

(b) how much of it is borne by Indian ships?

The Minister of Transport and Communications (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri): (a) and (b). Approximately 25 lakhs tons of dry cargo moved on the coast during 1956, the whole of which was carried in Indian owned ships or in ships chartered by Indian shipping companies.

Postal Facilities

*1338. **Shri Naushir Bharncha:** Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that in East Khandesh there are villages, where delivery of postal articles are made only twice a week or even less frequently,

(b) if so, the number of such villages which are without postal facilities

(c) whether Government have any plans for increasing postal facilities in such places, and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

The Minister of Transport and Communications (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri): (a) Yes

(b) None

(c) and (d) Yes, it is proposed to open more post offices and sanction additional delivery staff, where justified, during the remaining portion of the Second Plan period

Purna Project, Bombay State

*1339. **Shri Pangarkar:** Will the Minister of Irrigation and Power be pleased to state.

(a) whether it is a fact that the sanction of Central Water and Power Commission has not been granted as yet to the Purna Project in Marathwada region of Bombay; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

The Minister of Irrigation and Power (Shri S. K. Patil): (a) and (b). The Purna Project was discussed by the Advisory Committee for Irriga-

tion and Power Projects at its meeting held on the 30th November, 1957 on the basis of the preliminary comments offered by the Central Water and Power Commission on the Project report. The Project was originally prepared by the erstwhile Hyderabad State on certain assumptions about betterment charges, water rates etc. The Bombay State, who feel that the assumptions regarding the betterment charges and water rates made in the Project are on the high side, have now suggested revised rates, which, if accepted, would reduce the financial return considerably. As the project on this basis becomes uneconomic, the Advisory Committee have asked the State Government to furnish reasons for taking it up

Railway Porters

*1340. **Shrimati Sucheta Kripalani:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state

(a) whether the licensed porters and casual and contract workers in the Railway Department have represented for the abolition of contract system, de-casualisation of casual labour and for the grant of facilities available to other Railway employees, and

(b) if so, the action Government have taken in this connection?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): (a) Yes, some representations on the lines mentioned have been received

(b) So far as licensed porters are concerned, the contract system has been abolished on all the Railways, except over the Pandu Region of the North Eastern Railway and at two stations, viz. Kanpur and Allahabad, on the Northern Railway. In respect of both the exceptions also steps are contemplated to abolish the contract system.

Casual labour is so employed directly by the Railway when the work is essentially of a casual nature, and no change in that system is contemplated.