

The Minister of Home Affairs and States (Dr. Katju): (a) The preliminary survey of the Banihal Tunnel project has been completed. Construction of the north approach road to the tunnel is in progress and is expected to be completed shortly. Tenders have been invited upto the 24th May 1954 for the driving of the pilot heading.

(b) The main work will be done through contractors.

(c) The pilot heading will require approximately eighteen months to complete from the date of commencement and the main tunnel will require about two years thereafter for completion.

Shri Sanganna: May I know by how many miles the existing distance between Jammu and Kashmir will be reduced by the construction of this tunnel?

Dr. Katju: About sixteen miles, if I am not mistaken—probably more.

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: What is the length of the tunnel and how many feet above sea level will it be?

Dr. Katju: The length of the tunnel will be $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles. So far as height above sea level is concerned, it may be seven or eight thousand feet.

Mr. Speaker: It is not a question of guess.

Shri Sanganna: Will the work be done by the Government of India or by the Kashmir Government with aid from the Centre?

Dr. Katju: The cost of construction will be borne in the first instance by aid to the Kashmir Government, and, when it is declared a National Highway, from the National Highway Fund. But I think it is too premature to discuss all this at present.

Shri D. C. Sharma: May I know if any attempts will be made to accelerate the tempo of construction of this tunnel so that it may be constructed in a shorter time than is visualised by the hon. Minister?

Dr. Katju: We are doing our best. But that is really a matter for

engineers. As I said, tenders have been invited upto the 24th May, 1954. That is the last date. Then we will do our best.

FLAG DAY FUND

***2297. Sardar Hukam Singh:** Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount that was collected in 1953 for the Flag Day Fund; and

(b) what sum was spent for providing amenities to serving personnel?

The Deputy Minister of Defence (Sardar Majithia): (a) Rupees 6,91,643-4-0 have so far been reported to have been collected on Flag Day, 1953.

(b) Disbursements from the Fund have not yet been authorised. They will be made later in the year.

Sardar Hukam Singh: What are the usual heads under which these contributions are distributed among those that are serving and among the ex-servicemen?

Sardar Majithia: It is 70 per cent. to ex-servicemen and 30 per cent. to the serving personnel.

Sardar Hukam Singh: May I know whether the distribution for amenities to the ex-servicemen is done through some Central agency or, is the amount handed over to the State Governments for distribution?

Sardar Majithia: This is done through the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Board.

Sardar A. S. Saigal: May I know how the fund is being managed and by whom?

Sardar Majithia: There is a managing committee, consisting of the Minister for Defence as the Chairman, the Deputy Minister as the Vice Chairman, the Chief of the Army Staff, naval staff and the air staff, the Financial Advisor, Adjutant-General and the Secretary of the Indian Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Board.

Shri D. C. Sharma: May I know if the grants to ex-servicemen and amenities to servicemen are given through the State organisations?

Sardar Majithia: I have already answered that question; probably, the hon. Member was inattentive.

Shri D. C. Sharma: The difficulty is that the hon. Minister was not audible.

Sardar Majithia: It is done through the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Board.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Funds are raised from time to time for the amenities and welfare of the defence personnel under various names. May I know whether there is any pool of such funds, or are they kept separately?

Sardar Majithia: So far as I know, there are no other funds, unless the hon. Member is referring to the funds collected some time back for our service personnel in Korea. That fund was managed by a separate committee and that committee has kept those funds.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: What about the balance of the fund that was raised for the Korean service personnel? Will that be kept in any pool or it will be spent by that very committee?

Sardar Majithia: As I have already said, they are managed by a separate committee which was formed at that moment. There are considerable funds with that committee and it is still under consideration how best to utilise them because they were raised for a specific purpose.

SCIENCE CONGRESS

*2276. **Shri Radha Raman:** Will the Minister of Natural Resources and Scientific Research be pleased to state:

(a) how many foreign delegates attended the recent Science Congress held in Hyderabad; and

(b) the expenditure incurred on this Congress by Government?

The Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Scientific Research (Shri K. D. Malaviya): (a) 28.

(b) The actual expenditure is not yet known as the accounts have not

been finalised by the Indian Science Congress Association.

Sir, May I add with your permission that it is estimated to be something like, Rs. 70,000?

Shri Radha Raman: May I know the names of the countries which were invited and also such as were represented in the Congress?

Shri K. D. Malaviya: About 28 foreign eminent scientists attended the Congress. The countries invited and the countries from which these 28 scientists attended the Congress were: USSR, Pakistan, Burma, U.K., Italy, U.S.A., Norway, Japan, France and also a representative each of the UNESCO, F.A.O., and W.H.O.

Shri Radha Raman: May I know whether any copy of the resolutions passed there at the Congress has been received by our Government and whether there is anything which the Indian Government is required to do in that connection?

Shri K. D. Malaviya: The Indian Science Congress Association has been holding these annual sessions here with a view to enable eminent scientists to meet here and review the work that they have been doing from year to year and invite constructive criticisms on the work that they do. Their decisions or proceedings do not take any shape of resolutions.

Shri Radha Raman: May I know whether delegates invited from other countries were taken to centres of scientific research and if so, may I know the important places visited by them?

Shri K. D. Malaviya: Sir, such tour was on their programme and they were taken round our important institutes and laboratories.

RUPSI AIRFIELD

*2277. **Shri Brohmo-Choudhury:** Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to state:

(a) the allotment for the development of Rupsi Air-field (Assam) for 1953-54;