

The Minister of Home Affairs and States (Dr. Katju): (a) to (e). Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House, when received.

Shri Rishang Keishing: Is it a fact that Government officers are acquiring big plots of land in the Imphal Town area on the plea that they are also refugees?

Dr. Katju: I want notice of that question.

ASSAM REGIMENT

***956. Shri Rishang Keishing:** Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to state:

(a) the total strength of the Assam Regiment at present; and

(b) the size to which Government propose to expand the Assam Regiment?

The Deputy Minister of Defence (Sardar Majithia): (a) It is not in the interests of security to disclose the strength of the Assam Regiment.

(b) There are no proposals to expand the Assam Regiment at present.

Shri Rishang Keishing: May I know how many hill people are there in the Assam Regiment?

Sardar Majithia: I have not got the break-up figures.

Shri B. S. Murthy: May I know whether any special concession is shown to any of the hill tribes residing there in the matter of recruitment?

Sardar Majithia: There is no special concession.

Shri Rishang Keishing: May I know whether it is a fact that hill educated men have not been given proper facilities for serving in the Indian army and such a feeling is growing among them?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The Defence Ministry will come up for discussion now.

Sardar Majithia: As a matter of fact, Sir, the rejections from these hill tribes is very much less, as compared with others.

Shri G. S. Singh: Is there any difference in the pay in the Assam rifles of the officers and other ranks as compared with the Indian Army?

Sardar Majithia: No.

Shri N. Sreekantan Nair: What is the special purpose for which these

Assam Rifles have been recruited and maintained?

Sardar Majithia: It is part of the Indian army.

Shri Rishang Keishing: Are Government aware that many educated and qualified hillmen are ready to join the Army, but they have not been taken?

Sardar Majithia: I am glad to know that they are ready to join the army and if they want to there is a need for them today.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

CONTRACTS OF CIVILIAN CONTRACTORS IN MILITARY CENTRES

***949. Giani G. S. Musafir:** Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to continue the contracts of civilian contractors in the Military canteens; and

(b) if so, have Government revived the services of the contractors whose contracts were earlier terminated under the policy of Government in this connection?

The Minister of Defence Organisation (Shri Tyagi): (a) No.

(b) Does not arise?

GHATAPRABHA VALLEY PROJECT

***957. Shri Janardhan Reddy:** Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ramamurthi Finance Enquiry Commission has recommended that top priority should be given to the second stage of the Ghataprabha Valley project by re-adjusting, if necessary, the cost of the scheme in the Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, what is the proposed estimated cost of the project; and

(c) what are the other main recommendations of the Commission regarding the scarcity areas in Bombay State?

The Minister of Finance (Shri C. D. Deshmukh): (a) The Team have suggested that high priority should be given to this project but no recommendations have been made regarding

its inclusion in the Five Year Plan. It is for the State Government to initiate proposals in the matter.

(b) The cost as estimated at present is about Rs. 9 crores.

(c) A number of recommendations mostly long-term ones have been made and they are under examination.

DETENTION UNDER THE PREVENTIVE DETENTION ACT

*960. **Shri Amjad Ali:** Will the Minister of Home Affairs be pleased to refer to starred question No. 540 asked on the 5th March, 1953, regarding detention under the Preventive Detention Act and state whether the Deputy Minister of Home Affairs had personally looked into the cases of persons now under Preventive Detention in the States which he visited and if so, with what results?

The Minister of Home Affairs and States (Dr. Katju): No, Sir.

RATE OF ROYALTIES FOR SALT

664. **Shri Bheekha Bhai:** Will the Minister of States be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to lay on the Table of the House a statement containing the information promised in reply to starred question No. 194 asked on the 19th February, 1953;

(b) whether the Government of Rajasthan have represented against the rate of Royalties in respect of salt and requested the revision of the old rates; and

(c) if the answer to part (b) above be in the affirmative, what action Government have taken in the matter?

The Minister of Home Affairs and States (Dr. Katju): (a) This will be done shortly.

(b) and (c). A representation was received from the Government of Rajasthan that the surcharge of $3\frac{1}{2}$ annas per maund levied by the Government of India for the recoupment of certain expenditure incurred by them should be treated as part of the selling price of salt, in calculating the royalty payable to State Government which has been fixed as a percentage of the selling price.

The State Government have been informed that the charge of $3\frac{1}{2}$ annas per maund which is in the nature of a cess recovered under a Statutory Notification of the Government of India should not be taken into account in determining the selling price of salt for the purpose of calculating royalty. This is in accordance with the former practice of calculating royalty on the selling price of salt, exclusive of salt duty when the duty was in force.

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CUSTOMS DUTY ON ALCOHOL

665. **Dr. Amin:** (a) Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the rate of customs duty on potable and non-potable alcohol is the same?

(b) If the answer to part (a) above be in the affirmative, have Government considered the advisability of reducing the rate of customs duty on non-potable alcohol which could be used only for industrial purposes?

The Deputy Minister of Finance (Shri M. C. Shah): (a) No, Sir. The rate of customs duty on non-potable alcohol which falls under item 22(6) of the Indian Customs Tariff is much lower than that on potable alcohol assessable under item 22(4) of the Indian Customs Tariff.

(b) The question does not arise in view of reply to (a) above.

BOARD OF COUNCIL OF SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH

666. **Shri Bheekha Bhai:** (a) Will the Minister of Natural Resources and Scientific Research be pleased to state whether it is a fact that a meeting of the Board of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research was held recently in New Delhi?

(b) if so, what was the agenda?

(c) What were the decisions arrived at?

The Minister of Education and Natural Resources and Scientific Research (Maulana Azad): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). The Board discussed the programme of Research for the year 1953-54. A statement giving the recommendations made by the Board is placed on the Table of the House. [See Appendix VI, annexure No. 45.]

LAND LEFT BY DISPLACED PERSONS

667. **Sardar Hukam Singh:**
Shri Ajit Singh:

Will the Minister of Rehabilitation be pleased to state:

(a) the total area of land left by displaced persons in—

(i) West Punjab, (ii) Bahawalpur, (iii) Sind, (iv) Baluchistan and (v) N.W.F.P. in West Pakistan;

(b) what part of (i), (ii), (iii), (iv) and (v) was (1) canal irrigated, (2) well irrigated, i.e. *chahi* and (3) *barani*;

(c) the area of land left by Muslim evacuees in (i) Punjab (East), (ii) Pepsu, (iii) Rajasthan and (iv) Uttar Pradesh; and