

**Forest Research Institute,  
Dehra Dun**

\*536. { Shri A. K. Gopalan:  
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Shri Narayanankutty Menon:

Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Vigilance Officer of the Government of India conducted an enquiry into certain allegations against some officers of the Forests Research Institute, Dehra Dun; and

(b) if so, the result of the enquiry?

The Minister of Co-operation (Dr. F. S. Deshmukh): (a) Shri S. T. Raja, Vigilance Officer and the Officer-in-Charge of the Organization & Methods Division of the Ministry of Food & Agriculture, visited the Forest Research Institute, Dehra Dun, in March last to look into certain points raised in the first audit report on the Institute. He took that opportunity also to enquire into certain other allegations made against the President and another Senior Officer of the Institute.

(b) After holding a thorough enquiry, Shri Raja reported that the allegations either could not be substantiated or were found to be false. As for the points raised in Audit he reported that the Institute had been audited for the first time and the existing records and accounting practices, though not upto the standard required by Audit, were adequate and had been in vogue for many years. He found that on the receipt of the Audit Report, remedial steps were being taken or had already been taken by the President. Shri Raja did not find any proof of dishonesty, bribery, false T. A. claims, embezzlement or misappropriation of Government property. He recommended that all such charges should be dropped and no further action should be taken.

Shri Raja's report was accepted by Government and the question of taking any disciplinary action did not arise.

Shri A. K. Gopalan: May I know what were the specific allegations against them?

Dr. F. S. Deshmukh: Essentially, the allegations were with regard to the misuse of Government vehicles and undertaking private work in the Institute.

Shri Narayanankutty Menon: May I know whether there were allegations that a number of peons were exclusively working at their houses for years together and did not attend office at all?

Dr. F. S. Deshmukh: That was also one of the allegations.

Shri Narayanankutty Menon: May I know whether there was any allegation, to the effect that furniture was being made in the Institute for the personal use of the officers concerned without any payment being made to the Institute?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. P. Jain): The position was that until recently, under the rules an officer could get small articles of furniture made and he had to pay on the basis of the cost of manufacture. It was found that an officer of the Institute had got small articles of furniture worth about Rs. 100 made and made payments for them. Now, that rule has been cancelled and no private work can be done.

Shri Narayanankutty Menon: Is it not a fact that in the Audit Report mention was made that for the furniture made for the personal use of officers concerned no payment had been effected, and what action Government has taken on that particular report?

Shri A. P. Jain: From the accounts, it has been found that the payment has been made.

**Astronomical Observatories**

\*537. Shri S. C. Samanta: Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state:

(a) the number of astronomical observatories that exist in India at

present with the places of their location,

(b) whether any of them are equipped with modern telescopes and accessories;

(c) whether there is any liaison with the observations maintained by State Governments and Universities, and

(d) whether any of the old observatories have been re-orientated?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Humayun Kabir): (a) There are only three important astronomical observatories in India, located at Kodaikanal, Hyderabad and Nainital

(b) The present position is not entirely satisfactory but their Development Plans include provisions for better equipment

(c) There is scientific co-operation between the observatory at Kodaikanal, which is under the India Meteorological Department, and the observatories at Nainital and Hyderabad, which are maintained by the Uttar Pradesh Government and the Osmania University, respectively

(d) No, but the activities of the Kodaikanal Observatory which was established in 1901 have been expanded during the last ten years

Shri S C Samanta: May I know how far the proposed Central Astronomical Observatory has progressed and whether any work will be done during the Second Five Year Plan?

Shri Humayun Kabir: A good deal of progress has been made and observations have been taken in two places, one in Ujjain proper and the other at a place called Kalideh near Ujjain and these observations show satisfactory results. The difficulty of immediately starting an observatory arises out of the foreign exchange situation and, perhaps, for the next year or two, it may be difficult to start the observatory.

Shri S. C. Samanta: May I know whether for this Central Observatory any officer of the department has been sent abroad for acquiring a fair knowledge of the matter?

Shri Humayun Kabir: Sir, I would like to ask for notice for that question.

Shri Joachim Alva. In view of the heavy demand for both military and civil aviation, do Government propose to bring any one of these observatories directly under the Union control?

Shri Humayun Kabir: The Kodaikanal Observatory is an observatory directly under the Government of India

Shri Radhelal Vyas May I know whether, in view of the results that have been obtained at the observatory at Ujjain, Government have decided to have the Central Astronomical Observatory at Ujjain?

Shri Humayun Kabir. As I said, the results have been very satisfactory there and, therefore, the present indications are that, probably Ujjain will be selected. But, since the establishment of a Central Observatory will involve large expenditure, we want to be absolutely sure before the final decision is taken

Shri T N Singh. May I know whether it is a fact that the observatories situated in the plains suffer from certain handicaps, namely, dust and other things, which are associated with the plains, hampering proper observations, and also whether the experts have taken that point into consideration?

Shri Humayun Kabir: This has been taken into consideration. Ujjain seems to be satisfactory from that point of view. But, I would like to add that at Kodaikanal we have an observatory placed at a high altitude and the two observatories will be functioning in co-operation with each other