

**Shri M. V. Krishnappa:** I think from the month of May. I have not got the exact date with me. But we should take it from the date that the prices have been coming down.

**Shrimati Renu Chakravartty:** May I know, Sir, what is the open market price of rice and the price at which it is being sold at cheap grain shops?

**The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai):** In the cheap grain shops rice is being sold at controlled price i.e. about one rupee more than the procurement price per maund whereas in the open market it is selling at one or two rupees more than the cheap grain shop prices.

**Shrimati Renu Chakravartty:** May I know the number of ration cards that are being distributed in these 11 or 16 shops which have been opened?

**Shri M. V. Krishnappa:** I do not have the exact figures.

**Shri Kidwai:** We are prepared to distribute any number of ration cards required by the people. We have got 3,000 tons of rice there. The present off-take is only 250 tons. At this present rate it will suffice for about two years. We are prepared to give them any number of cards provided they are really in need of it.

**Shri Biren Dutt:** May I know, Sir, whether the Tripura State Workers Union demanded cheap grain shops for workers and whether the State Government has granted them?

**Shri Kidwai:** We have no such information but I think the workers should get their rations from the Government shops. Why should they have a privileged shop for themselves?

**Shrimati Renu Chakravartty:** May I know whether.....

**Mr. Chairman:** Next question.

#### ASSAM LINK ROAD

\*681. **Shri Nageshwar Prasad Sinha:**

(a) Will the Minister of Transport be pleased to state whether the Assam Link Road which connects Bihar and

other States with Assam is still under the management of the Central Government?

(b) What amount is annually spent over its proper maintenance?

(c) Do State Governments also share the expenses of its maintenance?

(d) Is there a proposal to metal the entire length of the road?

(e) What is the condition of the part of this road falling in the districts of Bhagalpur, Santal Parganas and Hazaribagh in Bihar?

**The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan):** (a) The Government of India pay for the improvement and maintenance of permanent alignment of National Highway No. 31 known as Assam Access Road. In the case of temporary alignments, however, the Centre pays for only the maintenance of the road, pending construction of the road all along the permanent alignment. The improvement of these temporary alignments is the responsibility of the State Governments concerned. The Governments of Bihar, West Bengal and Assam are in executive charge of the portions of the N. H. No. 31 lying in their jurisdiction.

(b) Rs. 24 lakhs approximately.

(c) No.

(d) Yes, in respect of the permanent alignment of the National Highway.

(e) The section of the road referred to by the Member does not form part of the permanent alignment of the road. This section is, however, maintained from Central funds as the missing links on the permanent alignment have not yet been constructed and it is necessary in the meanwhile to provide a through connection to Assam. 67 miles of this temporary alignment have black topped surface, 81 miles waterbound macadam surface and 21 miles earthen surface.

**Shri Nageshwar Prasad Sinha:** With reference to part (d) of the question, may I know when metalling work is

going to be started or whether it has started in any of the provinces?

**Shri Alagesan:** In the two years of the Five-Year-Plan period, we have already spent 68 lakhs on this road.

**Shri Barman:** In view of the fact that since 1950 this only life line to Assam is heavily damaged during the rains every year, is there any proposal for more bridges for flood water to pass?

**Shri Alagesan:** Yes, Sir. The estimate of this Assam Access Road covers all these things, metalling of surface, construction of bridges, etc.

**Shri N. M. Lingam:** May I know the necessity for these two alignments for this road and whether the temporary alignment will be abandoned when work is executed along the permanent alignment?

**Shri Alagesan:** The temporary alignment will be continued to be maintained by the States concerned, after we take over the permanent alignment.

**Shri N. M. Lingam:** The first part of my question has not been answered.

**Shri Alagesan:** The road along the permanent alignment does not exist in several sections.

#### RADIO PHOTO SERVICE

\*683. **Shri Heda:** (a) Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state the countries with whom India is connected by the Radio Photo Service?

(b) What are the charges separately for each country?

(c) Is the service getting more and more popular?

**The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur):** (a) and (b). A Statement is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix III, annexure No. 59.]

(c) Yes judging from the recent traffic statistics.

**Shri Heda:** From the statement laid on the Table, I find that only European and some of the American countries are linked. Is there any effort going to be made on the part of the Government to connect the Middle East and South East Asian countries?

**Shri Raj Bahadur:** We are constantly making efforts in that direction. But the effort is necessarily limited by our limited resources in equipment and finances.

**श्री हेडा :** चूँकि हमारे व्यापारिक और दूसरे सांस्कृतिक सम्बन्ध एशियाटिक कंट्रीज से ज्यादा हैं, इस लिहाज से क्या कोई इस प्रकार की स्कीम के हाथ में लिये जाने की सम्भावना है ?

**श्री राज बहादुर :** मैंने जैसा निवेदन किया, वह स्कीम हमारे विचाराधीन है किन्तु इस में जो योरोपियन कंट्रीज का बाहुल्य दिखता है उस का कारण यह है कि हमारे तार के सारे सम्बन्ध जो हैं वह लन्दन के द्वारा होते हैं इस सर्विस के लिये ।

#### FAMILY PLANNING RESEARCH AND PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

\*684. **Shri S. C. Samanta:** (a) Will the Minister of Health be pleased to state when the Family Planning Research and Programmes Committee was constituted?

(b) What are its main terms of reference?

(c) Has any interim report been submitted by the Committee?

(d) If so, what are its recommendations?

(e) Has any action been taken on the interim recommendations of the Committee?

**The Minister of Health (Rajkumari Amrit Kaur):** (a) and (b). The Family Planning Research and Programmes Committee was constituted on the 6th May 1953 to make recommendations to the Government of India regarding research schemes and experi-