

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: We are receiving of late, reports from the representatives of various growers and also the trade that on account of indiscriminate imports, the prices of arecanut are falling down. We are receiving such reports.

Shri E. S. Murthy: May I know whether there is any truth in the allegation that the standard has gone down?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: Our arecanut is of the most superfine quality, while the ones imported from Singapore and Ceylon are all wild crops grown in the forests.

Shri Punnesoe: Have the Government received any representation from arecanut growers that the quantity of imports be reduced?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: Yes, we are receiving such reports.

Shri Damodara Menon: Have the Government taken any steps regarding these representations?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: Not yet.

Shri Achuthan rose—

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. I am going to the next question.

MANGALORE AERODROME

*469. **Shri C. E. Iyyanni:** Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether the construction of the aerodrome at Mangalore is over; and

(b) if so, when the air service at Mangalore will be available for use?

The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) and (b). The aerodrome at Mangalore is nearing completion and it is expected that scheduled air services will start operating to and from Mangalore by the end of this Calendar year.

Mr. Speaker: Now question No. 470.

Sardar Hukam Singh: Question No 490 also may be taken up along with this.

Mr. Speaker: Is Mr. Sodhia present here?

Shri K. C. Sodhia: Yes, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: I believe it is convenient to the hon. Minister to answer both these questions together.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): Yes, Sir.

MOTOR VEHICLES TAXATION ENQUIRY COMMITTEE REPORT.

*470. **Shri S. N. Das:** (a) Will the Minister of Transport be pleased to state which of the recommendations of the Motor Vehicles Taxation Enquiry Committee have been accepted and implemented by the Government of India and the various State Governments?

(b) Which of the important recommendations are still under consideration of Government?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): (a) and (b). No decision has yet been taken by the Central and State Governments on the recommendations of the Motor Vehicle Taxation Enquiry Committee.

MOTOR VEHICLES TAXATION

*490 **Shri K. C. Sodhia:** Will the Minister of Transport be pleased to state whether Government have come to any decision on the recommendations of the Transport Advisory Council regarding motor vehicles taxation made in April 1951?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): Attention is invited to my reply to Starred Question No. 470 asked by Shri S. N. Das today.

Shri S. N. Das: May I know whether the recommendations of this Inquiry Committee were considered by the Transport Advisory Council at any time, and if so, what were the decisions of the Advisory Council?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: The decisions were considered by the Transport Advisory Council, and at present the whole matter is between the Technical Committee and the State Governments?

Shri S. N. Das: May I know when that Technical Committee was appointed, and by what time it was asked to submit its report?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: It was appointed in August 1952, and has finished its deliberations. The report will be ready by December.

Sardar Hukam Singh: May I know whether any ceiling for sales tax on petrol has been fixed according to the recommendation of this Advisory Council?

Shri Shahawaz Khan: As I have said before, no definite decision has yet been taken.

Sardar Hukam Singh: May I know whether there are still any inter-State taxes or other cesses chargeable on vehicles just at present?

The Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri L. B. Shastri): Yes, that is so.

Shri B. S. Murthy: May I know what are the terms of reference?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. It seems that the question has been asked merely because some question has to be asked.

Shri V. P. Nayar: Have Government made any inquiries as to the number of buses and other vehicles registered by the bus owners with wrong information regarding wheel-base, seating capacity etc.?

Shri Shahawaz Khan: It is for the State Governments to make such inquiries.

Sardar Hukam Singh: May I know whether the Government proposes to bring all these taxes on vehicles in the different States on a rational and uniform basis?

Shri L. B. Shastri: A Technical Committee has been appointed for the same purpose, and it has already had discussions with the representatives of several States. It is expected that they will be able to finish the remaining States by the end of December.

Sardar Hukam Singh: But that recommendation was made by the Advisory Council in April 1951. What is the reason for the delay in arriving at a decision?

Shri L. B. Shastri: No final decision was taken, the matter was considered and discussed by the Advisory Council. The recommendations were again referred to the various States for ratifying the conclusions that were arrived at by the Council. Some of the State Governments did not agree to them, and have not ratified them. And so this Technical Committee was appointed further to go into the matter, and arrive at some final decision.

RURAL POST OFFICES

*471. **Shri B. K. Das:** Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

(a) the number of self-supporting post offices under the "a post office for a village having two thousand and above population" Scheme;

(b) the total loss incurred on such post offices; and

(c) the total loss incurred during the first six months of this year for post offices started without any liability on the beneficiaries?

The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) 7,798.

(b) Presumably the Member is referring to Village Post Offices which are not self-supporting. In that case the loss is Rs. 67,40,914/- up to the end of September 1952.

(c) Rs. 20,10,631/-.

Shri B. K. Das: May I know the total number of post offices started under this 'a post office for a village having two thousand and above population' scheme?

Shri Raj Bahadur: At the end of September, the number was 17,850, for the villages.

Shri B. K. Das: Has the scheme been completed, or the work is still going on?

Shri Raj Bahadur: It is still going on.

Shri B. K. Das: How many post offices are still to be started?

Shri Raj Bahadur: An exact figure is not possible, because the population keeps on increasing.

Shri B. K. Das: Am I to understand that still more post offices are to be opened in villages with a population of two thousand and above according to the latest census?

Shri Raj Bahadur: Yes, they will be opened.

Shri B. K. Das: May I know, Sir, whether the non-returnable contribution scheme is also continuing?

Shri Raj Bahadur: It is.

Shri T. S. A. Chettiar: Among the post offices in villages with a population of 2,000, how many have turned out to be deficit?

Shri Raj Bahadur: Deficit? The number is 10,082.

Shri N. Sreekantan Nair: May I know, Sir, out of the 8000 odd rural post offices, how many engage departmental Postmasters and how many non-departmental Postmasters?

Shri Raj Bahadur: Mostly they are extra-departmental Postmasters.