

"SERVICE CHARGES" TO LOCAL BODIES

*1271. **Shri S. C. Samanta:** Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Government have decided to pay 'service charges' to the local bodies for the properties of the Union lying in the latter's jurisdiction in spite of Clause (i) of Article 285 of the Constitution;

(b) if so, from which date these 'service charges' will be paid;

(c) the specific services for which payments will be made; and

(d) what sort of properties will be exempted from such 'service charges'?

The Deputy Minister of Finance (Shri M. C. Shah): (a) Yes, Sir; but Government are advised that the payment of such 'Service Charges' is not excluded by Clause (1) of Art. 285.

(b) to (d). A copy of a letter addressed to State Governments on 10th May 1954 setting out the basis for this arrangement is laid on the Table. [See Appendix VIII, annexure No. 26.]

LOWER-GRADE MICA OF ANDHRA

*1278. **Shri Ramachandra Reddi:** Will the Minister of Natural Resources and Scientific Research be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large stock of lower-grade mica of Andhra State is lying unsold in U.K.;

(b) if so, the approximate value thereof;

(c) whether this slump has adversely affected mica mining and trade; and

(d) the steps taken by Government for its disposal?

The Minister of Education and Natural Resources and Scientific Research (Maulana Azad): (a) and (b). A statement giving information regarding stocks of mica lying unsold in U.K. is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix VIII, annexure No. 27.]

Separate figures regarding mica of Andhra State are not available.

(c) A statement showing the quantity and value of exports of mica from India during the years 1951, 1952 and 1953, is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix VIII, annexure No. 27.]

It will be seen therefrom that the marketing position of block mica continues to be fairly satisfactory, but the abnormal demand for splittings which was created between 1947 and 1951 by the U.S.A.'s stock piling has since disappeared. This should not be regarded as slump in mica trade.

(d) The matter is under consideration in consultation with the U.K. Government.

SEIZURE OF OPIUM

*1281. **Shri U. M. Trivedi:** Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that very large quantity of opium was seized in Jaura in Madhya Bharat in June, 1954; and

(b) if so, the quantity thus seized?

The Deputy Minister of Finance (Shri A. C. Guha): (a) and (b). There was no seizure of illicit opium in June 1954 but a quantity of 7 mds. and 36 srs. of opium was seized in Jaura in July, 1954.

FLOOD RELIEF MEASURES

*1282. **Th. Jugal Kishore Sinha:** Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have issued any directives to the Bihar Government for the proper utilisation of grants sanctioned for the flood relief measures; and

(b) whether any checks are exercised by the Central Government in such cases?

The Deputy Minister of Finance (Shri M. C. Shah): (a) No, Sir.