

ing any defects that may exist in the relationship between themselves and their employees.

Shri Yajnik: May I know if it is proposed to socialise this service and run these bookstalls on behalf of the Railway Ministry, when this lapses?

The Minister of Railways (Shri Jagjivan Ram): So long as the service given by these contractors is satisfactory, there is no intention to nationalise it.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: May I know whether it is a fact that this company has bookstalls on other Railways also?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: Yes, Sir Messrs Wheeler & Co are perhaps the best known firm of booksellers in Indian Railways. They have stalls in the Western, North-Eastern, Eastern, South-Eastern, Northern, Central Railways.

Mr. Speaker: The Question Hour is over

Short Notice Questions and Answer

Dacoity on Jhansi-Bina Section

S.N.Q. 6. Shrimati Ila Palchoudhuri: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the news item which appeared in 'The Hindustan Standard' New Delhi Edition, dated the 11th December, 1957, regarding looting of Government cash and jewellery and cash belonging to passengers and Railway staff, on the 8th December, 1957 at Jiron Railway Station on the Jhansi-Bina Section;

(b) if so, the details of the incident; and

(c) the action taken so far by Government in the matter?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shahnawaz Khan): (a) Yes.

(b) On 8-12-57 at 22.00 hours a gang of about 12 dacoits armed with lathis and one Breech Loading gun

raided Jiron station and looted Government Cash amounting to Rs. 24.19 nP. They further raided the Railway quarters of the Station Master, Assistant Station Master and Pointsman and looted cash and ornaments worth about Rs. 2,000. Property worth about Rs 60 of the passengers in the waiting room was also looted, but none was injured

The raid is reported to have lasted for about 49 minutes during which the dacoits did not allow the staff to use any means of communication.

(c) After the dacoits decamped, information was communicated to all concerned, on receipt of which 9 armed police Constables from Dhaura arrived and subsequently Station Officers of the Government Railway Police Stations at Jhansi, Bina, Lalitpur and Jakhlaun arrived on the scene of the occurrence. The Government Railway Police, Jhansi have registered the case under section 395 IPC. and their investigation is in progress

The Assistant Security Officer, Central Railway Jhansi has been instructed to follow up and report its developments

Shrimati Ila Palchoudhuri: May I know whether the Government has looked into this fact that after the Railway Protection Force has been constituted such incidents seem to have gone up rather than gone down?

The Minister of Railways (Shri Jagjivan Ram): The question appears to be rather strange. Such incidents have nothing to do with the Railway Protection Force. The Railway Protection Force is not meant for maintaining ordinary law and order which is the responsibility of the State Government.

Shri Radha Raman: May I know, after this incident has occurred, whether the investigations so far done in the matter have brought to light something which may be useful for the future?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: Investigations are being carried out by the State Government. That station is located in an area which is on the border of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh where there are lots of dacoits. There is a famous, well-known gang by name 'Devi Singh's gang'. These people were armed with lathis. They came to the station master and they started shouting 'Devi Singh has come, Devi Singh has come.' Actually from the investigations made so far, it appears that it was a gang of Kabutarinuts. They are criminal tribes.

Shrimati Ila Falchoudhary: Would it not be feasible to keep some sort of fire-arms with the station master and the station staff to guard themselves against such incidents?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: Even after that, I do not know how hon Member thinks that such a contingency will be ruled out. It is not possible to provide adequate guards at every station. We will have to depend upon the steps taken by the State Government for the maintenance of law and order.

Shri C. K. Bhattacharya: May I know whether any compensation will be given to the railway staff whose property has been looted because they could not be protected?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: I hope their property will be recovered by the police.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Rural University at Rudrapur

*1309. **Shri Raghunath Singh:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state whether it is a fact that Central Government proposes to help in the setting up by U.P. Government of a Rural University at Rudrapur?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. P. Jain): The question of rendering financial assistance to the

U.P. Government for establishment of an Agricultural University at Rudrapur is at present under consideration of the Government of India.

Opening of New Post Offices

*1310. **Shri Damani:** Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state how far Government have been successful in implementing the scheme of opening experimental extra-departmental branch post offices in various villages in India during 1956-57 and 1957-58 so far?

The Minister of Transport and Communications (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri): Out of the target of about 20,000 post offices of all categories proposed to be opened during the Second Five-Year Plan period, 3,498 experimental extra departmental branch post offices were opened during 1956-57 and 286 during 1957-58 upto 30-9-57.

Banihal Tunnel

*1314. **Shri Shivaramjappa:** Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether the initial boring of the second tube of the Banihal Tunnel has been completed;

(b) if so, how many foreign and Indian technicians are working on the spot; and

(c) the total expenditure incurred so far?

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

(b) The number of technicians employed on the Tunnel project varies from time to time. During the last 12 months the number of foreign technicians varied from 40 to 50 and that of Indian technicians from 100 to 400.

(c) Rs. 106.05 lakhs up to 31st October 1957.