.A. in collaboration with a firm of industrial consultants (Fabric Research Laboratories) with the main objective of developing new uses of jute goods;
- (3) Compulsory Pre-shipment Inspection and Quality Control under the Export (Quality Control and Inspection) Act, 1963 have been introduced with effort from 1st January, 1965;
- (4) Long term Trade Agreements with specific provision for export of jute goods have been negotiated with the U. S. S. R. and East European countries;
- (5) Export duties on jute manufactures are reviewed from time to time. As a result of recent review the duties