

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri M. V. Krishnappa):

(a) It is estimated that Government of India will spend about Rs. 9 lakhs on the Locust Warning Organisation and Rs. 14 lakhs on the Co-ordinated Locust Control Scheme in scheduled desert breeding areas of Rajasthan, Saurashtra, Bombay, Kutch and PEPSU, during the current financial year. The latter amount will be subsequently recovered from the beneficiary States on an agreed basis.

(b) The vulnerable States have their own Anti-Locust Organisations to fight the locust menace in their respective cultivated areas. They also contribute towards the Co-ordinated Anti-Locust Scheme sponsored by the Central Government.

Shri N. M. Lingam: May I know the extent of scheduled desert area in which the Government of India operate directly and the extent of area under the operation of the State Governments?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: I do not have the figures in terms of square miles of area, but the scheduled desert areas are in Rajasthan, Saurashtra, Bombay, Kutch and PEPSU.

Shri N. M. Lingam: What is the extent of area usually infested by locusts?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: I want notice for giving the square miles.

Shri Barman: Is it a fact that the contributing States are not paying their contributions to the Centre and, if so, what are the steps that Government propose to take?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: They are paying.

Shri Muniswamy : May I know whether planes are used in these anti-locusts operations?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: Yes, there are two planes which we have got from the T. C. A. and those are used during the peak periods which are the three months of July, August and September.

Shri Punnoose: Has it come to the notice of the Government that there is a variety of birds like the sparrow which is eating up locusts in large numbers?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): It has successfully operated in Rajasthan.

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: In today's papers there is something about a bird *bayya*. I am told it is doing a lot of anti-locust work.

BUILDINGS FOR POST OFFICES

***891. Shri S. C. Samanta:** Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

(a) the number of post-offices that are housed in rented buildings in India;

(b) the amount of rent, the Posts and Telegraphs Department has to pay annually;

(c) whether Government contemplate to construct post-office buildings of their own on lands available; and

(d) if so, whether plans have been prepared for Postal buildings?

The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) In all 4,702 post offices are housed in rented buildings in India.

(b) The annual rental bill paid by the Posts and Telegraphs Department for these buildings comes to Rs. 21,55,920.

(c) Yes.

(d) Yes.

Shri S. C. Samanta: May I know whether Government have a definite scheme for the future construction of post office buildings? If so, may I know the priorities of the different offices?

Shri Raj Bahadur: I would refer the hon. Member to the answer to part (d) of the question. As regards the respective priorities I am not able to give it offhand.

Shri S. C. Samanta: Is it not a fact that the Planning Commission apprehended that the amount of work in the post offices has enhanced to a great extent and, if so, may I know how much sum has been fixed for this purpose in the Five Year Plan and also whether any additional sum has been granted?

Shri Raj Bahadur: A sum of Rs. 2,50,00,000 has been provided in the Five Year Plan for providing new buildings for post offices, R. M. S. offices, administrative offices, quarters, etc.

Kumari Annie Mascarene. May I know whether the public in any part of India have offered to give buildings for post offices and telegraph offices?

Shri Raj Bahadur: Not the public, but one or two industrial concerns did offer to construct buildings for the department.

Shri Gidwani: Is it a fact that one of the post branch office in Delhi is located in a niche under a staircase?

Shri Raj Bahadur: There are many post offices in Delhi. Which particular post office does the hon. Member refer to, I do not know.

Shri Veeraswamy: May I know the number of post offices housed in private buildings in Madras State?

Shri Raj Bahadur: I have not got the State-wise or circle-wise break-up.

Shri Nanadas: May I know whether any of these post offices have been housed in Harijan localities?

Shri Raj Bahadur: Many.

Shri A. M. Thomas: May I know whether the figures given by the hon. Minister include those post offices—one for two thousand, which have been opened as part of the Five Year Plan?

Shri Raj Bahadur: This is the overall figure. The hon. Member will appreciate that it is not possible for us to provide buildings for branch post offices, particularly extra-departmental branch post offices which are opened on the basis of a special scheme.

Shri S. N. Das: Arising out of the answer to part (c) of the question, may I know what is the programme for the current year?

Shri Raj Bahadur: Construction of twelve post office buildings, apart from buildings for residential quarters and R.M.S. offices.

Shri U. M. Trivedi: May I know whether the Plan also includes the construction of residential quarters for postmasters and clerks?

Shri Raj Bahadur: I have already said so, Sir.

RAILWAY HIGH SCHOOL COMPOUND AT KHARGPUR

*892. **Shri S. C. Samanta:** (a) Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Indian Railway High School compound at Khargpur is being used by lepers at night?

(b) Is it also a fact that some of the peons of the School were attacked with leprosy?

(c) If so, what steps have been taken by Government to keep away the lepers from the school compound?

(d) Is there any proposal to construct walls around the boundaries of the school?

(e) If so, when will the work be taken in hand?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shahuwaz Khan): (a) No Sir.

(b) One of the peons of the school has been found to be affected with leprosy and he has been granted leave for treatment at a recognised Leprosy Clinic.

(c) to (e). The main school building is enclosed but the primary sections and the gymnasium have no boundary wall. Sanction has already been accorded to the construction of a boundary wall and the work will be undertaken very shortly.

Shri S. C. Samanta: Is it not a fact that in 1951 the General Manager of the then B. N. Railway informed us