

- (b) (i) Claims paid = 2430.
 (ii) Claims repudiated and withdrawn = 1443.

(c) 210.

- (d) Claims received = 15,921.
 Claims disposed of = 13,794.

(e) The decrease in number of claims received is due to less incidence of claims. Decrease in disposal of claims is due to insufficiency of trained staff and slow progress in the initial stages.

(f) Yes.

(g) The question of adjustment of claims work between the Gorakhpur and Calcutta Claims Offices is under examination.

FORESTS

***577. Shri Barman:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) the area of hardwood and softwood forests in India; and

(b) the quantity of hardwood and softwood imported into India during the last three years?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): (a) and (b). A statement is placed on the Table of the House. [See Appendix III, annexure No. 23.]

POST OFFICES IN HILL DISTRICTS OF ASSAM

***578. Shri Beli Ram Das:** Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state how many new post offices were opened in the hill districts of Assam during the years 1951, 1952 and 1953?

The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): A statement giving the required information is placed on the Table of the House. [See Appendix III, annexure No. 24.]

EXPORT OF ORE FROM CALCUTTA

***579. Shri Deogam:** Will the Minister of Transport be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the present system of transport and storage for export of ore from Calcutta is proposed to be changed; and

(b) whether the established shippers of Calcutta Port of the ore trade will be consulted in the matter?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) Yes.

(b) Government have taken the interests of all the parties concerned into consideration before taking their decision.

INDO-PAKISTAN LOCUST CONFERENCE

***580. Shri Muniswamy:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state in what respects the Indo-Pakistan Locust Conference has proved useful?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): The Conference has been useful for purposes of mutual consultation, exchange of information on locust situation and direct communications between field officers located on both sides of the border.

INDIAN RAILWAYS CENTENARY EXHIBITION TRAINS

***581. Shri Muniswamy:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Railways Centenary Exhibition trains are now on tour;

(b) if so, the date from which these trains are on tour;

(c) the number of such trains now on tour; and

(d) the average total collection per train per day?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shahnawaz Khan): (a) Yes.