

negligence have facilitated or contributed to the commission of the fraud. Steps have also been taken to tighten the supervision and to reorganise the Investigation Sections in the Directorate and States. Strengthening of the Supervisory Staff, which has not been increased proportionately with the rise in traffic and expansion of the P. & T. facilities in the country, is also under consideration of the Government.

Shri Muniswamy: May I know, Sir, whether it is a fact that the departmental rules are such that it becomes, in most cases, impossible to fix the direct responsibility on the actual culprits?

Shri Raj Bahadur: The truth is otherwise. As a matter of fact, if the departmental rules are strictly observed such frauds would become impossible. Only through laxity in the observance of rules by delinquent officials that such cases occur.

Shri Muniswamy: From the statement it is observed that the number of cases in 1952-53 has increased by about 200, as compared with the previous year. Does it mean that Government have failed to take adequate steps?

Shri Raj Bahadur: Again, the increase in traffic was much more in proportion to the increase in the number of cases.

Shri S. C. Samanta: May I know, Sir, whether it is a fact that most of these cases were detected in extra-departmental branch post offices?

Shri Raj Bahadur: I will not say most of them; but a good number of them were detected in extra departmental post offices.

Shri Muniswamy: Out of the cases mentioned by the Minister, may I know the number that ended in conviction in courts and the number against whom departmental action was taken?

Shri Raj Bahadur: The number of officials convicted by courts in 1951-52

was 145 and in 1952-53 131. The number punished departmentally I have already given—96 and 93 respectively. Officers still under trial 288 in 1951-52 and 248 in 1952-53. Number of officers against whom police or departmental action was taken 396 and 462; acquitted by courts 52 and 97 respectively unaccounted for: died, absconded, etc. 69 and 42.

NICOTINE MANUFACTURE FROM TOBACCO

*168. **Shri Dabhi:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to refer to supplementary to starred question No. 1194 answered on the 10th September, 1953 and state:

(a) whether experiments for the manufacture of nicotine from tobacco dust are being carried on in any Tobacco Research Stations in the Country; and

(b) if so, what progress has been made in this direction?

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri M. V. Krishnappa):
(a) No.

(b) Does not arise.

Shri Nanadas: May I know, Sir, whether in our own country this kind of research is carried out and if so with what results?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: I have not got the information.

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): If that is a suggestion for making enquiries, it will be considered.

Shri Dabhi: Is it a fact that nicotine can be manufactured from tobacco dust?

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: It is a fact. Since our research stations are mainly concerned with improving the quality and yield of tobacco, we have not carried out any experiments in that direction. We have, however, requested the scientific research laboratories to investigate it and they have by their investigations found out a plan. They are doing it and they are successful.